

# The Methodist Church in Singapore

新加坡基督教衛理公會

சிங்கப்பூர் மெதடிஸ்ட் திருச்சபை

70 Barker Road, Methodist Centre, Singapore 309936

Tel: 6478 4786 Fax: 6478 4799 <http://www.methodist.org.sg>



28 March 2020

Dear fellow Methodists,

Grace and peace be with you all.

This afternoon, Bishop Dr Chong Chin Chung, Bishop of The Methodist Church in Singapore (MCS) wrote a pastoral letter. Together with the Presidents of the three Annual Conferences, he announced that MCS would pause celebrating Holy Communion until the end of April.

Holy Communion is one of two important sacraments of the church and we are instructed to do it often "*in remembrance of Christ*". Our founder, John Wesley, teaches that it is a means of grace and the early church celebrated it daily. Over time, the sermon took precedence to the sacrament, and it is celebrated monthly in most of our Methodist churches, partly from historical shortages of Church Elders to conduct the rite. Holy Communion may only be presided over by an Elder of the Church.

**We have to put aside this act of piety and replace it with an act of mercy;** we have to do our part to stop this disease from spreading. It is honourable to make this sacrifice for our country.

In this time of pandemic, the situation is evolving very rapidly, and decisions made have to be revisited often. We have struggled in prayer and considered the various options of bringing the body and blood of Christ to believers, from pre-consecration to postage, but we cannot do so for we need to have the presence of His people. We also cannot safely practise physical distancing without affecting the fellowship and communion of the saints or compromising on this important rite.

We have to keep a physical distance between ourselves to stop this virus, or our healthcare workers will only be working hard to fight a contagion that is spread by our stubbornness. We also urge all small groups not to meet face-to-face but through online means or even by phone.

We ask that you do not go to each other's homes or small groups and attempt to have Holy Communion amongst yourselves, for it goes against the teaching of the church.

In this time, there are other ways we can show our love for our Lord and His means of grace; we do this by careful study of His word and spending time in prayer. We must train and form our spiritual lives that we may better know and understand the truth, discern God's will, and deepen our love for Him.

We look forward to the day when we can gather again at The Lord's Table with hearts full of joy and say the Great Thanksgiving to commemorate His mighty acts. Until that day comes, we labour together with our neighbours to fight this COVID-19 virus.

I remain  
Your fellow servant,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Goh', written over a faint, illegible stamp or background.

Dr Anthony Goh, OSL  
Chairman,  
Council on Communications