

Proposed Rivers Constitution

Version 1.0

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Section 1 — Name and Introduction

This Church is known as Rivers Baptist Church (subsequently referred to as “this Church” in this document) and is affiliated with the Baptist Union of Queensland.

This Church community consists of:

- ❖ members who have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and have been baptised by immersion in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- ❖ other persons associated with this Church who are not members and who either attend worship services or are involved in the ministries of this Church.

In addition, members must:

- ❖ accept doctrines as set out in section 2 of this constitution as part of their Christian belief
- ❖ accept the ministry statements as set out in section B2 of the church handbook.

More detail about membership requirements is set out in section 4 of this constitution and section B4 of the church handbook.

It should be noted that this constitution relates to other documents, namely the church handbook and the church manual.

As a general principle, the constitution contains those matters affecting the life of this Church which are unlikely to change very often. Any changes or amendments will be subject to the requirements of section 11 of this constitution.

The church handbook contains items which have strategic medium-term significance (e.g. 2–5 years) and can be more easily amended by a motion at a duly constituted members meeting. Details of the process for any changes are set out in section B10 of the church handbook.

The church manual is a collation of policies and procedures covering the day-to-day running of this Church. It will in general contain documents, developed by the staff or ministry leaders, which have been submitted to the board for approval on behalf of the members. A copy of the church manual will be held in the church office for reference by any member who requests it. This document will be treated as a controlled document and any changes or amendments will be included in the document with a notation of when and by whom the changes were made.

Section 2 — Objectives and Statement of Faith

This Church exists to advance Christianity through worship and service activities, as stated more fully in section B2 of the church handbook.

While it is recognised that the Scriptures are the only sufficient rule of faith and practice, this Church accepts the following statement of faith as a summary of biblical beliefs for the guidance of its members.

2.1 About God

There is one true, living God, who is Spirit, light and love. He is the creator and ruler of the universe, including everyone and everything in it, who is absolutely holy, infinitely good and great, all-powerful, all-present, all-knowing and personal. He has eternally existed in three persons, the Holy Trinity i.e. the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These are co-equal and are one God. (*Genesis 1:1, 26, 27; Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; John 4:24; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 1:5, 4:8 and 16*)

2.2 About Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second person of the Trinity. He came to Earth and took on humanity while still fully God and is now forever also fully human. This incarnation was achieved through a miraculous conception and virgin birth. Jesus lived a sinless human life in perfect obedience to the Father and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin and a substitute for us at His death on the cross. By the Holy Spirit's power, God the Father raised Him bodily from the dead, conquering Satan, sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and sits at God's right hand, where He intercedes on our behalf. He will return to Earth bodily to claim His own and visibly reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (*Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22, 23; John 1:1–5, 14:10–30; Acts 1:9–11; Romans 1:3–4; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4; 1 Timothy 6:14–15; Titus 2:13, 3:4–7; Hebrews 4:14–15*)

2.3 About the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God with the Father and the Son. He is present in the world to convince people of their sin and need for Jesus Christ. Upon a person's repentance from sin to a life with God through faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in the individual. He is the gift of eternal life, the promise of the Father. The Holy Spirit provides believers with power for living a godly life, understanding spiritual truth and guidance in doing what pleases the Father. In Him reside all the spiritual gifts necessary to build up the Church. He exercises these gifts through believers as they submit to Him. Christians are to be filled with the Holy Spirit and live daily under His control. (*John 14:16–17, 16:7–13; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16–17, 12:4–6; 2 Corinthians 3:16–17; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 1:13, 5:18*)

2.4 About the Bible

The Bible is God's self-communication in written form to us. It is a historical book written by human authors, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is the revelation of the objective Word of God regardless of our subjective response to it. It is the supreme source of truth and the final authority for Christian belief and living. It is not an end in itself but the means by which we come to a knowledge of Christ. Because God inspired it, it is the truth without error. (*Psalm 12:6, 119:105 and 160; Proverbs 30:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:10–13; 1 Timothy 2:4, 4:3; 2 Timothy 1:13, 2:25, 3:7 and 16; Hebrews 10:26; 2 Peter 1:20–21*)

