



# *South Yarra Community Baptist Church*

## *Decisions and Questions from the Host Group Meeting*

### *2 February 2021*

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](mailto:hosts@southyarrabaptist.church)

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

### **Summary of the Decisions and Questions**

1. The **manse tenants** were evicted on February 2 as the three month lease intended to provide a tenancy record for private rental was over in March 2020 and Yordanos had refused to take up several offers of private rental accommodation during that period. Rent subsidies from Launch Housing had ceased in March 2020. The warrant for eviction was issued by VCAT in August 2020 (delayed due to Covid) and had to be carried out within 6 months - we chose to allow the full 6 month period. Yordanos has been given details for crisis accommodation, and the accommodation service was alerted that she may contact them. We will store the family's belongings for at least 90 days until they can make arrangements to collect them. David Jackson, a former congregation member, and his wife and child will soon move in to the manse temporarily while they look for housing in Melbourne.
2. **Nathan's regular work hours** have been higher over the past month due to the change of liturgical season including Christmas. He took 6 days annual and conference leave in January, but is currently unable to take leave on Sundays while he is the only person who can run the service online.
3. We had our **Christmas Eve service and ecumenical Epiphany service** online which were good events, although they possibly lacked some of their peak celebratory feel over Zoom. The **January 26/Invasion Day discussion** at the church with Uncle Den was special as our first physical gathering at the church in a long time, and also significant for the reflection on our deepening awareness of how our understanding of ourselves in this land needs to change as we tell the truth about our history.
4. We will hold our **Lenten Retreat Day** at the church on Sunday 28 February (\*note change of date\*) at the church from 10am to 3pm. **Nathan** will provide some scripture texts for us to reflect on and we will hold a listening circle. We will let people know soon about a **Lenten reading book**.
5. Now that we are **legally able to return to the church building** for services, the host group have considered the situation for our congregation, including the significant group of people who have joined us online and are not able to attend physical worship at South Yarra. The host group is not confident that we can do a regular physically gathered worship service in the way we used to because there are now not enough people to do the work, which includes set up,

pack up and supper. We wonder also whether more creative options for meeting the needs of our increasingly diverse congregation might open up for us if we embrace the online environment more fully rather than making do with it as a temporary situation. One viable way ahead that doesn't lose our desire to still gather in person might be that we continue to worship online and encourage lots of physically gathered activities outside the Sunday service, not just in South Yarra, and organised by all congregation members. We are willing to hear ideas about how to run a physical service given the current constraints. **Nathan** will write a discussion paper for the congregation with some scenarios.

6. Host meetings will continue to be held over Zoom. Anyone is welcome to **attend a host meeting**, please let Nathan know if you wish to do so. The hosts may also invite a congregation member to attend a meeting if we feel they have insights into a particular issue on the agenda.

**Dates for your diary:**

|             |                                |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| February 17 | Ash Wednesday (7:00pm worship) |
| February 28 | Lenten retreat day, 10am - 3pm |

Next meeting: Tuesday 2 March 2021, 7:30pm, on Zoom