

Diamond Valley Baptist Church

An Update Regarding COVID-19

(Coronavirus)



**DIAMOND VALLEY
BAPTIST CHURCH**

As you will be aware, this weekend has seen an escalation in response to COVID-19 (Coronavirus). This is an important development aimed at slowing the spread of the virus.

This shift in thinking represents a move from; “how will this effect me?” to “how is this effecting others?” In particular, it considers the needs of our wider community and the most vulnerable in light of the capacity of our health care system.

Along with many other churches, we have begun to put into place certain measures that reflect a responsible approach based on the information we currently have. We hope that this email addresses some of the concerns and questions you may have.

It is vital that you regularly check your email or text message correspondence from the church. Check the DVBC Facebook page too, and check the DVBC website. We will keep you updated on what is happening with church activities as well as any news or points for prayer.

Diamond Valley Baptist Church
309 Diamond Creek Rd, Plenty VIC 3090
Phone: 0409 667 008
Email: office@dvbc.net
Web: dvbc.net
Facebook: www.facebook.com/diamondvalleybc/

Contact Details

Our office can be contacted by email or by phone. Note we have a new mobile phone number which you can use to phone to message the church: **0409 667 008**

As we have seen, things can change very rapidly and for that matter it is important that we have your latest contact details. If your contact details have changed and you are unsure whether you have notified us: Email: **office@dvbc.net**

Next Sunday

- We will be closing our two Sunday Gatherings and Kids Church and Youth Chills until further notice. We will however be broadcasting a ‘gathering’ on the internet for you to follow so that we can still ‘gather’ to pray and focus on our faith and fellowship together. We will let you know by email Newsletter and Text message what we are doing and how to access this.

- Note too on our website there are many videos and audios of past church services and links to other podcasts and similar sites.
- We will obviously not be passing around the offering bowls however, our church still has financial obligations (as do our missionaries). This is a great time to switch to electronic giving:

Diamond Valley Baptist Church

BSB: 033 053

Account: 560299

In the coming days / weeks

The Pastoral Team will be collaborating with the BUV and other churches to modify our ministries over the coming weeks. **We will be postponing all our church events and regular weekly programmes till further notice.** We are receiving some very helpful guidelines from a number of sources and will be attempting to keep you updated as we make changes. **Please pray for wisdom for us as we consider:**

- When and how to place various ministries and meetings on hold?
- How best to care for those who are isolated. Our Care team will be considering the best way to keep in touch with those who are vulnerable.
- What services we can offer remotely or 'virtually'?
- When to close the physical church office and encourage the staff to work as a 'virtual' team
- The development of virtual church services: use of podcasts / streaming etc...
- **Connect groups and other small groups or programmes** — Look out for each other. Maybe form a **WhatsApp group** (or group text-list; or facebook page) to keep touch. Watch for friends and neighbours of the group that might need care or support. www.whatsapp.com

What can I do?

- 'Pack a box'. Pack a box of essential items that can be dropped at the door of somebody who is isolated. Contact the office for more details.
- If you have experience or interest in online services and would like to offer your time to the church, contact the office. office@dvbc.net
- If you are not feeling well, isolate yourself at home. Seek professional medical advice as needed.

- If you are over the age of 70 or have a significant medical condition (specifically immunosuppression) it is advised that you stay away from public gatherings. Likewise, carers for people in the above categories should also consider a level of self-isolation.
- **Trust God:** Viral disease is a fact of biological existence and part of creation. Keeping perspective and not panicking apply here, just as they do for all risks we face as creatures in a finite world. No matter how dire circumstances get, the Lord remains our refuge and strength, “an ever-present help in trouble” (Ps. 46:1). To trust in the Lord amid trouble is to experience and bear witness to the power of Christ.
- **Pray:** We must pray for the sick and the scared, for public health officials, for doctors and nurses, for researchers, and for caregivers. As Christians, we believe prayer has power, so we seek help from the Lord.
- **Heal the Sick:** A core calling for Christians is to care for the sick and dying (Matt. 10:8), at times at the risk of our own lives (John 15:13). This is the epitome of love. Even if a virus outbreak prevents us from gathering as congregations to worship, we still support one another in our caregiving. This can happen through prayer, through verbal encouragement, and through coming alongside others to provide help in a crisis.
- **Stay Informed:** The media is aflame with daily updates. Reading everything only increases anxiety. The following is a reliable list of links for educational, planning, and coping tools:
- **Department of Health:** Up-to-date health alert with the latest medical advice and official reports: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>
- **Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services:** Up-to-date information and guidance about current outbreak of COVID-19 in Victoria: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>
- **Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for COVID-19:** Includes an overview of the national approach and operational plan: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/australian-health-sector-emergency-response-plan-for-novel-coronavirus-covid-19>

Martin Boutros
(On behalf of the DVBC Church Council)
15 March 2020