2.5 About People

People are the supreme object of God's creation. They are made in His image to be His representatives and like Him in character. Although all human beings still display evidence of their divine creation, they are marred by an attitude of disobedience towards God called sin. Sin is the irrational assertion of independence from the Creator, tainting the good in people and in their thoughts, words and deeds. From the moment the human race rebelled (fell), this attitude of independence from God has caused alienation from self, neighbour and the environment. This alienation means that every individual is hopelessly lost and destined for an eternity in hell, the second death. (*Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3–6; Isaiah 53:6a, 59:1 and 2; Romans 3:23, 5:12, 8:19–22; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Revelation 20:14–15*)

2.6 About Eternity

All people are created as eternal beings. Heaven and hell are real places of eternal existence. After death, there will be a resurrection of the body and a final judgment of all people by the Lord Jesus Christ. There will then be the creation of new heavens and earth where sin will no longer exist. All will either exist eternally in hell, alienated and separated from God because of personal sin, or eternally in fellowship with God through repentance of sin and salvation in Christ. (*Matthew 18:8, 25:41 and 46; John 3:16; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:42–48; Hebrews 9:27; 1 John 2:25, 5:11–13; Revelation 20:15*)

2.7 About Salvation

Salvation begins for the individual when that person receives the free gift of eternal life. Eternal life is the very life of Jesus Christ Himself resident in the individual through the person of the Holy Spirit. This occurs upon repentance from sin to a life with God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone and is declared in believer's baptism. This gift of God's grace and mercy is what Jesus Christ has made possible by His perfect life, His atoning death, His powerful resurrection, His glorious ascension, His ongoing priesthood and His certain return. Salvation is assured by the grace and commitment power of God. The Holy Spirit provides power over sin as a person lives in dependence upon and in obedience to Him. (*John 10:29, 14:6; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10 and 14; 1 Peter 1:3–5*)

2.8 About Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only two ordinances, which were given by Jesus Christ as recorded in Scripture, to be observed by the Church till His return.

Baptism is in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is by full immersion of believers in water upon profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a declaration of union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection and an initiation into the Body of Christ, the Church.

The Lord's Supper is a remembrance of and thanksgiving for the sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is to be regularly practised until He comes. It relates to forgiveness of sin, present sanctification and future glorification

in Jesus Christ and is a sign of the believer's continuing fellowship in the Body of Christ, the Church. (*Matthew 26:26–30, 28:19–20; Mark 14:13–26; Luke 22:14–20; Acts 2:41, 8:12, 18:8; Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 11:17–34; Colossians 2:12*)

2.9 About the Christian Church

Christ alone is the head of the Church. No other person, group or religious organisation can profess to be the head of the Church. The Church is the instrument which displays the redemptive activity of God. The Church is composed of those who, having repented of their sin and in faith accepted salvation through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ by grace, have been born of the Spirit and thus placed into the Body of Christ. (*Acts 9:31; Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 1:22–23, 4:1–16, 5:25–27; Colossians 1:18–24*)

2.10 About Faith and Practice

The Bible (Scripture) is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. Where the Scripture is silent, each believer must exercise liberty of conscience in line with the principles of God's Word and in the light of the One to whom all are ultimately accountable. (*Matthew 4:4; 1 Corinthians 8; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; Hebrews 5:13–14*)

Section 3 — Ordinances (Baptism and the Lord's Supper)

The divine ordinances to be observed by this Church will be baptism and the Lord's Supper (communion). They must be observed as set out in section B2 of the church handbook.

