



BMC

Black Methodist Consultation

A formation within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa



CONNEXIONAL
OFFICE
2017/18 - 19/20
T2

23 March 2020

CIRCULAR 027_23/03/2020 COVID - 19 RESPONSE [CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC] UPDATE

BMC Synod Executives, Ex-Officio's, Connexional Think Tanks and Task Teams as well as All BMC Members (*Mawesele Amahle Amnyama*)!

RE: COVID - 19 RESPONSE [CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC] UPDATE BMC MEMBERS

TAKING ON AGENCY

Warm Christian greetings to you all dearest BMC Synod Executives, Ex-Officio's, Forebears and All Members

BMC notes and receive the twenty-one-day (21) lock down *aimed at disrupting chain of transmission for the Corona Virus (Covid – 19)* announced by the President of the Republic of South Africa. BMC further note with regret the passing-on of the first person within Southern Africa owing to Covid – 19 in Zimbabwe. The video circulated earlier today 23rd Mar. 2020 of hundreds of burial coffins with bodies of Italians who succumbed to Covid – 19 *was unbearable to watch*. Italy has one of the well-developed Health Systems in the World certainly does not have developmental challenges like inequality, poverty, unemployment that are found at many of the African States.

The magnitude of the impact of further acceleration of Covid – 19 transmission in Africa generally and in Southern Africa in particular would surely mount an unimaginable humanitarian crisis where hundreds of thousands of people would die untimely due to the Corona Virus. BMC further note increasing Covid – 19 Infections at unprecedented rates in Southern Africa three-fold increases compared to China, South Korea, Italy ... obviously transmission is fuelled by development challenges like lack of access to basic services like running water and sanitation; overcrowding and lack of adequate housing; basic healthcare needs and basic hygiene competes for priority with economic needs to secure the next meal.

BMC Connexional Executive reflected on all the above Sunday 22nd March 2020; noting that every coming together by two or three people poses a risk of Covid – 19

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*“The MCSA Lilifa
Labazali Bethu; Lefa
Labatswadi Barona”*

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*transmission, granted anyone could be carrier. That Health Systems in Southern Africa would collapse should infections continue at the same rates as seen in China. The executive in anticipation of the now 'real' RSA, Nationwide twenty-one-day (21) lock down from mid-night 26th Mar until mid-night on the 16th April 2020 and that Physical Distancing with Social Solidarity was critical in flattening the fast-increasing infection curve. **We resolved to recommend for your consideration, review, more inputs the following to be ratified at the next 45th BMC Annual Convocation: -***

1. BMC fully supports the twenty-one-day (21) Nationwide lock down in the RSA aimed at disrupting the chain of transmission for the Corona Virus (Covid – 19);
2. BMC calls upon the MCSA Connexional Leadership to publicly support the twenty-one-day (21) Nationwide lock down and direct all MCSA Synods, Circuits and Societies *to stop gatherings of any kind in the MCSA Properties (unless prior approved by the Presiding Bishop in writing)* effective immediately until about 17th April 2020 (date to be reviewed and announced);
3. BMC calls upon MCSA Connexional Leadership to cancel physically Easter Gatherings *in the MCSA Properties (unless prior approved by the Presiding Bishop in writing)* effective immediately until about 17th April 2020 (date to be reviewed and announced);
4. BMC supports Churches that had shutdown prior the proposed MCSA twenty-one-day (21) lock down;
5. BMC members and All Methodists are encouraged to take-on agency at Local Church level(s) working with Resident Ministers and entire local Church Leadership *to be creative and innovative* in enabling electronic worship services using available smart mobile devices where feasible; this extends to continued Class Meetings and or Small Groups using “Zoom for Conferencing” as an example and or Audio-voice calls and or recordings for conferencing and continued group worship;
6. BMC promotes Home Worship and Family Prayers to continue during the proposed MCSA twenty-one-day (21) lock down;
7. BMC calls upon its members to educate at Local Church Member level the Pastoral Care implications owing to Covid – 19 affected would be, mass attendance of funerals and weddings in accordance to African Rituals, Culture and Practices;
 - a. BMC calls upon its own members to cease attending daily, weekly pastoral care prayers prior funerals;
8. BMC calls on MCSA to make its own property available for Quarantine, Isolation and or any use during the Covid – 19 Humanitarian Crisis;

9. BMC calls on MCSA to grant amnesty for the normal monthly assessments for the months of March, April and May in respect of shortfalls and arrears through re-prioritisation and or re-allocation of available funds at MCO level;
10. BMC calls on the MCSA to establish **Covid – 19 Mission Response Fund**, that would be open to all Methodists for donations in order to resource Food Banks at Local Church Level for Children who depended on School Feeding Schemes for food; same fund could assist with Water and Sanitation needs during the lockdown; buy soap and Sanitizers in bulk ...etc.;
11. BMC would withdraw an amount of R100, 000 from its investments reserves to contribute the proposed **MCSA Covid – 19 Mission Response Fund**;
12. BMC would further engage and actively encourage Methodists and other Organisations to contribute the proposed MCSA Covid – 19 Mission Response Fund.

Please engage the above contents comment, suggest alternatives etc.

To God Be the glory, great things He had done!

Yours in Christ Service



Mr Xhanti T. Mhlubulwana

Secretary General



Rev Mzwandile Molo

Chairperson