



WHITSUNDAY  
**Baptist  
Church**



**CONSTITUTION**  
of the  
**Whitsunday Baptist Church**

AGM September 2012

## 1. Name

The name of the church is Whitsunday Baptist Church. Whitsunday Baptist Church is a member church of the Baptist Union of Queensland.

## 2. Mission

*Whitsunday Baptist Church* is a passionate, Holy Spirit led church committed to being a Christ centered, Bible based community who value prayer, worship, discipleship and relationships.

We are passionately committed to connecting our community with Jesus and His message of hope and love.

*Following the model of Acts 2:42, Whitsunday Baptist Church exists to:*

1. Be a people devoted to prayer and worship in Christian fellowship.
2. Grow through discipleship.
3. Be a beacon of light to our community, drawing them to Christ and demonstrating the love of God.
4. Develop unity with other churches in the local area to promote Christ and His church.

*We will do this by:*

1. Being a church that is strongly focused on prayer and worship, and the leading of the Holy Spirit.
2. Having Bible based teaching, bible studies and discipleship groups
3. Being committed to our personal spiritual growth through guided and individual discipleship.
4. Serving and reaching out to our community
5. Partnering with other churches.

## 3. Definitions and Interpretation

Unless the contrary intention appears:

### 3.1 Definitions

- (a) **AGM** means an Annual General Meeting convened under Section 9.1.
- (b) **Chairperson** means the Chairperson appointed from time to time under Section 9.9.
- (c) **Natural Person** means a human being, not a trust fund, company, etc.
- (d) **Doctrinal Basis** means the doctrinal basis set out in Section 4.
- (e) **General Meeting** means an annual general meeting or extraordinary general meeting of the Church convened under Sections 9.1 and 9.2 respectively.
- (f) **Leadership** means the "Leadership Team" established under Section 6, or specific part thereof determined by context;
- (g) **Member** means a member of the Church under Section 5 but does not include a person on the Supplementary Roll under Section 5.4.
- (h) **Congregation** means the members together, especially in church business meetings.
- (i) **Pastor** means a person employed or designated as a pastor of the Church as per section 6.
- (j) **Secretary** means the Secretary appointed from time to time under Section 6.4(a).
- (k) **Simple majority** means more than 50% of those present and entitled to vote at a General Meeting or Leadership meeting.
- (l) **Special majority** means 75% or more of those present and entitled to vote at a General Meeting or Leadership meeting.
- (m) **Treasurer** means the Treasurer of the Church appointed from time to time under Section 6.4(d).

### 3.2 Interpretation

- (a) the singular includes the plural and conversely;
- (b) a gender includes all genders;
- (c) if a word or phrase is defined, its other grammatical forms have a corresponding meaning;
- (d) the meaning of general words is not limited by specific examples introduced by *including*, or *for example*, or similar expressions;

- (e) headings do not affect the interpretation of these sections.

### 3.3 **Supplementary Documents**

Information regarding processes for the call and appointment of a pastor, church discipline and grievance procedures are listed separately and do not form part of this constitution.

These supplementary documents form part of the operating principles of Whitsunday Baptist Church and may not be altered except by the following process:

- (a) Changes may be proposed only by the Leadership team
- (b) The Leadership together (all Pastors, Elders and Deacons) review any proposed changes and approve them
- (c) Revised and original documents are distributed to members at least two Sundays before a business meeting with the changes highlighted.
- (d) Revised documents are accepted by a special majority at any church business meeting

## 4. **Doctrinal Basis**

The Church affirms as its doctrinal basis principles consistent with the Apostles' Creed, namely that:

*"We believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. We believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic church<sup>1</sup>; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."*

Further to this, or in explaining some of this creed, we believe the following:

- The Trinity: There is One God, who exists in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, co-equal and co-eternal.
- Charismatic Distinctive: We believe that the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are available to all believers, are given by God as he determines, and are for the purpose of building up the church.
- Scripture: The Old and New Testaments together are inspired by God and are our primary authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- Ordinances of the Church: We believe that Jesus ordained two ordinances for the church, that of Baptism and Communion ("The Lord's Supper"). We believe in and practice Baptism by full immersion of believers upon their profession of faith.