Section 4 — Membership

4.1 Membership Admission

A person may be received into membership of this Church after:

- ❖ profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour
- ❖ being baptised by full immersion as a believer
- ❖ submission of a written application which states acceptance by the applicant (also called the proposed member) of:
 - the statement of faith as set out in section 2 of this constitution
 - the ministry statements set out in section B2 of the church handbook
 - the partnership commitment as set out in appendix C of the church handbook
- ❖ having been interviewed in the manner prescribed by section B4 of the church handbook by two (2) active members of the church
- ❖ meeting any other requirements set out in the church handbook.

After those prerequisites have been satisfied the board must consider the application of the proposed member at its next convenient meeting. Following the guidelines set out in section B4 of the church handbook, the board must decide to either accept or reject the applicant as a member. The board must also, if the applicant is admitted as a member, decide which category of membership will apply to the member.

The board must notify the applicant of the outcome of its decision as soon as possible after its decision (and, if the board admits the member, advise of the category to which they have been admitted).

If the board rejects the proposed member's application, there is no right of appeal for the rejected applicant.

Notes:

1. Any of the above steps except for those beginning "profession of faith" and "submission of a written application" may be waived at the discretion of the board for staff being appointed from outside this Church and for staff coming from another Baptist church.
2. The board may approve an application for membership if all the above prerequisites have been satisfied with the exception of being baptised by full immersion as a believer, on the condition that this is carried out prior to the applicant being welcomed into membership.

4.2 Members Rolls

There are five (5) different categories into which members can be classified. They are as follows:

- ❖ **active members:** those members who have reached the age of eighteen (18) years and who are active in the life of this Church by being involved in its ministry. (Detailed requirements for active members are set out in section B4 of the church handbook.)
 - ❖ **junior members:** a person who meets all the requirements of an active member but who is under the age of eighteen (18) years. (Note that in accordance with section 5.5 of this constitution, junior members may attend members meetings, express their opinions under the rules of debate and take part in discussions, but are ineligible to vote.)
 - ❖ **members living away:** members who live out of the local area* and for a reason notified to and approved by the board have not joined a local church where they live and work. For example, members' names may be placed in this category if:
 - they choose to leave their name on our roll while attending a church that is not a Baptist church or
 - there is no local Christian church to attend.
- * Local area is defined as the area within thirty (30) minutes drive of the facility where this church's congregation meets regularly.
- ❖ **members under discipline:** a member who is being dealt with under the disciplinary procedures set out in section 4.4 of this constitution.
 - ❖ **inactive members:** any member who is no longer an active or junior member in the life of this Church (refer to section B4.2 in the church handbook for the requirements of an active member) — for example, a member who is unable to attend regularly and participate fully in the ministry of this Church but who has not yet been approached to discuss and review the status of their membership.

Before classifying a member into a different category of membership, or before removing a person as a member, the board must authorise such a reclassification or removal. The board may delegate this power and responsibility to a membership taskforce which must follow the guidelines set out in section B4 of the church handbook.

The board must maintain rolls of each category of membership and the appearance of a person's name on a particular roll is prima facie evidence of their membership in that category.

4.3 Records

The names and addresses of all members of this Church, with the method and date they were admitted or removed, are to be kept on file in the church office and as part of the church database. This list must be revised at least annually in accordance with the church manual.

The rolls of the different member categories must be published annually and be available for any member to view in the church office. These lists must be treated in a manner which ensures their security as set out in the church manual.

4.4 Discipline

In all cases, the ultimate goal of disciplinary action is to achieve loving reconciliation with God and people and restoration to the fellowship of this Church.

After due process, the board may cancel the membership of a member, or place a member into the category of members under discipline, if:

- ❖ it is of the opinion that a member no longer fulfils the requirements for admission to membership outlined in section 4.1 of this constitution, or
- ❖ for some other reason, it considers that particular conduct or attitudes of the member disqualify them from continued membership.

The board may, on the grounds set out above, by resolution, remove the name of a member from the membership rolls, or move a member from their current roll to the roll of members under discipline.

