

2024 Assembly Key Points from the Assembly 14-15 June

Text of email dated sent by **Steve Bartlett, Director of Ministries and Allen Sibley, Assembly Council Chair**



Hi Everyone,

Friday and Saturday 14-15 June was The Gathering, incorporating the Annual Assembly. Almost 500 people from 168 churches were part of The Gathering on at least one of those days, either at the Macquarie Park main venue or at a regional venue. Thanks to everyone who was part of this time together!

There was much presented, discussed and decided over these 2 days.

Keynote sessions were shared by Mark Wilson (National Ministries Director of Australian Baptist Ministries) on Friday, and Kirsten & Jamie Long (pastors at Epping Baptist Church) on Saturday. Both of these talks were inspiring and encouraging – you can view them again [HERE](#)

The following people were elected to various positions:

To Assembly Council:

Allyson Beddoe (previously an Appointed Member)

To Morling College Council:

Stephen Welsh

To the Baptist Property Trust:

Richard Brading and David Evans

We thank each of these people for being willing to serve and pray God's blessing on them as they continue in their roles.

On Friday:

- 3 churches were welcomed in as newly Affiliated Churches.

- 19 Accreditation Candidates were approved to proceed to Accreditation, and a further 7 pastors had their accreditation transferred in to the Association.
- We heard stories from across the movement of how God is at work. From 17 churches planted, to hundreds of leaders trained, to new regional initiatives, to the ongoing vision of Morling College and the redevelopment of the campus at Macquarie Park, it was hugely encouraging. You can see some of the stories [HERE](#)

The assembly also dealt with a number of AGM matters including receiving the Annual Report, the financial statements and approving the Church Partnership Support Budget goal of \$1,550,000.

Annual Report
Videos

On Saturday, arising from the Way Forward Motion agreed to at last year's Annual Assembly and as part of our process of discernment regarding support for Baptist Values, Affiliation and Marriage, significant time was given to discussion and voting on the related Processes for Churches and Pastors. These were recommended by Assembly Council, following a year of consultation and preparation. You can find all the documentation [HERE](#).

The Processes for Churches and Pastors, as well as consequential changes to our Ministry Affirmation Guidelines and Code of Ethics and Conduct, were passed unamended with strong majorities of 80% or more.

Alongside this, all amendments to the [Constitution](#) proposed by Assembly Council and Morling College Council were also passed, with majorities greater than 90%.

A motion to amend the Constitution to increase to two-thirds the majority required to make changes to the Association's Constitution was brought by Canberra Baptist Church. After a strongly supported amendment (77%) to increase to two-thirds the majority required to pass this motion, the motion itself did not pass (54% support).

A further motion from Canberra Baptist to increase to two-thirds the majority required for assembly to disaffiliate a church also did not pass (25% support).

Assembly Council now needs to implement the processes agreed to at Assembly, and continue dialogue across our movement as it does so. Given the significant workload in the months leading up to this Assembly, and the time now needed to set up the processes, it is not anticipating any conversations with churches or pastors will commence before late September. Based on the timeframes required in the process documents, Assembly Council will not be bringing any related recommendations at the November 2024 Assembly.

As we now move forward with the decisions made by Assembly, it is also very important we continue to acknowledge that for some of us, the decisions taken will have been difficult and painful. Let's continue to be in prayer for one another at this time.

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Romans 12:10-12

In Christ,
Steve Bartlett, Director of Ministries
Allen Sibley, Assembly Council Chair

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