

## CONSTITUTION

### I. NAME

The name of the Church shall be:

**CHINESE & AUSTRALIAN BAPTIST CHURCH - WEST RYDE**

### II. BASIS

Membership shall consist of persons who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and have been baptised as believers into the Lord Jesus Christ upon profession of their faith. Such persons shall give evidence of their faith by their manner of life and shall hold to the following evangelical doctrines:

1. **The Nature and Unity of the Godhead**

There is one God who is eternal personal Spirit. He is infinite in power, wisdom, holiness and love. God is Triune in essential being and revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

2. **The Deity and Humanity of Christ**

Jesus Christ as the second Person of the Godhead is eternally one with God the Father of whose person and glory Jesus is the accurate expression. To become human He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, so that two whole and perfect natures, the nature of God and human nature, were united in one Person; truly God and truly human.

3. **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Trinity is eternally one with the Father and the Son yet He is sent by Them to achieve the divine purpose in the world and in the Church.

4. **The Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures**

The Scriptures, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, are the infallible Word of God. They were written by holy people of God inspired by the Holy Spirit and have supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

5. **The Sinfulness of Man**

People were made in the image of God and for fellowship with God. By transgression of God's command humankind fell from fellowship with God and their nature was corrupted. As a consequence all people are spiritually dead under Satan's dominion and control and subject to God's wrath and condemnation. Therefore, apart from God's grace, people are helpless and hopeless.

6. **Christ's Atonement for the Sin of Man**

In order to redeem people from the guilt, penalty and power of sin, Jesus Christ became human and died a sacrificial death as our representative substitute. By His resurrection, God's acceptance of His atoning death was demonstrated. This atonement is sufficient for the whole world, but effective only in those who received it. The sinner is justified and reconciled to God, not through any personal merit, but solely on the basis of God's gracious gift of salvation in Jesus Christ received through faith.

7. **The Work of the Holy Spirit in Salvation**

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is necessary for the acceptance of God's provision of salvation. The Holy Spirit convicts sinners of their sinfulness, leads them to personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and so brings them to spiritual birth as God's children and to fellowship in Christ. Working within the life of believers the Holy Spirit makes real the presence of Christ, witnesses to their relationship with God, leads into all truth, bestows gifts for effective service and produces graces for holy living.

8. **The Church**

The Church is the body of people whom God has separated from the world through faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. All regenerate persons are members of the universal Church of God which takes local form wherever groups of believers unite for worship, fellowship and service in accordance with scriptural principles. All believers are called to a priestly ministry in the offering of spiritual sacrifices and sent into the world to be witnesses. God calls individuals to positions of oversight and leadership or to special ministries. The Church recognises such by ordaining pastors, commissioning missionaries, appointing deacons and other leaders, following New Testament practice.

**9. The Baptism of Believers Only, by Immersion**

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a public declaration of a person's faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In accordance with New Testament Scripture it should be administered only by total immersion which symbolises the believer's identification with Christ in death, burial and resurrection, the remission of sins and the believer's dedication of oneself to God to live and walk in newness of life.

**10. The Communion**

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ instituted by Him to be celebrated with the elements of bread and wine by believers in Christ until the end of the age. It commemorates and declares our thanks for the Lord's substitutionary death. The celebration of the ordinance expresses our fellowship with and in the Lord Jesus Christ as members of the Body of which He is the Head.

**11. The Return of the Lord Jesus Christ**

At the end of this age, according to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in His glory to the earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom of God awaits His return.

**12. The Resurrection of the Dead**

At the end of the age, there is to be a resurrection both of the righteous and the unrighteous. After death people's bodies return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God - the righteous to be with Him and the unrighteous to be reserved for the judgment.

**13. Rewards and Punishments in a Future State**

God has appointed a day of final judgment for the world. At that time Jesus Christ will judge every person and each will receive reward or punishment according to their deeds. Those judged righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment.

