

Announcements and Reminders

November 2020

FOR ELDERS

1. **Circuit Assemblies:** As indicated in the announcement for congregations, live circuit assemblies are being canceled until further notice. Therefore, please organize the viewing of the assembly as follows:

- (1) A 30-minute *Watchtower* Study, with no reading of the paragraphs, should be considered by the congregation before the circuit assembly is viewed. If a videoconferencing tool, such as *Zoom*, is being used for congregation meetings, this tool should be used for the abbreviated *Watchtower* Study. Although the attendance count should be taken for the *Watchtower* Study, no count of those viewing the assembly is needed.
- (2) At the end of the *Watchtower* Study, announce that all who are able to do so should now view the circuit assembly using the JW Stream link provided by the elders. (See *Access to Programs on JW Stream by Elders and Ministerial Servants* [S-142].) The elders should use good judgment in considering whether to grant a disfellowshipped or disassociated person access to such recordings. Announce that at the conclusion of the assembly, someone in the home can offer a prayer of thanksgiving.
- (3) After the announcement, sing the second song specified for the *Watchtower* Study and conclude with a prayer, acknowledging the circuit assembly to follow. The publishers can be encouraged to discuss with one another throughout the following week points that they enjoyed from the program. The body of elders can decide if they would like to designate a time for those who want to discuss the benefits of the program to meet in smaller groups by means of videoconference, such as *Zoom* breakout rooms.

Additional Considerations:

- (1) If some publishers are unable to access JW Stream, the elders may transmit the recorded assembly program to such ones by means of a videoconferencing tool, such as *Zoom*. After the *Watchtower* Study, these individuals would stay connected to enjoy the program. The program should be downloaded in advance to the host's computer.
- (2) Be reasonable and flexible. Due to family circumstances or other reasons, some publishers or families may choose to view the program at other times.
- (3) Please make appropriate arrangements for any candidate(s) in your congregation who has been approved for baptism to be immersed locally.—See September 2020 *Announcements and Reminders* (S-147).

2. ***Pure Worship of Jehovah—Restored at Last!***: Beginning the week of November 16, 2020, the *Pure Worship* book will be considered at the Congregation Bible Study. Those assigned to conduct the study should follow the weekly schedule in *Our Christian Life and Ministry—Meeting Workbook*. When starting a new chapter, the conductor should have the introductory video played. When considering boxes, the conductor should draw out the audience with auxiliary questions. He may decide whether the box text should be read. He should make good use of the artwork and, as time permits, call attention to the cited scriptures.—*sfl* chap. 6 pars. 3-7.

3. Serving With a Distant Congregation: Since congregations are using videoconferencing for meetings and field service, some publishers have asked if it would be appropriate to support a distant congregation, perhaps even in another country or branch territory, without physically moving to that congregation's territory. While we appreciate that some may consider this an opportunity to help where there is a greater need, there is no arrangement for a publisher to serve virtually in this way. Thus, unless a publisher has plans to physically move to a distant congregation in the near future, the *Congregation's Publisher Records* (S-21) should not be transferred. (*od* chap. 8 par. 30; *sfl* chap. 22 par. 5) If you believe that an exception is warranted, please contact the Service Department for assistance.

4. Maintaining Precautions During the Pandemic: The announcement for congregations does not change the previous direction regarding use of the Kingdom Hall, congregation meetings, or the preaching work. We trust that you appointed men will set a good example for the congregation as you prayerfully make personal decisions regarding your daily activities during the pandemic. Because your decisions reflect reasonableness as well as high regard for the sanctity of life, the publishers will be inclined to imitate your faithful example. (Heb. 13:7) Modesty and balance are needed if questions arise about the decisions that a family head or a publisher makes regarding personal matters.—1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

5. Computer Security Alert: Please be alert to any attempts to compromise your jw.org username and password. Individuals with bad motives may use jwpub accounts to e-mail dangerous links. Such links are purposely designed to trick you into visiting malicious websites. Do not enter any personal details, including your username and password, on any website that you did not intentionally visit or that has an address you do not recognize.