## 5. **Membership**

### 5.1 **Application**

An applicant for membership of the Church must:

- (a) be a natural person of 16 years of age or older;
- (b) be baptised or have been baptised, or have undergone a baptismal rite from another recognised Christian tradition as an adult or by their own personal choice with an understanding of its significance as a public confession of faith, and agree that Baptism by full immersion is the Scriptural model and is the practice of this church.
- (c) demonstrate by their life that they are a believer;
- (d) subscribe to the Constitution and Doctrinal Basis;
- (e) agree to be subject to this Constitution;
- (f) have been in attendance at WBC for 6 months or is able to give a pastoral reference from their previous church
- (g) be willing to obtain a 'blue card' of suitability to work with children;
- (h) complete, sign and submit the application form prescribed by the Leadership.

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<sup>1</sup> "...holy catholic church": When written with a lower case 'c', catholic means "universal" (all believers of all times and all places) not the Roman Catholic Church.

## 5.2 Admission

An applicant shall be admitted as a member of the Church if the Leadership approves his application and their membership application is approved by a simple majority at any church business meeting as outlined in section 9.3. Notice of the applicants name is to be included in the agenda of the meeting distributed as per section 9.3(d).

A Pastor and his spouse are considered to have been accepted into membership upon appointment to the role of Pastor as this is a requirement of the role.

## 5.3 Termination

A person ceases to be a member of the Church if:

- (a) they die;
- (b) they resign by written notice to the Leadership; or
- (c) their membership is terminated by a special majority of the Leadership for any of the following reasons:
  - (i) they are opposed to the Constitution or Doctrinal Basis;
  - (ii) they have conducted themselves in a manner that is contrary to the Constitution or Doctrinal Basis or in a way which is anti-Scriptural;
  - (iii) they are found to be guilty and unrepentant of a significant moral offence or ongoing misconduct as determined by the church leadership.

PROVIDED THAT he has been given the opportunity to be heard and a right of appeal to a General Meeting which may confirm, vary or revoke the Leadership's decision.

## 5.4 Supplementary Roll

The membership roll of the Church shall be reviewed by the Leadership prior to every AGM for the purposes of:

- (a) deletion (due to the reasons in Section 5.3);
- (b) moving of names to the "Supplementary Roll". The Supplementary Roll consists of members who have, in the opinion of the Leadership, ceased to participate in the activities of the Church. Such members shall not be eligible to vote and shall not be considered for the purposes of constituting a quorum. Members who have been on the Supplementary Roll for 2 consecutive years may have their membership terminated by the Leadership without notice or any right to be heard.

## 5.5 Responsibilities of Membership

In committing to membership of the church, individuals commit to the following responsibilities and expectations:

- Prayer – pray for the church and the pastor, elders and deacons.
- Encourage and Support ministry – to encourage and support the ministry of individuals and the church, including the pastor and leadership team, and ministry volunteers.
- Attendance – attend the community worship service weekly if possible, or as often as possible if circumstances prevent weekly attendance.
- Stewardship – to give freely and in the spirit of generosity of finances, time and possessions for the support of the church and its ministries.
- Lifestyle and Witness – to live a life that is honouring to God and to in all ways make the Gospel attractive to those who know us.
- Submission – to God and Scripture as the rule of life, to the pastor and elders as the spiritual leadership of the church and to the church as the community of faith, in that order.

## 6 Leadership Team

6.1 The church governance structure is:

- **Pastor** – the pastor is the head of the Eldership and is subject to the role description that was agreed on at the time of appointment and to the qualifications set out in Scripture. The pastor operates in partnership with the Elders. The pastor's authority is only as strong as the partnership between the Pastor and the Elders and he cannot operate in the role of pastor without the cooperation of the Eldership. The Pastor is accountable to God at all times, in church governance to the Elders primarily, and through them to the congregation.
- **Elders** – the Elders are charged with the spiritual direction and oversight of the Church. Together with the Pastor, they pray for and direct the church in its vision and direction. The qualification for an Elder is set out in 1 Timothy 3. Further, as the name implies, Elders should be people who are not new converts or young in age. Depending on the age of the Pastor, the Elders should ideally be older than the pastor. The Elders operate in submission to the Pastor insofar as the pastor reflects the character of the eldership and the values of the church. The Elders are accountable to God at all times, in church governance to the Pastor and to the congregation directly.
- **Deacons** – the Deacons are charged with the general running of the Church. These roles will include the Treasurer and Secretary and shall operate as advisors to the Elders in decisions regarding the running of the church. The deacons are empowered with duties, authority and responsibilities by the Elders and Pastor and the Congregation. Deacons are accountable to God at all times, and in church governance to the Pastor and Elders and to the congregation directly.

