



Baptist Union
of Victoria



may 2021

members' pack

together *on mission*

You are invited to attend our BUUV May 2021 Members' Dinner.

Please visit buv.com.au/membersdinner to register

INFORMATION PACK

BUV Members' Dinner

May 21st 2021, 6:00pm sharp

Karralyka Centre
Mines Rd, Ringwood VIC 3134

Dear Member of Assembly,

We welcome you as an Ordained BUV Minister or nominated Delegate of your Baptist Church, Faith Community, Microchurch or Agency, to participate in our May 2021 Members' Meeting. We prioritise the coming together in association to share and discern God's movement and will amongst us as Baptists in Victoria. Thank you for choosing to invest yourself and your time in participating and representing others at this Members' Meeting.

We recognise that there is time spent in preparation, reading and praying over the papers, and engaging with your church community in discussing questions and issues prior to the meeting. It takes effort, but we believe that as we see things move and change in response to our collective discernment, we can move forward together in our mission to advance the Kingdom of God.

This year, we aim to and are looking forward to meeting together again in person but will still need to exercise caution and observe COVIDsafe recommendations – **this will mean some changes to the way the event is facilitated.**

- In line with Government health advice, please refrain from attending if you have any of the following symptoms – sore throat, cough, fever or shortness of breath - or have been in contact with anyone who has recently had COVID-19.
- Karralyka Centre will require you to scan in via QR code at the door.
- Rather than queuing to be checked off at tables and issued with ballot papers in a tight foyer area, you will be asked to move directly into the auditorium where you can mingle before taking your seat.
- You will need to have your event ticket scanned at the auditorium door – please ensure you have your digital or printed QR code from your ticket available. This is issued by our ticketing system once you have registered (sent by email from order@humanitix.com - please check all email boxes)
- Due to venue and food handling recommendations, finger food will not be provided
- **Voting will take place online at the event - you will need access to the email you registered with on your own device - smart phone, iPad or lap top computer.**

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU PAY FOR YOUR TICKET TO MEMBERS DINNER IN ADVANCE

Register at buv.com.au/membersdinner

Registrations close on Monday 17th May, 2021

If COVID conditions or Government restrictions change before May, we will exercise caution and respond accordingly, advising you by email.

We look forward to connecting with you again in person.

Members' Dinner Proudly Supported By:



DINNER PROGRAM

5.30-6.00	Registration
6.00	Welcome & Acknowledgment of Country Worship Bible Reading & Opening Prayer
6.20	Recognition and Welcome of new BUV Communities of Faith
6.40	Meet our 2021 Ordinands
6.55	Grace & Dinner
7.30	Agency Profile - 'Beyond COVID'- Baptist Camping, Baptcare
8.00	Assembly Meeting and Voting Appointments - Union Council Chair, Whitley Principal 2020 BUV Support Hub Financials Annual Report
8.15	BUV 2021 Strategic Direction BUV staff update
8.45	Discussion and Discernment Topic: Welcoming Communities/ Who is my Neighbour?
9.35	Declaration of Results & Closing Prayer

BUSINESS PAPERS

Union Council Appointments - UNION COUNCIL CHAIR

Jo-Anne Bradshaw

BA GradDipVET MEd CAHRI GAICD



Resolution: That Assembly elect Jo-Anne Bradshaw as Chair of the Baptist Union of Victoria.

Nominated by: Union Council

Voting by ballot: Simple majority required.

"I am passionate about the advancement of our Baptist movement in Victoria and beyond. We are a movement of over 253 churches, a theological college, schools, aged care homes, camping, financial services, community care, social enterprises and missional communities, the list goes on. The opportunity we have to live out the gospel in our communities is immense. Working together we can better serve our communities and live out the nature of the Kingdom of God.

As Chair of Union Council, I see my role as enabling the ministry of our movement, to serve the growth and vision of our Baptist family. God is at work amongst us and I am excited for Him to continue to use me in this leadership role."

Jo Bradshaw has been a member of Union Council since October 2012 and is the current longest serving member. She was appointed Acting Chair in 2015 during previous Chair Trevor Spicer's illness, and was made permanent Chair in 2016. She also chairs the Nominations Committee and Council Development Committee. During her time as Chair, Jo has actively participated in the selection and appointment of the Whitley Principal, Rev Dr René Erwich, and the Head of Finance and Administration Debbie Uy; conducted the review and reappointment of the Director of Mission and Ministries, Rev Daniel Bullock; reviewed the complex governance documents of the BUV and introduced a new Constitution providing clarity and enabling the smooth and effective functioning of the Union to achieve its purposes.

