

# Announcements and Reminders

May 2020

## FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL ELDERS

1. **Arrangements for Viewing the 2020 Convention:** The dates that the convention sessions will be posted on JW Broadcasting are listed below. Please note that it may take an additional three days for the files to appear in *JW Library*.

- July 6, 2020—Friday morning
- July 15, 2020—Friday afternoon
- July 23, 2020—Saturday morning
- August 3, 2020—Saturday afternoon
- August 13, 2020—Sunday morning
- August 24, 2020—Sunday afternoon

2. The body of elders should determine which of the following options for viewing the program will be used:

(1) The congregation views the sessions together at the Kingdom Hall on the respective weekends. This option may be chosen only if the congregation has been approved by the branch office to resume holding meetings at the Kingdom Hall by the time the program becomes available. Local public talks would not be scheduled on these weekends. A *Watchtower* summary is not included in the recorded convention program. Therefore, an abbreviated *Watchtower* Study (no reading of the paragraphs) should be scheduled during the affected weeks using one of the following options:

- Hold the abbreviated *Watchtower* Study immediately before the congregation views the recorded convention session.
- Hold the abbreviated *Watchtower* Study in place of the Congregation Bible Study during the midweek meeting. Families and individuals can consider the Congregation Bible Study material as part of their family worship.

(2) Publishers view the sessions on their own at their convenience using JW Broadcasting, just as they are accustomed to for the monthly program. Midweek and weekend meetings would be held as normal.

3. **Baptism in Connection With the 2020 Convention:** Please make appropriate arrangements for any candidate(s) in your congregation who has been approved for baptism to be immersed locally. This should happen as soon as possible after the Saturday morning session is viewed, in accord with local circumstances. At the baptism, a local elder should ask the baptism candidate(s) the two questions appearing on page 206 of the *Organized* book and give him an opportunity to answer in the affirmative. The elder will then offer a prayer. Thereafter, the candidate(s) should be immersed. (*sfl* chap. 11 pars. 16-17) Please remember to report the number baptized to your circuit overseer. He will compile the number of baptisms in the circuit and send his report to the branch office.

4. **2020 Convention Invitation Campaign:** The arrangements for the convention invitation campaign may be reviewed with the congregation throughout the months of July and August as needed. The body of elders may decide how to adjust the preconvention local needs part described in the *Shepherd* book, chapter 20, paragraph 17.

5. **Disfellowshipped or Disassociated Persons Joining Meetings by Videoconference:** When holding congregation meetings by means of videoconferencing tools, such as *Zoom*, use good judgment in determining whether to permit a disfellowshipped or disasso-

ciated person to connect to the meetings. If needed, the elders should remind him of when it would be appropriate to join and to leave such meetings.

**6. Judicial Matters:** Videoconferencing should not be used for handling judicial matters, including reinstatement hearings. Until circumstances permit the hearing to be held at the Kingdom Hall, the matter may need to be held in abeyance. (*sfl* chap. 15 par. 8) If the body of elders believes that a judicial matter is urgent and needs to be handled immediately, two elders should contact the Service Department for direction.

**7. Financial issues:** Please keep in mind the following information:

- **How to care for the basic needs of the publishers.** Analyze whether the basic needs can be met in the following manner: 1) Help from relatives, 2) Government assistance, and 3) Help from other publishers (Acts 4:32; *od* 12, ¶13-14). If, after having exhausted these methods, meeting the basic needs of the publishers remains an issue, the body of elders can decide to use congregation funds to meet these needs. As an exception, during the COVID-19 pandemic, these expenses can be considered as routine expenses. (*Instructions for Congregation Accounting* (S-27b), 21) and as such, presenting a resolution to the congregation is not necessary. It is best to provide families with the supplies they need, instead of giving them cash. You can request direction from the circuit overseer if any questions in this regard should arise.
- **How to proceed if congregation funds are running out.** The following steps may be taken: 1) Assist the publishers that are in a position to make donations, to do so using [donate.jw.org](https://donate.jw.org), instead of saving their contributions until the Kingdom Halls are opened again. 2) Consider the possibility of reducing or eliminating some of the expenses related to Kingdom Hall maintenance. Where several congregations use the same Kingdom Hall, the Kingdom Hall Maintenance Committee, could perhaps reduce or suspend the monthly contribution from the congregations for a few months, especially if the maintenance account has sufficient funds. 3) Reduce or suspend the monthly contribution by the congregation to the worldwide Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall Construction Fund. If necessary, and as an exception, you may close off all of the contribution boxes in the Kingdom Hall except for the box for congregation needs. If, after taking these steps, there are insufficient funds to cover the Kingdom Hall expenses, or to cover the basic needs of the publishers, inform the branch of the existing need.

**8. Preaching in unassigned territories and areas of need:** Due to the pandemic caused by COVID-19, the campaign to preach in unassigned territories for 2020 has been cancelled. At the same time, applications to support areas of need in our branch territory have been suspended until further notice.