### 6.2 Number

The Leadership will consist of

- (a) Elders: up to a number that is 10% of the church membership with a maximum of 5 persons including the Pastor who are members of the Church, elected or appointed under Section 8; and
- (b) Deacons: up to a number that is 10% of the church with a maximum of 7 persons including the Pastor
- (c) The pastor(s) of the Church. The Pastor is a member and the head of both the Eldership and the Deaconate, and all other committees formed within the church ex officio. Where there is one Pastor, he will fill the role of one of the Elders and one of the Deacons and will sit on both committees, unless agreed between the Pastor and relevant committee that he will not be on the committee. Where there are multiple pastors, the responsibilities for being on the Eldership and Deaconate will be decided between the pastors. The Pastor is not required to attend all committee meetings of sub committees of the Eldership and Deaconate, but has the right to do so.

### 6.3 Powers and responsibilities

The Leadership, being subject to Scripture and to the stipulations in section 6.1:

- (a) is responsible for ensuring that all necessary and appropriate spiritual care, instruction and guidance is provided to the Church. This role is specifically fulfilled by the Elders;
  - i. is responsible for managing the resources and affairs of the Church in the best interests of the Church and to bring glory to God. This role is specifically fulfilled by the Deacons; and
  - ii. subject to any resolution of the Church at a General Meeting, has authority to do whatever is necessary or desirable for the proper care, conduct and management of the Church, its affairs and resources including the employment or engagement of pastors and other employees.

### 6.4 Allocation of duties among members of Leadership

- (a) The Leadership shall appoint from among its own members a chairperson and a secretary to act as Chairperson and Secretary of the Leadership and the Church generally.

- (b) The Chairperson shall call and preside over Leadership meetings and General Meetings and attend to all other functions generally expected of a chairperson.
- (c) The Secretary shall:
  - (i) give notice of Leadership meetings and General Meetings;
  - (ii) keep minutes of all Leadership and General Meetings; and
  - (iii) attend to all other functions generally expected of a Secretary.
- (d) The Leadership shall appoint a Treasurer from either among its own members or the members of the Church generally. The Treasurer will be responsible for the following:
  - (ii) collect and bank monies on behalf of the Church;
  - (iii) disburse monies as directed by the Leadership;
  - (iv) keep an account of all monies received and disbursed;
  - (v) produce such accounts and financial statements as may be required from time to time by law and/or the Leadership;
  - (vi) act as and carry out all duties of the Public Officer as required by taxation laws;
  - (vii) Prepare an annual budget for the church in consultation with the Deacons and Elders; and
  - (viii) attend to all other functions generally expected of a Treasurer.
- (e) The Leadership may otherwise allocate to its members such duties and responsibilities as it considers necessary for the proper management of the Church's affairs. These individuals and/or committees are accountable to the Eldership through the Deaconate.
- (f) The Leadership may from time to time as it sees fit replace the Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer appointed under Section 6.4(a) and (d) with other members of the Leadership (and in the case of the Treasurer, other members of the Leadership or the Church generally).

#### 6.5 **Pastor/Elder/Deacon ceases to hold office**

- (a) A pastor/elder/deacon ceases to hold office if:
  - (i) they die;
  - (ii) their specific duration (if any) of employment or appointment ends;
  - (iii) they resign by written notice to the Leadership; or
  - (iv) their employment or appointment is lawfully terminated by the Leadership.
  - (v) They cease to be a member under section 5.3
  - (vi) They are removed from office by a special majority vote of members present at an extraordinary general meeting called according to section 9.2 of this constitution for the purpose of removing a member from leadership.
- (b) A pastor ceases to be a Leadership member when he ceases to hold office as a pastor and for the avoidance of doubt, a pastor is not subject to the term or process of appointment of Leadership members set out in Sections 8.1 to 8.3.