Before the board acts under the preceding paragraph, the board must give the member a full and fair opportunity to show why the proposed decision should not be made and, in particular, must provide the member with:

- ❖ fourteen (14) days notice of the board meeting at which the matter is to be considered
- ❖ notice of the proposed resolution
- ❖ notice of any evidence to be considered by the board
- ❖ an opportunity to make written submissions to the board in relation to the resolution and any other matter.

If, after considering all representations made by the member, the board decides to make a resolution under the preceding two sub-clauses, the board secretary must give the member a written notice setting out the resolution of the board.

The board will have regard to the principles set out in Matthew 18 in dealing with the disciplinary process and will endeavour to give a member an opportunity for restoration of issues which have led to the disciplinary process. To achieve this, when the board resolves to place a member on the roll of members under discipline, it must explain to that member the processes and actions which the board considers will show the restoration of the member.

The senior pastor is responsible for implementing specific actions agreed with the board and will be at liberty to delegate such actions if considered appropriate.

A member under discipline may have membership privileges withheld for a period decided upon by the board. In instances where a member placed under discipline has genuinely repented and has complied with the requirements of discipline, that person may have their previous rights as a member restored at a time determined by the board.

If the matter of discipline involves the senior pastor either directly or indirectly, the board will be at liberty to appoint a suitable person to undertake specific actions on its behalf in consultation with the Baptist Union of Queensland.

A report on matters of discipline may, at the discretion of the board, be presented at a members meeting stating the nature of the offence (but not necessarily full details) and the steps taken in the disciplinary process.

Should any member being dealt with under these provisions feel that the treatment they have received is unjust, they are entitled to select up to three (3) other active or junior members to petition the board on their behalf. On receipt of this petition, the board must convene a meeting with the concerned parties to discuss and resolve the issue. After this meeting, and after any agreed actions or enquiries are completed, no further action may be taken on the matter by the member subject to the discipline or the petitioners on his or her behalf — that is, there is no other right of appeal for the member.

A report on the petition may, at the discretion of the board, be presented at a members meeting. This report will state the steps taken in dealing with the petition.

Section 5 — Members Meetings

5.1 Authority

Recognising the headship of Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this Church will be governed by its members. Except where matters are specifically delegated to the board, either in this constitution or by resolution of the members, all authority for the transaction of matters affecting this Church is vested in the duly constituted members meeting.

In accordance with the processes and scope set out in this constitution, the church handbook and the church manual, the members appoint the board to fulfil their responsibilities in the management of the activities, business and affairs of this Church. The board must bring the following matters to a members meeting for approval:

- ❖ appointment of active members to a position on the board
- ❖ appointment of the senior pastor
- ❖ appointment of senior staff as outlined in the church handbook
- ❖ major expenditure of church funds on non-budgeted items
- ❖ decisions on changes to ministry statements (refer to church handbook section B2 Ministry Statements)
- ❖ setting of yearly budgets for ministry activities
- ❖ changes to this constitution
- ❖ other matters as outlined in the church handbook.

5.2 Types of Members Meeting

There will be four (4) types of general meeting:

- ❖ annual general meeting
- ❖ regular members meeting
- ❖ special members meeting
- ❖ forum.

An annual general meeting must be held every calendar year.

A minimum of two (2) regular members meetings must be held at approximately even intervals throughout the year.

Special members meetings and forums will be held as required to address specific issues and needs which arise from time to time. Forums will have no decision-making power but are for communication of information and discussion of specific issues.

Notice of all such general meetings must be given in the following manner:

- ❖ by notice in writing (which includes electronic communication such as facsimile and email) to all members, or
- ❖ by publishing a notice in the church newsletter, which is distributed regularly at Sunday worship meetings.

If notice is given only in the latter manner, then the effective date for notice is the first Sunday upon which the newsletter including the notice is distributed.

The members specifically agree that even if they do not personally receive notice of a meeting, they will be deemed to have received notice so long as notice is given in the above manner.

The time periods for notice for various types of meeting are set out in section B5 of the church handbook.

5.3 Conduct of Members Meetings

The board must nominate the chairperson for any general meeting.

