

Charters Towers Baptist Church <u>Constitution</u>

(version 02.19)

A Member of the Baptist Union of Qld (Qld Baptist)





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1.1 THE NAME

The name of 'the Church' shall be the Charters Towers Baptist Church, hereinafter called 'the Church'.

1.2 AFFILIATION

'The Church' shall be affiliated with the Baptist Union of Queensland and accepts their responsibility to and privileges of the said Union.

1.3 PURPOSE

The purpose of 'the Church' is to glorify God by:

- worshipping the living God
- communicating God's Word
- nurturing God's people
- connecting with the community around us
- being involved locally and globally in Christ's name

1.4 DOCTRINAL BASIS

'The Church' subscribes to the following doctrinal beliefs:

1.4.1 The Divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testaments Scriptures.

(2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Tim 3:16)

The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any distortion or error.

1.4.2 The existence of one God in three persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (1 John 5:7; John 1:1-2; John 14:15-17; John 10:30; Genesis 1:26)

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

1.4.3 The Deity and Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God. (John 1:14; Matthew 1:18; Hebrews 4:14-15; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)



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Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

1.4.4 The immediate work of the Holy Spirit: to convict, regenerate, indwell, sanctify and guarantee the believer's eternal salvation. (John 16:7b-11; Romans 8:9-17; Ephesians 1:13-14)

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.

1.4.5 The fallen, sinful and lost condition of all people, making them subject to God's wrath and condemnation with its eternal consequences. (Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12)

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation and love. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called SIN.

1.4.6 The necessity, in order to be saved, of repentance towards God, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:38; Acts 20:21, Isaiah 59:1-2, 9, 20, Ephesians 2:1-2, Revelation 20:10)

We are all in need of the new life that only God can give through a relationship with Jesus.

Satan is a real being who is opposed to the purposes of God for the universe and humanity. He is now at work in those who are disobedient to the ways of God. Our world is currently living out the consequences of Satan's and our rebellion against God's teachings. The good news is that Satan was defeated by Christ at Calvary and one day will be cast into the lake of fire and eternally doomed.

1.4.7 The salvation of people from the penalty and power of sin, through the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, His atoning death and shed blood, His resurrection from the dead, His



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ascension to the right hand of the Father and His unchanging priesthood. (1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Mark 16:19; Hebrews 4:14-16)

Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

1.4.8 God, through the Holy Spirit, gives spiritual gifts as he chooses, to each believer, to be used for the building up of 'the Church'. (Ephesians 4:11-13; Hebrews 2:4; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. The gifts are given for the benefit of the body of Christ, not for self gratification.

1.4.9 The visible return to earth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment of all people, resulting in eternal glory or damnation. (John 14:1-3, Acts 1:9-11, 1Corinthians 15:20-26, Ephesians 1:9-10, 1 Thessalonians 4:13- 17; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9,)

We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

1:4.10 Ordinances of 'the Church' are:

The church comprises those who have been given new life, gathering together to worship, grow, encourage and engage with the community in Jesus name. As part of our church life we practice the two ceremonies given by Jesus Christ through scripture: these being baptism by the immersion of believers upon their repentance and profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and The Lord's Supper as a memorial thanksgiving for the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus;

Baptism, being the immersion in water of believers upon their profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as a symbol of the fellowship of the believers in his death, burial and resurrection; (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 2:38.)

The Lord's Supper is a memorial, until He comes, of the sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; (Matthew 26:26-29 1 Corinthians 11:24-25).



2. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

2.1 ADMISSION OF MEMBERSHIP

2.1.1 Membership will be open to all persons baptized by immersion as believers in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who give evidence of their faith in daily life and who subscribe to this Constitution. (Acts 2:38-47)

2.2 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

2.2.1 By conversion and baptism or transfer. See Bylaws

2.3 RESPONSIBILITY OF MEMBERS TO 'THE CHURCH'

- 2.3.1 Agree with and abide by the Constitution,
- 2.3.2 Regularly attend services and meetings (Hebrews 10:25),
- 2.3.3 Contribute to funds according to their ability (2 Corinthians 9:7),
- 2.3.4 Encourage development and use of spiritual gifts (Romans 12:4-8),
- 2.3.5 Do everything possible to advance the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 14:12, 26),
- 2.3.6 Support the elected Leadership of the church (Hebrews 13:17).

