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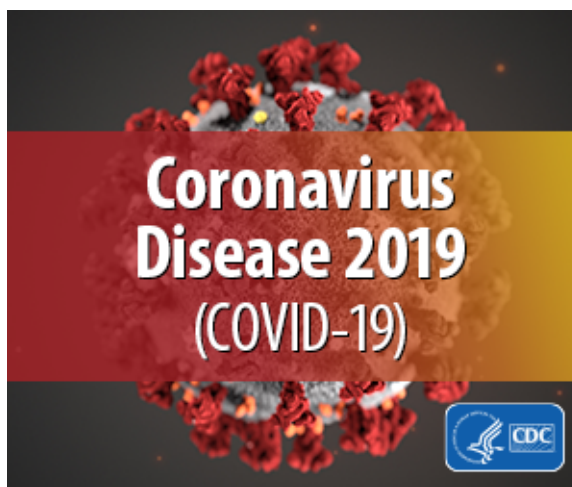
Coronavirus – Updated guidelines from the Archbishop – As at Thursday April 2



17th Mar 2020 < <https://anglicanchurchsa.org/coronavirus-updated-guidelines-from-the-archbishop/>>

Sticky post

Archbishop Thabo is posting News and Reflections for Holy Week on his blog at <https://archbishop.anglicanchurchsa.org/> < <https://archbishop.anglicanchurchsa.org/>>



Logo credit: CDC

UPDATE: APRIL 2, 14:00

Dear Parishioners, Clergy and Bishops

My update is late today because we were racing to put together a 30-minute Easter service, recorded by Newzroom Africa for DStv, at the Church of the Good Shepherd in the shadow of Table Mountain. We'll let you know when it will be broadcast.

Yesterday, I asked that we lament, and perhaps some of the cries of lamentation are around the loss of our usual rituals and practices leading up to Easter: our retreats ; this time; confession; the washing of feet and stripping of the altar; the energy with which we are led through the seven last words; the moving Mass on Holy Saturday with the bare altar; the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday.

I already miss these as I write to you and acknowledging the loss is also healing me. I am finding ways to recreate the feelings and the experience with family with the broadcasters who will record an excerpt from the Easter service. I am already humming the Easter songs as I allow them to heal me and help me deal with the loss. I have tithed what I would have given in the collection to a project that feeds the hungry, and I urge others to work at ways in which through others you also can find ways to supplement the feeding of the destitute.

A number of COVID-19 teams are being set up on a Provincial, regional and Diocesan basis. By regional, I mean the Gauteng Dioceses, the Western Cape Dioceses, the Eastern Cape Dioceses, the KwaZulu-Natal Dioceses and the following groupings: Kimberley & Kuruman, Free State, Lesotho and Matlosane; Mpumalanga, eSwatini and the Mozambican Dioceses; and Namibia, Angola and St Helena.

The teams have been asked to share information and experiences; to report if they have parishioners infected; and to keep us informed on what is happening in their regions. Our Provincial team, the COVID-19 ACSA advisory group, has been exceptional – with support from our legal teams also. The group has been engaged in vigorous daily consultation on everything from general advice and Government information to feeding schemes, food vouchers and the availability of hand sanitizer. Thank you to all of them for their efforts.

During this time of restrictions on the number of people who attend funerals, I want to record at the end of these updates the names of parishioners whose funerals have been held under restriction, in order that we may remember their families in our prayers.

Today we remember:

In the Diocese of St Mark the Evangelist

- Layminister Albertina Letsoalo (94), Parish of Tlhatlaganya
- Mr Mongatane, Chapelry of St. Simon of Cyrene, Cyferskuil

In the Diocese of Cape Town

- Katie Louw, the mother of Bishop-Elect Joshua Louw

God bless.

As we go forward, updates will be reflected on this page, and dates and times of each update published.*(If you are not sure an update has loaded, “break the cache” on your computer by pressing Ctrl/F5 to reload the page.)*

UPDATE: APRIL 1, 06:40

Yesterday we asked men’s and women’s groups in the Church, as well as religious communities, to join us in praying during this time of the coronavirus. Mothers’ Union, can you please also devote your Thursday prayers to the crisis, over and above other times? We also asked the youth and servers, as well as other young people’s formations, to create prayer platforms. Perhaps our young people could add their voices to the calls for the cost of data to be reduced during this period of shutdown?