Where it is considered necessary, the board may nominate a chairperson for any church organisation meeting.

Meetings are to be held in accordance with the standing orders set out in appendix D of the church handbook.

Printed minutes including an attendance record will be kept for all general meetings except forums. These minutes are to be confirmed as a true and accurate record at the subsequent meeting and prior to any business being dealt with.

5.4 Quorum for General Meetings

The quorum for the annual general meeting, regular members meeting and special members meeting will not be less than twenty per cent (20%) of the active members. No quorum will be required for forums.

5.5 Voting Members

Only active members are entitled to vote at a members meetings in person, or by an absentee vote as set out below. Junior members may attend, express their opinions under the rules of debate and take part in discussions but are ineligible to vote. Other members may attend but not take part in discussions or otherwise participate.

5.6 Absentee Votes

Absentee votes will be accepted in writing for any written motion notified to the members prior to the meeting. If the motion is amended by the meeting, then these votes will be deemed null and void. Votes will be administered in accordance with appendix D in the church handbook.

5.7 Adoption of Motions

Any motion will be decided by active members, both those at the meeting and those casting absentee votes.

Except as otherwise specified in the constitution or church handbook (e.g. for the call of a senior pastor), motions will be deemed passed on the affirmative vote of a majority of active members voting.

Section 6 — Church Leadership

6.1 Overview

Recognising that the final authority for decision making is vested in the members meeting and that this Church is committed to the priesthood of all believers, this Church may appoint members to key ministry and leadership positions in accordance with sections B6 and B7 of the church handbook.

6.2 Church Board

The board is the primary oversight and accountability body of this Church on behalf of the members.

The board's size will be determined by the board according to ministry needs and notified to this Church prior to the annual general meeting. It will, however, consist of a minimum of six (6) elected members, who will be active members prior to being nominated for such a position. The method of election for board members is set out below and in section B6 of the church handbook.

The senior pastor and senior staff (where the board role is included in their ministry description) will automatically be appointed as board members and be part of the eldership team for their term of office, without the need for any additional election process. These staff will not be eligible to function in the role of chairperson of the board.

The general ministry description, call and voting procedures for the positions of senior staff are found in the church handbook.

The quorum for board meetings will not be less than fifty per cent (50%) of the total board members. Also, the minimum number of elected members present must be equal to the number of non-elected members present plus one. Furthermore, no motions will be considered passed unless a majority of board members (i.e. a majority of total board members, not just a majority of those present) have voted in favour of a motion.

6.2.1 Role of Church Board

The board is responsible for:

- ❖ overseeing the spiritual life of this Church
- ❖ direction and vision of this Church
- ❖ aligning finances, facilities, processes and staffing with direction and vision
- ❖ monitoring and evaluating overall ministry of this Church
- ❖ reviewing and refining policies
- ❖ modelling biblical servant leadership
- ❖ oversight of church finances
- ❖ oversight of the discipline process
- ❖ undertaking annual reviews of personal development, resourcing and team function of the senior pastor and senior staff

- ❖ ensuring this Church is complying with the legal and regulatory requirements of the various Government authorities under whose jurisdiction this Church operates.

6.2.2 Election of Board Members (Including Board Elders)

The members have the power to add or remove board members, including those board members functioning in the role of board elder, in accordance with the principles set out in this constitution. Normally, names of persons nominated to the board (following the nomination process set out in section B6 of the church handbook) will be submitted to a ballot for confirmation by a majority of at least three-quarters (3/4) of active members voting at the annual general meeting.

A regular or special members meeting may, however, consider the addition or removal of board members at any time as long as a proper notice of the relevant meeting, specifying the intention to consider that issue, is given in accordance with the constitution. The members may appoint a person as a board member only if the person has been nominated pursuant to the process set out in section B6 of the church handbook.

Nominations for approximately one-third (1/3) of the total number of board members must be called for each year prior to the annual general meeting as set out in section B5 of the church handbook.

