

## Additional Prayers and Recommendations for Faith Communities in Response to Disasters

Be with us, dear Lord, through all sorrow, loss and difficulties we face.  
Help us to face difficult times with courage.  
Help us to know that you are with us, even when we see only darkness.  
Help us to know your love and to share this love with others.  
In Christ's name, Amen.

From [Ministering with Adults following Disasters, Episcopal Relief & Development](#)

God of all consolation,  
grant to those who sorrow the spirit of faith and courage,  
that they may have the strength to meet the days to come  
with steadfastness and patience;  
not sorrowing without hope,  
but trusting in your goodness;  
through him who is the resurrection and the life,  
Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

From *A New Zealand Prayer Book - He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa* (used with permission)

### Recommendations for Faith Community Gatherings During an Epidemic

An epidemic is a large-scale outbreak of an infectious disease, such as influenza, norovirus or coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Leadership, communication and liturgical decisions should be made in collaboration with church leadership and health authorities and based on local practices and safety concerns.

### Leadership & Communication Recommendations

- Remind congregants not to come to church or meetings if they feel ill.
- Expand or remind clergy of your policies regarding sick leave for clergy.
- Do you have supply clergy available?
- Do you encourage lay-led Morning Prayer services?
- Remind leaders that they should model the behaviors you're asking from congregants, especially about staying home when ill.

### Liturgical Recommendations

- General hand hygiene: Encourage clergy and lay eucharistic ministers to wash hands with soap and water before services and use hand sanitizer before distributing communion; also provide hand sanitizer for congregational use
- Sharing of the Peace: Remind parishioners that waving is acceptable instead of shaking hands or hugging.

- **Serving & Receiving Communion:** Those concerned should abstain from communion or receive “in one kind,” which means receiving the bread only. Hands are the dirtiest part of the body; therefore, intinction is not recommended. If choosing intinction, allow the Eucharistic minister to intinct the Eucharistic bread for you — it’s just as valid to bow to the chalice. Intinction is only feasible when wafers are used. Using the common cup with proper purificator procedure presents a relatively low risk. Open the purificator to its full size so that a clean part of the purificator is used for each communicant. It may be necessary for the minister to use more than one purificator. Wipe the chalice between communicants on the inside as well as the outside.

Additionally, check with your bishop and local health officials for their protocol.

If there is an outbreak in your area, consult local public health authorities. You might consider taking the following steps:

- The fonts should be drained, and the practice of dipping hands in the water should be discontinued.
- Use new water for each person during baptism.
- Home visits should be restricted to ordained persons, and Eucharistic Visitors should not be deployed until further notice.
- Do not pass the offering plate. Instead, instruct ushers to bring it around or set it in one spot and have people come up to put in their offerings.



*Dorothy is a member of her local Savings with Education group in Malawi. Dorothy was one of the members who attended fertilizer training and was able to buy fertilizer and seeds for her farm with a loan. She also attended training to learn how to grow additional crops.*