Multichoice (DStv) has approached the churches with their plan to launch a special Easter channel to bring Good Friday to Easter to God’s people across the continent. They will create a pop-up channel – Channel 344 – from Thursday April 9 to Monday April 13, accommodating denominations including ours. We will share more information when it is available.

The Bishops’ court staff, including the Provincial Executive Office and the Media Office, continue to enable my ministry during this time, for which I am thankful to God. The Media Office has added to and re-arranged our Resource page, and asks you to keep on sharing your Facebook pages and any tweets that you send out. Let’s use the hashtag #acsaworship on what we publish so fellow Anglicans at home can follow and share. You can find the Resource page here:

[/coronavirus-resources-for-prayer-and-worship/](#)

Please support the Government in the crucially important mass community tracing screening, testing and treatment programmes, announced for South Africa by President Ramaphosa on Monday. If asked, please help the health authorities in

whatever way you can. I am spending these days in a “semi-retreat” and come out only in the evenings to work on those updates. It is for me a period of intense prayer and lament.

In the past, Jeremiah has for me best described what it is to lament. ‘Cry aloud to the Lord!’ he writes in his Lamentations, ‘Let tears stream down like a torrent day and night ... Arise, cry in the night, at the beginning of the watches. Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord!’ (Lam 2:18,19).

But lamenting does not only have negative connotations. Denise Ackermann has written that lamenting “...is a refusal to settle for the way things are. It is reminding God that the human situation is not as it should be and that God as the partner in the covenant must act.” In exploring lamentation, we trust that the incarnate, second person of the Trinity, God who took human form, is always with us as we discern his way in struggling with the contemporary issues of our day. We must thus act courageously, “recklessly confident” that nothing will separate us from God’s love.

Lamenting helps us build hope – as I wrote in my book Faith & Courage:

“I am not speaking of hope in the sense of an anaesthetic administered to dull the throbbing pain of the everyday reality of inequality and indifference to suffering. As... Denise Ackermann says, hope ‘is not that blithe sense that all will end well... because human progress is guaranteed’. No, hope is a determination, a conviction that seeks to name our problems and highlight our differences, precisely in order to mobilize people to overcome them. As Ackermann adds: ‘To live out my hope is to try to make that which I hope for come about – sooner rather than later.’ It is ‘never to surrender our power to imagine a better world’.”

These updates will become shorter and shorter as I spend more time in the next few days listening to God rather than talking and writing. I hear God saying daily to me, “Thabo, be still and know that I am Lord,” as I lift up mine eyes daily to God from whence my hope comes.

Do pray for those who have died COVID-19 related deaths in Southern Africa, and for those infected and under treatment.

God bless you, and keep safe.

UPDATE: MARCH 31, 05:30

With Day Five of South Africa's lockdown – and Day Two of Lesotho's three-week lockdown – beginning today, Tuesday, our people and parishes are starting to look ahead to Holy Week and Easter.

But before I write about that, a reminder about following the South African Health Department's basic guidelines, including those on staying at home, on social distancing when you shop for food or medical supplies, on hand-washing (for 20 seconds) or sanitizing, and sneezing or coughing into a tissue and then throwing it away. You can find comprehensive advice on the [Department of Health's special website](https://sacoronavirus.co.za/) >> < <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>> Please read it and follow the advice and the compulsory regulations.

We managed to get a [special ACSA Resources page](#) up on the website at the weekend, with a range of advice, ideas, prayers, forms and examples of service etc. in text, audio, video and poster format. By Sunday, the Resources page was offering links to a number of services webcast live, and archived for later viewing, including services run on the principles of social distancing. You can find the Resources page here:

</coronavirus-resources-for-prayer-and-worship/>

Please share your own ideas and practices with others, at anglicanmediasa@gmail.com. Our staff resources are stretched, so the quickest way of getting your ideas onto the page – and of readers seeing them – is if you send links to your own blogs, Facebook pages, YouTube or SoundCloud channels.

