



# *Tuggeranong Baptist Church Incorporated*

## **CONSTITUTION**

28 JUNE 2011.

### 1) PURPOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION

The purpose of the association is to conduct the affairs of the church.

### 2) PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

- a) To be a local church.
- b) To spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and make disciples.
- c) To foster growth of the Christian Faith.
- d) To erect and maintain buildings and such other structures as are deemed to be necessary.
- e) To do all such other things as may be considered to be incidental or conducive to the pursuit of the above objectives.

### 3) PRINCIPLE OF AUTONOMY

- a) We hold that the church is under Christ's headship and power is exercised by the church assembled as a Fellowship, decisions thus made shall not be subject to change or reversal by any other body. This Church is autonomous, but advice and counsel may be sought from qualified ministers or other bodies of like principles and faith.
- b) We believe that the church should be headed by a male Pastor who will be assisted in church government by qualified men and/or women called Elders whom we empower to exercise Godly leadership over us. The Elders and the Fellowship are served by qualified men or women called Deacons.

### 4) STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

We believe in:

- a) One true God existing in three persons – the Father, Son & Holy Spirit;
- b) God who is personal, all-powerful and sovereign in creation; in revealing His purpose in redemption from sin; and in final judgement;
- c) The divine inspiration of the Bible and its supreme and sufficient authority in matters of Christian belief and conduct;
- d) The original creation of man in God's image; the sinfulness and guilt of all mankind since Adam disobeyed God, rendering every person subject to God's judgement, condemnation and punishment;
- e) The coming to earth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as a man; His sinless life, death, bodily resurrection and ascension;
- f) Redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin is only possible through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ;
- g) The work of the Holy Spirit as the one who convicts of sin, continually indwells the believer, gives spiritual gifts as He wills, and produces fruit in the believer;

- h) The expectation of the personal return and reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead; rewards and punishment in a future state;
- i) One holy, universal Church, the body of Christ, to which all true Christians belong;
- j) The divine institution of baptism (the immersion of the believer in water) in obedience to the command of Christ, as a symbol of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and as a witness by the Christian to his/her identification by faith with Christ and His Church – Baptism is the outward demonstration of an inward profession of faith;
- k) Communion as a remembrance of Christ's work;
- l) The priestly ministry of all believers and their mission in the world as witnesses to the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

5) PASTOR/S

- a) All Pastors must hold to the Statement of Beliefs.
- b) The Senior Pastor shall be male who holds credentials acceptable to the Baptist Union of NSW & ACT; the credentials of any other Pastor/s will be at the discretion of the Eldership.
- c) The Eldership will search (by advertising at their discretion and making inquiries of any appropriate source) for the Pastor/s that God has chosen to minister in the church and bring their names/s before the Members for confirmation before a call is issued.
- d) The Senior Pastor will be a member of the Eldership and serve as its leader.

6) COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION

- a) The committee of the association shall consist of, at a minimum, the senior pastor and three elders.
- b) The composition of the association shall include a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary. These officer-bearers shall be the following members of the Eldership:
  - i) The senior pastor shall act as the President of the Committee.
  - ii) The Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary of the Committee shall be appointed by the Eldership.
- c) An Elder appointed as an office-bearer of the committee shall hold office until either they no longer serve as an Elder under sub clause 7c), or until the Eldership appoints another Elder to their office.
- d) In the event of a casual vacancy of the committee, the Eldership may appoint another Elder to fill the vacancy and that person shall hold office until either they no longer serve as an Elder, or until the Eldership appoints another Elder to that office.
- e) A casual vacancy of the Committee is taken to have occurred if the Elder no longer serves as an Elder or is unable to serve on the committee due to incapacity.
- f) Quorum for Meetings of the committee:
  - i) The committee shall meet at such a place and time as it may determine.
  - ii) At least 50% of the members of the committee constitute a quorum for the purposes of a committee meeting.
  - iii) Oral or written notice of a meeting of the committee shall be given by the Secretary to each member of the council at least 48 hours (or such other period as may be unanimously agreed upon by the members of the council) before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting. Notice of a committee meeting must specify the general nature of the business of the meeting.