**14. Marriage**

Marriage is an institution created by God as the foundation for a lifelong faithful union of a man and a woman.

**III. GOVERNMENT**

The church shall be affiliated with the Baptist Union of N.S.W., accepting its responsibility to support and share the ministries undertaken by the Denomination.

Recognising the headship of Jesus Christ and the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Church shall be governed in line with the fundamental Baptist principle of the autonomy of the local Church and congregational government.

Notwithstanding this principle of autonomy, the church recognises and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and co-operation which are common among Baptist Churches.

**IV. OBJECTIVES**

The Church adopts the following objects, which it believes to be in harmony with the purpose of Christ's Church as declared in the New Testament:

To glorify God through

1. The inspiration and maintenance of active spiritual growth among its congregation by the regular assembling for public worship and the administration of the ordinances;
2. The proclamation of the truths of the Bible by all means so that persons experience salvation;
3. Teaching, training and discipling all who come to faith in the Lord Jesus so that they grow together in love, are loyal to each other and grow to maturity in Christ;
4. Proclaiming the sole Lordship of Christ Jesus in the lives of the members of the congregation and seeking to fulfill His desires in the life of the community, nation and wider world through evangelistic and missionary enterprise.
5. Assisting those who are in need in the belief that both social action and evangelism are mutually our response to the Gospel.

## **V. MEMBERSHIP**

### **1. Conditions**

- a. Except as provided in 1b. below, the church admits as members all persons who:
  - i. give evidence of a sincere profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,
  - ii. have been baptised as believers by immersion upon profession of faith and
  - iii. agree to hold to the doctrines set forth in this Constitution.
- b. While the church practises only the baptism of believers by immersion, it may admit as members those who were baptised as believers, other than by immersion, provided they fulfill the provisions i. & iii. in 1(a) above. (See also By-Law III.2. 'Procedures' paragraph b.iii. on such a member's voting rights)

### **2. Admission to membership**

All applicants for membership shall apply to the Pastor or Secretary. Applicants shall be visited by two members appointed to discuss their testimony to faith in Jesus Christ, Membership responsibilities, the Church Constitution (and By-laws) and its various ministries. A report shall be presented to the Church Council following the visitation. Applications may be admitted to membership upon a majority vote at a properly constituted Church meeting.

Letters of transfer and /or commendation shall be sought and shall be taken into account by the Church meeting.

An application for baptism should normally include an application for membership at the same time. They are encouraged to proceed simultaneously.

### **3. Responsibilities of Members**

- a. To endeavour at all times, by God's grace, to remain true to their commitment to Christ as expressed in their baptism.
- b. To join regularly in the Worship of the Church.
- c. To lead a life worthy of Christ in love, humility and peace, endeavouring to build each other up through encouragement, counsel and comfort.
- d. To study the Scriptures in private and with others as the Lord gives opportunity.
- e. To express their gratitude to God, and their responsibilities as His stewards by contributing regularly and whole heartedly to the financial support of the Church.
- f. To seek opportunity to use their gifts in the ministry programmes of the Church.
- g. To pray regularly in private and where possible in group for the people and ministry of the Church.
- h. To witness regularly to the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- i. To attend members meeting regularly and to participate in the discussion and decision-making of church affairs.

### **4. Membership Roll**

- a. A roll of members shall be kept by the Church Secretary. The Church Council will prayerfully review the membership roll annually.
- b. Members who for a period of six months have failed to participate in the Worship of the Church or failed to honour other responsibilities of membership shall receive special attention. Every effort shall be made to restore such members to worship and fellowship.
- c. Where these efforts fail, a recommendation may be brought to the Church that such members' names be either removed from the roll or transferred to the absent members' roll.

- d. Members from the absent members' roll shall not be eligible to vote until reverted back to the membership roll by the decision of a Church membership meeting.
- e. No members' name shall be removed from the roll or transferred to the absent members' roll except by their request or the decision of a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting at a properly constituted Church meeting.