We'll continue to update the Resources page with any new links to services we find for Palm Sunday. On Monday of Holy Week, the Bishops of the Province will connect using video-conferencing software to say the Angelus together, as well as to offer prayers for our countries, our continent and the world.

Through Holy Week, I appeal to the Anglican Women's Fellowship, the Mothers' Union, the Bernard Mizeki Men's Guild and similar groups to don their uniforms, and for members of religious houses their habits, and to organise WhatsApp and other social media groups for prayer until Easter.

On Maundy Thursday, the clergy in the Diocese of Cape Town, instead of gathering to renew their vows, will also join a video-conference to say the Angelus and offer prayers for the Diocese, the city, South Africa, Africa and the world. I appeal to you, the clergy and people of our parishes, to link up via groups such as those on WhatsApp and elsewhere and do the same during Holy Week.

Led by the South African Council of Churches, the country's religious leaders have reached an agreement with the SABC to step up their religious programming in the coming weeks. We Anglicans are on the schedule for a service on Easter Sunday – I share more details with you when I know them. In your own parishes, perhaps you can consider opportunities for joint ecumenical and interfaith worship.

Let me end on a note on ministry, and then with an invitation.

As clergy and laity, we need to reflect on the meaning of ministry in “a time of coronavirus” and on what it means for the future, covering a number of scenarios. If the lockdown has to be extended, how do we plan for that? If that graph showing the exponential growth in the spread of the virus continues to shoot up, what preparations do we need to make? Could we help the Government by opening churches for testing or other purposes? If the curve flattens – and we pray that it will – how has this crisis enabled us to rethink our pastoral plans and our vision of ministry? What have we been missing, how has the world changed, and how do we respond?

Now the invitation: I challenge you all, clergy or lay people, to explore your own creativity as you pray, meditate and worship at home in the coming weeks. Is there a new Collect that you've had in the back of your mind for a while? Write it down and hone it for use in your parish. Or a song, or a hymn? Consider working on new contextual liturgies and prayers for this season and beyond. The key is: be imaginative! Be bold! Be original!

God bless

UPDATE: MARCH 27, 06:25

Today, a prayer that you can use when you observe the Angelus at noon, and a blessing that you can use at the end of devotions at home. The video versions will

appear first, followed by audio versions which, if you click on the links through to Soundcloud, can be downloaded to your phone or computer.

An Angelus Prayer for the coronavirus loc...



Archbishop's blessing for home services ...



[AnglicanMediaSA](#)

Angelus prayer for coronavirus I...



Share



[AnglicanMediaSA](#)



Archbishop Makgoba's blessing ...

Share

ockdown message, available



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Message from Archbishop Thab...

Share

lown, we will be focussing in
guidelines, but also sharing
the coronavirus, COVID-19
ince.

YouTube video page. Please
e videos of an Angelus praye

give generously to our Province-wide Lenten Appeal for Mozambican Dioceses still recovering from the cyclones which hit them last year.

Across our Province, I want to suggest today that since many people are not on computers or mobile phones able to reach the Internet, each parishioner or cleric should phone at least three vulnerable people a day as a continuation of your ministry.

Many of you are taking innovative and creative steps to continue ministering to you people. Please share them with us, so that we can perhaps create a page on our website devoted to best practices. Send them to: anglicanmediasa@gmail.com

One of the innovations has been to reach people through videos online, an example which **you can see here** < <https://bit.ly/2UhWxjy> > – it is produced by St. Laurence’s Church in Discovery, in the Diocese of Johannesburg, where the Revd Martha Gordon presented a short service. Of course not all parishes have resources do that, so South Africa’s church leaders are exploring whether we could have more live services broadcast on television.

Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury will be joining Pope Francis and many other Christians today, Wednesday, in saying the Lord’s Prayer at noon. Do join them, and also ring church bells and use the Angelus prayer I sent yesterday.