2.4 DISCIPLINE / RESTORATION

2.4.1 We are a nurturing Church and desire that all disciplinary action is for the restoration of Member. (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2,; 1 John 4:7-11). See Bylaws

2.5 CHURCH ROLL

2.5.1 'The Church' shall have a membership roll revised at least annually. Only members on the roll are eligible to vote at church meetings or hold positions within 'the Church' leadership.



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3. ORDINANCES OF 'THE CHURCH'

- 3.1 The Lord's Supper. See Bylaws 3.1.1
- 3.2 Believer's Baptism by immersion.

4. CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- 4.1 LEADERSHIP See attached diagram
 - 4.1.1 'The Church' will operate under a 'Leadership Team' model of Pastor(s), Elders and Deacons.
 - 4.1.2 The primary function of the Leadership Team is to assist the Pastor(s)
 - 4.1.3 The Pastor shall be the Team Leader
 - 4.1.4 The Pastor or an appointed person from the Leadership Team can be delegated as the Chair Person of the Leadership Team and Church meetings at the discretion of the Pastor.
 - 4.1.5 Members only will be eligible for the Leadership Team.
 - 4.1.6 Elders and Deacons will be added to the Leadership Team as the Lord provides leadership and as the Church grows.
 - 4.1.7 The Leadership Team will oversee the Church and appoint Ministry Coordinators as required.
- 4.2 APPOINTMENT OF LEADERSHIP See Bylaws.
- 4.3 PASTOR/S

The Pastor will:-

- 4.3.1 Be Registered or eligible for Registration by Baptist Union of Queensland;
- 4.3.2 Provide spiritual leadership to 'the Church' in consultation with the Leadership Team.
- 4.4 APPOINTMENT OF PASTOR/S See Bylaws



5. CHURCH MEETINGS

- 5.1 Church Business meetings shall be held at least bi-annually, one of which shall be the Annual General Meeting. See Bylaws
- 5.2 A Special Member's Meeting may be called by the Pastor/s, Leadership Team or 25% of the membership of 'the Church'.
- 5.3 All Members Meetings shall require a quorum as set out in the Bylaws

6. FINANCE

6.1 CHURCH MONIES – see Bylaws

- 6.1.1 All monies given or raised in the name of 'the Church' shall be under the direction of 'the Church' leaders.
- 6.1.2 All 'the Church' monies shall be incorporated within 'the Church' Accounts.
- 6.1.3 The management of 'the Church' monies shall be in accordance with the Baptist Union of Queensland accounting principles and as required by Australian Law.
- 6.1.4 Each financial year the church monies shall be certified as a true and accurate record and reported at the Annual General Meeting. The person to undertake the 'financial certification' shall be appointed annually by Church Leadership.
- 6.1.5 'The Church' monies will be accounted for within an accredited accounting package and budget as approved by Church Leadership.
- 6.1.6 Tenure of paid employees.

6.2 DESIGNATED GIFTS AND DONATIONS

6.2.1 'The Church' shall be maintained primarily by voluntary contributions and gifts and shall accept such contributions and gifts for its own use under the following conditions:-

'the Church' shall, unless it expressly agrees otherwise, restrict itself to accepting contributions and gifts which are free from any legal obligation to use the contribution or gift in a particular manner or for a particular purpose.



6.2.2 'The Church' shall notify Members and other persons or organizations contributing to 'the Church', that unless 'the Church' expressly agrees otherwise, any contributions or gifts to 'the Church' shall be considered available for use in any activity of 'the Church' consistent with the objects stated in this Constitution. In particular, although contributions or gifts designated for a particular purpose within 'the Church' shall be treated with proper respect as suggestions or requests, they will not be treated as a legal obligation."

7. TRUSTEE

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

8. MINISTRIES

8.1 ORGANISATIONS

- 8.1.1 No organisation may represent itself as being associated with 'the Church' without the approval of 'the Church' leadership. In all matters of dispute 'the Church' membership shall be the final authority.
- 8.2 PROGRAMS
 - 8.2.1 All programs, policies and rules of organisations connected with 'the Church' shall be subject to approval by the Leadership before being published, circulated or performed. See By-laws

9. PROPERTY / RESOURCES / EQUIPMENT

- 9.1 Property, resources and equipment received or purchased by any organisation of 'the Church' shall be deemed the property of 'the Church'
- 9.2 Use of property by outside organisations or individuals requires approval of 'the Church' Leadership through the secretary.
- 9.3 The property and equipment must be maintained and insured according to Occupational Health & Safety regulations and the policies of the Baptist Union of Queensland.



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9.4 All substantial building alterations, purchases or sales shall be subject to fourteen days notice in writing to the members before being dealt with at a constituted meeting.

