



March 12, 2020

TO BE READ IN ALL CHURCHES IN JAMAICA UNION CONFERENCE

RELEASE #1: COVID 19 Advisory

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

I greet you warmly with my prayer for continued blessings for you and family.

Jamaica has now joined many other countries in the world in confirming two cases of the COVID-19. The World Health Organization (WHO) has now classified COVID-19 as a pandemic. While we pray earnestly that we will not experience an epidemic here in our beautiful island, we must ensure that the necessary precautions are taken to minimize the risks. The government of Jamaica has not placed a ban on church services, funerals or weddings at this time; we await further advisory regarding these matters. As such, the Administration of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica shares the following protocols as we move forward:

1. Each church must appoint a Crises Coordinator to supervise all matters in this regard. This person will relate to the Pastor, who will liaise with the Conference, and the Conference will relate to the Union, in order to facilitate a coordinated approach.
2. Outside of regular church service, no other large gathering should be planned (evangelistic series, conventions, music days, rallies, pathfinder and youth-related outdoor activities etc.).
3. Evangelistic series already in progress must be concluded at the very soonest, while maintaining the protocols that have been established for large gathering.
4. Where possible, streaming of our services should be done to minimize large gathering, in addition to using other forms of technology for our evangelistic programmes and activities.
5. Until further advised, if communion and baptismal services must be conducted, strict hygienic protocols should be observed.
6. No handshaking, holding of hands or embracing, as we seek to minimize the risks
7. Adequate water, soaps and hand sanitizers should be made available, in addition to gloves for persons handling tithes and offerings. Bathroom facilities must be properly sanitized.
8. Elderly persons with pre-existing conditions should stay home.
9. Potlucks should be discontinued.

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10. Members and guests who have recently travelled within the last 14 days returning from North America, Europe and Asia (China and other Asian countries), or countries where the virus has been confirmed, are asked to “voluntarily” worship at home using livestream on YouTube, NCU TV, Hope Channel or 3ABN for 14 days.
11. Persons with cold, fever and flu-like symptoms must seek medical advice and stay home.
12. Where facilities are available, please utilize the online giving platform.
13. The necessary protocols will also be established in our conferences/institutions and schools.

Please practice personal hygiene, to include the regular washing of hands; avoid touching face; sneeze or cough in paper towel, tissue, rag or your elbow; avoid public places if you have flu-like symptoms. In addition, boost your immune system by having increased fruits and vegetables and other supplements, such as Vitamin C and Zinc.

We also admonish you to keep abreast of the news and abide by the guidelines and regulations as outlined by the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

Finally, avoid distributing information from sources that cannot be verified. False information will lead to panic. Sources such as Ministry of Health and Wellness (www.moh.gov.jm, and Dropbox <https://t.co/33Qj7riAJR?ssr=true>); World Health Organization (www.who.int); Centre for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov) will provide all the information and guidelines needed.

We are not sure of the overall impact for our country, and so further updates will be given as it becomes necessary. In the meantime, we encourage each member to be cautious and use the best judgement in interactions.

Let us rest in the assurance found in Psalms 91:2 “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Him will I trust”.

Your Brother in Christ

Everett E. Brown (Pastor)
President