7) ELDERSHIP

The Elders will be appointed from the membership, and shall possess appropriate spiritual qualifications and visionary leadership to enable the strategic direction of the church.

a) Roles of the Eldership

- i) Exercise leadership and discipline.
- ii) Oversee the Ministry and Teaching programs.
- iii) Take responsibility for the vision and its strategic implementation.
- iv) Delegate responsibilities for ministries within the Fellowship.

b) Appointments to the Eldership

- i) New Elders shall be appointed by unanimous decision of the existing Eldership as the need arises. All Elders must be chosen and accepted on the basis of the Scriptural qualifications laid down in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1:5-9, and must have been Members for sufficient time to have demonstrated their gifts and character.
- ii) Before appointment, the name of a proposed new Elder shall be submitted to the Fellowship for affirmation. Prospective appointments will be announced for 2 consecutive Sundays with the Fellowship being invited to bring any concern to the Eldership regarding the proposed appointment.

c) Term of Office

- i) Elders shall serve for an open Term, but may resign their office at any time.
- ii) Elders are subject to removal by a majority vote of the Eldership at any time should they cease to qualify under the original qualifications by which they were appointed.
- iii) Any individual of the Fellowship may bring concerns to the Eldership regarding the suitability of any Elder to remain in office.
- iv) The committee must call a Special Meeting if requested by two thirds of the Membership to consider the suitability of any Elder to remain in office.

d) Checks and Balances

The Eldership shall be required to submit to the membership for confirmation the following:

- i) Audited annual financial accounts of the church to the General Meeting.
- ii) Appointments of any Pastor/s.
- iii) Undertaking of major building construction and/or extensions, purchase or sale of property and lands.
- iv) Distribution of funds in the event of the dissolution of the church.

Where a special meeting has been called relating to items (ii), (iii) or (iv) the meeting shall require a two thirds majority of the Members in the affirmative before a proposal shall be deemed to have been agreed to by the Membership.

8) DEACONS

- a) Deacons shall be men or women appointed to serve for a Term with the Elders in the various ministries essential to meeting the needs of the Fellowship.
- b) The Deacons shall exercise responsibilities as delegated to them by the Eldership.
- c) They shall be nominated from Members by the Fellowship and must be confirmed by the Eldership before holding office.
- d) Deacons must meet the qualifications laid down in Scripture at 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:5-9.

9) MINISTRY LEADERS' COUNCIL

- a) Shall consist of those within the Fellowship who have been appointed by the Eldership to represent the ministries of the church.
- b) The Ministry Leaders' Council shall assist the Eldership to review the state of the church; evaluate goals and future vision, and generally assist the Eldership to hear the heart of the Fellowship.

10) MEMBERSHIP

- a) It is expected that each Member would:
  - i) Have a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.
  - ii) Agree with and support the Statement of Beliefs and Purpose of the association.
  - iii) Have a lifestyle that is consistent with Christian conduct and doctrine.
  - iv) Regularly attend the gatherings of the church.
  - v) Contribute to the financial support of the church.
  - vi) Voluntarily submit to the Leadership of the church.
  - vii) Complete the church orientation course.
  - viii) Willingness to serve the church and community.
- b) Qualified persons may be admitted into Membership following their request to the committee and subject to any admission procedures determined by the committee.
- c) The Secretary shall enter the person's name in the register of members no later than 48 hours after approval of their membership has been granted; and the applicant becomes a member once his or her name is entered in the register.
- c) Discipline of Members
  - i) Conduct deemed by the Eldership to be contrary to Scripture shall be sufficient grounds upon which any person may be disqualified as a Member.
  - ii) The steps of the discipline of members shall be consistent with the instructions given in Matthew 18:16-20 and Galatians 6:1.
  - iii) Members acknowledge that they are subject to the Eldership matters of discipline. The purpose of discipline is restorative and remedial.
  - iv) If a person is separated from the Fellowship, they may be re-instated when they demonstrate genuine repentance of the offence and reconciliation. This will be attested to and confirmed by the Elders.
- d) Records of Membership
  - i) Shall be periodically revised by the Eldership.

11) CHURCH PROPERTY AND BUSINESS

- a) The real estate of the church shall be vested in the association.
- b) Authority to Borrow  
The association may borrow money and mortgage its property. Approval to borrow must be ratified by the Membership.
- c) Conduct of Finances  
Financial transactions within delegated limits may be executed by person/s approved by the committee.

12) ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- a) Any Member may propose an alteration to the constitution by a special resolution. Such resolutions must be proposed in writing and delivered to the committee..
- c) The committee may also propose an alteration to the constitution.
- b) Such special resolutions shall require a two thirds majority of the Members in the affirmative before alterations shall be deemed to have been agreed to by the Membership.
  - i) The date, time and place of a meeting where such a special resolution is to be proposed shall be determined by the committee.
  - ii) The Secretary will provide oral or written notice to the Membership of the date time and place of the meeting and the nature of the special resolution proposed for the meeting at least 30 days prior to the meeting.