Jo previously worked as a consultant to the BUV heading up the Stipend Review Group and developed the "Guidelines for Healthy Church-Pastor Relationships". She has also worked as a consultant for Whitley College and Global Interaction in policy development and for Baptist Camping and numerous Baptist churches as an HR Advisor.

Jo is a Human Resources and Organisational Development professional with over 25 years' experience in leadership development, performance management, talent management, organisational culture and climate, skills training and managing both learning and development and generalist HR functions. Jo has well-developed skills in HR strategy development, facilitation, coaching and mentoring staff at all levels to improve performance. Jo has broad industry experience having worked in the banking and finance, retail, health, hospitality and telecommunications industries as well as the not-for-profit sector (local government, schools, charities and churches).

Jo has been actively involved in Baptist churches her whole life, coming from a rich heritage of Baptist families. She is the granddaughter of Baptist Minister Rev Arnold Moore and the daughter of Boyne Alley a previous long serving Chair of BUV Executive Council. She is married to Rev Derek Bradshaw, who established the social enterprise church plant Now and Not Yet Café in Warrandyte where they both currently serve. They have been married 26 years and have four children.

BUSINESS PAPERS

Union Council Appointments - WHITLEY COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

Rev Professor René Erwich

Resolution: That Assembly appoint René Erwich to the Special Position of Principal of Whitley College for a period of 3 years.

Nominated by: BUV Union Council and Whitley College Council

Voting by ballot: Two-thirds majority required.



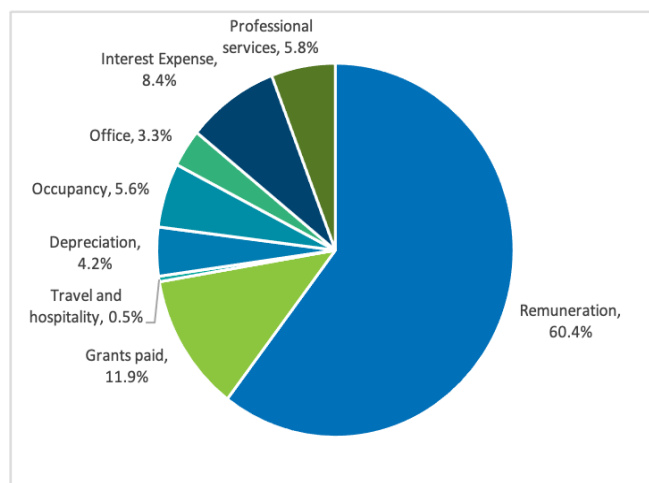
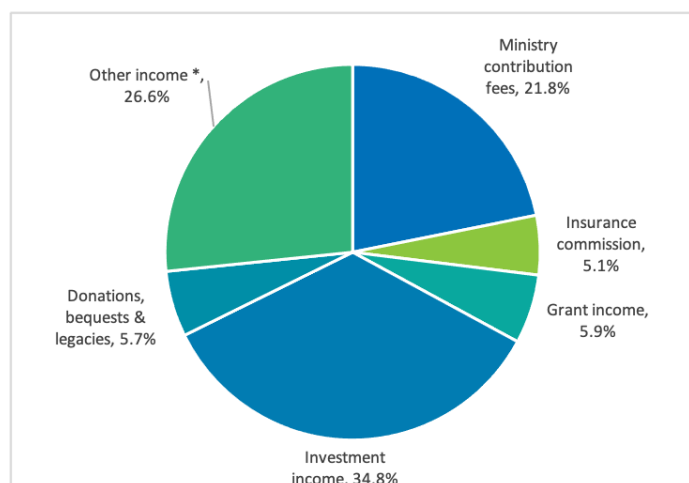
Rev Prof René Erwich was appointed Principal of Whitley College in 2017 after working as a research professor in Practical Theology in the Netherlands for a number of years. His focus in teaching and research is always on the intersection of faith, religious practices and society. The driving motivation behind his work in preaching, teaching and writing is around creating connections and integration of the realities of today's world with the realities of the Gospel of the Kingdom. He is highly interested in new forms of church, theology and media, human sexuality and theology and supervised learning. Dr Erwich is an ordained Baptist minister and a registered pastoral supervisor. He is married to Christa Eijer and together they have four children.