God bless the world,

Give it wisdom at this time,

Grant us relief and release,

Be with those who are ill,

And bless the carers fighting this pandemic,

For Jesus Christ’s sake,

Amen

You can also end your worship, at home or in services in countries where they can still be held, with the prayer that I shared with you last week:

ship. Also coming: audio link for your mobile phone.

[Cookie policy](#)

Message from Archbishop Thabo on eve ...



the Province on South Africa's

get our Dioceses in Angola, St Helena.

that Ramaphosa should not blur

us as South Africans to the different challenges around services and other ministry elsewhere in our Province. In many areas, the spirit has been one of “Let us move on and get into a congregational mindset, doing our own thing.” Sharing our collective responses is key to keeping together, and we can learn from and hold in our prayers those in the Province whose churches are still open.

Please pray for the Dioceses of Angola; Lesotho; Lebombo, Niassa and Nampula in Mozambique; and the Dioceses of Namibia; Swaziland; and St Helena. Also, please

Lord God, in this season of fear and uncertainty,

as we face the threat of the coronavirus,

Grant us the wisdom and determination to walk in one another's shoes,

The confidence and the humility to draw closer to you and to those affected,

Empower us to pastor those who are ill, to weep for the dead, to support the healed and to care for and love one another.

And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and always.

Amen

UPDATE: MARCH 24, 06:00

The national “stay-at-home” lockdown that the Government will impose in South Africa from midnight on Thursday will test as never before our capacity as a church to innovate and share with one another.

But it will not prevent us from ministering to one another, and since our churches are now effectively closed, I have a simple request if at all possible:

At midday, every day, please could we ring our church bells around Southern Africa for 10 or 15 seconds as a signal to those, in every county in our Province, who are ill or live in fear, despair and perhaps anger, assuring them that God is here, that He loves us, that we are not alone and that this too shall pass.

It would also be a wonderful way of demonstrating our presence, our solidarity with our communities, and the fact that we are praying and worshipping at home.

If you are at home, pause whatever you are doing, and clink a glass or cup to ring the same message out to yourselves and your loved ones, resurrecting the use of the Angelus and saying this prayer:

God bless the world,

Give it wisdom at this time,

Grant us relief and release,

Be with those who are ill,

And bless the carers fighting this pandemic,

For Jesus Christ's sake,

Amen

This time of great anxiety and stress in the world, where tomorrows are not certain for so many, is one when we need God's presence more than ever. We need to acknowledge to ourselves that the fear and anxiety created by the novel coronavirus and by COVID-19 will have long-term effects on us.

We will never be able to know now what the psychological effects on us will be in the future – on how we view ourselves – and on society at large. That is why in my messaging I am asking people to take seriously their psychological and emotional well-being.

Develop a spirituality of caring for yourself and those around you. Regard what health officials are calling “self-isolation” as a form of retreat in which you can pursue a ministry of prayer. Meditation and prayer are also a way of feeding the people of God.

And please reach out to others, especially the vulnerable and those who live in parishes which are materially poorer than yours. It is not clear as I write what leeway the Government will allow clergy, lay ministers and devoted parishioners to minister outside their homes, but please reach out by phone, by WhatsApp groups and chats by Skype or other means to a parish in your Diocese which may not have as many resources as yours, and see whether you can find a way of meeting their needs.

Bishops and clergy, please do say Mass with one or two others in your household, or even alone, for the people of God wherever you are and especially if your Rectory is on or next to your Church premises. If you can, find a way of transmitting this electronically for those who want to watch or listen at home.

I have asked the Bishops to form diocesan teams, and parishes their own teams, to consult with one another to develop and share ideas for ministry. These will be received by a Provincial team so that we can derive by shared effort best practice for the church instead of pulling back in fear. And there may be practical steps we can take for the health authorities in future, such as opening our churches as testing centres or simply to feed the homeless and the needy.

Keep safe, take good care of yourself,

Wash your hands often and thoroughly,

and God bless you and keep you.