6. Since cybersecurity concerns are ever increasing, it is very important that all jwpub users pay close attention to the following information in order to protect their account. If you need help in understanding this information, please ask other knowledgeable brothers for immediate assistance.

(1) Protect Your Username and Password:

- Do not share your jw.org password with others. The branch office or any other jwpub user should **never** contact you to request private account details, such as your username and password. If you receive such a request, do not respond.
- Ensure that your jwpub password is unique and not used for any other accounts.
- Some web browsers offer to remember your password or keep you signed in. Do not use these features on any shared computer, phone, or tablet.
- Always log out when finished using any shared computer, phone, or tablet.

(2) Log In Only to Official Websites Used by the Organization:

- Individuals with bad motives may use websites that look like official websites used by the organization.
- Do not use Internet search engines to find and navigate to organizational websites. It is best to type in the website address manually.
- **Always check the website address in the address bar carefully.** If you are not sure it is an official website, do not enter your username and password.

(3) **Do Not Be Quick to Click:** If you receive a jwpub e-mail with a link, do not be quick to click on it. Harmful links can infect your computer, phone, or tablet if you click on or open them.

(4) **What should you do if you receive a jwpub e-mail with a link?**

- If you were not expecting an e-mail with a link, do not click on the link.
- If possible, contact the sender by a means *other than jwpub e-mail*, such as by video call, phone call, or text message, in order to confirm that he sent the e-mail with the link.
 - If he did not send the e-mail with the link, or if you cannot confirm that he did, report the matter by calling the Computer Help Desk at the branch office and await further direction.—Select the “Contact Us” link at the bottom of the webpage when logged in to jw.org.

(5) **How do you determine if a link is safe?**

- **Computers:** Hover over the link with your mouse pointer, but do not click. The *real* address of the link will display. (See example below.) If you do not recognize the *real* address, do not click on the link.
- **Phones and Tablets:** Press and hold the link. The *real* address of the link will display. (See example below.) If you do not recognize the *real* address, do not tap on the link.



(6) **Review Your Login History:** If you have reasons to believe someone else is using your jwpub account, change your password *immediately*.

(7) **Security Updates:** Regularly apply the latest security updates to your computer, phone, or tablet.

7. Practical Support for Those Affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic: You are to be warmly commended for your attention to those experiencing the adverse effects of this pandemic. We encourage you to continue providing the ongoing practical support described in the *Shepherd* book, chapter 26, paragraph 12. This includes ensuring that relief supplies are distributed adequately and equitably to families in need and helping publishers to determine if they qualify to apply for government aid. As a reminder, documents outlining programs available through the government and other aid organizations are routinely updated and can be found on jw.org under Forms > Disasters > COVID-19 Disaster Assistance. The Disaster Relief Committee (DRC) assigned to your area remains available to assist with food distribution, remote medical attention, and information regarding COVID-19 disaster assistance. We encourage you to consult the following additional references:

- The letter from your COVID-19 DRC dated August 25, 2020, regarding the food distribution arrangement.
- *Direction Related to COVID-19 Pandemic for Bodies of Elders*, heading entitled “Remote Medical Assistance.”

FOR COORDINATORS OF THE BODIES OF ELDERS

1. **Announcements for Congregations:** Please ensure that the announcements for congregations are read at the next midweek meeting. Please ensure that the announcement regarding maintaining precautions during the pandemic is also read to the congregation at the conclusion of the next *Watchtower* Study.

Announcements and Reminders

November 2020

FOR CONGREGATIONS

1. **Circuit Assemblies:** All live circuit assemblies have been canceled until further notice. Therefore, the congregation will view the entire prerecorded assembly via JW Stream on the same weekend that the live program was scheduled. The elders will provide publishers and interested persons with a link to the video along with further direction as needed. As is the case with live circuit assemblies, no midweek meeting will be held and no local public talk will be presented that week. However, the congregation will hold an abbreviated *Watchtower* Study on the weekend. Arrangements for the special meeting with regular pioneers, special pioneers, and field missionaries that is generally held in connection with a circuit assembly will be announced later in the service year.

