

# GBC Mid-Year Meeting

3<sup>rd</sup> July 2022

(HYBRID: Onsite and Online via Zoom)

Zoom: Meeting ID: 992 3662 6149 Passcode: 628422

## Agenda

1. Welcome.
2. Members and Guests record attendance.  
Via Zoom Chat (online) and on Members' Roll (onsite)
3. Apologies.
4. Devotion and Prayer.
5. Confirmation of Agenda.
6. Confirmation of Minutes from last Meeting  
AGM2 – Sunday 27 March 2022.
7. Discernment Process:
  - Report from Discernment Team
8. Reports:
  - Hopefield (Vicki Sherry)
  - Finance (Glenn Smith)
  - Associate Pastors (Roxane Lawler and Matt Willis)
9. Prayer.
10. Close.

**GBC Annual General Meeting-2**  
**27 March 2022 at 11.30am**  
(HYBRID: Held via Zoom Meeting and Onsite)

**Minutes** (Taken by Susan Kusch, CLT Chair)

Open: 11:30am

**1. Welcome – (11:30am)**

Marc Rader

**2. Members and Guests record attendance.**

Via Zoom Chat (online) and on Members' Roll (onsite).

Signed in members (at 11:32): 44 (onsite) 45 (on zoom)

Attendees: Please refer to Karen Watkins' written record of attendees & saved Zoom Chat (Members Roll).

Active Members: 265

**3. Apologies:**

None

**4. Devotion and Prayer.**

Marc Rader – Psalms, Sing for joy, Praise for God, Come and see what God has done.

**5. Agenda –**

Hopefield report and Partnership to be included in Senior Pastor's Report

**6. Confirmation of Minutes from last Meeting (AGM-1 05/12/21).**

Moved – Marjy Robertson

Seconded – Bruce Harbour

Passed

**7. Accept the Annual Report.**

**8. Treasurer's Report – Finance – Glenn Smith**

Personal:

- One year anniversary of Glenn's appointment
- Thanks to finance committee, especially John Lunney and Neil Evans

2021 Highlights (graphs – see finance report for further detail):

- \$150k behind offerings budget

- Support from Government of \$97
- Ended with \$100k in cash
- MMM \$246, well over budget
- Extraordinary gift to Hopefield of \$200k
- Over \$250k spent on major capital works

See Glenn's report for detailed breakdown of finances.

2022 and beyond:

Renovation, rebuilding for purpose

- The broader picture
- New giving and increased giving

The year so far:

- Offerings – to 20<sup>th</sup> March
  - Received \$153k vs budget \$165k
  - \$12k behind budget year to date, track towards \$780 annual budget
- Expenses – to end of Feb
  - Approx \$6k under budget
- Cash available to date
  - Approx \$90k
  - Down from approx. \$100k at start of the year

For further details, please see finance report.

CLT will continue to assess achievability budget for 2023.

#### **Questions:**

Helen McKelleher: *Regarding not meeting budget – What will be cut if we continue to not meet budget?*

Glenn: *The leadership team will decide this as it is not up to Treasurer to make these decisions. Once the money in the bank gets down to \$50k, changes to staffing will need to be made. Other expenses have already been cut to a minimum*

Kathleen Foster (online): *Do you know if the church size reflects the giving amount?*

Glenn: *Doesn't have numbers for other churches. Every person has different capacity to give. Some have greater capacity for giving than others. Please be mindful of what you are giving to.*

Ross Langford: *Regarding new givers. We need approx. 15% more giving. Is this reflective of the number of new givers?*

Glenn: *We need to have 20% increase from 2021 to 2023. With regards to new givers, we don't know. We know that broadly, people who are already giving have increased by 20% overall.*

Neil Evans Q1: *Has giving per household (giving unit) increased?*

Glenn: *Some work has been done to investigate this. No. of giving units is down. Disparity between giving units has remained consistent but the average has decreased slightly.*

Neil Q2: *Expenses - are they given month by month?*

Glenn: *Yearly expenses are averaged out by dividing over 12. Some monthly expenses are put into the correct months. Using expenses as a cash flow management tool.*

Rod Wolf: *Are we considering a thanksgiving offering?*

Glenn: *Run past CLT – We don't want to get into the habit of just giving a little each month and then see how things are going before playing catch up but we are still considering this as an option.*

Janelle Drake: *From the graph, how did we get back up to zero briefly in Feb?*

Glenn: *We had 2 significant one-off gifts in one week.*

## 9. Senior Pastor's Report (Incl Hopefield)

### The State of the Church

- Like a slowly inflating inflatable pool – lots of internal work, things slowly taking shape and growing anticipation.
- Lessons learned from 2021:
  - Need for non-anxious space and time for re-engagement (esp with increased COVID cases)
  - Musical pews (the music is still playing) – ie people are still trying out different churches and trying to find where they belong. This is still continuing.
  - GETMO (Good enough to move on)
- Renovation: Rebuilding for Purpose
- Engagement opportunities: The process of discernment, partnership, Serve Team (esp Guest Services)

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- Attendance (Jan-March):
    - 9:30 av no. of adults: 49, 128, 148
    - Online av no. of devices: 119, 78, 98
    - 6pm av no. of adults: 26, 54, 62
  - Patterns of attendance (Feb):
    - Greater frequency online
    - People appear to be attending more and less frequently (four times or once)
      - Whether these are legitimate patterns or not is yet to be seen.
  - When might we return to two morning services?
    - No immediate need to do so but numbers that might justify/require the change are growing (probably not before Term 3)
    - Two big obstacles:
      - Parking
      - Volunteer teams
    - Online to remain at 9:30 but move to a hybrid live stream/pre-record.
  - The impact of check-in/log-in:
    - Name tags, welcome for visitors, follow-up and care.
  - Staff team update:
    - Steve Foxe (Service Coordinator)
    - Belinda Lakelin (Evangelism)
    - Kat Lewis-O'Connor (Youth and Young Adults)

Questions:

Michelle and John Cox (Online): *Who will replace Kat on Maternity leave?*

Marc: *We don't know yet*

Tim Venum: *Will we do two Sunday morning services rather than Friday?*

Marc: *Yes*

Janelle Drake: *Why hybrid services rather than just pre-recorded online or live stream?*

Marc: *People really liked the live but also liked having something that was just for them.*

Jan Speckman: *We seem to have lost our music team. Are we re-building the team?*

Marc: *We have lost volunteers everywhere. This is also seen at other churches. We will try to rebuild but are just going with GETMO at the moment. Not keen to put too much pressure on volunteer recruitment while people are still working out their own re-engagement.*

Tracey Nelson: *Mission report missing – Could Marc please give a brief outline?*

Marc: *Partners are the same and projects and sent missionaries are the same.*

### **Hopefield Report – Vicky Sherry (please see report for details of Hopefield activity)**

#### Community Hubs update

Vicky was reminded this morning of the importance of community hubs – people need places of safety and belonging and friendship. We all have a responsibility to safely welcome people into community. Well-being doesn't just comprise of good mental health, it also requires people to have social community, friends and safety.

#### Progress-

- Workshops with Baptist Association.
- Slowed down with lockdowns.
- Survey of potential participants (Inc people in playtime or people involved with Hopefield)

Wanted to understand if there would be any barriers to participants engaging with our Church, eg not everyone will be a Christian. Largely a real willingness to engage. There is some interest in some activities, esp social connections (part post lockdown).

Community Hub is more than social connections. There are five main areas being considered:

- Education –
  - psycho education – delivered by professionals, eg parenting seminars or
  - life skills – co-led by GBC
- Social connections or activities – collaborative Hopefield/GBC
- Cultural activities – represent the cultures of the wider community Collaborative Hopefield/GBC.
- Practical support (collaborative) – eg HopeDrive, one meal work, food co-op
- Community Services – other organisations that service and offer supports, eg a legal support service.

What are we up to now?

- Roxane Lawler is now a point of contact for what activities can be done.
- Stop/start with COVID but education sessions have been run such as parenting sessions. Teen seminar coming in April.
- HopeDrive continues. Recognised and appreciated externally including by government who refers people.
- Social connections activity – started for women who may not have social connections yet.

Coming up:

- Connection group for seniors (games morning tea) - need volunteers
- Mothers' group – connecting with Playtime but more for informal for mums of 0-5s. With access to child and speech specialists.
- Additional talks such as parenting talks for 0-18s.
- Marriage enrichment program.

Please let us know if you have suggestions and please pray for courage for participants and for us as a community.

### Partnership @GBC

- The proposal: To rebrand membership as partnership and to introduce a regular renewal of commitment.
  - Strong support for the change but some confusion about “Why”

Partnership at GBC proposal.

- The motion:

That Gynea Baptist Church adopt a renewable model of “membership” whereby members will be called partners.

- Explanation:

Began with a look at what it means to be a member of GBC. Also became part of the constitutional renewal.

Main change in the constitution would be that there would be a regular period of renewal.

For lots of people, coming out of COVID, there were two questions – What does it mean to be the church? and What is my place in it?

The main excitement around this change is an opportunity to look at these two questions and mutual commitments. Team are committed to our members to see them grow. We would like members to be committed to be actively involved. How do

members have a voice in decisions. This move allows us to gather together to commit and help.

Feedback from survey – What should a church do for its members? Church leadership should be engaged in making sure that the members are cared for and growing. Discipleship is critical.

The motion is the start of something bigger and a step forward but not the complete answer.

Language is not as important but comes from Philippians 1. Clearer to our younger congregation in particular. Reflects sharing together.

Moved by Marc Rader, Seconded by Christine Moffat

Questions:-

Neil Evans: *Concern that it becomes another buzzword that doesn't mean anything as opposed to looking at attitudes. How do we measure if someone is a partner? Is it constitutional? Can we simply go back to caring for one another?*

Marc: *Heart change is the heart of it. There is certainly a risk that this will be a buzzword but hopeful that this is more of a re-boot. Not sure yet how we will do the recommitment but in our existing model, there is no questioning regarding commitment. This new model gives us an opportunity to ask every few years at least.*

Glenn Smith (Comment): *The word "Member" more widely has become more of a transactional word eg being a paid member of RSL entitles you to cheaper meals and drinks. Doesn't reflect the nature of our commitment to the Church. The new word reflects the engagement and meaning.*

Marc: *The word is not so important and shouldn't be a "sticking point" to the decision.*

Nicole Rader: *Also agrees the word is outdated. In most situations, memberships are "paid".*

Gavin Bowman *Non-member who can't vote but wants to be a partner or member - it's difficult to join perhaps because it's a structural problem. This new structure won't fix that. Can't become a member without going through lots of processes but can do just about anything else eg kid's ministry.*

Marc: *This is actually a legal requirement because we are a Baptist church.*

Ross Langford: *Doesn't like the word partnership either. Can all this be done without changing the membership? Membership is never talked about. A lot of this is simply pastoral care.*



Cherelyn Muller: *Previously Member of Baptist church at Fraser Point. At the time, needed to be baptised to be a member – is that changing?*

Marc: *We must still be baptised by immersion to be a member as we are a Baptist church.*

Diane Kirkman: *Does the motion as it is stated show the whole package involved or does it only show us changing the term to “partner”? Should motion be changed? Are we ready to vote on this today?*

Marie Renneberg: *Thoughts on Baptism – if we love God enough, surely we can be baptised. Jesus was baptised.*

Marg Seymour: *Is it still a stipulation to be baptised to be a member?*

Marc: *Yes. Although under certain circumstances, sprinkling of an adult may still be allowed and someone who was baptised as an infant and has formally committed their lives (eg a confirmation) may also be allowed.*

Michelle and John Cox: *Is GBC the only church looking at changing the name membership to partnership?*

Marc: *No, Georges River Life Church changed this five years ago. There are probably others.*

Tracey Nelson: *The word Partner – does give a greater sense of care for one another.*