10. GENERAL

- 10.1 BY- LAWS
 - 10.1.1 'The Church' at a business meeting may establish, rescind or modify Bylaws governing day to day matters of 'the Church', by a 60% majority of votes cast by members present. Notification must be given to all members in writing two weeks in advance.

10.2 ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION

- 10.2.1. The Constitution may not be cancelled or amended, except at a Special Member's Meeting.
- 10.2.2 At least four Sunday's notice will be given of intention to hold a meeting.
- 10.2.3 At least two Sundays prior to the meeting, the details of the Constitutional alteration are to be given/posted to 'the Church' members and the Baptist Union of Queensland.
- 10.2.4 The meeting shall only consider the business for which it was convened.
- 10.2.5 Decisions shall be by 75% majority of votes cast by members present.





BYLAWS

- 2. **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP - BYLAWS**
- 2.2 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
 - 2.2.1 Applications for membership shall be processed by the church secretary. The Church Secretary will ensure all applicants receive a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Application for membership by transfer from another church will require the applicant to provide contact details of their previous Church. Applicants will be asked to share their conversion and baptism experience.

The church leadership will appoint two Church Members to interview the applicant. The leadership will make a recommendation to the Church Membership. The Church Membership will decide by casting a vote if the applicant is successful.

Church Membership will commence from the date the applicant receives acceptance and will be welcomed into membership at the next communion service.

2.4 **DISCIPLINE - RESTORATION**

2.4.1 At all times when Christian discipline is required the Church leadership will appoint two members of the Leadership Team to visit the church member involved.

If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily the matter will again be brought to the Leadership Team and a meeting between the Church Leadership Team and member will be arranged.

The member will be given seven days notification of the purpose and time of the meeting and given every opportunity for a positive response.

If still unresolved the Church leadership will take the matter to a members meeting, where sufficient details of the matter will be given (as determined by the Leadership team.) The Leadership team shall have sole discretion as to the form of discipline.

Where dissention cannot be resolved as detailed above, the Baptist Union of Queensland may be requested to provide a mediator. In the case of failure of a successful outcome the member's name shall be removed from the membership and relieved of those responsibilities undertaken by the member.



2.5 CHURCH ROLL

2.5.1 A member will cease to be a member when they choose, by letter of resignation or absence from services for a period of six months. Exceptions to this may be mission service or health reasons.

3. ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH - BYLAWS

3.1. THE LORD'S SUPPER

3.1.1 All believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, as Saviour and Lord, shall be welcomed to the Lord's Table.

4.2 LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENT - BYLAWS

4.2.1 In general, all leadership positions will be filled at the Annual General Meeting.

4.2.2 If the need arises to appoint additional Elders or Deacons due to church growth, a recommendation shall be brought to a church meeting and be approved by a simple majority.

4.2.3 APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS

1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5;1-4, Titus 1;6-9.

The Leadership Team shall nominate the candidate/s who shall be a member in good standing for a period of at least twelve months and is over the age of twenty-five.

The nomination will be given to the Leadership Team for their consideration and approval. The church secretary will bring the nomination before the church membership. Members will be given two weeks notice.

The nominated persons will need to receive 75% majority of votes cast. Appointment as an Elder is a two year appointment, with an eligibility to stand for re-election. The Elders shall meet with the Pastor(s) as often as deemed necessary.



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4.2.4 APPOINTMENT OF DEACONS

1 Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6:2-7; Romans 16:1-2.

The Church Members shall be able to nominate a person who has been an active member of this church for at least six months and is over the age of twenty-one years.

The nominee for a diaconate position must sign a member's nomination confirming their willingness to accept the nomination.

The Leadership Team will scrutinize the nominations, visit the member and bring a recommendation to the membership via the Secretary. Two week's notice prior to elections will be given. The nominated persons will need to receive 75% majority of votes cast.

Appointment as Deacon is a two year appointment, with 50% of the Deacons retiring each year. Deacons are eligible to stand for re-election.

In the case of a vacancy the Leadership Team can appoint a person to the office to serve until the next Annual General Meeting.

The Leadership Team shall meet at least monthly or as often as deemed necessary.

The Deacons shall consist of Secretary, Treasurer, and other Deacons as deemed necessary and as the Church grows.

- 4.2.5 All those appointed to the Leadership Team must have the appropriate Working with Children Card and as is required in government regulations.
- 4.2.6 APPOINTMENT OF MINISTRY COORDINATORS

The Leadership shall be responsible to appoint Ministry Coordinators as deemed necessary and as the Church grows. These positions will be ratified at a subsequent Church meeting.





