

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



1 Kingdom Way, Chelmsford CM2 8FW Telephone: 020 8906 2211

March 12, 2020

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS IN IRELAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Re: Coronavirus Outbreak

Dear Brothers:

As you are likely aware, various governments are monitoring the spread of a virus, which authorities refer to as “novel coronavirus 2019” or COVID-19. While we do not wish to cause panic or unnecessary alarm, we are writing to acknowledge this concern. We also want to provide some direction for spiritual activities and give basic reminders about good hygiene, which can protect us from a variety of illnesses. This is in harmony with Proverbs 22:3, which says: “The shrewd one sees the danger and conceals himself.”

What precautionary measures should be taken? If the local government recommends precautions or implements restrictions, it is best to obey these “superior authorities.” (Rom. 13:1) At this time, the following measures are being applied until further notice:

- All tours and guests to Bethel are cancelled.
- All circuit assemblies are cancelled.
- All Bethel speaking assignments are cancelled.
- Meetings (including the Memorial) will be arranged in smaller groups in private homes. The elders will provide direction concerning local arrangements.
- Memorial campaign: Hand out printed invitations only to friends, family or acquaintances.

In addition, various health agencies have recommended being especially alert to practise good hygiene, such as:

- Frequently clean your hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unclean hands.
- Limit physical contact—medical experts recommend fist or elbow bumps instead of shaking hands.
- When coughing and sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with your elbow or a tissue. Throw the tissue away immediately and wash your hands.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has a fever and cough.
- If you have a fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical care immediately and share your travel history with your health-care provider.
- Avoid the consumption of raw or undercooked animal products.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

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- Older ones and those with serious underlying health conditions should avoid crowded places including congregation meetings and public witnessing, using spiritual provisions at home instead.

We appreciate your loving cooperation as we continue to care for one another. We look forward to the time when we will no longer have to deal with pestilences.—Isa. 33:24.

Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,
*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

c: Circuit overseers

PS to coordinators of the bodies of elders:

Please arrange for this letter to be read during the next meeting or in some other way communicated to the congregation.

Note also that congregations must not combine for the Memorial. The body of elders can make additional local adjustments as needed. For example, make sure those who cannot attend meetings, especially older ones, have access to spiritual provisions at home. This can be done by means of a video or telephone link to a local group or, if this is not possible, by JW Stream. Be diligent in recording meeting attendances, including those who link in or view JW Stream. Also, could such publishers be helped to take advantage of other preaching methods, such as witnessing to those they know by telephone, text, or letter? Assure such ones that they are not being unfaithful for taking such precautions.