The term of a board member will normally (unless otherwise resolved by the members at the relevant meeting) be three (3) years with the position being declared vacant at the end of this term. A board member may renominate for a second term. After this, the board member will stand down for a minimum of twelve (12) months prior to being eligible for re-nomination. However, if stability is required due to changes in staffing or other ministry needs, the board may bring a recommendation to the membership to allow the nomination of a further full or part term for a board member completing their second term. This vote will be a secret ballot carried out prior to the vote for board members and will require a majority of at least three-quarters (3/4) of active members voting to be carried.

Should the number of board members fall below the minimum of six (6), the board may continue to operate provided that the selection process for sufficient replacement board members (to bring the number of board members back to at least six [6]) is in process. The process for replacement is to be as specified in section B6 of the church handbook with the exception of timing for the election and the term of service. The ballot will be taken at a regular members meeting or a special members meeting as appropriate.

When there are less than the minimum six (6) board members, the board may temporarily fill casual vacancies by nominating a person to be a casual board member. A person may be so nominated only on one occasion in any financial year. A person so nominated will be deemed to be a board member, exercising all powers and responsibilities of other board members, but for a period of three (3)

months only. A regular or special members meeting may elect to affirm the board membership of such a casual board member within that period of three (3) months, converting the casual board member's term of service into a full term of three (3) years (or a shorter length as resolved by the members meeting).

6.2.3 Positions on Church Board

6.2.3.1 Officers of the Board

The board must elect from its members a chairperson*, secretary and treasurer, who will be responsible for specific duties as set out in appendix B of the church handbook. This election will be for a period of twelve (12) months and will be an item of business at the first board meeting following the annual general meeting. People elected to those positions, as long as they are still board members, are eligible for re-election to their positions.

* Refer to earlier in section 6.2 re the senior pastor and senior staff not being the chairperson.

6.2.3.2 Board Elders

The board is the primary oversight body of this Church (refer to section 6.2 of this constitution). Part of this oversight is an eldership function, which is performed by the senior pastor, senior staff on the Board and the board elders, who together form the eldership team.

Specific details on the role of board elder and the eldership function, along with nominating and voting procedures, are set out in appendix B and section B6 of the church handbook.

6.2.4 Financial Authority of Church Board

The board is responsible for the general oversight of ministry activities including the expenditure of church funds. Generally such expenditure will be in accordance with the annual church budget as approved by the members at a members meeting.

In the event of unforeseen circumstances arising, the board will have the discretion to authorise expenditure outside of the budget to a limit as set out in section B8.5 of the church handbook.

6.2.5 Discipline and Dismissal of Board Members

If the board is of the opinion that a board member no longer fulfils the moral, legal or functional requirements for the position of board member, then the board may consider the removal of that board member from their position. If the issue is unresolved, the matter can be brought to this Church for a vote after following a process as close as possible to that set out in section 4.4 of this constitution. Any board member who is removed from that position by the action of a members meeting has no right of appeal.

6.2.6 Board Conflict Resolution

Board resolutions will be made by “endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3). However, should there be an impasse within the board that is hampering ministry, the board will be at liberty, without the authority of the members, to request that the Baptist Union of Queensland nominate a moderator to discuss the issue and, under God’s guidance, give advice.

6.3 Senior Pastor

6.3.1 Role of Senior Pastor

The senior pastor, with the board and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, will seek to establish, develop and balance the interrelated aspects of the Church: worship, community and mission.

The senior pastor in a managerial role will oversee the direction of staff who organise and manage the ministry or ministry teams.

6.3.2 Appointment of Senior Pastor

This Church will appoint a senior pastor to lead the ministry of this Church. The senior pastor must be an accredited pastor as defined by the Ministerial Committee of the Baptist Union of Queensland or become accredited within six (6) months of the call being accepted.

Specific details of this position are set out in appendix B of the church handbook.

