



COVID-19 GUIDANCE

Faith leaders: Safe ceremonies

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Government and public health authorities at both local and national levels are the primary source of information and guidance about Covid-19 in communities. They can provide information about locally mandated restrictions on the movement of people, and about whether gatherings are permitted and, if so, what size of gathering is allowed. Those organising a gathering should comply with this official guidance.

Many celebrations and solemn ceremonies performed by faith leaders will need to be modified during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Where local health authorities do allow gatherings, faith leaders may be able to perform ceremonies such as weddings and funerals. But this will depend on their being able to follow World Health Organization guidance on physical distancing (see [‘Conducting safe gatherings’](#)) and observe limits set by public health authorities on the number of people taking part.
- When gatherings cannot be held in accordance with national or local public health guidelines, ceremonies may still be possible with only essential members attending in person. A larger number of guests could participate through live-streaming and video technologies. This [Tearfund Bible study](#) uses the Apostle Paul's example as inspiration for how digital technology might be used creatively.
- If/when health authorities issue guidance limiting the number of people at a funeral, the wishes and prayers of extended-family members and friends unable to attend can be written down or recorded and presented by those who do attend.