#### **5. Transfer of Membership**

Any member in good standing may request that a letter of commendation be sent to another Church he or she wishes to join. The Church Council should process the request reporting their action to the next Church meeting for confirmation.

#### **6. Offences and Disputes**

- a. Where a member becomes an offence to the Church by reason of immoral or un-christian conduct, the Church will make every effort, in the spirit of love and meekness, to restore such a member to fellowship. Where such efforts fail the Church may terminate or suspend for a specified time, his or her membership. Termination or suspension of such membership should be determined by three-fourths majority of members present and voting at a properly constituted Church meeting.
- b. In the event of a dispute arising either between members, the Pastor(s) and the members, or the Church and the Baptist Union, such dispute may, after every effort has been made to resolve it within the Church or through the services of the Department of Home Ministries or the General Superintendent, be referred for decision to the Panel of Arbitrators elected by the Assembly, if agreed to by all parties of the dispute.
- c. Matters of offence or dispute between members and between the Pastor(s) and the members shall be resolved in accordance with the guiding principles in the Bible and the Church's Grievance Policy.

### **VI. TRUSTEES OF CHURCH PROPERTY**

The Baptist Churches of N.S.W. Property Trust shall be the Trustees of all Church properties. Any disposal of property will be carried out according the guidelines of the Property Trust.

Church properties mean all existing and future real properties.

### **VII. ALLOWING BY-LAWS**

The church may make By-Laws consistent with the Constitution for the regulation of its affairs.

The By-Laws are made subject to this Constitution. Should any inconsistency exist between the Constitution and the By-Laws, the Constitution shall prevail.

### **VIII. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

This Constitution may not be altered except in the following way:

Any proposed alteration shall be considered a Special Resolution and must be passed by a three-fourths (75%) majority of members present and eligible to vote at a meeting convened for the purpose, inclusive of all votes by proxy.

The quorum for such a meeting shall be forty percent (40%) of the membership, inclusive of all votes by proxy, and twenty five percent (25%) of the quorum for such a meeting must be physically present.

Any proposed change to the Constitution shall be given in writing as a Notice of Motion to the Church Council. Such a Notice of Motion shall be distributed by the Secretary to all members not less than 4 weeks before the date of such meeting.

## BY-LAWS

### **I. CHURCH ORGANISATION**

Fuller details of the Church Organisation are given in the Church's Structure Document as approved by members from time to time.

#### **1. The Church Council**

At the Church's Annual General Meeting it shall elect representatives of the various functional teams of the Church to a Church Council. This Council shall also include the Pastors and shall coordinate the affairs of the church within the framework of the church's determined structure and policy as passed by members from time to time.

#### **2. Voting Procedures in the Church Council**

The voting procedures of the Church Council are laid down in the Church Structure Document as approved by members from time to time.

#### **3. Functional Teams**

The functional teams comprise of various ministry, congregational and administrative teams. At the Church's Annual General Meeting it shall elect representatives to various ministry and congregation teams. Ministry and congregational teams shall normally be chaired by a Pastor. The administrative team shall normally be chaired by the Chairperson. These teams are responsible for coordinating its tasks as determined in the Church Structure Document as approved by members from time to time.

#### **4. Voting Procedures within the Functional Teams**

The voting procedures within the functional Teams shall be determined by each Team.

#### **5. Election Committee**

An Election Committee shall be appointed by the Church Council to oversee the annual election of Team Representatives and Teams Members.

### **II LEADERSHIP**

Pastors, Ministry Worker, Elders, Team Representatives and Team Members shall be elected to the Leadership of the Church as approved by members from time to time. Such leadership shall attend to the affairs of the Church, within the framework of the Church's determined policy.

Fuller details of the Leadership are given in the Church's Structure documents as approved by members from time to time.