BUV 2020 FINANCIALS

2020 Operational Financial Summary Snapshot

The 2020 operational activities of the BUV were heavily impacted by the summer bushfire appeal and of course Covid-19. Funds raised from the bushfire appeal totalled \$588,408 and Government assistance received in the form of Jobkeeper and other grants totalled \$848,500. These unbudgeted receipts combined with savings in costs realised an operating surplus of \$817,022 which is \$1,323,648 better than the original budget. Of the total bushfire appeal funds received, \$326,220 in grants have been distributed up to the end of December 2020 in support of families and communities affected by this tragedy.

	2020 Actual	2020 Budget
INCOME		
Ministry contribution fees	1,499,975	1,417,500
Insurance commission	350,756	313,632
Grant income	408,515	437,092
Investment income	2,389,518	2,890,563
Donations, bequests & legacies	389,477	313,501
Other income *	1,828,466	404,604
Total Income	6,866,707	5,776,892
EXPENDITURE		
Remuneration	3,651,126	3,722,393
Grants paid	722,702	417,230
Travel and hospitality	28,600	406,444
Depreciation	255,380	309,000
Occupancy	337,327	458,562
Office	198,081	191,340
Interest Expense	505,399	412,984
Professional services	351,070	365,569
Total Expenditure	6,049,685	6,283,522
Excess/ (shortfall)	817,022	(506,630)
 *Other Income		
Government Grants Covid-19 related	848,500	
Bushfire Appeal	588,408	
BFS Dividend	128,548	
Other	263,010	
Total	1,828,466	



Overview of 2021 Budget

	2021 Budget	2020 Budget
INCOME	5,199,063	5,776,892
EXPENDITURE	6,482,288	6,283,522
Excess/(shortfall)	(1,283,225)	(506,630)
Church Dev Fund	228,919	140,156
Bushfire Appeal	113,148	0
Adjusted Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(941,158)	(366,474)

Budget Assumptions

- The 2021 budget will essentially support the same activities as in 2020
- Cash & term investments to earn 0.99%
- JB Were investment income assumed at 2.93%
- Salary and wages rate increase 0.57%
- The 2020 grants budget is subsidised by \$228,919 from the capital of the Church Development Fund
- Balance of bushfire appeal funds to be distributed in 2021 totals \$113,148

Income

- Budgeted income for 2021 decreases 10% (577K) from the 2020 budget. This is mainly due to dividend income decreases \$505K reflecting pessimistic investment outlook

Expenses

- Budgeted expenses for 2021 have increased 3.2% (\$199K) from the 2020 budget.
- Remuneration savings due to reduction of 1.6 full-time equivalent heads \$131K
- Increased depreciation costs due to completion of renovations at 1193 Toorak Rd \$85K

2021 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In 2021, the BUV Support Hub Strategic Direction remains focussed on 4 main areas: Mission, Health, Leadership and Relationship. A new digital lens has been added to our Innovation, Cultural and Younger demographic lenses to ensure we look at our strategic focus areas from significant viewpoints.



In 2021, some of the significant projects we are focussing on are:

1. **Mission / Innovation - Microchurch network**
2. **Health - Flourishing Church Survey**
3. **Relationship - Together on Mission – Church Planting Partnership Programme**
4. **Leadership - Creating Safe Spaces**

BUV STAFF UPDATE

Since our last meeting in October 2020, the BUV Support Hub has had the following Staff movements:

We have farewelled:

- Leanne Hill from the Mission Catalyst team
- Allison Lynn and Sulari Neilsen from the Global Interaction Vic state office

We have welcomed:

- Danny Ang to the Mission Catalyst team (Grassroots Placemakers)
- Cassandra Chiong to the Communications team