Rod Wolf – *At GRLC the word change was seen as a positive and more attractive to a number of new people. Gave the idea of being a part of the church and involved. This increased membership from 120 to almost double because people liked the idea and found it more inviting.*

Christine Moffat: *Supports motion, however, member is ambiguous (it’s everywhere and can mean different things in different places). Partner makes it clearer. Chris became a Member but was never asked what her thoughts were on the relationship. She became a member as was her habit. If asked if she wanted to be a partner, she would have thought more about ongoing commitment.*

Cameron Shipway: *None of the words mean anything. Concerns about pastoral care – if this is a step in the right direction of being more caring as a church. We do need to do more than just change the process of membership. The issue is the reciprocated relationship and whether this is constitutional.*

Marc: *Passing this does not finish our work.*

Neil Evans: *As this is a constitutional issue can we vote on this today in this way?*

Lawrie Green – Answer: *This is foundational to making a change in the constitution. Today’s vote will inform the draft.*

Tim Venum – Put forward Motion 2 – *Let's not vote on it today*. Seconded by Stan.

Derek Mullins – Speaking to amendment (proposed by Tim)– *The issue would then be very difficult as we would not have a direction to go forward with the constitution*.

Cameron Shipway: *The discussion shows that we need to make a change. If we don't vote we would then have too much to vote on with the new constitution and it could be left over another AGM cycle*.

Marc - Voting on Motion 2: *Should we vote on the original motion today?*

Show of hands with “yes” we should proceed with the vote on the original motion today:  
25 onsite – 18 online

Show of hands we shouldn't vote on the original motion today:  
21 onsite – 8 online

It was decided to postpone the vote on the original motion.

### **The Process of Discernment**

- ‘Impressions’ include: Scriptures, word-pictures, ideas, reflections, etc
- A simple online survey form will be the primary format used.
  - Anonymous (but with opportunity to self-identify)
  - Additional submission mechanism will be clearly communicated

The discernment group:

- Vicki Sherry, Ian Giles, Meddwyn Hinton, Bethany Munckton and Rob Seaton
- Stage 3: Call to prayer about the themes and our Focus Day (17<sup>th</sup> September)
- Stage 4: Creating the five-year strategic plan from the areas identified on our Focus Day.

Vote to accept the group – Moved by Marc, Seconded by Glenn Smith, passed by show of hands

### **Long service leave**

Marc's last Sunday April 17 back on July 18

- Ice Hockey
- Rest (renovation, reading, a few weekends away, retreat)

Matt and Roxane will be sharing the responsibilities

### **Constitutional Change**

A review of the Constitution was launched in 2021

- A committee was appointed to clean up some inconsistencies, consider changes to membership, review Constitution as a whole.
- Derek Mullins, Lawrie Green, Erin Forster, Roxane Lawler and Marc Rader
- Committee felt that a significant rewrite was called for and have drafted a new one.

CLT will be seeking legal advice on the draft before recommending its adoption at our mid-year meeting (July 3)

- A month's notice will be given (as required for constitutional changes) and a guidance document has been drafted which outlines the most significant changes.

### **Carols in Your Backyard**

- After more than twenty years of Carols in the Park, COVID-19 forced a change to Carols.
  - Carols in Your Backyard was a big success and softened the disappointment of not having a large-scale, outdoor, community event
  - As a resource it was picked up by dozens of churches
  - There was an assumption that we would eventually return to what we have done
- The redevelopment of Seymour Shaw Park – and lack of another suitable site - is forcing another change
  - After exploration of other options, the committee has decided to continue down the digital path and seek to create a high-quality Christian carols resource that can be used by churches to host local carols for their local community
  - GBC would seek to host one or more of these “micro-events” (50-200 people).
- Two important comments:
  - This decision was not made lightly
  - There is a sense of loss even in the hope of even greater impact

Information Session (onsite and online)

- Monday April 4 @7:30
  - Marc will outline, in more detail the decision-making process and the vision for the future, as well as answer questions
  - We are planning to recognise and celebrate what has been such a significant activity for us.

Prayer and Close. – 1:40pm