## **7 Meetings of Leadership Committees including Meetings of Elders and Deacons**

### **7.1 Quorum**

The quorum for a meeting of the Leadership is any number more than 50% of its members with a minimum of 3.

If there are less three members of the leadership team, those members may act only to appoint others to the leadership team in question in accordance to section 8.7. No other business may be conducted.

### **7.2 Minutes**

Any member of the Church may inspect the minutes of Leadership meetings except for any confidential or otherwise inappropriate matter as determined by the Leadership or the Secretary or the Pastor.

### **7.3 Voting**

Each member of the Leadership has one vote in their committee. All votes are equal and no individual vote is worth more than any other vote.

### **7.4 Calling meetings**

Any member of the Leadership may call a meeting of the Leadership.

### **7.5 Other matters**

The Leadership may otherwise regulate its meetings and business as it sees fit.

The chairperson of the meeting may adjourn the meeting at any time where there is good cause. Such cause may be, for example, to further investigate or gather information on a topic or to facilitate a more orderly meeting or for the purpose of reconvening at a more appropriate time and/or location.

### **7.6 Technology**

A Leadership meeting may be held using any technology consented to by the Leadership. For example, a Leadership meeting may be held with Leadership members in different places at the one time provided that each participating member is able to hear the other members and is able to address each of the other participating members simultaneously (for example, by conference telephone).

### **7.7 Exclusions**

The following people are excluded from eligibility for membership of the leadership team

- (a) The spouse of a member of the same committee
- (b) Non members
- (c) Members under church discipline
- (d) Members who have not been in membership for 6 months or more
- (e) Persons under 18 years of age

## 8. Appointment of Leadership

### 8.1 Term of service and staggered retirement of Leadership Team

- (a) Tenure for Deacons or Elders elected at AGM is 2 years.
- (b) Tenure for Deacons or Elders appointed under section 8.7 is until the next AGM (c) Pastors are perpetually Elders and Deacons for the term of their service as Pastor
- (d) Each year half of the existing leadership team retires.

### 8.2 Overriding intent

- (a) The overriding intent of Section 8.1 is that there at all times there will be an equal or close to equal number of experienced and new Leadership members, for the purposes of continuity.
- (b) The Leadership shall use its best endeavours to give effect to that overriding intent. For example, if the Eldership consists of less than 7 members and additional members are appointed under section 8.7, those additional members may be appointed for the necessary terms to give effect to the overriding intent in subsection (a).

### 8.3 Nominations

- (a) At least 6 Sundays prior to each AGM the Leadership must notify the Church of the number of vacancies on the Leadership that are to be filled at the AGM and call for nominations of candidates to fill those vacancies.
- (b) All nominations must be:
  - (i) in writing;
  - (ii) signed by the nominee and the person making the nomination; and (iii) received by the Leadership at least 4 Sundays before the AGM. (iv) Approved by the Elders and Pastor
- (c) The Leadership must publish the nominations to the Church at least 2 Sundays before the AGM.
- (d) All Leadership members who cease to hold office at or prior to the AGM are eligible for nomination and re-appointment in accordance with this Section.

### 8.4 Process for appointment

Leadership members will be appointed at the AGM in the following manner:

- (a) voting will be by secret ballot and decided by a simple majority vote;
- (b) ballot papers with the names of each nominee will be distributed, collected and counted by 3 members who are not nominees for the Leadership (***Election Committee***);
- (c) members may vote for any number of nominees they choose but may not vote for more than the number of vacancies;
- (d) if the number of nominees is equal to or less than the number of vacancies, each nominee that is approved by a simple majority of the Church will be appointed to the Leadership;
- (e) if the number of nominees is greater than the number of vacancies, the following will apply:
  - (i) the nominees (up to the number of vacancies) with the highest number of votes and who are approved by at least 50% of members present at the meeting (simple majority) will be appointed to the Leadership;
  - (ii) if there is a tie for the final place, the tied nominees will draw lots for that place.
- (f) the Election Committee will keep the ballot papers for at least 2 Sundays after the meeting for inspection by any member.