2021 ORDINANDS



Than Zuala Khomun

Falam Baptist Church Melbourne Inc



Cameron Healey

Albert Park Baptist Church



Norman Chan

Syndal Baptist Church



Byangsuk (Noah) Lee

Mill Park Baptist Church



Ghay Moo Moo

Kangaroo Flat Karen Baptist Church



David van Wynen

Point Cook Community Baptist Church



Simon Burnett

Kyneton Baptist Church

2021 ORDINANDS



Lian Hlun Zakulh

Lutuv Baptist Church



James wakow Kun

Doveton Baptist Church



Jared McLeod

Manifold Heights Baptist Church



Toli Morgan

Eastern Hills Community Church



Siang Nawl Thlaceu

Melbourne Immanuel Baptist Church



Toby Baxter

Crossway Baptist Church



Lance Blythe

NewHope Baptist Church

DISCUSSION & DISCERNMENT TOPIC

WELCOMING COMMUNITIES/ WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

Rev Gayle Hill - Head of Mission Catalyst, BUV
Geoff Maddock - State Director, Global Interaction

As we embark upon a season within our Baptist churches of focusing on the concept of “Who is my neighbour?” through this Members Dinner discussion and also a devotion series on this topic, we are encouraged and assured that there are theological, biblical, conceptual, and traditional precedents that abound to instruct the church. Throughout this document and the devotion series, we will continually highlight scripture to understand the expansive heart God has for all humanity, with a particularity for the stranger and neighbour.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY:

To begin our understanding of God’s particularity towards ‘the other’ or neighbour, requires a strong theological foundation. This is supplied to us by the early church mothers and fathers in their attempt to maintain the monotheism of their faith in the midst of persecution. The doctrine of the Trinity has become for us a foundation for our ongoing actions of faith and witness in the world, as it was for them.

“The doctrine of the Trinity is ultimately a practical doctrine with radical consequences for Christian life...**it is essentially relational**...could be described as par excellence a theology of relationship, which explores the mysteries of love, relationship, personhood and communion within the frame of God’s self-revelation in the person of Christ and the activity of the Spirit...it is not an abstract teaching about God apart from us, but about God’s life with us and our life with each other **and the other**.¹”

There is no hierarchy within the Trinity, only a mutuality of indwelling persons, distinct yet in unity, and this translates to God’s mission, love, and care for all humanity. God is social, not solitary, says Stanley Granz². That “God is love” and that love is the essential essence of trinitarian character, becomes a guiding principle in how we are to relate to one another and to neighbour.

Many scriptures reassure us and our actions in relation to this doctrine, but 2 Corinthians 13:14, highlights both the mutuality and sending character of the Trinity:

“...may the **grace** of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the **love** of God, and the **fellowship** of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

Here grace, love and fellowship are the hallmarks of the Trinity and essential to their sending character. A catchcry for today has become, “God is as God does, and what God does is love”.³

¹ Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), 14-15. “and the other” is an insertion from the author/s.

² Stanley J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 23-57

³ John R. Franke, *Missional Theology*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Publishing, 2020), 8

GOD IS LOVE

We realise from Scripture that ultimately, the characteristic of love remains preeminent¹. God's essential character is love and this is exemplified in the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The revelation of God in Jesus Christ as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and the actions of Jesus of Nazareth allow us to say that God is as God does, and what God does is love...God is known through what God has done, and what God has done emerges from the person of Jesus Christ and the witness of Scripture. What we see in the life of Jesus and narratives of Scripture is that God is the One who loves. Therefore, as we seek to know the character of God in response to the action of divine self-revelation, we must seek to understand the fundamental biblical assertion that "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16).²

This central understanding of the character of the Trinity, assures us that God has been and will be in an active, loving relationship with the world. God's love for the world is not uninvolved and unmoved but is the love of one who is actively and passionately involved in the ongoing drama of life in the world, and who lavishly pours out this love in Jesus Christ.³

THE BIBLICAL MANDATE TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOUR

The biblical mandate to love our neighbour sits at the very heart of our tradition. Leviticus 19:18 (the fountainhead of Judeo-Christian ethics) could not be clearer:

'You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons (or daughters) of your own people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the LORD.'

In the New testament we understand that the central call to love is contained in the Great Commandment which includes neighbour.

In Matthew 22:36-40 the Scriptures say,

'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?' And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend on all the Law and the Prophets.'

Perhaps Romans 13:8-10 summarizes all we have been saying thus far:

'Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.'

