



19th March 2020

Dear Church Family,

The COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly changing our cultural landscape at an incredible speed. This has led our Elders, Staff team, Vision Coordinators and SCPC health consultants to pray and consult with each other over the last week. In addition to this, with the announcement given by Prime Minister Morrison yesterday, we have decided to take the following course of action:

**To not hold our Sunday church family gatherings, youth ministry, and Mum & Me Time until further notice.**

**BUT keep reading about the exciting ways we'll be continuing our online gatherings over the coming weeks and months.**

The way forward during these days is difficult to determine, but as the leaders of SCPC have contemplated this crisis, time and time again the refrain has been "How good is it that we are doing Acts?!". God, in his kindness and his powerful word, always speaks a word that is crucial. As we have seen throughout Acts 1-9, Christ works through His powerful Spirit to grow His living church. That is what we are, a living church. A church made, not from wood or stone, but people bound by the precious gospel and fuelled by God's powerful Spirit. Therefore, this crisis will not affect Christ's work in the world, even though we are separated from each other physically. We will endeavour to grow in our love for God, for each other and for the world in the following ways:

#### **CARE:**

We will be compassionate as we care for you, the beloved people of God. God, in his immense grace, has blessed us with an incredibly diverse church family; children, women, men, old, young, different races, different vocations - very different people united by the Spirit. With that diversity comes a particular vulnerability. Therefore, at this time we want to be extremely compassionate to those in our church family by not exposing them to the risk of the Coronavirus. This will have a wide-ranging impact on our extended church family, our Gospel Communities and DNAs.

#### **CREATIVITY:**

While we may not be able to meet as a gathered people, we need to be courageously creative to explore new ways to express our life as a church family. This is what our Elders, Staff Team, COM, Vision Coordinators and Common Fund Committee have spent the week thinking through. It is with a suitable level of excitement that we look to the coming months to see how God might extend our reach, into ways we had never dreamed.

#### **NEW GOSPEL OPPORTUNITIES:**

Our secular culture is extraordinarily hardened to the gospel word. The world's vision of 'the good life' is so seductive that many, many souls are drawn from Christ. It is in these moments of crisis that people scramble for a safe refuge. We pray that through our care for each other and friends and family, through creative ways, God might save some.

We wish to express these this care and creativity in the following ways:

**SUNDAY GATHERINGS-SCATTERINGS** – An online resource on our website will be provided for this Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March that will include a video bible talk (ZOOM) from Acts 10, electronic resources for kids from Acts 10, and a Spotify playlist of the songs for Sunday. We encourage you to meet in your homes at 9am, 9:45am or 6pm, depending on when you join the gathered people of God at SCPC. At this point we're hoping to do a live webinar through ZOOM around 10am on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March. We're hoping to meet with Vision Coordinators tomorrow morning (Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March) to work through some of the logistical aspects of this process.

**DAILY DEVOTIONS** – In an attempt to express an online community, Daily Devotions will be uploaded onto the website beginning on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Over the next three weeks, we will join Luke as he outlines the events leading to the first Easter in Luke 22-24.

**DIGITAL DNAs** – LT and COM are purchasing a monthly subscription to online video conferencing software, ZOOM, to enable Gospel Communities and DNAs the opportunity to meet over the internet. After the month, we will re-examine the subscription. We will have people available to provide help if your GC requires assistance.

**SONGS FOR SCPC** – The songs from our Sunday Gatherings will be placed weekly on Spotify. The link for this will be made available on our website.

**AROUND THE TABLE TUESDAY** – A two minute audio from a family, as they express their faith, posted to the website on Tuesdays.

**COMMON FUND** – Common fund policy has been extended to include not only our SCPC church family but also individuals and families in need that are connected to gospel communities. Get in touch with a member of the Common Fund Committee: Sue Crosthwaite, Ally Jarrett, Scott Herd and Ken Murphy if opportunities arise. To contribute to the Common Fund, the bank details are as follows:

Account name: Southern Cross Presbyterian Church Common Fund  
BSB: 012-715  
Account number: 4385-23391

LT has also forged a partnership with Matthias Media, the Gospel Coalition Australia and Saturate ministries to assist us during COVID-19 as we seek to grow as followers of Jesus together.

If you are not connected to a Gospel Community, please notify our Elders and Staff. This time is a key moment in which we can express our love for each other through these communities: be caring, be creative! Our pastors will be in touch with the more vulnerable members of our church family to understand how we can assist them through this crisis.

May we fear not COVID-19, but him who accepts people from every nation (Acts 10:34-35).

Stew

On behalf of LT

