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**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (COVID-19)
CHURCHES (NO. 4) DIRECTIVE, 2020**

WHEREAS by paragraph 15 of the *Emergency Management (Covid-19) Order, 2020* (S.I. 2020 No. 16) it is provided that the Prime Minister on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer may issue a directive requiring every person to observe such physical distancing and associated protocols in the interest of public health as may be specified;

AND WHEREAS a public health emergency exists in Barbados;

NOW THEREFORE by virtue of the power and the authority in me vested and on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer aforesaid I do hereby issue the following Directive.

1. This Directive shall be read and construed as one with the *Emergency Management (Covid-19) Protocols (No. 3) Directive, 2020*.
2. This Directive applies to all
 - (a) religious institutions however denominated and "church" shall be construed accordingly; and
 - (b) funeral services and wedding ceremonies.
3. All officiants however styled and all other persons, whilst within the precincts of a church shall comply with the following protocols:
 - (a) face masks shall be worn throughout the service by all persons present in the church, except a person who is officiating, preaching, singing, reading, praying or playing a wind instrument;

- (b) there shall be a physical distance of at least one metre between all persons on church premises and attending church, including between worshippers and officiants;
- (c) members of the same household may sit together;
- (d) sanitisation stations shall be set up at the entrances and exits of every church and such stations shall be manned by ushers or other persons who are administering sanitiser to the hands of worshippers;
- (e) all worshippers and officiants shall sanitise their hands upon entering the church;
- (f) the temperature of each worshipper and officiant shall be taken before entering the church using a contactless thermometer;
- (g) a person whose temperature exceeds 37.5° C may be allowed to rest in an area designated for such purpose and have their temperature taken again after a period of time;
- (h) a person who is coughing repeatedly, sneezing or exhibits any flu-like symptoms or who after having their temperature taken for a second time still registers a temperature that exceeds 37.5°C shall not be allowed to enter the church;
- (i) air-conditioning may be used provided that some windows and doors are kept open or an air intake and extractor system used to allow for air transfer and air flow;
- (j) where possible microphones and cameras shall be manned by designated persons;
- (k) no hymnals or Bibles shall be distributed to worshippers but worshippers may take their own from home;
- (l) where prayer mats are used, worshippers shall take their own mats;

- (m) offerings shall be collected by use of fixed containers located at strategic points in the church and physical distancing protocols must be complied with when worshippers are placing offerings in the containers;
- (n) children's face-to-face programmes (e.g. Sunday School) may be conducted provided that the protocols that are in effect in nurseries and schools are adhered to;
- (o) ordinances, sacraments and rituals of the faith may be conducted, provided there is no physical contact, except between members of the same household;
- (p) the sacrament of baptism by immersion is permitted provided gloves are worn by the officiant;
- (q) persons engaged in choir or group practice or performance for or at worship or prayers shall adhere to the physical distancing protocol;
- (r) signage shall be placed in conspicuous locations outside and within every church and the officiant shall make announcements explaining the protocols to be followed before the commencement of every service;
- (s) where multiple services are held on the same day, adequate time shall be allowed between services for sanitisation of all internal and external bathrooms and fixtures and equipment in high traffic areas;
- (t) all bathrooms must be equipped with sufficient soap and paper towels or contactless hand dryers;
- (u) areas used by persons who become ill shall be thoroughly sanitised before use by others;

- (v) where possible volunteer health personnel should be present at services;
 - (w) outdoor services are allowed and those present shall adhere to the physical distancing protocols;
 - (x) drive-in services are allowed and those present shall adhere to the physical distancing protocols and persons of the same household can be in the same vehicle;
 - (y) church offices may open to facilitate the work of the church and air-conditioning may be used; and
 - (z) every effort shall be made to limit the number of people present in the church office at any one time and masks shall be worn and physical distancing protocols shall be observed.
4. A person who contravenes this Directive without reasonable explanation, is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$50 000 or to imprisonment for a term of one year or to both, pursuant to paragraph 15(1) of the *Emergency Management (COVID-19) Order, 2020* (S.I. 2020 No. 16).
5. This Directive shall come into effect on the 28th day of September, 2020.

Made by the Prime Minister this 28th day of September, 2020.

MIA AMOR MOTTLEY
Prime Minister

