October 19th 2020

Lilydale Baptist Church Steering Group Summary (FM)

## Background

A congregational survey was conducted in August in response to gathering restrictions due to COVID in 2020. With the prospect of future changes to restrictions it was felt by the pastoral staff, elders and leadership team (LT) a timely opportunity to hear from the community of people who worship and call Lilydale Baptist their home church.

Prior to COVID the church met weekly on a Sunday. Outside of this service, the people met together in small groups, and in ministry activities.

The LT tasked the pastoral team of Stewart Barnard (Senior Pastor) and Chris Barras (Generations Pastor) to form a steering group to lead the process of regathering with input from the results of the survey. A steering group was formed with representatives from the elders, leadership team, worship team, church admin, congregational representatives and pastoral staff.

## Steering group members:

Stewart Barnard (SP), Chris Barras (GP), Vicki Shaw (Admin), Fiona McLeod (Elders), Scott Huddleston, Dave Huddleston (Worship), Gordon Taylor (Leadership Team) and Reannon and Matt Turner (Congregational Reps).

## Activity

First meeting held in September. Total of 4 meetings to date

Meeting schedule: fortnightly via ZOOM on a Monday night

Terms of Reference established:

* pray and listen to God, open channel of communication between SG and the group we each represent, spirit of cooperation, complete any tasks required between SG meetings, regular attendance at SG sessions, commitment to TOR, minute-keeping (secretary)

Two fold purpose -

* Practical - how we reopen to face to face gathering on a Sunday morning, considering both the physical space and the online space. This includes considering possible restructuring/s to gathering/s and considering staged gathering/s, as COVID restrictions allow.
* Vision - The reason why we gather - informed by survey, and agreed guiding principles that are in line with LBC’s vision statement

## Congregational Survey Results Summary as identified by the Steering Group:

* 60% response rate to survey (150 sent out 90 responses)
* Respondents predominantly female and over age 45years
* Respondents value **community** mentioned by many
* They want to **gather** again when able.
* A majority of respondents said their **faith was strong or stronger** than before COVID restrictions
* **Missing Age Group** in congregation - youth to young adults a concern raised by several steering group members
* Over 75 % of respondents felt **connected,** but this **percentage drops significantly** as age decreases
* Older age brackets are keener for church to continue as per pre-COVID once able (**community/fellowship** greatly valued), compared to younger age brackets who had less comments around what they appreciated about church pre-COVID, and had more suggestions for how church could look different post-COVID
* People **missing most worship and community**
* A majority of respondents wanted to **continue some form of online worship** service once face to face gatherings resume

## Key Themes:

1. Willingness to regather
2. Value Community
3. Value Online worship
4. Congregation not reflective of all ages
5. Faith growing despite adversity
6. Different needs identified based (not solely) on different age brackets

##

## Steering Group Draft Plan:

### Goal:

Congregational Survey identified a strong desire to regather and reconnect.

Aim to regather as per “Moving forward with Sunday Services @LBC,” according to COVID restrictions and government guidelines

(see attached plan by Dave Huddleston, LBC Worship Coordinator, endorsed by Steering Group)

Worship Team (Dave Huddleston)

Develop COVID safe plan for reopening (Admin & LT)

Worship Team plan for services through to February including Christmas

### Goal:

Congregational Survey identified desire for continued online worship provision.

Build online worship platform with Scott Huddleston leading

Action: Draft needed resources - people/equipment upgrade against /costs to take to LT

### Goal:

Congregational Survey identified a gap in engagement across age groups.

Identify strategies to engage all age groups - continue to meet the needs of those who are already engaged and to reach out to others - possible more contemporary service options (all).

### Goal:

Steering group discussion identified a need to articulate our values that underpin the vision of the church and the reason why we gather. (Out of Scope of Steering Group)

Elders to start this conversation (FM & SB).

## Recommendations to Leadership Team:

1. LT release funds to support the investment of up to $1000 to support the provision of online service development up to the end of 2020. Some provision of online services can be met with current resources - however lighting and recording upgrade needs to be factored in; this has up until now been met by the worship team using a combination of church and personal equipment.
2. That LT is made aware of the need to further invest money to support the future upgrade of equipment and resources to develop online worship services into 2021 may be at a greater expenditure, and may need to be factored into the 2021 church budget.

(More accurate cost estimates are to follow).

1. That a working group is convened to explore the gap identified in connectedness, and how to address this, across the congregation as a result of feedback from the congregational survey.
2. A process of review & reflection on 2020 is led by the elders with the identification of key priorities for 2021, including vision and values - Spiritual Direction of the Church - Elders.