#### **1. Pastor**

The Pastor shall be person whose credentials are acceptable to the Baptist Union of N.S.W., and holding the doctrines set forth in the Constitution.

Where more than one Pastor is appointed, the Pastors shall comprise the Pastoral Team in which one shall be the Senior Pastor. All pastors are chairpersons of the Congregation and Ministry Team as assigned.

Pastors will be appointed upon a three-fourth majority or removed upon a simple majority vote of the members present and voting at a meeting of which notice has been given on the two Sundays preceding such meeting, the purpose of such meeting having been specified. The quorum for such meeting shall be forty percent (40%) of the membership eligible to vote, inclusive of all votes by proxy, and twenty five percent (25%) of the quorum for such a meeting must be physically present.

#### **Procedures for Calling Pastors**

The Church shall appoint a Pastorate Committee every time when there is a need to call for a new Pastor. The Pastorate Committee shall be nominated by Church Council and approved by members.

The Congregational and/or Functional Pastorate Committee should be made up of minimum five members: the Senior Pastor (or if unavailable another Pastor), two Team Representatives from the Church Council and two members from the related Congregations.

The Consulting and/or Honorary Pastorate Committee should be made up of minimum three members: the Senior Pastor (or if unavailable another Pastor) and two Team Representatives from the Church Council.

The Senior Pastorate Committee should be in accordance with the Senior Pastor Appointment Guideline.

A convener should also be selected from amongst the Pastorate Committee.

The Pastorate Committee will then decide the suitable method to locate the prospective person including seeking advice and assistance from the Baptist Union of NSW.

The Pastorate Committee shall arrange interviews and a minimum of two references checking with the applicant.

At least 75% support from the Committee is necessary before the recommendation is put to the Church Council. All information regarding the applicant should be tabled at the Church Council for consideration. The candidate must also receive 75% support of the Church Council before being submitted to members for approval. Only one candidate shall be submitted to the Church for voting at one time.

In the event of adverse vote, or the call or approach not being accepted, the above procedures shall be repeated until successful.

#### **Procedure for Appointment, Renewal and Termination of Interim Pastor**

Where there is an opportunity to appoint a candidate as a pastor in the Church for a term of less than 6 months, the Procedures for Calling Pastors as stated above need not apply.

Where such opportunity for appointment of an Interim Pastor is identified either by the Church Council or by an existing Pastorate Committee, the Church Council shall, at its own motion or alternatively at the recommendation of the Pastorate Committee, with a 75% majority support within the Church Council, appoint an Interim Pastor for a maximum term of 6 months.

In the course of the appointment of Interim Pastor, the Church Council may, with a simple majority support within the Church Council, remove the appointment of the Interim Pastor in accordance with the Employment Agreement as executed by the appointed Interim Pastor and representatives of the Church Council.

On expiry of the initial term of maximum 6 months, the Church Council may, with a 75% majority support within the Church Council, renew the term of the Interim Pastor for one further term only of up to a further 6 months.

In circumstances where the Church Council wishes to renew the initial term for the Interim Pastor for a period beyond 6 months, or at the expiry of the renewal term of up to 6 months, the candidate must, with at least 75% support from within the Church Council, be submitted to Church Members for approval of further appointment as Interim Pastor by way of ordinary resolution at a Members Meeting, requiring a simple majority support of the members present and voting at the meeting.

All terms and conditions of appointment, termination or resignation shall be documented in the Employment Agreement and be executed by the appointed Interim Pastor and representatives of the Church Council as agreement to the terms of appointment of the Interim Pastor.

In circumstances where there is an opportunity to appoint an Interim Pastor as a pastor in the Church for a term of greater than 6 months, the Procedures for Calling Pastors as stated above shall apply.

#### **Appointment, Termination or Resignation of Pastor**

The Church Council will generally determine the terms of a call with recommendation from the Pastorate Committee. All terms and conditions of appointment, termination or resignation shall be documented in the Employment Agreement and be executed by the appointed pastor and representatives of the Church Council as agreement to the terms of the call.