The appointment of a senior pastor may be introduced as an item of business at a members meeting only after the recommendation of a senior pastoral search team appointed by the board.

Voting on such a recommendation must occur at a properly constituted members meeting for which two (2) full weeks notice will be given in writing to all active and junior members. This notice requirement replaces the normal notice requirements.

The motion regarding appointment of a senior pastor will be submitted to a ballot for confirmation by a minimum of a three-quarters (3/4) majority of active members voting. If this majority is obtained, an offer of appointment will then be made to the proposed senior pastor.

The appointment will be for a period of five (5) years and is subject to review and renewal at the end of this time. The review will be carried out by a senior pastor review team formed six (6) months prior to the end of the call. It will consist of a minimum of two (2) board members and two (2) active members who are nominated by the board to the church membership for approval. The review team will bring its report initially to the board. If the report identifies issues that need to

be addressed, the senior pastor will be given the opportunity to develop an agreed plan of action with the board. If the plan is accepted by the review team, the church membership can be advised of the agreed plan of action together with the review team's report and recommendation that the senior pastor be recalled as per the initial call procedures for a period of up to five (5) years.

If after the review the review team cannot recommend the call be renewed and the senior pastor decides to pursue a recall vote, a report will be given in writing to the membership, along with notice of a ballot as per the initial call procedures, stating the review team does not support the motion renewing the call of the senior pastor.

The call can be terminated by either this Church or the senior pastor giving a minimum of three (3) months notice except in the case of a moral offence or misconduct (as judged by the Ministerial Committee of the Baptist Union of Queensland), where the call will terminate immediately.

6.3.3 Conflict Resolution

Should there be an impasse between the board and the senior pastor which is hampering ministry, either party will be at liberty, without the authority of the members, to request that the Baptist Union of Queensland nominate a moderator to discuss the issue and, under God's guidance, give advice.

If the resolution process fails to resolve the impasse, the board will bring a motion to this Church in the format described in section 6.3.2 to enable this Church to express its support of the senior pastor in his role. If a three-quarters (3/4) majority of active members voting is not obtained, this Church will deem that there is insufficient support for the senior pastor to effectively minister in his role and his tenure will be terminated as per section 6.3.2.

6.4 Additional Staff

This Church may also appoint other staff as may be considered necessary. This procedure is set out in section B6 of the church handbook.

Section 7 — Church Organisations

An organisation will be defined as but not limited to a club, society or ministry area that is part of an organisation that may also exist beyond this Church.

This Church may adopt or utilise such organisations as will make its work for the Kingdom more effective. Each organisation will be considered a valuable part of this Church.

All organisations and all activities, financial or otherwise, will function under the approval of the board.

Each organisation may give nominations for its key ministry positions to the eldership team, which will process the nomination as per section B7 of the church handbook. The main leader of an organisation must be an active member. Every

effort should be made to see that all other leaders of these organisations are active members.

Where it is considered necessary, the board may nominate a chairperson for any church organisation meeting.

Property purchased or used by any organisation will be deemed the property of this Church. In particular, if the organisation disbands or ceases to function, all property will be utilised or disposed of as directed by the board.

Ministry statements, programs, rules and the syllabus of any organisation connected with this Church will be subject to approval by the eldership team before being published, circulated or performed.

No organisation will use the name of this Church without the consent of the board.

This Church reserves the right to refuse, cancel, suspend and/or terminate any organisation at any time if in the opinion of the board that organisation may be operating or conducting itself in a manner that could be detrimental to this Church. That organisation or its nominated representative may request an opportunity to address the board in relation to the particular issue.

The board will have the right to request that an organisation of this Church provide any requested documentation or explanation in order that the board may evaluate that organisation, its operation and adherence to this constitution and this Church's ministry statements as set out in section B2 of the church handbook. Such requests are to be in writing and will require a written response within one calendar month.

Section 8 — Finances

8.1 Administration

A treasurer will be elected from the church board in accordance with section 6.2.3 of this constitution. This person will be responsible for the oversight of the church finances.

