



South Yarra Community Baptist Church

Decisions and Questions from the Host Group Meeting

1 August 2018

Listed below are the main decisions and questions from our recent Host Group meeting. This is not the full minutes, but a summary of the main decisions and questions. In line with our church policy, these are circulated not only for your information, but to allow you to consider the decisions and ponder the questions and, if you have any concerns about any of them, to seek more information or ask for them to be reconsidered. Where possible, we will not implement the decisions for at least seven days, in order to allow time for people to respond. Questions or concerns can be raised with any member of the Host Group, or by emailing all of them at once at hosts@southyarrabaptist.church

Those in attendance at the recent meeting were Nathan Nettleton, Eliz Cook, Shelley Taylor, Ian Cook and Samara Pitt.

Summary of the Decisions and Questions

1. Nathan is still working on some draft proposals for **changes to our membership structures**. Stay tuned!
2. We received a letter from **Equal Voices, a national grassroots movement of LGBTIQ+ Christians and allies** who are committed to cultivating churches where LGBTIQ+ people are fully welcomed and accepted (www.equalvoices.org.au). Equal Voices is running a conference called “Connecting Stories” on 13-14 October and have asked affirming churches for support in promotion, prayer and financial donation. In light of the healthy budget surplus we have received this year (particularly through hall hire), we want to **donate \$1000 to the conference** which would sponsor hiring of AV equipment. As a sponsor we would have a table for information or promotional material at the conference, and acknowledgement in their welcome booklet. (Disclosure: one of the organisers, Teash, is Samara’s housemate!)
3. **Sanctuary is being recognised as a “faith community”** by the BUV, which indicates that they are more established than a church plant but not yet a fully independent church congregation.
4. Andaman is getting ready to move overseas and has offered her **good quality 2 seater couch** to replace the large green one we currently have – thanks Andaman!
5. In **maintenance news**, after the sparks on Sunday, electricians are currently working on 3 separate faults in our electrics, one which includes some kind of fried animal interrupting the circuit :(We also had a plumber this month to deal with a blocked sewer which was partly a South East Water problem with roots in the pipes.
6. Welcome to **new babies Lior Fillipi and Neave Gray!** We are delighted that Lior is coming home from hospital this week and the family are very grateful for everyone’s support.
7. We had a sparsely attended **working bee** this month, but windows were cleaned and rust spots on the roof covered up!
8. **End of year financial reports** show that we had a healthy surplus this year, primarily due to an increase in hall hire income. Sanctuary broke even this financial year as well but will need to increase income to cover Alison’s increase to 0.6 time fraction in the coming year.

9. **Ecumenical service at St Joseph's** for the Transfiguration is Monday 6 August at 7pm. All welcome!
10. **Church camp** is approaching 24 – 26 August. Please let Shelley know asap if you can come for some or all of the time (we need to provide numbers to the venue by 12 August). Do not let financial concerns be a barrier – it's an event we value even if we do not cover costs. You are welcome to invite friends. There will be no scheduled program other than what the participants organise, so be thinking about whether there is an activity you would like to run – it could be a walk along the beach, a board game, some singing, some art, a discussion...the space is open!
11. We would like to begin **a conversation about current trends in our congregation** towards an older demographic, and our sense that there is also a stagnation of energy. We wonder whether there is some complacency about what we have and whether our active sense of discipleship and growth has diminished. We don't have anyone currently who is shaking things up and challenging us. Nathan feels that he has probably become “too much part of the furniture”, and he thinks that without the creative energy that comes from constantly having to work things through with a second pastor, he may now be more likely to be part of the problem than the driver of a solution. We discussed what we offer that people might be hungry for, such as rich liturgy, silence, participative worship. We discussed ways that we could make ourselves known to people who might be interested, including hall hirers. We wondered why our exposure during the marriage equality debate didn't result in anyone new attending regularly. We asked about the impact of having our meal in the worship space on those seeking prayer after the service. We would like to hear your observations, responses and ideas!

Next meeting: 5th September 2018, 7:30pm