Constitution

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents 1
1) THE CHURCH 2
2) OBJECTIVES OF THE CHURCH 2
3) PRINCIPLES OF AUTONOMY AND PRIESTLY MINISTRY OF ALL BELIEVERS 2
4) STATEMENT OF BELIEFS 2
5) PASTOR/S 3
6) ELDERSHIP 3
7) COMMITTEE OF THE CHURCH 4
8) MEMBERSHIP 4
9) CHURCH PROPERTY AND BUSINESS 5
10) ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION 5
11) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SPECIAL MEETINGS 6
12) FUNDS 6
13) CUSTODY OF BOOKS 7
14) INSPECTION OF BOOKS 7
15) DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH 7
GLOSSARY 7

1) THE CHURCH

The name of the Church is the Tuggeranong Baptist Church. The Church may exercise all the powers of an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991* (ACT).

2) OBJECTIVES 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) PRINCIPLES OF AUTONOMY AND PRIESTLY MINISTRY OF ALL BELIEVERS

a) We hold that the church is under Christ's headship and power is exercised by the Church in accordance with the provisions of this constitution, 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 hold to the priestly ministry of all believers and their mission in the world as witnesses to the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

4) STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

We believe in:

a) One true God existing in three persons – the Father, Son and 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 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 of the Spirit.
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) Believer's baptism as the outward demonstration of an inward profession of faith in obedience to the command of Christ, as a symbol of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.
k) Communion as a remembrance of Christ's redemptive work.

5) PASTOR/S

a) We believe the Church should be headed by a Lead Pastor who will be assisted in church government by qualified people whom we empower to exercise Godly leadership over us.
b) All Pastors must hold to the Statement of Beliefs and Principles (Clauses 3&4).
c) The Lead Pastor shall be accredited by an established and widely recognised association or union within the Christian faith; the credentials of any other Pastor/s will be at the discretion of the Eldership.
d) 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.
e) The Lead Pastor will be a member of the Eldership and serve as its leader.

6) ELDERSHIP

The Eldership will consist of the Lead Pastor and at least three Members of the Church. The Elders shall possess appropriate spiritual qualifications and visionary leadership to facilitate the strategic direction of the Church.

a) Functions of the Eldership include:
   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) The Lead Pastor is taken to be appointed as an Elder on an ongoing basis.
   ii) The members of the Existing Eldership at the date of adoption of this Constitution remain appointed as Elders and for the purposes of clause 6(c) the term of such appointment is taken to have commenced on 8 December 2024.
   iii) 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.
   iv) Where the Eldership identifies that additional elders are needed, any member may nominate another member to be considered for appointment as an Elder.
   v) A member so nominated must indicate that they are willing to be considered for the Eldership.
   vi) The written nomination (and acceptance by the member) should then be provided to the existing Eldership, who will assess whether the nominee meets the qualifications and has the characteristics needed to be an Elder.
   vii) Provided the Eldership considers the nominee has the necessary qualifications and characteristics, a vote on the nomination will occur at the next AGM.
   viii) If the nomination receives a two thirds majority vote of the Members in the affirmative, the nominee becomes an Elder.
c) Term of Office
   i) Elders shall be elected for a term of three years, normally at the AGM. An Elder so elected may be re-elected for a second term of three years. After serving for two consecutive terms of three years, the Elder must take a break of at least twelve months before standing for re-election. An Elder may resign their office at any time by written notification to the existing Eldership. If an Elder resigns or is unable to serve on the Eldership due to incapacity, and this results in there being less than three Elders (not including the Lead Pastor), the remaining Elders may appoint a member to fill that role.

Such an appointment operates until the next AGM, at which point the process for appointments to the Eldership under clause 6b applies.

ii) Elders are subject to removal by a majority vote of the Eldership (excluding the Elder who is the subject of the vote) at any time should they cease to qualify under the original qualifications by which they were appointed or cannot perform the functions of an Elder.

iii) Any member may bring concerns to the Eldership regarding the suitability of any Elder to remain in office.

d) Checks and Balances

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

i) Annual financial accounts of the Church to the Annual 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 surplus property or funds in the event of the dissolution of the Church in accordance with clause 15)c).

Where a special meeting has been called relating to items (ii), (iii) or (iv) the meeting shall require a two thirds majority vote of the Members in favour of a proposal to be accepted.

7) COMMITTEE OF THE CHURCH

a) The Committee is to attend to the governance and management of the Church.
b) The Committee of the Church shall consist of, at a minimum, the Lead Pastor and the Elders. Other persons on the Committee shall be appointed by the Eldership.
c) The composition of the Committee shall include a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Public Officer:
   i) The Lead Pastor shall act as the President of the Committee.
   ii) The Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Public Officer of the Committee shall be appointed by the Eldership and may be members of the Eldership.
d) A person appointed as an office-bearer of the Committee shall hold office until the Eldership appoints another person to their office.
e) In the event of a casual vacancy of the Committee, the Eldership may appoint another person to fill the vacancy, and that person shall hold office until the Eldership appoints another person to that office or, in the case of an Elder, until an appointment is made at the next AGM.
f) A casual vacancy of the Committee is taken to have occurred if the person resigns, is removed, or is unable to serve on the Committee due to incapacity.
g) 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.
h) Formal decisions of the Committee will require a simple majority of those present and be duly minuted.