13) GENERAL AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

- a) General Meeting
  - i) This shall be held annually as soon as is practicable after the conclusion of the church's financial year.
  - ii) This meeting shall be for the presentation of the financial report and for reasonable discussion by Members of the information contained in such report.
  - iii) Members may submit to the committee any matters they wish to have discussed. Such submission should be made in writing and delivered at least 14 days prior to the General Meeting. It shall be at the discretion of the committee as to whether a particular matter is included on the agenda and no new business shall be introduced without due notification.
- b) Special Meeting
  - i) The committee may call a Special Meeting of the Membership to consider:
    - \* any urgent business that requires the support of the Membership;
    - \* changes to the constitution;
    - \* any other matter which the Eldership considers appropriate.
  - ii) Any individual of the membership may write to the committee requesting a Special Meeting be called. If, in the opinion of the committee, the need

for such a meeting is warranted, notice will be given to the membership of such a meeting at least 30 days in advance.

- c) Quorum  
No business shall be transacted at any General or Special meeting unless a quorum of twenty percent of the members is present at the time when the meeting is declared open.
- d) Calling of a General or Special meeting
  - i) The date, time and place of the meeting shall be determined by the committee.
  - ii) The Secretary will provide oral or written notice to the Membership of the date time and place of the meeting and the nature of the business proposed for the meeting at least 30 days prior to the meeting.
  - ii) Any individual of the Fellowship may write to the committee requesting a Special Meeting be called. If, in the opinion of the committee, the need for such a meeting is warranted, notice will be given to the Fellowship of such a meeting at least 30 days in advance.
- e) Voting
  - i) Voting on motions shall normally be by a show of hands to indicate a simple majority, but a secret ballot may also be used.
  - ii) Absentee voting will be permitted at the discretion of the Eldership.
  - ii) Members under 18 years of age may not vote on matters pertaining to the purchase or sale of property.

#### 14) FUNDS

- a) The funds of the association shall be derived from donations and, subject to section 114 of the Act, such other sources as the committee determines.
- b) All money received by the association must be deposited as soon as practicable and without deduction to the association's bank account.
- c) Management of funds
  - i) All cheques must be signed by any two members of the committee.
  - ii) The funds of the association must only be used to achieve the purpose of the association in such a manner as the committee determines

#### 15) COMMON SEAL

- a) The Common Seal of the Association shall be in the custody of the Secretary and must not be shall be affixed to any document except by the authority of the Committee.
- b) The use of the common seal shall be attested by the signatures of 2 members of the committee.

#### 16) CUSTODY OF BOOKS

- a) The Secretary must keep in their custody or control all records, books and other documents relating to the association.

#### 17) INSPECTION OF BOOKS

a) The records, books and other documents of the association will be open for inspection free of charge, by a member of the association at any reasonable time.

18) DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION AND THE CHURCH

a) Dissolution of the association and church will be determined by a unanimous decision of the committee and confirmed by a two thirds majority vote of the Membership.

b) In the event of dissolution, the committee shall make provision for the payment of all liabilities of the association from the assets of the same.

c) Upon such conditions as above, all remaining assets of the association shall be given or distributed to other like-minded Christian institutions existing for similar purposes as the church outlined at *clause 2*. Such distribution shall be determined by a majority of members at or before dissolution, it being expressly forbidden that any Member or Members benefit from such distribution.

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GLOSSARY

Deacons	Men or women who meet the standards laid down in Scripture at 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1: 5-9 and are gifted to serve in the many and various ministries essential to meeting the needs of the Fellowship. ( <i>clause 8</i> )
Elder	Men or women who meet the standards laid down in Scripture at 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1: 5-9 and possess appropriate spiritual qualifications and visionary leadership to enable the strategic direction of the church. ( <i>clause 7</i> )
Eldership	All of the Elders.
Fellowship Financial year	All of the individuals who regularly attend the church. means the year ending 30 September.
Leadership	Both the Elders and Deacons combined. ( <i>clause 10</i> )
Member	Any person who has been admitted into Membership of the church and association following the completion of admission procedures. ( <i>clause 10</i> )
Membership	All of the Members.
Ministry Leaders' Council	Those within the Fellowship who represent the areas of ministry. It shall advise the Eldership and assist the Eldership to hear the heart of the Fellowship. ( <i>Clause 9</i> )
Term	As defined and revised from time to time by the Eldership.
The association	means the Tuggeranong Baptist Church Incorporated.
The church	means the Tuggeranong Baptist Church. Referred to as "the church" or "we".
The committee	means the committee of the association

Note: Scriptural references are not regarded as precluding women, single men, those without children, divorced or remarried people from serving as a Deacon or Elder. They are included to show spiritual qualifications desirable in Deacons or Elders.