## **Reappointment After the Expiry of the Term of Services**

On expiry of the term of services of a pastor as provided for under the Employment Agreement, a Review Committee should be nominated by the Church Council to make any recommendations for consideration by the Church Council regarding any reappointment of the pastors.

The members of the Review Committee on expiry of the terms of services of a Senior Pastor are to consist of one member from each congregation and chaired by one Team Representative, preferably the Chairperson or Secretary.

The members of the Review Committee on expiry of the terms of services of a congregational or functional Pastor is to consist of a minimum of 3 members, consisting of the Senior Pastor (or if unavailable another pastor), one team representative and one congregation team member.

At least 75% support from the Committee is necessary before the recommendation is put to the Church Council for consideration.

The recommendation for reappointment of Pastors will then be proposed by the Church Council, and would require a three-fourth majority (75%) of the members present and voting at the meeting. Notice for the meeting is to be given on the two Sundays preceding such meeting, the purpose of such meeting being specified to be the recommendation for reappointment of Pastors. The quorum for such meeting shall be forty percent (40%) of the membership eligible to vote, inclusive of all votes by proxy, and twenty five percent (25%) of the quorum for such a meeting must be physically present.

## **Retirement of Pastor**

Upon attaining the age of seventy-two years the Pastor shall retire from the Pastorate. An exception to these circumstances is that the Pastor may remain in office after that age by annual vote of the Church.

### **1.a. Ministry Worker**

Ministry Workers are paid coworkers carrying out various specialised functional ministry.

Depending on the nature of the ministry, ministry workers could be serving in cross congregational, cross language, or entire church capacity.

The scope of their responsibility and to whom they are reporting will be determined at the time of their appointment.

#### **Procedures for appointing Ministry Worker**

Church Council shall appoint a recruitment committee to find a suitable candidate, consisting of minimum of 3 church members.

The Recruitment Committee will then decide the suitable method to locate suitable candidate(s) and will arrange interviews.

At least 75% majority support from the recruitment Committee is necessary before the recommendation is put to the Church Council. The candidate must also receive 75% support of the Church Council before being submitted to members for approval. At least 75% majority support from the members is required for the appointment of Ministry Worker.

#### **Appointment, Termination or Resignation of Ministry Worker**

The Church Council will generally determine the terms of appointment with recommendation from the Recruitment Committee. All terms and conditions of appointment, termination or resignation shall be documented in the Employment Agreement and be executed by the appointed Ministry Worker and representatives of the Church Council as agreement to the terms of the appointment.

## **Reappointment After the Expiry of the Term of Services**

On expiry of the term of services of a Ministry Worker as provided for under the Employment Agreement, a

Review Committee should be nominated by the Church Council to make any recommendations for consideration by the Church Council regarding any reappointment of the Ministry Worker.

The members of the Review Committee on expiry of the terms of services of a Ministry Worker is to consist of a minimum of 3 members, consisting of the Senior Pastor (or if unavailable another pastor), one team representative and one congregation team member.

At least 75% support from the Review Committee is necessary before the recommendation is put to the Church Council for determination. The Ministry Worker must also receive 75% support of the Church Council to be reappointed.

## **2. Elders**

The Church may appoint Elders from the membership of the Church who shall share with the Pastor(s) in the pastoral ministry of the Church.

Elders shall be responsible to the Church and shall:

- a. Assist in shepherding those who are part of or associated with the Church, willingly encouraging and building up such persons, and being an example to the Church in Christlike living.
- b. Visit such persons mentioned in (a).
- c. Participate in the preaching and teaching ministry of the Church where they are recognised as having these gifts and are invited to do so by the Pastors and Church Council.

