



March 13, 2020

Seventh-day Adventist Churches
South Leeward Conference

Dear Brethren,

NOTIFICATION TO ALL SDA CHURCHES RE: COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS)

The Seventh-day Adventist church recognizes the serious implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and is fully prepared to make the necessary adjustments to ensure that the members of our congregations are safe, protected and supported as this virus spreads around the world. Members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are reminded that we must not panic, but remain calm during this pandemic.

As we attempt to keep our members safe, all Seventh-day Adventist churches must adhere to the following guidelines:

PROVIDE ADEQUATE HANDWASHING FACILITIES:

- Churches need to ensure that there is running water in all bathrooms and kitchens and that repairs are made to taps that are not working.
- A regular stock of liquid hand soap must be available in all bathrooms and kitchens (Please remember to replenish regularly).
- If running water is not available, there should be water storage facilities.

HAND SANITIZERS:

- Must provide hand sanitizers at all entrance points, in all foyers, bathrooms, kitchens, church halls and meeting rooms.
- Note that hand gels are most effective when they contain a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Hand gels that state “kills 99% bacteria and viruses” and are between 60 - 95% alcohol based are best.

GREETING EACH OTHER:

To protect personal space and prevent the spread of the virus, please adhere to the following:

- Absolutely no handshakes, hugging and kissing.
- Alternatives would be to smile, wave or nod as you greet each other

PERSONAL HYGIENE:

- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.
- Regular hand washing throughout the day is advised.
- Use toilet tissue to touch toilet handles, bathroom taps and open bathroom doors.

- Use hand sanitizers after touching surfaces.
- Use knuckles to operate light switches if concerned.
- Open doors with elbows or tissue.
- Signage demonstrating steps to hand washing should be displayed at hand washing stations.

PERSONAL BEHAVIOUR:

- Avoid touching your face. If touching face is necessary, sanitize hands immediately before and after touching face
- Viruses can live on surfaces for a few days. When we touch surfaces where the virus may have been deposited and then touch our eyes, nose or mouth, the virus can enter from there.
- Avoid the exchange and distribution of the following: writing materials, snacks, sweets, and passing of note etc.

CHURCH CLEANING:

As the COVID-19 Coronavirus lives on surfaces for a few days, it is advised to ensure a thorough cleaning of the church premises each week.

- It is important that church cleaners/caretakers use rubber gloves while cleaning in order to help to protect themselves
- The church caretaker/cleaner should be advised to undertake a thorough cleaning each week paying particular attention to benches, door handles, church rails, light switches and all surfaces in bathrooms, kitchens and meeting places.
- Deacons and deaconesses may need to assist in the general cleanliness of the church environment, and attend to surface cleaning as advised above.
- Sanitize buses before and after use
- Sanitize all surface areas for example desks, tables, pianos, organ, pulpits, etc.

COLLECTION OF TITHES/OFFERING:

Please ensure that the offering containers are handled only by the deacons. Do not allow the baskets to be passed from hand to hand. Deaconesses should sanitize hands before and after collection of tithes and offerings.

Persons counting after collection of tithes and offerings should wear gloves where possible and wash hands upon completion.

OLDER MEMBERS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH CHRONIC ILLNESSES:

It is important to keep in touch with our older members and those with ongoing health conditions during this time. They are the most vulnerable to the virus. You may need to advise them to worship at home, especially if they are frail or currently unwell.

It is extremely essential to keep in touch with them so they do not feel isolated. You may do this through regular phone calls to see how they are doing and to ensure they have adequate resources and essential items such as food, water, toiletries and medical supplies.

FEELING UNWELL/SYMPTOMS:

If you are unwell, and have symptoms such as a temperature of 99 Fahrenheit or above, coughing, sneezing and a runny nose, please worship at home and watch services online. If you are experiencing difficulties breathing or breathlessness, call 911 for attention and advice.

SELF-ISOLATION:

If the above symptoms are present and you are concerned that you may have the virus, please remain at home and call 911. You will be assessed and advised as to whether you need to be tested for the virus. Do not attend your doctor's or General Practitioner's office, but rather, call your GP to let them know.

During self-isolation, or if quarantine is advised by a health professional, you should not use public transport, attend public places, or go into work, college, university or school. This could be for a period of 2 weeks.

FIRST AID:

Each church is mandated to name a qualified first aider/medical personnel to be duty for each gathering and provide protective gear to ensure the safety of such person(s) on duty.

SOCIAL DISTANCING:

The recommendation by the World Health Organization (WHO) and department of Health (DOH) is to stand at least 6 feet (six feet) away from people who are coughing and sneezing. This is so that you can avoid breathing in tiny droplets which may contain the virus when people cough and sneeze.

GATHERINGS:

Avoid all large gatherings: No communion, baby dedication, potluck, agape feasts and similar events should be arranged or held.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Please make verbal announcements about hand hygiene and greetings as mentioned above, and also place in the church's bulletin. Such announcements must be repeated each week for absent members and visitors.

PRAYER:

We stand on the power and promise of His Word in Psalm 91 as we embrace the protection that God offers us as we abide in Him: "No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways."

Psalm 91:10,11.

Let us commit to lifting up prayers for those impacted by the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and the families, friends and communities who are grieving the loss of loved ones as a result. We continue to petition God in our daily prayers as we seek His intervention to halt the spread of this virus.

UPDATES:

Further updates will follow.

Please listen for updates on the coronavirus daily on the Second Advent Radio Station

Sincerely,

Eulalie Daley Semper, Ed/D

Health Director