

# Constitution

**Loving God, Loving People**

September 2019

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## MEMBER'S PLEDGE

Recognising that membership in a local Church carries with it both privilege and responsibility, I promise by the grace of God:

1. To **live** according to Christian principles, endeavouring in all my attitudes, actions, and words, to glorify Jesus, Head of the Church, and my Lord and Saviour.
2. To **attend** worship services regularly and be faithful and supportive.
3. To gladly **serve** the Church using my gifts and talents to witness to Jesus Christ, our Lord.
4. To **pray** regularly for the members and missionaries of our Church community as they witness to the local community and overseas.
5. To **give** financially to further the work of the Church as the Lord enables me.
6. To **be loyal** to my fellow-members, guarding their reputation and supporting and encouraging them on their Christian journey.

## **Constitution of the Franklin Baptist Church**

### **1. THE CHURCH**

- i. The Church shall be known as the FRANKLIN BAPTIST CHURCH.
- ii. The Church is an autonomous body governed through its members, working with the local Baptist Association, the Baptist Churches of New Zealand and the wider body of Christ.

### **2. STATEMENT OF BELIEF**

The Church is a community of people who believe in:

- i. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- ii. the Lord Jesus Christ as truly human and truly God.
- iii. Jesus Christ who took our sin on Himself at the cross to set us free from sin's penalty and power.
- iv. His bodily resurrection from the dead and His return to God, the Father.
- v. salvation by faith in Christ alone.
- vi. the inspiration of the Bible and its authority on all matters of faith and practice.

### **3. AIMS AND FUNCTIONS**

The aims and functions are:

- i. to meet regularly for worship, prayer, teaching, encouragement and fellowship.
- ii. to express the love of God to others.
- iii. to seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ and bring them

into membership of His church in New Zealand and overseas.

## **4. ORDINANCES**

- i. Communion - The ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be open to all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and will be held at least monthly.
- ii. Baptism - The Church will practice believer's baptism by immersion.

## **5. MEMBERSHIP**

- 1. Membership may be granted to baptised believers, whose lives evidence their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who accept the Statement of Belief and who indicate their willingness to share the responsibilities of church membership.
- 2. When someone applies for membership and has attended any church membership course the church requires, the leaders will then consider the applicant and make a decision. Once approved by the leaders the applicant will be received into membership as soon as possible.
- 3. Someone who is a member of another Baptist church shall be received into membership if their transfer is approved by the leaders .
- 4. The church shall have power to admonish, suspend, or expel any member for misconduct.
- 5. The members' roll shall be reviewed annually when the

name of any member who has ceased to attend church services for a period of twelve months without any satisfactory reason may, after appropriate pastoral care and notice, be removed from the roll.

6. The church shall have:

- a) A 'Resident Roll' of members in regular attendance at the church services and
- b) A 'Non Resident Roll' of members not able to attend because of distance or isolation from the church.

## **6. LEADERSHIP**

- 1. The leadership shall consist of the Senior Pastor and no more than eight elected Leaders who are all baptised Church members.
- 2. The Leadership is responsible for the oversight and direction of the Church while seeking to bring into reality the vision and mission of the Church. The Leadership shall meet at least monthly.

### **3. Pastors**

- a) The Senior Pastor is responsible and accountable to the Leadership.
- b) Other pastoral staff shall be under the direction of, and responsible and accountable to, the Senior Pastor.
- c) When a vacancy occurs in the Senior Pastorate, the Leadership shall appoint a search committee. The

committee, with approval of the Leadership, shall bring one nomination to a church family meeting called for that purpose. A call to the pastorate requires at least 75% of member votes cast by secret ballot.

- d) Other pastoral staff shall be appointed as in (c), except that such an appointment can be made at any Church family meeting.
- e) Where part-time pastoral staff are to be appointed, the Leadership may decide on any other process of appointment it considers appropriate.
- f) The conditions of appointment shall accompany the call to any pastoral staff, together with the terms of the call and arrangements for the termination of the ministry.
- g) The Church or the Pastor shall give three months notice before the pastorate is terminated unless another period is negotiated between the parties. Any resolution to terminate the pastorate shall require, by secret ballot, a vote of at least 50% of the members present at a properly constituted special Church family meeting called for that purpose.

#### **4. Leaders**

- a) The selection of Leaders shall be determined by consideration of their leadership qualities, spiritual maturity, and the qualities described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

- b) The Leadership shall bring nominations for Leaders to a Church family meeting. Leaders shall be elected by at least 66% of the votes cast by secret ballot.
- c) The Leaders shall be elected for a two-year term and shall be eligible for re-election. If at any election more than 75% of the leadership team is up for election/re-election then up to 50% of those leaders may be appointed for a 1-year period in order to restore a staggered membership.
- d) Any vacancy in the Leadership may be filled in the manner prescribed for the original appointment.