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4.4 APPOINTMENT OF PASTOR/S -BYLAWS

4.4.1 A Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) shall be formed consisting of at least one Elder, two Deacons and two appointed members of the church.

The Chairperson shall be a member of the Leadership Team.

- 4.4.2 The PSC shall work closely with the Baptist Union of Queensland Northern Area Consultant or his nominated representative.
- 4.4.3 Church members are encouraged to recommend to the PSC candidates for the Pastorate.
- 4.4.4 The PSC shall exercise the strictest confidentiality in all matters relating to the call of a Pastor. Only the Chairperson shall divulge any information to the candidate, his Church or leadership, the Baptist Union and to the local membership.
- 4.4.5 The PSC shall enter into correspondence whether by email, post, fax or phone calls etc as deemed necessary. Copies of all correspondence shall be dated and kept on file, leaving a complete record of all negotiations.
- 4.4.6 The recommendation from the PSC shall be given to the Church Secretary who will call a special members meeting for ratification by the church membership. At least two weeks notice will be given to all members in writing.
- 4.4.7 The recommendation will comprise an open call with two yearly reviews of pastor, church ministry and leadership and conducted in accordance with The Baptist Union of Queensland terms and conditions.
- 4.4.8 The termination of the call requires a minimum three months notice from either side in writing.
- 4.4.9 In all decisions regarding pastoral calls a majority of 75% of votes cast is required for appointment or termination.
- 4.4.10 If the Pastor shall be found guilty of any immorality or misconduct (deemed such by the Ministerial Committee of the BUQ) his pastorate shall automatically terminate.
- 4.4.11 Conditions of the call, salary package, accommodation etc shall be discussed and finalized in consultation with the Pastor and Leadership Team.





5.1.1 All church member meetings shall have the Pastor or nominated member of the Leadership Team as Chairperson.

At all church member meetings the secretary or person appointed shall take minutes.

Motions need to be moved and seconded before discussion and voting.

All motions need a simple majority of members present to be approved except where 75% is stipulated.

All matters of business should be listed on the agenda prior to the beginning of the meeting.

All comments and remarks shall be addressed to the Chairperson.

All church member meetings shall be completed within one hour, Annual General Meeting one and a half hours. A half an hour extension time may be approved by member's present if required.

All meetings shall be opened and closed in prayer. Prayer may be requested by the Chairperson during the meeting.

5.3.1 A quorum shall consist of at least 60% of members residing in the district.



6.1 CHURCH MONIES

- 6.1.1 All Church monies shall be placed in Church Bank Accounts authorized by the Church Leadership and operated under their direction. All Church Bank Account signatories are to be appointed by Church Leadership.
- 6.1.2 No church ministry or associated activity shall have its own bank account.
- 6.1.3 All income and expenditure incorporated in Church Accounts is:-
 - disclosed to the Church Treasurer;
 - accompanied by relevant 'documentation;'

- in accordance with the approved budget unless otherwise agreed by Church Leadership.

All offerings shall be counted by two persons at the time of receipt, entered and signed for in the book provided. The treasurer or designated person shall deposit the monies in the authorized Church Accounts within two working days of receipt.

- 6.1.4 The Church Treasurer will submit the Church Accounts for 'financial certification' to an appointed person and present the certified report to the Annual General Meeting.
- 6.1.5 The Church Treasurer, in consultation with the Leadership Team and Ministry Coordinators, shall prepare a budget outlining income and expenditure to the Church Leadership each year or as requested by them. This budget will be submitted to Church membership for approval.

The Church Treasurer will account for all monies within the accredited accounting package and budget.

The operating expenditure shall be the responsibility of the Church Leadership through the Church Treasurer in accordance with the budget.

An emergency fund is available to the Leadership Team to be used in case of dire need.

6.1.6 All paid positions shall be subject to a contract of employment, which shall have terms, conditions and review mechanisms in accordance with the Baptist Union of Queensland



8. MINISTRIES—BYLAWS

8:2:1 All those involved in any Children/Youth Ministry must have the appropriate 'Working With Children Card' and as is required in government regulations.



Unregistered Pastor: Daniel O'Connor	Date:
Deacon Secretary: Melinda O'Connor	Date:
Deacon Treasurer: Betty James	Date:
Deacon: Narda Geisel	Date:
Deacon S. Anne Liddell	Date:
Deacon: David McGinnis	Date: