

# NBC

## NARRABEEN BAPTIST CHURCH

### WHAT'S NEXT? | THE DISCUSSION PAPER

#### **The SCOPE**

This paper is seeking to summarise for the NBC Church family discussions that principally relate to our Sunday gatherings. We are proposing significant changes to the times we gather, as well as the leadership structures, church identity and the level of intention that each gathering enjoys. As you read keep in mind that the proposed changes are about us continuing to be a church that is faithful to God and His Word, retaining and serving our commitment to be 'God's Family on Mission Making Disciples of Jesus'

#### **WHY are we engaged in this discussion?**

The short answer is that we are listening.

- We believe that God is promoting us to explore how we gather *in His Name around His Word*.
- We have also heard from multiple members in the church that have asked that we re-evaluate the church services in their timing, structure and intention. These requests have come from a broad spectrum of demographics and reflect a desire to see a vitality & engagement increase.
- People are also asking for better opportunities to build relationships and connect.
- The Pastoral Team has expressed concerns that our current practice, where we have shared responsibilities across the church gatherings & the replication of church services each week, is not helpful – it lacks clarity and engagement.

#### **HOW have we responded?**

Over the last 18 months the Church's Leadership has been engaged in numerous discussions that asked the question: "How should we structure our gatherings and deploying our resources so as to allow for continuing Church health & multiplication?"

We started a Key Project to explore how we might address issues of declining engagement & numbers at the 11AM Church. We soon realised that the answers we were arriving at had church-wide implications. We also identified a number of issues that were created as a consequence of having AM services back to back. Some of these issues have to do with replication, logistics and parking overlaps – but the biggest strain has been most keenly felt by those leading the children's ministry that has had fluctuating numbers for a long time – and the 11AM musicians who have week-by-week been rushed & stressed to produce consistently an excellent worship experience.

In order to evaluate how we would make decisions we identified four core-commitments that serve in defining how we gather and provide the questions we needed to be asking. These commitments are:

1. The Gathering is Word-Centred – Q: Is the church hearing, implementing and being transformed by Scripture?
2. The Gathering is Edifying – Q: How does this build one another up?
3. The Gathering is Participatory – Q: Are we intentionally making disciples of EVERYONE?
4. The Gathering is Purposeful – Q: How do we remain true to the Gospel & engaged with a changing culture

#### **WHAT are we proposing? [a little abstract]**

We believe that we need to:

- Develop gatherings that are communities with distinctive identities, that have identifiable leadership – that keeps NBC as 'one-church'
- Implement strategies that genuinely pursue a commitment of being an Intergenerational 'Everyone' Church.
- Investigate the oversight, timing, place and duration of our gatherings – recognising the implications on:
  - o Each age and stage of life
  - o How we can better provide care
  - o The church's leadership resources – with particular concern for Children & Music Ministry leaders
  - o Service content & sermon length
  - o Opportunities for hospitality
  - o Site & Parking limitations
- Actively pursue church planting on the Northern Beaches as the best method to accommodate future growth.

### **WHAT are we proposing? [more concrete]**

We are proposing to have 2 church services on this site on a Sunday and changing each of the times we meet so that:

- we are able to run effective children's ministry both AM & PM
- we are more accessible to young families & young adults/workers who are finding that the PM service is finishing too late.
- We want to avoid crossing over meal times - lunch or dinner – we've come to appreciate the negative effect this has - especially on young families and our seniors in retirement homes.
- We want to allow adequate time for musicians to prepare
- We want free up more time to do hospitality better – AM & PM DeckTimes

For these – and other reasons, we are proposing:

- that we move to having one AM service at 9:30am
- and one PM service at 5pm
- We are determined that each service is intergenerational
  - one implication of this is that we will be running full children's ministry program at 9:30AM & 5PM
  - Toasties for high-school students will also feature at both AM & PM
- We propose that each Church service has a clear and identified leadership.
  - Appointing Service Pastors who will be responsible for the leadership & coordination of each gathering.
  - Travis for the 9:30AM – Kieran for the 5PM.
  - Leon as Senior Pastor will be freed up to lead the church as a whole – overseeing both congregations and preaching regularly at both AM & PM services.
  - Kieran's current role as Children & Families Pastor will not change.
  - Travis' current role of Community Group Oversight and integration will continue.
- We are also proposing that each Church Community will have Elders associated with them – the sheep will know their shepherds – and vice versa.

### **The PASTORAL bit**

We understand the sadness and loss that comes with the consolidation of the church services and the changes to times. We also know the fears that wake up with any change. We are especially mindful of the impact on those of us who regularly worship at 11AM. We are sorry that you'll bear the heaviest loss. We understand the gravity of what is proposed – we are not making the changes to hurt anyone. These are significant decisions – none of them taken lightly – and it is why we are inviting you to respond to them.

We also want you to know that we are excited to pursue these NEXT REFORMS for our Church.

### **So how might you RESPOND?**

**PRAY:** – We are proposing some significant changes in the life of our church family. We recognise that everyone will be impacted by these changes. So please commit these ideas to prayer. We earnestly want to be in step with where God is leading this flock as we ask: "Where to NEXT?"

We don't want to give the enemy any foothold through disunity or disobedience. So please commit to pray

**TALK:** We recognise that this will come as a surprise to some of you – and to others it will seem long overdue – some of us will be excited by the idea of change – others of us find it unsettling.

We want to care for you the best way that we can.

Please make sure that you are raising your thoughts and concerns with those of us who are leading the Church and proposing these reforms. The Pastoral Team is available and always just a phone call away.

Please have the conversations with us. We really want to listen and talk through things – especially any concerns you have.

**EMAIL:** We've also set up an email if you'd like to make contact that way.

Send your thoughts to: [next@narrabeenbaptist.org.au](mailto:next@narrabeenbaptist.org.au)

**TRUST:** The last thing we want to say as you think about your response is to invite you to trust. As a leadership we have prayed hard and thought hard through these reforms. We believe that they are 'good' and 'healthy' and what is NEXT for NBC.

Again - Please be in prayer for the decisions in front of us.

'Through Him and for His name's sake'  
Leon and the Leadership Team