All church accounts will have at least four (4) signatories with withdrawals generally requiring two (2) signatories to sign. If a special-purpose account is established, the board may reduce the number of signatories to one (1) if it is satisfied sufficient accountability processes are in place for that account. The names of all signatories will be approved by the board.

8.2 Tithes and Offerings

This Church will encourage tithing and the giving of offerings over and above to support the work and ministry of this Church both locally and through its missions involvement.

All offerings and monies will be accounted for in the presence of at least two (2) people. These persons will be selected in accordance with section B8 of the church handbook and the church manual.

8.3 Account Records

The treasurer will ensure all income and expenditure is recorded and handled in accordance with policies and procedures as set out in section B8.3 of the church handbook and in the church manual. Records will be available to the board and finance advisory team as required.

8.4 Financial Statements

A financial report will be provided for the information of members at each regular members meeting and at other times as required by the board.

8.5 Budget

An annual budget will be prepared in accordance with section B8.5 of the church handbook and presented for approval at a members meeting.

8.6 Designated Gifts and Donations

Until this Church approves otherwise all gifts whether designated for a particular purpose or not will be treated as available for use in an activity of this Church in any way this Church may determine and free from any obligation to use or apply the gift in a particular manner or for a particular purpose.

Any donation offered may be refused at the discretion of the board.

8.7 Appeals and Fundraising

No financial appeals for any organisations will be undertaken without the prior approval of the board.

Fundraising activities, where goods or services are provided to raise funds for an organisation, must be approved by the board or its delegate.

8.8 Auditor

The board will appoint an auditor(s) annually. After auditing of the church accounts, a report will be prepared for presentation at the next regular members meeting following the annual general meeting.

8.9 Organisations

Each organisation will appoint a treasurer to keep financial records in accordance with the guidelines approved by the board.

Each organisation will produce a financial report for the church treasurer at regular intervals as requested by the board. In addition, if the organisation maintains its own bank account, it will meet the following requirements:

- ❖ an auditor's report of its accounts will be provided annually at a time agreed with the church treasurer
- ❖ signatories to bank accounts will be active church members.

All records and reports will be maintained and prepared in accordance with the church handbook and manual.

8.10 Finance Advisory Team

A finance advisory team will be formed to assist the treasurer in recording and administering the church finances. This team will be formed and hold meetings as set out in section B8.10 of the church handbook.

Section 9 — Church Property

Use and maintenance of church premises or property will be in accordance with section B9 of the church handbook and the church manual.

This Church may ask the Baptist Union of Queensland or another suitable entity to act as trustee for it in relation to property which is owned by this Church.

The income and assets of this Church, from whatever source derived, must be applied exclusively to the promotion of the objectives of this Church as set out in section 2 of this constitution. No portion of the income or assets may be paid or transferred, directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise, to the members of this Church.

However, this does not prevent the payment, in good faith, of remuneration to any officers, employees or servants of this Church or to any member of this Church in return for any services actually rendered to this Church or for goods supplied in the ordinary and usual way of business, nor prevent the payment of interest at a rate not exceeding the rate for the time being charged by bankers in Brisbane for overdrawn accounts on money borrowed from any member of this Church, or reasonable and proper rent for premises let by any member of this Church.

Section 10 — Winding Up

In the event of the church being dissolved, all property, assets and monies which remain after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be vested in the Baptist Union of Queensland.

Notwithstanding any previous or following provisions, this clause shall not be rescinded or amended without the prior approval of the Baptist Union of Queensland.

Section 11 — Changing the Constitution

This constitution may not be altered, added to or cancelled except by a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote of the active members voting (i.e. 3/4 of the active members voting in person or by absentee vote at a properly constituted members meeting with a quorum present). This vote is to be taken at a special members meeting convened for the purpose. A minimum of one (1) months notice of such a meeting will be given in writing to all active and junior members and it will set out in full detail any motions to be moved at the proposed meeting.