The biblical material, especially 1 Timothy 3:2-7, Titus 1:7-9 and 1 Peter 5: 1-4, shall assist the Church in appointing Elders. Only persons of known maturity, spirituality and gifts appropriate to the office shall be appointed upon a three-fourths majority vote at the Annual Church meeting and upon the nomination in writing of the Pastor(s), and Church Council. Such nominees shall be over the age of thirty-five years and shall have been in membership in the Church for at least three years and have served in the Church Council or a functional team for at least two years. Elders will be chairperson of the Congregation and Ministry Team as assigned in the absence of Pastor(s).

The term of office shall be two years with eligibility for reappointment.

## **3. Team Representatives**

Team Representatives are in effect Church Deacons. They are members of the Church Council and are elected by members at Annual General Meeting. Team Representatives shall, as far as is possible, attend and sustain all meetings connected with the church and be empowered to transact the routine business of the church.

### **Qualifications**

**Team Representatives should:**

- a. be persons showing spiritual maturity like the qualifications given in 1 Tim.3:8-13.
- b. possess gifts appropriate to the office of Team Representatives with a commitment to serve God diligently in the Council and the Team represented.
- c. have been in membership of the Church for at least six months.
- d. be over twenty five years of age.
- e. possess ministry experience in the represented Team as a Team Member or have served in any ministry of the Team at a sub-committee level in our church or in an equivalent position or capacity in another church for more than two years.
- f. First be elected as a Team Member of a functional team.

The term of service of Team Representatives should be two years. The retiring Team Representatives shall be eligible for re-election for another term only. After an absence of one year, he/she may be eligible for re-election. The Church Council should exercise its best effort to ensure that no more than half of the existing Team Representatives retire from the Council at every election.

In case of Team Representatives resigning from their offices before the completion of their full term, it would be necessary for the Church Council to appoint a replacement to fill up that vacant position for the remaining term held by the resigning Team Representatives. The remaining time served by the replacement Team Representative should not be considered as his/her first term of office.

**Chairperson**

The Chairperson, as defined in the Church's Structure document, is an ex-officio member of the Church Council and will chair the Administration Team, the Church Council and Member meetings.

**Secretary**

The Secretary, as defined in the Church's Structure document, is ex-officio member of the Church Council. The Secretary shall ensure that adequate records of all Church, Council, and Team meetings are kept, and conduct correspondence on behalf of the Church.

**4. Team Members**

Team Members are elected by members at every Annual General Meeting. The Team Members shall be responsible to carry out the functions and duties of a designated ministry area as given in the Church's Structure documents as approved by members from time to time.

**Qualifications of Team Members****Team Members should**

- a. be persons showing spirituality maturity like the qualifications given in 1Tim.3:8-13.
- b. possess gifts appropriate to the office of Team Member with a commitment to diligently serve God in the Team.
- c. have been a member of the church for at least six months.
- d. be over twenty-one years of age.

The term of service of Team Members should be two years. The retiring Team Members shall be eligible for re-election for another term only. After an absence of one year, he/she may be eligible for re-election.

In case of Team Members resigning from their offices before the completion of their full term, it would be necessary for the Church Council to appoint a replacement to fill up that vacant position for the remaining term held by the resigning Team Member. The remaining time served by the replacement Team Member should not be considered as his/her first term of office.

**Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall keep a record of all financial transactions and inform the Church through regular reporting. An audited financial statement shall be presented to Members Meeting.

**5. Election Procedures for Team Representatives and Team Members**

All elections of Team Representatives and Team Members shall be by ballot. Every member will be provided with a ballot paper for this purpose.

Two Scrutineers will be appointed for counting the votes

Members can only elect the Team Members and Team Representatives of the congregation they attend. Team Members and Team Representatives from common ministry areas will be elected by all members.

All Team Members and Team Representatives need to secure 75% majority of those present and entitled to vote to be elected. When there is more than one candidate for a vacancy, if no candidate can secure 75% majority on the first round of voting, the candidate who obtain the highest vote among the candidates will enter into second round of voting. The candidate needs to obtain 75% majority in this round to be elected.