PS: I have learned reliably overnight that we will continue to be able to hold funeral under the strict guidelines previously announced: no more than 100 mourners and strict adherence to the new public health practices – social distancing, hand-washing or sanitizing, no hand-shaking etc.

UPDATE: MARCH 20, 05:10

Yesterday I recorded this video message to motivate you to offer ministry in such a time as this, and not to fear.

Update continues after video

Ministering to God's People in a time of c...



the Church of England to
 light of life, Jesus Christ,
 There are **various liturgies**

a-centre/coronavirus-
 the CofE website and use.

who represented me at a
 day. (You can read **the**

marks-president-cyrl-ramaphosa-interfaith-meeting-response-coronavirus-outbreak%2C-sefako> to the leaders on his website.) Let us continue to work together and pray together. We shall overcome, for He has overcome.

I note that, as in Swaziland, the Church in Namibia has had to impose a limit of 50 congregants on its services. Read the **Diocese of Namibia's pastoral plan here** < **<https://bit.ly/2xeTwra>**> .

This morning at the prayer service with clergy of the Diocese of Cape Town, we shall light a candle and say a short prayer. Please join me in praying:

Lord God, in this season of fear and uncertainty,

as we face the threat of the coronavirus,

Grant us the wisdom and determination to walk in one another's shoes,

The confidence and the humility to draw closer to you and to those affected,

Empower us to pastor those who are ill, to weep for the dead, to support the healed and to care for and love one another.

And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and always.

Amen

Note: On Saturday and Sunday, we shall take a break from issuing these updates be still, reflect and pray more. The next update will be on Tuesday morning.

If you have not read these guidelines before, please continue to read the earlier updates; they are meant to be read as a whole.

UPDATE: MARCH 19, 05:10

In the worst days of the struggle against apartheid, we cried together, we sang together and we prayed together, and God brought us through our tribulations. In places such as Edendale, Empangeni and Table Mountain in KwaZulu-Natal, and in Kagiso, Katlehong and Sebokeng in Gauteng, faithful priests were present with their people in their townships even when threatened nightly with violence and petrol-bombings.

Our current crisis is different. In Mozambique, the President has decreed that no more than 200 people [**this figure was lowered to 50 on March 20: Updated here on March 21**] should gather at a time. In South Africa, the limit is 100. In Swaziland, it is even lower: only 50. Even when we gather, the medical experts say we must practise “social distancing”, meaning that we must stay a metre apart from one another.

But common to both situations is the fact that at no time is ministry – and the presence of those who minister – more critical than at times like these. We mustn't be negligent with people's lives, but neither is panic and fear the way forward.

That is why I say “Alleluia” when I hear of a parish which has a comprehensive plan for how they are going to connect people and give them a sense of community during

this crisis. And it is why I am distressed when the main focus of debates in the church is shutting doors and keeping people away.

Then I have to ask: are you copping out, or do you have a pastoral plan with a positive message for your congregation? Is there not a way of making your church available for private prayer or prayer groups? Do you actually have practical, implementable ideas for using modern media to connect people who can't or who prefer not to attend services?

As **I said with my predecessors <**

<https://archbishop.anglicanchurchsa.org/2020/03/three-archbishops-desmond-tutu.html>>, Archbishops Emeriti Desmond and Njongo, earlier this week: “Only mutual love and care for one another will get us through the crisis... Let us take the opportunity to respond by choosing life over death; by choosing knowledge over ignorance; by sharing that knowledge; and by caring about others through taking care of ourselves.”

Of course, we don't need to congregate to pray. No stigma should be attached to parishioners, lay ministers or servers who choose not to attend services we hold. If parishioners are ill, elderly or otherwise vulnerable, they should be encouraged to pray at home on Sunday, with appropriate ministry extended to them at other times in the week. Whether we worship at church or at home, we have to be one in solidarity.

A special word to young people, drawn from our joint Archbishops' appeal:

We know you are not scared for yourselves, and some of you may feel that coronavirus is not an African problem. But you might be carriers of the virus without even knowing it. So we appeal to you not to put at risk the lives of those who cared for you when you were children. We know that you are being asked to sacrifice the most for your old people. But please protect those of your parents' and grandparents' generation.