2. ***Pure Worship of Jehovah—Restored at Last!*:** Beginning the week of November 16, 2020, the *Pure Worship* book will be considered at the Congregation Bible Study. This book provides an updated explanation of the prophecies in the book of Ezekiel—thrilling inspired visions that affect our everlasting future! The *Pure Worship* book will build our faith in those prophecies, strengthen our determination to give Jehovah the pure worship he deserves, and encourage us to keep in expectation of the time soon to come when the nations will have to know Jehovah's great name. **(Read Ezekiel 38:23.)** Prepare carefully each week. When we begin a chapter, try to read through the entire chapter to get an overview. Then, study the portion assigned for that week. Look up the scriptures, especially any "Read" scriptures, and study any boxes that are included in the lesson. Take note of the many beautiful illustrations, which have been carefully researched and are designed to teach. Participate in the study each week, if possible.

3. **2021 Public Editions of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*:** There will be a delay of approximately three months in the release of the 2021 public editions of *The Watchtower* Nos. 2 and 3, and *Awake!* Nos. 1, 2, and 3. Publishers may offer other items from the Teaching Toolbox in the ministry.

4. **2020 Pioneer Service School:** In April 2020, all theocratic schools, including the 2020 Pioneer Service School, were suspended. We are pleased to inform you that, as an exception, approval has been given for the 2020 Pioneer Service School to be conducted via videoconference. Pioneers eligible to attend will be informed of the arrangements in due course.

5. **Maintaining Precautions During the Pandemic:** We commend you for your faithful adherence to the adjusted theocratic arrangements during this pandemic. Although we miss attending meetings with our congregation in person and engaging in the field ministry as we would like, we realize that these adjustments help to keep Jehovah's name free from reproach and help to protect our health and that of our brothers.

6. Nevertheless, the pandemic has taken a serious toll on our worldwide brotherhood. Thus far, over 130,000 of our brothers and sisters have been infected with the virus. While many have recovered, we are deeply saddened to inform you that worldwide over 5,000 of our brothers and sisters have died from the virus. It is for this reason that the Governing Body has

directed all branch offices and special full-time servants to maintain various safety precautions. In most cases, this means that Bethel facilities are remaining on lockdown and special full-time servants are sheltering in place at least until February 1, 2021. These precautions are vital to protecting the Kingdom work. We appreciate the support and encouragement that you give these brothers and sisters, as it helps them loyally follow the direction they have received. Please continue to pray for the worldwide Bethel family and for the special full-time servants in the field. We are confident that Jehovah values their obedience.

7. In some parts of the world, COVID-19 is resurging. Additionally, the longer the pandemic continues, the more of a toll it exacts emotionally, mentally, and physically. However, now is not the time to let down our guard. To that end, you may find it beneficial to review the three key principles highlighted in the *2020 Governing Body Update #4* as part of your family worship.

8. Each family head must prayerfully decide the wisest and safest course for his household during this pandemic. When considering the physical and emotional needs of his family, he should continue to evaluate the risk of possible exposure to the virus. This includes such factors as the following:

- (1) Does the nature of the secular employment of anyone in the household increase his risk of exposure to the virus?
- (2) Are any members of the household elderly, or do they have underlying health conditions?
- (3) How rapidly is the virus spreading in the community?
- (4) What are the government directives for the area?

9. Whether you are at your place of employment, at school, or at medical appointments or going food shopping or caring for other essential personal matters that require you to come in contact with the public, we encourage you to maintain your vigilance in taking safety precautions. These include wearing face coverings, maintaining physical distancing, and washing hands regularly. If you experience cold or flulike symptoms, it would be best for you to stay home and notify your health-care provider.

10. Since the needs of each family are unique, the decisions made by one family head may differ from the decisions made by another. We should respect the personal decisions that others make in such matters. Galatians 6:5 reminds us: "Each one will carry his own load." We trust that each family head will prayerfully decide how best to care for his family, being guided by Bible principles and obeying directives of "the superior authorities." (Rom. 13:1) Please know that we love and respect all of you very much.