## 7. MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS

1. The Leadership will determine the Ministry areas of the church. The Leadership will appoint Ministry Team Leaders on the recommendations of the Senior Pastor. The Ministry Team Leaders will be members of the church.
2. Each Ministry Team Leader will develop an annual plan including goals, expected outcomes and the resources required. This plan requires the agreement of the Senior Pastor. Each Ministry Team Leader will be required to work according to the values and policies of the Church and within the parameters of the budget allocated to that ministry. They will be given authority to develop their ministry and will be accountable to the Senior Pastor for achieving the agreed outcomes. A Ministry Team Leader may appoint other people to form a team to assist them in

their ministry.

## **8. TREASURER**

1. The Leadership will appoint a Treasurer who will be a member of the Church.
2. The Treasurer will be a member of the Ministry Team responsible for the administration of the Church.
3. The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring that proper books of account are kept of the Church's finances.

## **9. CHURCH FAMILY MEETINGS**

1. There shall be an annual Church family meeting and at least two other family meetings each year. At least two Sunday's notice is required for any Church family meeting.
2. The Church Financial year shall end on the 31<sup>st</sup> July. The annual meeting shall be held in or near September and shall include the consideration of the annual report, the audited accounts for the preceding year and approval of the budget, as previously accepted by the Leadership, for the current financial year.
3. The purpose of Church family meetings shall be to discover and confirm the mind of God on matters affecting the life, work, and mission of the Church. The following are matters which must be decided by a Church family meeting:
  - Calling a Senior Pastor and other fulltime pastoral staff
  - Appointment of the Leaders
  - Approval of the Church vision, plans and budget

- Approval of non-budgeted expenditure outside parameters delegated to the Leadership
  - Sale and purchase of land and property
  - Alteration of this constitution
4. A quorum for Church family meetings, where binding decisions are made, will be at least 25% of the resident membership.
5. The Leadership shall call a special Church family meeting within 21 days of receiving a request signed by at least 10% of resident members.
6. The Senior Pastor or nominee shall chair all Church family meetings, except where the pastor has a personal interest in an issue or is unwilling or unable to act, in which case the leadership shall nominate a chairperson for the meeting.
7. Both Church members and attendees are able to participate in Church family meetings, but only members 16 years of age and over may vote. A secret ballot shall be held if requested by the chairperson or by not less than 10% of members present.

## **10. CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

1. In cases of dissension between members, our Lord's rule, as set out in Matthew 18:15-17 shall be followed. The Leadership shall have power to admonish, suspend or expel any member for misconduct.

2. Cases of serious trouble or misconduct shall be considered by the Leadership who shall investigate and, having interviewed or sought to interview the person concerned and given him/her and witnesses the opportunity to be heard, take such action as they consider necessary.

## **11. CHURCH PROPERTY**

Applications for use of Church land, rooms or equipment shall be made to the Office Secretary acting on behalf of the Management Team. Such applications may be granted with or without conditions, or refused.

## **12. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

1. Any recommended alteration to the constitution shall be publicized at least two Sundays prior to a Church family meeting. No alterations or additions shall be made to the constitution unless adopted by a majority of at least 66% of votes cast.
2. Unless the Church agrees to forgo its charitable status and income tax exemption, no alteration shall be made to this constitution which would in any way detract from the exclusively charitable nature of the Church.

## **13. DECLARATION OF TRUST**

Any land or property, including church buildings and manses, shall be vested in the Baptist Union of New Zealand as trustee, which shall hold them for and on behalf of the Church and shall deal with the property by consent and direction of the Church, in accordance with the Trusts declared in the Sixth Schedule to

the “Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1923”.

## **14. NO PRIVATE PECUNIARY PROFIT FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL**

No decision shall be made which would allow a member or members to receive any pecuniary profit from church funds. This shall not prevent the Church from paying a fair and reasonable amount to any member for services provided.

## **15. WINDING UP PROVISIONS**

Subject to clauses 17, 18 and 19 of the Sixth Schedule of the Baptist Union Incorporation Act, if the members resolve, at a properly constituted meeting of the Church, adopted by a majority of at least 66% of votes cast, that the Church should be wound up, then the net proceeds arising from such winding up shall be applied, with the prior approval of the Baptist Union of New Zealand, to such charitable purposes within New Zealand, as the members may determine, or in default of such determination, as may be determined by a Judge of the High Court of New Zealand on application by the members, and such proceeds shall not be paid or distributed amongst the members of the Church.