8) MEMBERSHIP

a) The Members shall have power to decide all matters relating to the conduct of the Church and its affairs.
b) It is expected that each Member:

i) Has a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.
ii) Agrees with and supports the Purpose of the association, Objectives of the Church, and Principles and Beliefs set out in Clauses 1-4.
iii) Regularly attends the gatherings of the Church.
iv) Contributes to the financial support of the Church.
v) Voluntarily submits to the Leadership of the Church.
vi) Completes the Church orientation course.
vii) Is willing to serve the Church and community.

c) Persons may be admitted into Membership following their request to the Eldership and subject to any admission procedures determined by them.
d) There are no fees, subscriptions or costs to become a Member of the Church.
e) Members will not be liable to contribute to the payment of any debts or other liabilities incurred by the Church or to the costs, charges or expenses in the course of the dissolution or winding up the Church.
f) The Secretary shall enter the person's name in the register of members as soon as practicable after approval of their membership has been granted.
g) All Members will be voting members.
h) 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, provided the member has been given reasonable notice of the concerns and an opportunity to be heard before a decision is made.
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 on matters of discipline. The purpose of discipline is restorative and remedial.
iv) If a person is removed from the Membership by the Eldership, 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.
i) Records of Membership
i) Shall be periodically revised by the Eldership.

9) CHURCH PROPERTY AND BUSINESS

a) The real estate of the Church shall be vested in the Church.
b) Authority to Borrow
The Church may borrow money and mortgage its property. Approval to borrow must be ratified by a two thirds majority vote of the Members at a Special Meeting called for that purpose.
c) Conduct of Finances
Financial transactions within delegated limits may be executed by person/s approved by the Committee.

10) ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

a) Any Member may propose an alteration to the constitution in accordance with the process set out in Clause 11(b).
b) The Committee or Eldership may also propose an alteration to the constitution.
c) Such proposals shall require a Special Resolution before alterations shall be deemed to have been agreed to by the Membership.

11) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

a) Annual General Meeting
   i) This shall be held annually as soon as is practicable, and no later than five months, after the conclusion of the Church's financial year.
   ii) This meeting shall be for the presentation of the financial report (including annual financial accounts, audited where required by law or as otherwise determined by the Committee) and for reasonable discussion by Members of the information contained in such report, for the election of Elders, or for any other matter that the Eldership considers appropriate.
   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 Annual 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 Meetings
   i) The Committee or Eldership 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 member may write to the Committee or Eldership requesting a Special Meeting be called, in accordance with clause 11(d).

c) Quorum

   No business shall be transacted at the Annual General Meeting or a 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 the Annual General Meeting or Special Meetings
   i) The date, time and place of the meeting shall be determined by the Eldership or 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.
   iii) Any member may write to the Eldership or Committee requesting a Special Meeting be called. If, in the opinion of the Eldership, the need for such a meeting is warranted, notice will be given 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 at the discretion of the Eldership.
   ii) Absentee voting and proxy voting will be permitted at the discretion of the Eldership.
   iii) Members under 18 years of age may not vote on matters pertaining to the purchase or sale of property.

12) FUNDS

a) The funds of the Church shall be derived from donations and, subject to section 114 of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991, such other sources as the Committee determines.
b) All money received by the Church must be deposited to the Church's bank account as soon as practicable, and without deduction.

c) Management of funds
   i) All expenditure must be authorised by any two persons nominated by the Committee.
   ii) The funds of the Church must only be used to achieve the purpose of the Church as determined by the Committee.

13) CUSTODY OF BOOKS

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

14) INSPECTION OF BOOKS

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

15) DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH

a) Dissolution of the Church will be determined by a unanimous decision of the Committee and confirmed by a Special Resolution of the Membership.
b) In the event of dissolution, the Committee shall make provision for the payment of all liabilities of the Church from the assets of the same.
c) All remaining assets of the Church shall be given or distributed to other like-minded Christian institutions existing for similar objectives as the Church outlined at clause 2. Such distribution shall be determined by a two thirds majority vote of the Members at or before dissolution, it being expressly forbidden that any Member or Members benefit from such distribution.

GLOSSARY

Church or “we”	Tuggeranong Baptist Church Incorporated
Committee	The committee of the Church as determined in accordance with clause 7).
Elder	A person appointed as an Elder pursuant to clause 6)b).
Eldership	All of the Elders.
Existing Eldership	Each person, other than the Lead Pastor, who is appointed as an Elder pursuant to clause 6)b)ii).
Financial year	means the year ending 30 September.
Leadership	the Committee.
Member	Any person who has been admitted as a Member of the Church in accordance with clause 8.
Membership	All of the Members.
Special Resolution	has the same meaning as provided in the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991* (ACT).