Our various Baptist communities are most faithful to the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, when we practice Christian love. As Baptists, we especially celebrate and treasure difference. This was written into our movement by way of our historical forebears. Knowing this history and remembering our particular gift to the Christian movement – to honour difference expressed

¹ 1 Corinthians 13:13

² Ibid, 9

³ Ibid, 13

through freedom of conscience – becomes inspiring examples of love. We can hold otherness, difference, and diversity as assets for our movement, not liabilities. This is not easy, but we have the unique resources of the Triune God to cultivate the distinct kind of love the scriptures call us to. Christian love will not only shape us as disciples of Jesus, but it will also open our lives to missional opportunities as well as involve our communities in God's transformation of the world around us.

When Jesus was asked by the young lawyer how to inherit eternal life, Jesus responded with the Great Commandment. Desiring to justify himself he asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbour?"¹

Surprisingly, Jesus continues to radically challenge the lawyer with a story about the ones who should be modelling, God is as God does, and what God does is love, but fail to do so. Instead, a stranger, a Samaritan, models God to the suffering traveller, and becomes included in the paradoxical and eternal story of the radical hospitality and welcome of God.

WELCOME, HOSPITALITY AND JUSTICE

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus instructs us to "go and do likewise". This is aligned with our catchcry, **God is as God does, and what God does is love.**

One major way the church (Gods gathered and sent people) demonstrates this love is through the practices of welcome and hospitality. And this should include a particularity to those who do not have the same opportunities and inclusions within our culture. This is the justice that God expects from those of us who have been blessed by so much. According to Jesus' parable, those with "neighbour" status do not consist only of those living in houses either side of yours. The neighbour does not even stop at the limits of your suburb or your state.

Our "neighbours" are anyone within tangible reach of our compassion.²

Good neighbours are informed about those issues which affect others. Good neighbours pray intelligently, advocate for those who cannot stand for themselves, give money strategically and live justly. Good neighbours love greatly, without exception.³

Following are just a few of the abundant Scriptures that caution us to extend love, welcome, hospitality and justice to our neighbours and in particular, to those who are different to us:

'He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.'

— Deuteronomy 10:18

'He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honour.'

— Samuel 2:8

The Spirit of the LORD is on me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed.'

— Luke 4:18

¹ Luke 10:25-37

² www.sarmy.org.au/en/Social/JustSalvos/About-Us/Theology/Who-is-my-Neighbour/

³ www.sarmy.org.au/en/Social/JustSalvos/About-Us/Theology/Who-is-my-Neighbour/

Because hospitality is basic to who we are as followers of Jesus, every aspect of our lives can be touched by its practice. Imagine if we use hospitality as a lens through which to examine our homes, churches, jobs, schools, health care, and politics? We may just experience the true reign of God in our midst. Can we make the places which shape our lives and in which we spend our days more hospitable? Do current practices within these settings distort hospitality or shut out strangers?

Christine D. Pohl makes this challenging statement:

Occasionally, churches embrace a model of hospitality to strangers in an attempt to get past racial, ethnic, and other distinctions. A gracious spirit of welcome, equality, and care can help in efforts to heal racial divisions and previous exclusions. Generous and steady hospitality, practiced among believers from different backgrounds, can be the beginning of significant reconciliation. However, such hospitality is more complex than welcoming “those people into our church” or “making room at our table.” In the church, especially, it is not our table to which we welcome people; **it is God’s table to which we come as equals**. We may act as hosts in particular churches where we need to welcome individual persons, but as the household of God, the situation is more complicated. When people from minority groups or those with disabilities have not been present in churches of the dominant culture, congregational responses may need to include repentance. A church may need to acknowledge that had it been a responsible steward of God’s household, these new “guests” would have had an equal place in God’s house from the beginning.¹

Following are some further links to resources that may help to extend this call to love neighbour:

- www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2016/september-web-exclusives/hospitality-matters.html
- www.nytimes.com/2020/12/24/opinion/jesus-christ-christmas-incarnation.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share
- www.sarmy.org.au/en/Social/JustSalvos/About-Us/Theology/Who-is-my-Neighbour/

QUESTIONS FOR TABLE DISCUSSION

1. How would you describe your church’s welcoming culture? Does everyone in your church community feel equally welcome?
2. Is hospitality to neighbour a natural part of your community life? What would a neighbour experience attending your church for the first time?
3. How does your church encourage members engaging with and loving your neighbour in their street, suburb, workplace and community?
4. Are there barriers for minority groups to be welcomed in your community?

¹ Christine D. Pohl. Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition (Kindle Locations 1775-1786). Kindle Edition.