Numbers of you have come up with practical suggestions in emails to me, in comments on our Provincial website and via social media. One of them is to hold days of prayer, during which we don't necessarily need to congregate. On March 22, the Diocese of Swaziland will hold a day of prayer. Tomorrow, Friday March 20, the clergy of the Diocese of Cape Town will meet at St Thomas' Church, Rondebosch, to devote the hours of 10:00 to 11:30 to prayer.

I encourage other similar initiatives, and I have resolved to establish a Provincial COVID-19 Team to come up with a pastoral plan to look at the practicalities of bringing us together, recognising that there is no “one-size-fits-all” plan.

Now to elaborate on some of the guidelines we have published earlier – and which you can see below on earlier posts:

- Confirmations and weddings – Try to postpone them, but if you can’t, limit the participants to families or other small groups;
- Ordinations – Postpone them, or if you can’t, limit them to families, a small parish delegation and Chapter;
- Funerals – We just have to encourage families to do their best to limit numbers;
- Sunday School – Consider drawing circles on the floor to keep children at least a metre apart, and build social distancing into your arrivals and lesson plans;
- If a child has been where an infection is suspected, they should not come to church;
- Baptisms and anointing with oil should be performed either with the appropriate implements or using hand sanitiser, or soap and water, before and after the act; parents rather than clergy should hold babies being baptised and there should be no baptism by immersion;
- There should be no foot-washing;
- Clergy are human beings too! If you show signs of contracting the virus, you must test and self-isolate yourself if need be.

If you have not read these guidelines before, please continue to read the earlier updates; they are meant to be read as a whole.

UPDATE: MARCH 18, 06:00

Since the updated guidelines on our Province’s response to the coronavirus were published yesterday, a debate has arisen over whether we should suspend our services and close our churches. Parishioners have made useful contributions on social media and Diocesan Chapters have had creative discussions. The Diocese of Johannesburg decided to suspend all services until Easter, and the Archbishops of

Canterbury and York have issued advice that public worship is suspended until further notice.

My own ecclesiology goes back to the Early Church as recounted in the Acts of Apostles, where Christians always met for fellowship, even in house groups. The issue of numbers is not that important: what is important is creating opportunities for Christians to worship in the way they wish to worship, insofar as that is practically possible.

We will not as a Province be advising the closing of churches nor the suspension of services. My own preference is that we keep our churches open and continue to hold services.

However, we recognise that there are local challenges, and my advice, in order of preference, is the following:

- That we keep our churches open and hold as many services of no more than 100 as we can within our parishes' resources; and that we follow strictly the guidance on social distancing – keeping at least a metre apart, and for example, occupying every second row of pews. If you can't find hand sanitizer use soap and water. (See also yesterday's guidelines further down this document.)
- That if you do suspend services, you arrange to have churches opened for times of prayer for those who want to attend.
- That as well as allowing for times of prayer for individuals within your churches, parishes organise house groups for worship and prayer, fulfilling our Lord's promise that "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." (Matthew 18:20)

The key is not to forget the Lord of the Church as we do the work of the Church. We need to proclaim the Gospel, we need to teach, we need to heal and we need to feed the multitude. As we look at the practicalities, we need to return to our Anglican heritage of seeking guidance from scripture, experience, reason and tradition.

The Season of Lent leading up to Holy Week is about moving towards breaking through the cloud of darkness, dispelling fear and birthing light; it is about bringing hope to a seemingly hopeless situation. Let us seek to do that at this challenging time in our history.

PS: This fascinating study on the spread of viruses illustrates [Why outbreaks like coronavirus spread exponentially, and how to “flatten the curve”](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/world/coronavirus-simulator/) <
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/world/coronavirus-simulator/>>

UPDATE: MARCH 17, 06:45

This version of the guidelines replaces all previous guidelines.

