

HAPPENINGS

News of Churches of Christ in Australia – May 2020

Welcome to the fourth issue of *Happenings* for 2020. If you have news, please send it to tedpaul@hotmail.com or ring (02) 9888 9664, (02) 9878 3008 or (02) 9878 1078 or mail it to **P O Box 41 NORTH RYDE NSW 1670**. If you would like to receive your personal email copy of *Happenings*, please let us know. Ted Paull

Melbourne Baptism

At the Belmore Road church **Joyce Chen** was united with Christ on April 12. Joyce had been staying with a Christian family while she studied in the USA and she began attending the Belmore Road church about 2 years ago. **Charles Hooi** and **Graham Wall** assisted in her baptism, observing social distancing, with a rope attached to Joyce to make sure she rose again!

Sydney/NSW Seminar

Pending developments regarding Covid-19, this year's Family Seminar organised by the Bankstown church has been scheduled for Sunday, September 27. The theme is: "A Sense of Belonging in the Family of God." **Dennis Rayner** is to teach three lessons from Colossians 3:12-14. The seminar is to be held in the hall used by the Southwest congregation (located in Ambarvale, Campbelltown). Lunch will be provided.

Thanks from Bairnsdale

During the past summer some members of the Bairnsdale (Victoria) church lost their homes in the bushfires. Rebuilding will cost more due to changes in building codes so money donated by churches and individual Christians has been welcomed by the church and by these families. They have expressed their grateful

thanks to all who contributed. Almost \$80,000 was donated.

STAYING IN TOUCH



Lots of churches are using electronic means of communication during the virus crisis. This does not completely substitute for face to face personal contact and the “kiss of love”, but it does help! In addition, members are personally using electronic communication to stay in touch.

If any of these are being done in the name of the church, i.e. with the church's agreement, then it is important that those conducting it are chosen by the church to lead and teach—just as the church chooses those who lead and teach in normal circumstances to maintain the close fellowship and unity of the church.

In general terms, if there is going to be a group “meeting”, consideration should be given to whether the meeting is “open”, i.e. something anyone can view, which means that it is a broadcast and those who teach and lead should be asked if they agree to being broadcast and recorded, and any songs used must be free of copyright. (--usually 70 years after the composer's death or date of publication. The songbook often has copyright information.) If the meeting is “closed”, i.e. an invitation-only group,

and not for public broadcast, then the broadcast laws do not apply.

One method of connection is by **telephone**: Richard & Marianne Newton in Lidcombe, Sydney, have a Sunday worship on the telephone with Don & Eleanor Males in North Richmond. Some telephones are equipped with technology to add other callers to a call.

Many churches, such as Malaga in Perth, and Belmore Road and Western Melbourne churches in Melbourne and many others are using **Zoom** meetings. If the Zoom app is on your device, you merely have to click on the link sent by the host to be connected. These have the benefit of every member being able to see and hear others in the meeting. They are initiated by a host, who has to allow members to join. He can also mute the microphones of members so that the teacher can be clearly heard. Due to a difference in delays, singing together is quite confusing, but the host can play acapella videos such as from YouTube and members can join in, with their microphone muted to avoid confusion. PowerPoint presentations and other media on the host's screen can be viewed and participants can also message each other. In Bible classes, all can comment if they wish and children in Bible classes can show the teacher any work they have done. Since they are closed meetings, they can be used for a members only gathering such as a business meeting, as was done recently by the Macquarie church in Sydney. There is a time limit and number limit on free meetings but the cost for extending these is minimal.

Skype calls where those involved can see and hear each other have been used for worship by some churches such as Heidelberg West in Melbourne. Skype has the benefit of having closed captions on the screen so what is spoken is typed on the screen. This enables deaf brethren to follow what is being said in any lessons and worship. That congregation is also producing videos of Bible lessons with young people signing in Auslan for deaf brethren.

Some churches have used **YouTube** meetings for worship. These can be

accessed by anyone who knows the name of the church, unless the account lockout is chosen, in which case only selected ones can view it. Anyone with a Gmail account can automatically set up a YouTube account, others can also set up accounts. Only the person who has the account can post the meeting and be seen and heard and it is recorded so it remains on YouTube and can be viewed later by others,

Where a church has a **Facebook** account, meetings can be screened live on that medium, organised by the administrators of the account. The recorded video can remain on the site and viewed by others later.

All of the above can be supplemented by previously sent **emails** to intended participants with lesson outlines, visual aids, activity sheets, Power point presentations, etc.

Since I am not a technology expert, any detailed information you need should be sought from someone in-the-know, who will be half my age or younger!

CALENDAR

May 1st-3rd

**Drama of Scripture Course @
Belmore Rd, Melbourne
CANCELLED**

May 1st-4th

**50-n-Over Retreat @
Kurrajong, NSW
CANCELLED**

May 29th-31st

**Youth & Young Adult Camp
Soul @ Long Point, NSW
CANCELLED**

July 15th-19th

**Macquarie Lectureship @
Macquarie, Sydney
CANCELLED**

September 27th

**Family Seminar @
Campbelltown, NSW**

December 27th-January 1st

**Camp Challenge @ Tahmoor,
NSW**