



# The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

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**Limpopo District Office**  
Based at the Kilnerton Centre:  
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20 July 2020

**To All Limpopo Synod Leadership [ Circuits and Organisations ]**

## **RE: RE-OPENING FOR CHURCH GATHERINGS AND ACTIVE WAITING**

Companions in Christ,

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be unto you in abundance.

The Extended Limpopo Synod Executive met on Wednesday 15 July 2020 to reflect and review, as promised, the decision to close Churches Buildings for gatherings and services. The Synod received a presentation from the Convenor of the Task Team set up to guide the Synod on the matter, the Rev Ian France. [See the attached document]. The meeting confirmed the evidence presented that the South African numbers are rising, that we are nearing the peak and that the country has a differentiated prevalence of the virus with Gauteng, the Eastern Cape, the Western Cape and Kwa Zulu Natal very high.

The meeting, noting the complexity of the Coronavirus and the diversity in its prevalence in the country and the Synod, decided to allow every Circuit to make its own decision and for every Circuit Superintendent to take full responsibility. It was agreed that this is more than the legal responsibility. It is also moral burden of saving lives and reducing the spread of the virus.

It was emphasised that the Circuit decision should be based on local facts and factors relating to the virus. The re-opening of Church services is to be conditional on the Circuit meeting the Limpopo Synod Guidelines which must be read together with the government regulations and SACC protocols.

The meeting further directed that:

1. Those members and ministers who are 60 years old and those with comorbidities should be urged and discouraged from attending gatherings. Any member attending is doing so at own risk.
2. Where church buildings are smaller, the government recommended number of 50 should be reduced to one that is proportional in size.
3. The re-opening of Church for gatherings shall be from 1 September 2020. This will assist to avoid the winter cold and the eminent peak. It will further provide Circuits the opportunity to finalise their state of readiness.

*A Christ-healed Africa for the Healing of Nations*

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It was further agreed that the Circuits in the Synod will continue with what we termed **Active Waiting**. This is the active way of continuing to minister through creative ways during this time of the lockdown. The **Active Waiting** Document will now be strengthened to include responsible and safe ways of serving Holy Communion. **Active Waiting** is a ministry that includes support of the poor and the vulnerable and creative worship and fellowship initiatives.

The Synod Executive will continue to provide space and opportunities for Circuits to provide feedback on their opening for gatherings. The Synod Executive will use this feedback to inform its collective response to COVID-19.

The Limpopo Synod Executive Commits itself to contributing to the halting of the spread of the virus in order to help free the health care system to cope. We will do this by encouraging our members to stay safe by reducing movement, observing physical distancing, sanitising and disinfecting, regularly washing hands and wearing of masks.

**Re kaofela...**

With you in Christ's Service,

*A Christ-healed Africa for the Healing of Nations*

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