



open icon baptist church

Decisions and Questions

from the Host Group Meeting

1st July 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. **Anniversary Covenanting Service:** We reviewed this year's service, which used a special liturgy structured around looking back over the year and looking forward. Feedback from the congregation was positive, and several of us found it a moving experience.
2. **Visiting Pastoral Overseer:** We have agreed to recommend Philippa Thomson's appointment as a Visiting Pastoral Overseer, and will be organising an online vote for the congregation to approve this. We remain keen to find one or two further people for this role, so please let us know if you have anyone in mind.
3. **Cloud of Voices:** Uptake of our new social platform continues to be encouraging, with more than 20 people actively using it. We discussed whether to invest in a dedicated phone app (to enable notifications), but have decided to hold off this month and revisit the question in August once we have more information.
4. **Church Camp:** We will go ahead with our camp at Aireys Inlet on the weekend of 9-11 October, whatever the final numbers turn out to be. As happened last year, our usual Sunday service will also be held online at 5pm. More details, including booking information, will follow.
5. **Feast of Creation in Christ:** This new addition to the church calendar falls on 1 September. We have decided to mark it with a liturgy on the actual day, in keeping with our usual practice, rather than shifting it to the nearest Sunday. Our existing Season of Creation prayers through September will continue as before.
6. **Promoting our church:** Rob is looking into the possibility of advertising our services in regional Victorian newspapers, linked to dedicated pages on our website. He will bring costings back to the August meeting. On a related note, we recently received our first enquiry that appears to have come directly from someone finding our new website – a very encouraging sign.
7. **Finances:** Ian reported that the past financial year finished with a small deficit, and that the coming year's budget shows a possible surplus of around \$28,000. We were reminded that simply accumulating a surplus isn't the goal, and that we should be looking for creative ministry uses for these resources.
8. **Nathan's leave:** Nathan will be on leave in Western Australia from 7–21 July. Craig Bartlett will preach on 12 July and Geoff Leslie on 19 July, with hosting and other arrangements in hand.

Next meeting: Wednesday 12th August 2026