If the Chairperson of the meeting is also a candidate in the election, one of the pastors should take up the Chair in the election process. The Chairperson will resume the Chair of the meeting upon completion of the election.

### III. CHURCH MEETINGS AND PROCEDURES

#### 1. Meetings:

##### a. Types and Frequency

- i. Members' Meetings shall be convened at least quarterly, one of which shall be the Annual Church Meeting to deal with designated business required which usually includes receiving reports from the various functional teams and the Church Council and conducting elections as required herein.
- ii. Extraordinary Members' Meetings shall be convened upon request of:
  - The Pastor(s),
  - a signed request by ten per cents of the church membership;
  - a majority of the Church Council
- iii. An extraordinary meeting may be called for a special purpose and shall only consider matters of which written notice has been given.
- iv. Church Council Meetings shall normally be convened bi-monthly and/or as required

##### b. Notice of Meetings

- i. Members' Meetings: Notice shall be given at least two Sundays at all Services prior to the meeting
- ii. Extraordinary Members' Meetings: Notice shall be given at least two Sundays at all Services prior to the meeting.
- iii. Church Council Meetings: Notice shall be determined by the Church Council.

##### c. Quorum

- i. Members' Meetings to pass an Ordinary Resolution. The quorum shall be twenty five percent (25%) of the membership recorded on the roll of members at the end of the last financial year.
- ii. Members' Meetings to pass a Special Resolution. The quorum shall be forty percent (40%), inclusive of all votes by proxy, of the membership recorded on the roll of members at the end of the last financial year, and of which twenty five percent (25%) of the quorum must be physically present.
- iii. Church Council Meetings. The quorum shall be 50% of the number of the elected members of the Council.

##### d. Resolutions

- i. Ordinary. An Ordinary Resolution shall be passed by a simple majority of the quorum present throughout the meeting. It deals with the general business of the church which may include, but is not limited to: approval of the annual budget, financial reports, appointment of Sub-Committee members and an auditor.
- ii. Special. A Special Resolution shall be passed by 75% of the quorum present throughout the meeting, inclusive of all votes by proxy. It deals with important business with resolution shown in the notice of meeting and may include but not limited to: the calling of a pastor, amendments to the Constitution or By-Laws, purchase and/or sale of church property.

The Church Council shall decide whether a motion should be passed by ordinary or special resolution.

##### e. Adjournments

If a quorum is not present within thirty minutes of the appointed starting time of the meeting, the meeting shall stand adjourned usually to the same day, time and place in the next week.

Notice of the adjourned meeting will be given at the intervening services. Such meeting will be competent to deal with the matters adjourned notwithstanding the absence of a quorum, except for amending the Constitution and/or By-Laws, the buying or selling of property and calling of pastors.

## **2. Procedures**

### **a. Chairperson of Members' Meetings**

The Chairperson of the Church Council will normally chair all members' meetings unless legal authority requires otherwise. The Chairperson can delegate his/her authority.

### **b. Voting**

- i. The Chairperson or the members at the meeting will decide on the method of voting. Generally, the vote will be taken by voice or by a show of hands. For Special Resolutions, election of church officers and other important matters agreed upon by the Church Council or the majority of members present at the meeting, the voting will be carried out by ballot.
- ii. Every member has one vote including the Chairperson.
- iii. By law no member under 18 years old or members admitted into the membership under "Membership" clause 1(b) can:
  - vote on matters relating to the sale and/or purchase of property,
  - be elected as a delegate of the Church to the Assemblies of the Baptist Union of N.S.W.

### **c. Motions and Amendments**

A motion is a proposed form of a resolution. A motion must be proposed and seconded during the meeting before it can be put to the members for discussion and/or voting.

