



Baptist Churches of South Australia

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COVID-19 Update

On Monday 23rd March at 4:15pm, acting on the advice of SA Health specialists, the State Coordinator, SAPOL Commissioner Stevens made a direction under the *Emergency Management Act 2004*. This direction places restrictions on non-essential business and social gatherings and is now in force. South Australia Police will be conducting proactive random checks on venues and those businesses which have been captured by these newly announced restrictions.

<https://www.police.sa.gov.au/sa-police-news>

Having contacted SAPOL to seek some clarity on how this applies to “places of worship” we can confirm that **this applies to all gatherings** – worship services, weddings, youth, kids, craft, men’s shed, seniors, lunches etc. It **DOES NOT** include staff working on site although wherever possible they should be given the option of working from home.

We continue to encourage churches to take actions recommended by both the [SA Health](#) and the [Australian Government Department of Health](#) to reduce the risk of transmission. This means that **all church gatherings and activities should be suspended until further notice**.

[The Australian Government](#) states that *"The following facilities are restricted from opening from midday local time 23 March 2020: Religious gatherings, places of worship or funerals (in enclosed spaces and other than very small groups and where the 1 person per 4 square metre rule applies)."*

If you have staff working on site or are recording your Sunday message or live streaming your service, please try to minimise the number of personnel in the building at any time and ensure to adhere to the following regulations:

- In an enclosed space there should be on average **no more than one person per four square metres of floor space**
- Plan ways to enable **physical distancing of 1.5m** to reduce in-person contact
- Provide supplies to help limit infection, for example alcohol sanitisers and soap
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces regularly, including desks, keyboards, mics and change room surfaces
- Open windows, enhance airflow, adjust air conditioning
- Where possible, avoid large indoor meetings and lunchrooms and use outdoor venues

For service broadcast we recommend a skeleton team, with reduced numbers. It may be helpful to pre-record sections of your service during the week to stagger the number of people in the building.

Mike Mills

State Executive Minister