In Parishes

- Services should be limited to 100 people. This will mean that many clergy will have to spend longer hours, presiding at more services, on Sundays and popular weekday services – and especially on Good Friday and Easter. We rely on the ingenuity of clergy and Parish Councils as to how you work with regular worshippers on deciding who attends what service (whether by signing up to rosters or some other method).
- Hand sanitizers should be made available for congregants arriving at and departing from services.
- Since churches will be emptier, spread yourselves out to keep distances of at least metre between you and your neighbour. I realise that “social distancing seems a drastic, even unChristian way of behaving towards one another. But the best advice we have from coronavirus experts is that people who are infected but do not show symptoms – including young people who may never have symptoms – may be among those who spread the virus the most. Therefore, keeping physical distance from others – whether or not they have symptoms – is one of the surest ways to slowdown rates of infection.
- Suspend physical contact with one another at the Peace – don’t shake hands embrace – instead wave hands to acknowledge the other instead.
- Develop ways of making the collection without passing around a collection plate.
- Keep your distance from others while waiting in line to receive the host.
- Do not touch the Communion rail with your hands. Where possible, stand when receiving Communion.

- Clergy must use hand sanitizer before they distribute the host/ wafers.
- Only the priest should consume the wine. This is theologically sound practice and does not invalidate the Eucharist for those who receive it.
- As you leave, wave to your clergy instead of shaking hands.
- Parishioners who are ill should stay at home to recover and request home communion or a pastoral visit.
- No pastoral visits should be undertaken to people who are self-isolating or in quarantine. However, do offer phone support.
- Ensure good regular cleaning of surfaces which people touch regularly including such things as door handles, light switches, etc.
- Ensure a good supply of soap or sanitizer in cloakrooms, kitchens etc.
- Suspend catering (tea/coffee, etc) where multiple people touch mugs, utensil and foodstuffs.

Clergy, Pastoral Workers and Lay representatives

- No meetings of more than 100 people will be held.
- Avoid travel unless there are exceptional circumstances. Hold audio or video meetings on Skype, WhatsApp, Zoom and other devices.
- Clergy should not make direct physical contact with congregants when they bless or lay hands on them. Bishops should not make physical contact when confirming or ordaining congregants.
- When visiting parishioners at home, wash hands before and after giving the sacraments.
- If you are making pastoral visits to hospitals or homes for the aged, be strict about disinfecting yourself, washing hands etc before and after your visits. Follow the advice of staff on infection control.
- Educate yourselves and your congregations on your Government's guidelines on hygiene and follow them when not dealt with in these guidelines. For example, wash your hands frequently and don't touch your face unless you've washed your hands.
- Matters such as clergy becoming ill and needing leave or sick leave to be handled at Diocesan level under the authority of the Bishop.

These guidelines do not cover every imaginable situation. I rely on you and your Parish Council's wisdom to develop detailed steps as you face new situations — and

do listen to your national and local health authorities. Shortly, I will make available for the clergy appropriate guidance which the Southern African Anglican Theological Commission is helping us develop.

I know these measures sound drastic, and they are, for good reason. We face an emergency. The world is so interconnected that we cannot avoid the virus, so we must do everything we can to educate ourselves to minimise its spread. The prospect of it spreading among the aged, people with TB and other vulnerable groups is too awful to contemplate.

Please take care of yourselves, your loved ones and everyone in your community. We can minimise the spread, but we have to take it seriously to succeed.

I pray that our common life in worship and pastoral care will be rooted in the compassion of Christ and appropriate care for one another in a time of uncertainty.

God bless you.

The Most Revd Dr Thabo Makgoba

Archbishop and Metropolitan

Anglican Church of Southern Africa

Scroll down for the latest Responses from readers, which appear at the end

← **[Five pilgrims to Bernard Mizeki birthplace die in accident](https://anglicanchurchsa.org/five-pilgrims-to-bernard-mizeki-birthplace-die-in-accident/)** < **<https://anglicanchurchsa.org/five-pilgrims-to-bernard-mizeki-birthplace-die-in-accident/>**>

→ **W Cape Dioceses
Postpone Lady Day
celebrations**

< <https://anglicanchurchsa.org/w-cape-dioceses-postpone-lady-day-celebrations/> >

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Up ↑