During the discussion of a motion, an amendment to that motion may be proposed and seconded provided that the spirit and substance of the original motion is principally preserved. If an amendment does alter the spirit and substance of the original motion it will not be considered until and unless the original motion is not passed by the required majority of members at the meeting. If the amendment does not alter the spirit and substance of the original motion and is passed by the majority of members in the meeting, then the amendment will be incorporated in the original motion to become the substantive motion for members voting or further amendment.

### **d. Members' Meeting Agenda**

The agenda is the list of matters to be addressed in a member's meeting. All questions affecting the management and general business of the Church shall normally be submitted to the Church Council before being presented at a member's meeting.

The Secretary of the Church has the responsibility of preparing the agenda of meetings in consultation with the pastors and/or Chairperson. The agenda of all members' meetings will be discussed and approved by the Church Council before proceeding to a members' meeting.

No motion can be raised during the meeting which is outside the scope of the agenda items.

### **e. Conducting Meetings**

The Chairperson has the authority to execute the rules relating to the conducting of members meetings.

A member may speak only after raising a hand and being called upon by the Chairperson.

The conducting of meetings shall be subject to the Standing Orders governing the meeting procedures of the church.

Non members are welcome to members' meetings but not advised to speak in a meeting unless invited to do so by the Chairperson.

All meetings will be conducted in a spirit of Christian love to glorify God.

### **f. Proxies**

Members are encouraged to attend members' meetings in person and are allowed to vote by proxy for Special Resolutions only.

## **IV. SUNDRY BY-LAWS**

### **1. Ordinances**

The Senior Pastor may baptise any believer upon application at his discretion, or alternatively a member of the Pastoral team. An Elder may baptise any believer upon approval of the Church Council.

The Lord's Supper shall be regularly observed. All believers in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be invited to partake in the Supper. Church members who are regularly absent from the Lord's Table shall be visited.

### **2. Use of Property**

Church buildings and properties shall not be used or occupied by persons or organisations for any purpose except where previous consent has been obtained from the Administration Team who may give such consent in accordance with the decisions and guidelines laid down by the Church.

### **3. Insurance**

Insurance shall be effected on all Church buildings, property and employees.

### **4. Administration**

The ministry of the Church shall be supported and expenses met by voluntary contributions. Cheques shall be signed on behalf of the Church by any two of the authorised signatories by Church Council from Council members.

### **5. Auditors**

Auditors shall be appointed at the Church meeting annually and shall audit the financial records of the Church for presentation at the Church meeting annually.

### **6. Application of Church Assets and Income**

The assets and income of the church shall be applied solely in the furtherance of its charitable purpose and the advancement of religion and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members except as bona fide remuneration where a member is an employee of the church, fee for services where a member is a contractor to the church and reimbursement of expenses incurred by a member on behalf of the church.

### **7. Church Dissolution**

In the event of the church being dissolved, the amount that remains after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall:

- a. In the case of property held in trust pursuant to the *Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust Act 1984 (NSW)*, be dealt with in accordance with that Act, and in particular with section 29. No portion of any proceeds of sale shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Church;
- b. In all other cases be transferred to the Baptist Union of N.S.W. or to any other organisation with similar purposes and which has rules prohibiting the distribution of its assets and income to its members and which is exempt from income tax.

## **V. ALTERATIONS TO THE BY-LAWS**

These By-Laws may not be altered except in the following way:

Any proposed alteration to the By-Laws must be passed by a three-fourth (75%) majority of members present and eligible to vote at a normal Church meeting or a special meeting convened for the purpose, inclusive of all votes by proxy.

The quorum for such a meeting shall be forty percent (40%) of the membership, inclusive of all votes by proxy, and twenty five percent (25%) of the quorum for such a meeting must be physically present.

Any proposed alteration to the By-Laws shall be presented in writing to the Secretary at least three weeks before the date of the meeting at which the proposed alteration is to be discussed.

The Secretary shall give such written and verbal notice to the Church on at least two Sundays prior to the meeting date.