**9. Simplification of the channel of communication between the branch and the field (cases of Covid-19):** The congregations will report the number of confirmed infected (and deceased, if applicable) only to the circuit overseer. The circuit overseer will then send a weekly report to the branch (see letter dated April 8, RE: Appendix to the letter dated March 24, relating to caring for the congregation during the COVID-19 pandemic). The circuit overseers should indicate in their reports the totals (infected and deceased) for each of the congregations in their circuit, not just the total amount. In order to confirm the information received to date, we ask you to please, report to your circuit overseer this week the total confirmed number (infected and deceased) so far for your congregation. Thereafter, your weekly reports should only include the number of new confirmed cases (infected and

deceased). This will allow us to continue to “let all things take place decently and by arrangement”.—1 Cor.14:40.

**10. Renewal of theocratic activities:** The fact that the government is lifting restrictions does not have an automatic impact on theocratic activities. The branch will inform the congregations as to when they may resume the theocratic activities that were the norm before COVID-19 (including street witnessing, public witnessing, preaching from house to house, and any use of the Kingdom Hall). There is no need to call and ask. The congregations will be informed when the time arrives.

#### **FOR FOLLOW-THROUGH BY THE COORDINATOR OF THE BODY OF ELDERS**

**1. Announcements for the Congregation:** Ensure that the announcements for the congregation are read at the next midweek meeting.

**2. Arrangements for Viewing the 2020 Convention:** In order to build anticipation for the convention program, ensure that the congregation is informed of the arrangements for viewing the program once the body of elders finalizes these arrangements. The congregation will need to be reminded periodically of the dates that the various convention sessions will be available for viewing.

#### **FOR FOLLOW-THROUGH BY THE SERVICE OVERSEER**

**1. Annual Items:** Each congregation should enter its own request for annual items for 2021 no later than **Saturday, August 1, 2020**. The quantity requested from the branch office should reflect the actual quantity requested by publishers.

**2. Worldwide Campaign in November 2020:** As indicated in the announcement for the congregation, more information about distributing *The Watchtower* No. 2 2020 to government officials and businesses in the congregation’s territory will be provided later.

**3.** The poster for the cover series of *The Watchtower* No. 2 2020 should be used at all public witnessing locations (including special metropolitan public witnessing locations) during the campaign. The poster is available for download in PDF format. If your congregation uses magnetic boards on your literature carts and you need a magnetic-compatible poster for this issue, you may submit a periodical special request by Friday, May 15, 2020. *The Watchtower* No. 2 2020 should be the principal publication featured at public witnessing locations. However, the *Teach Us* book may also be displayed. Other literature may be kept on hand for use as appropriate.

**4.** When determining the number of additional copies of *The Watchtower* No. 2 2020 needed for the campaign, each congregation should consider its arrangements for public witnessing, the anticipated increase in auxiliary pioneers, and so forth. Once a quantity is determined, inform the language-coordinating congregation who, in turn, will submit a special request on behalf of the language group. Special requests should be submitted by Friday, June 5, 2020.

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May 2020

## FOR THE CONGREGATION

1. **Annual Items:** Annual items for 2021 will be made available for download beginning in October of this year. Publishers who require hard copy editions may now request the following items: 2020 *Watchtower* and *Awake!* bound volume, *Examining the Scriptures Daily—2021*, and the *Watch Tower Publications Index 2001-2020*. Additionally, requests may be submitted for braille editions of *Examining the Scriptures Daily*.

2. **Bethel Service:** Baptized Christians 19 years of age or older who desire to pursue Bethel service or assist with theocratic construction projects on a part-time or full-time basis should view the videos *Making Yourself Available for Bethel Service* and *Be Honest in All Things (Bethel/Construction Application)* before submitting an application to the elders.

3. **Worldwide Campaign in November 2020:** The cover series for *The Watchtower* No. 2 2020 is “What Is God’s Kingdom?” Although this issue is now available for use in the ministry, in November 2020 it will be featured in a worldwide campaign to focus attention on God’s Kingdom. Publishers will be encouraged to share one scripture about God’s Kingdom with as many people as possible and to place a copy of the magazine with all interested persons. Thus, there will be no arrangement to leave a copy at not-at-homes during the campaign. A special arrangement will also be made to deliver this magazine to government officials and businesses in the congregation’s territory. More information on that aspect will be provided to the elders later. Publishers who decide to serve as auxiliary pioneers during November 2020 will have the option of choosing the 30-hour or 50-hour requirement.

4. **2020 Convention Invitation Campaign:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the convention invitation campaign is being modified. Rather than distributing printed invitations to the public as in previous years, publishers may send a copy of the electronic invitation from [jw.org](http://jw.org) or *JW Library* to family, friends, and interested ones. Use the Share feature to send a link to the invitation on [jw.org](http://jw.org). (Go to ABOUT US > CONVENTIONS.) In *JW Library*, use the Share Link feature. (Go to PUBLICATIONS > TRACTS.) Since arrangements for viewing the convention program will vary, publishers can simply encourage interested ones to view the program on [jw.org](http://jw.org).

5. As previously announced, the six sessions of the 2020 “Always Rejoice!” convention program will be released incrementally on JW Broadcasting during the months of July and August. It is likely that most brothers and sisters will enjoy the program in private homes as families or as individuals. Depending on local circumstances, some congregations may be able to meet together to watch the sessions. In due time, more specific direction will be announced to the congregation.