



open icon baptist church

Decisions and Questions

from the Host Group Meeting

10th June 2026

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. 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 hostgroup@openicon.church

Those in attendance at the recent meeting were Eliz Cook, Ian Cook, Rob Davis, Liesl Filippi, Nathan Nettleton, and Shelley Taylor.

Summary of the Decisions

1. The **name change to Open Icon Baptist Church** has been processed by the Australian Business Register — the ATO has already updated the church's name accordingly, and the latest GST return has been issued in the new name. Banking and other notifications are still being completed.
2. Our **Visiting Pastoral Overseer** search continues. Rev Neville Taylor has declined the invitation. Nathan has had a positive conversation with Philippa Thomson (a friend of Eliz's with a background in Baptist and ecumenical ministry and in spiritual direction), who is expected to give her decision shortly. If she proceeds, the plan is for her to attend a worship service before a formal recommendation is put to the congregation for a vote.
3. We affirmed Nathan's proposed redraft of the **Anniversary Covenanting Service liturgy** for use on 21st June. The service is designed to name and mark the significant changes of this past year — particularly the relinquishing of the South Yarra property and the adoption of our new name — as we covenant together for the journey ahead.
4. Our new **Cloud of Voices** social communication platform is up and running within the members' section of the website. We received encouraging feedback from those who have explored it so far. We will continue to observe how the congregation engages with it over coming weeks before deciding whether to invest in a dedicated phone app (which would significantly improve the mobile experience and add push notifications, at a cost of approximately \$1,550 per year).
5. **Concerns have been flagged about the use of AI in producing church music**, including its environmental impact, the devaluing of human musicianship, and the concentration of power in large AI companies. These are important questions. This is the beginning of a conversation we will continue, and we would welcome the congregation's thoughts. We are not looking to make an immediate policy decision, but to think carefully about when and how AI tools serve our worship well and when they don't. Feel free to share your reflections with any member of the Host Group.
6. **Nathan will be on leave** in Western Australia from 7–21 July. Preachers, Zoom hosts and parts allocators will be in place for the two Sundays during that period (13th and 20th July).

Next meeting: Wednesday 1st July (moved from our usual second Wednesday).

Dates for your diary:

Sunday 21 June Church Anniversary service, 5pm