



Blackall Range UC – COVID-19 Statement

Dear members,

Peace be with you! We are overwhelmed with information about the Corona-virus. In this topsy-turvy time we need to ensure that we pause, daily, to take a deep breath, gain perspective and commit the pandemic to God.

By now you may have heard that the QLD Synod has made a decision to cease all Worship Services from this weekend. We would like to inform you of what will happen within BRUC.

A gathering will be conducted this coming Sunday 22 March, at the usual times at all three Worship Centre's: Maleny (led by Rev Bruce Johnson); Montville (led by Rev Liena) and Palmwoods (led by Pastor Kay).

The purpose of these meetings is to explain 'where to from here' in terms of future communications, small groups (eg. Connect Groups, Meditation, Easter Services and other regular meetings) and COVID-19 protocols for future activities.

We are in unprecedented times and other countries like Italy, Spain and China represent the significance of the impact this virus has when left unchecked.

Our approach continues to –

- Be Calm
- Be Cautious
- Use Common Sense,
- Care for others, and
- Commit to Prayer.

Look forward to seeing you on the weekend.

Shalom Rev Liena & Peter Callaghan

March 19th 2020

BRUC COVID-19 PROTOCOL

The Blackall Range Uniting Church will continue to support members, small groups and gatherings in the Maleny, Montville and Palmwoods Churches. That said, we would like to ensure that with any gathering of people we take all necessary precautions with personal hygiene and safety of yourself and other.

Our approach continues to be – Calm, Caution, Common Sense, Care for others, and Commit to Prayer.

The following guidance provides some hints do this:

Exclusions: If you are not well or feel uncomfortable to participate, please exclude yourself from the activity. Should you be involved and showing symptoms of illness, you may be asked to 'go home'. Please don't be offended as the person asking is only looking after the members of the group.

Social Distance: This term has become known during this pandemic. Social distance means keeping a reasonable distance from others when participating in a group activity. The usual 'rule of thumb' is 1.5 metre's between people.

Personal hygiene: Given the nature of the coronavirus, there are additional measures that our congregation members should take.

Greeting and farewelling people: We often shake hands or even hug and kiss. These instances provide an opportunity for transmission of the virus. It is recommended that handshaking and hugging be suspended at this time to minimise the possibility of infection.

People should be reassured that it is alright to refuse this kind of contact, and that a smile, nod and a friendly greeting and especially the use of the other's name are sufficient.

Handling of money: Those involved in collecting and counting money should wear gloves to protect themselves from infection.

Giving: Where possible, we encourage members of our congregation to make offerings and tithes by direct debit deductions or cheque. If you need assistance, ask a family member or church council member to assist.

Sharing of food: Seek to limit risk for those who may be vulnerable to the virus. Before serving food wash hands thoroughly with hand detergent.

Sanitising: We will endeavour to provide hand sanitiser. However, products are in limited supply. The advice is that soap and water is best to use.

Cleaning: We encourage people to ensure that cleaning at home (when hosting a small group) and when using Church facilities is undertaken with health and hygiene as a focus.

We provide the following advice:

- Use disposable cleaning cloths or regularly washing/changing micro-fibre cloths after use,
- Ensure tea towels are washed after use,
- Don't re-use cloths across multiple surfaces,
- Use a general cleaner with a disinfectant,
- Use a diluted bleach solution on high touch point surfaces such as door handles, light switches, desks, toilets, taps and sinks etc. or where appropriate,
- Allow rooms to be exposed to sunlight and be well ventilated.

Care for others: Because our congregation has an ageing demographic, the potential risks are very serious, and while there will be lockdowns in nursing homes, we need to ensure that those at home are well supported.

Phone calls (texts and emails where appropriate) are to be encouraged. Pastoral carers may be required to make regular phone calls to those who are either self-isolating or who are infected or those who are isolated. Please look after the well-being of the members of your congregation.

Connection with your community: More than anything else, now is the time to look after one another, neighbourhood and wider family especially through phone, message and social media contact. If you or a member of our congregation is struggling, contact Rev Liena (M:0490421874) or contact Lifeline on 13 43 57.

Prayer: Continue to pray for each other, and widen your prayers to include other congregations, health workers, personal carers, our aged-care communities and civic leaders. Remember also other nations especially those where health care resources are thin on the ground. Give thanks for those who have identified the virus and those who are researching and developing a vaccine for this virus.

Shalom Rev Liena & Peter Callaghan

20 March 2020+.