



South Yarra Community Baptist Church Decisions and Questions from the Host Group Meeting

11th March, 2026

Listed below are the main decisions from our recent Host Group meeting. This is not the full minutes, but a summary of the main decisions. In line with our church policy, these decisions are circulated not only for your information, but to allow you to consider the decisions 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 Eliz Cook, Ian Cook, Rob Davis, Liesl Filippi, Nathan Nettleton and Shelley Taylor. Jen Davis was present as minute secretary.

Summary of the Decisions

1. The **Lease of the Manse** is complete, with Earthen Vessels Church taking on financial and maintenance responsibilities. Feedback from our congregation expresses gratitude that the process is concluding.
2. We are still working on the best way to reserve for a specific purpose **Sylvia Sandeman's generous bequest** of \$69,246, so that it is held intact and earning the best rate of interest.
3. We reviewed the **Ash Wednesday service and the Lenten Retreat Day**, with positive feedback received from the congregation.
4. We continued with a discussion of the next steps in our **Church Renaming**. The 'Readiness for closure' poll was in progress at the time of our meeting. We thought about the risks associated with the name change of SYCBC, including concerns about preserving the church's history and identity, and how to assist the church to embark on the change with its eyes open to potential pitfalls. It was recognised that people will have different reasons for opposing the change - opposed to any change, opposed to the new name, concerned about a lack of consensus - and that SYCBC has been going through a period of change since the COVID pandemic. We agreed that when the result of the 'readiness for closure' vote is known, an affirmative vote of over two thirds would mean that a Special Church Meeting would be called, with a minimum 4 weeks notice, for covenanting members to vote on a change to the church's constitution. Ratification by the BUV was to be further investigated. For a negative vote of greater than one third, there would need to be a different approach, with congregational consultation, and probably a 'Listening Circle'. Whatever the outcome, Nathan would draft a pastoral letter to the congregation, outlining the issues raised, including potential organisational risks. The use of the new name on reversible items (Notices, Liturgy Slides) before the constitutional change was discussed. Supporting this suggestion was the need to gradually adjust to the new name; opposing the suggestion was the fact that the congregation had not made a final decision. The decision to begin a phased implementation was agreed by a majority vote.

5. We are still considering **how AI can be used in our church**, and Nathan is informing himself and also investigating further ways in which our congregation can use the opportunities presented by this innovation.
6. 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.

Next meeting: 15th April 2026

Dates for your diary:

Palm and Passion Sunday service

5:00pm, Sunday 29th March

Holy Week Vespers

5:00pm Mon 30th March - Wed 1st April

Maundy Thursday service

7:30pm Thursday 2nd April

Good Friday service

5:00pm Friday 3rd April

Morning Prayer for the Day of Nothingness

8:00am Saturday 4th April

Great Paschal Vigil

7:30pm Saturday 4th April

Resurrection Sunday 5th April

9:00am Online Liturgy

10:30am Brunch in Melbourne (location t.b.c.)

5:00pm Vespers Online