

FAQs

CCH in denomination

Who are CRC Churches International?

CRC Churches is an Australian Pentecostal denomination that looks and feels remarkably like our church, CCH. Many of us are familiar with Bill Vasilakis (the Australian National Chairman of CRC Churches), Barry Chant (the founding President of Tabor College, Australia), Bill Brill (Pastor of Beachside Christian Fellowship, Nelson Bay), Grant Redman (Pastor of New Horizons Community Church, St Marys), Con Keros (Pastor of Seaview Community Church, Adelaide)... and of course, myself! These are all CRC Pastors. You can check out their website (www.crcchurches.org) if you wish to learn more about them. I also have several books that describes the CRC Churches as a denomination. I'm happy to lend them out if you're interested (drop Caroline a note caroline@cch.net.au).

Why are we looking at this now?

The need to make some proactive steps in this direction are pretty well outlined in my recent Pastoral Letter. If you didn't get it, it's still available online. Go to <http://www.cch.net.au> if you want to read it. The letter highlights the reasons why, but you may still want to know "Why now?" It's a question that we've been kicking around at Eldership level for perhaps the last two years. In that time, we've continued to grow, and there have been some pressing issues that have brought it finally on the table for the whole church. Some of it is simple logistics, like the clash we have in April with two of our weddings happening on the same day. (I'm the only celebrant at CCH.) But mostly, it's simply a matter of it needing to come on the agenda at some point, and now is a fine time.

Do we lose anything in joining with CRC Churches?

This question is addressed within my Pastoral Letter. Go to <http://www.cch.net.au> if you want to read it. Without going into all of that again, it's worthwhile reiterating that we lose nothing in joining CRC Churches and only gain. Our leadership structure, our style of ministry, our vision and mission, our strategy, our beliefs – all of these remain unchanged. There is, however, a financial obligation we would be embracing. Levies on churches are calculated at 2.5% of annual Tithes Income. For us, this would not include monies that we designate for Missions or Building. The levy funds national initiatives, legal supports, missions supports, training ventures, church planting, conference attendance for pastors in remote regions.

Do we have to change our name?

No. CCH is who we are, it's who we remain. In fact, most CRC Churches don't call themselves by the denominational tag. Names like our own are common.

What are the benefits?

There are many benefits ranging from increasing our effectiveness in Impacting Communities for Christ; opening up opportunities for a wider expression of ministry of our gifted people; partnering with other churches in training, church planting and missions; and deriving support in the business affairs of the church.

What if some of us feel uncertain about affiliating with a denomination?

A couple of our people have had bad experiences with denominational churches in the past. For that reason, we've endeavoured to give opportunity for as much dialogue as possible to work through those issues. Already, I've had dozens of people speak to me or write to me expressing their enthusiasm and confidence in the strategic nature of the move, and also an appreciation of the way that the process has been handled.

When will this come into effect?

Having gone through the process of writing to the church, holding the General Information Afternoon, and facilitating discussion across the church, the Elders are proposing that early in the New Year, we call a special meeting of the Church Council and at that point we will make an official decision.

Membership

We haven't had membership before, why now?

At Elders, we've recognised the need to have a formal process by which people can declare their commitment to CCH. We didn't need it in earlier days when we were much smaller than we are now, but given our size, the Elders need a mechanism by which to know who they are responsible before God for. We've also realised that the church as a whole needs a way of celebrating the growth that Jesus is bringing to us with the regular flow in of new people. And it's not something that we see as a major deal anyway. All of us who are married were eager to declare publicly our commitment to our partners on our wedding day. This will provide a great opportunity for new people to declare their commitment to this part of Jesus' church.

Who can be a member?

Basically, anyone who loves Jesus and loves CCH!

Will I be treated differently if I'm not a member?

Absolutely not. Everyone who comes to our church is a valued part of our church. You'll still be able to serve on any of our ministry teams. Understandably, we wouldn't want our senior ministry leaders NOT be official members of the church, but outside that, nothing would be different for you. Membership doesn't give a person voting rights or anything like that. It's not the way we govern ourselves. (There is one occasion when a Member would have a right to vote, and thereby have a right not available to a non-Member. That would be in the event that if we were a CRC Church and we were for some reason wanting to pull out of that association.) So for the most part, life remains the same.

I've been at CCH for years. Do I have to take out Membership?

No. What we're proposing is that unless a person writes to the Elders (email, Welcome Card, letter) to the intent that they DON'T want to be a member, we'll just assume that everyone who's on our Database is in. This will take effect on Sunday February 3 (first week of Term 1).

Any other questions? Email query@cch.net.au and watch this space for the response.