



South Yarra Community Baptist Church

Decisions and Questions from the Host Group Meeting

2 November 2023

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 via Zoom were Eliz Cook, Shelley Taylor, Liesl Filippi, Samara Pitt, Uncle Dennis Fisher, Ian Cook and Nathan Nettleton.

Summary of the Decisions and Questions.

1. **Melbourne Water** have asked if they can lease our back garden and the back section of car park for 6 months to do road works in the area. We are clarifying some details and would need to check with Victoria House who currently hire parking spaces during the week, but if the answers are satisfactory we will probably approve this.
2. **Church camp** was a successful event in its new format. Quite a few local congregation members were able to attend and organise a range of activities including beach walks, mini golf, art and singing, Auslan story time and shared meals. The Airey's Inlet Uniting Church congregation were glad to welcome and connect with us. We will pencil it in for the same time next year. We received more pay-it-forward money than was needed to subsidise accommodation and meals, so we will be in touch with those who contributed to see what they want to do.
3. The **All Saints Service** was held, with people contributing names and pictures for remembrance, and it also created space to grieve after the referendum.
4. The **Open Baptists Association Gathering** in Canberra was a very encouraging event for participants, who included Nathan and Karen from our congregation. It was run as an Open Space event, with an independent facilitator. Numerous issues were raised and discussed, and working groups were created to take matters forward for this new entity.
5. After much discernment and wrestling and with a mixture of hope and sadness, **Sanctuary Baptist Warrnambool** has decided to wind up when Alison Sampson finishes her pastoring role with them at the end of November. Alison will continue being paid for some weeks after that to finalise some administrative and relational work, and to take some leave. Our congregation is the auspicing body for Sanctuary. Because there is still some possibility of parts of the Sanctuary congregation re-emerging as a BUV micro-church, we will sequester their website and any remaining money in their bank account for at least 12 months.
6. The **future of the Surrey Road property** continues to be something we need to make a decision about in light of the potential land tax we could be subject to now that we are no longer using the building for its primary charitable purpose, which is weekly church services for our congregation. We will contact the BUV to find out what we need to know to assist with this

decision making, and we will also follow up with Baptcare to check that they don't have any use for the building. One idea that we could look into if we sell the building is the possibility of paying some reparations to First Nations people from the proceeds via the Pay the Rent program (see here: paytherent.net.au)

7. Annually we **gift 10% of building and grounds hire income** to several groups doing good work. At the AGM we agreed to gift to the Theological College of the Protestant Church of Timor Leste, the Indigenous Hospitality House and RISE (Refugee, Survivors and eX-Detainees advocacy organisation) this year. As we received higher than usual income this year due to the AEC hall hire arrangement, we propose to give a one-off \$5000 amount to the Theological College, and \$1300 to the IHH and RISE which is a similar amount to what they received last year. This would cover about 75% of what the Theological College requested for their project to provide IT resources for the College. As this split was not raised and agreed on at the AGM, **if anyone has concerns please let us know** and we will review the proposal.
8. Advent is approaching. We will organise the **Advent Retreat** at St Luke's Baptist in Abbotsford, details soon. If anyone is interested in **suggesting and organising a book** for people to read and discuss over Advent, let us know.
9. 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:

Sunday 3 December	Advent Retreat Day
Thursday 7 December	Host meeting, 7pm
Sunday 24 December	Vigil service for Feast of the Nativity (main Christmas service)
Saturday January 6	Epiphany service, 7pm