## 8.5 Process for appointment or termination of a Pastor

The process for appointing a pastor will be the same as the process in section 8.4 with the following notable exceptions and the process for terminating a pastor will be the same as in section 6.5 with the following notable exceptions:

- (a) Only one pastor may be called at any one time. At no time shall two prospective pastors be placed on the same ballot or voted upon in the same meeting.
- (b) The appointment or termination of a pastor will be decided on by a special majority vote of members present at an extraordinary general meeting called for the specific purpose of appointment or termination of the pastor.
- (c) The Baptist Union of Queensland will be involved in the process of calling or terminating a pastor from the beginning of the process to the end of the process and their recommendations and advice will be sought and considered at all times.
- (d) The call of a pastor shall normally be for an indefinite period and will be subject to an employment contract which is approved by both the church membership and the Baptist Union of Queensland. Such an employment contract will set out details of responsibilities and termination notice.
- (e) Remuneration for a pastor will be according to the recommendations of the Baptist Union of Queensland unless specifically agreed upon by the pastor and leadership at the time of appointment.
- (f) Should the membership of the pastor be terminated under section 5.3 of this constitution, their pastorate shall immediately terminate. In all other cases, whether the Pastorate is terminated by the Church in a meeting called under section 8.5(b) or by the Pastor himself, the notice of termination period shall be 3 calendar months.

## 8.6 Other rules

Subject to this Constitution, the Leadership may make any other rules for the proper management of the process of appointing Leadership members.

## 8.7 Church Governance

### (a) Co-option

- (i) If a Leadership member ceases to hold office before the end of their term, or if additional members of the Leadership team are required to make quorum above the number elected, the Leadership may co-opt any person who is a member of the Church and is not disqualified under section 7.7 to replace that Leadership member until the next AGM (at which time the co-opted Leadership member or another member of the Church may be appointed in accordance with Sections 8.3 and 8.4 for the remaining term of the Leadership member who ceased to hold office).
- (ii) The co-opted person is deemed to be a Leadership member in every respect and all relevant sections of this constitution and any other documents apply to them equally as to any other leadership member.

### (a) Congregational Government

- (i) If there are insufficient members of the Leadership Team to govern the church, as decided by the church Leadership, the government of the church shall be as follows:
  - (A) Deacons and Elders shall meet monthly to discuss church government issues and will make decisions according to the below guidelines:
    - (1) Financial decisions that are required for the maintenance of the church and property, regular bill payment and sponsorships, including repairs and replacement of equipment. The deacons are authorised to make these decisions without a vote from the members.
    - (2) Ministry decisions pertaining to the regular ministry events and activities of the church.

- (3) Discuss and consider other ministry and church related issues to bring to the members meeting for approval. These issues will include new ministry initiatives, financial decisions that are beyond the above mentioned, and the acquisition and disposal of real property, and any other issues that a properly convened members meeting deems appropriate.

(B) Church members will meet monthly to be informed of the decisions of the Deacons and Elders regarding issues related to the above sections 1 and 2, and to discuss and vote on other issues related to section 3 above.

## 9. Meetings

### 9.1 Annual General Meeting

- (a) The Leadership must convene a annual general meeting (AGM) of the Church at a date no later than 3 months after the end of each financial year to receive the reports mentioned below and to transact any other business which under this Constitution ought to be transacted at the meeting.
- (b) Notice of the AGM must be given by the Secretary at least 3 Sundays before the date appointed for the meeting together with an agenda giving notice of the business to be transacted at the AGM specifying the date, hour and place of the meeting.
- (c) At the AGM:
- (i) the minutes of the previous AGM and any extraordinary general meetings called during the year must be published for confirmation as a true record;
  - (ii) the Treasurer shall present the financial statements of the Church;
  - (iii) the Leadership may require written reports to be presented by other members;
  - (iv) all written reports must be received or amended (as the case may be) confirmed by a resolution of the members present at the meeting; and
  - (v) any other business transacted which, under this Constitution ought to be transacted at the AGM.

### 9.2 Extraordinary General Meeting

An extraordinary general meeting may be convened:

- (a) by the Leadership of its own initiative;
- (b) by the Leadership upon receipt of the written petition of at least 10% percent of the Church membership;
- (c) with not less than 2 Sundays notice before the date of the meeting together with an agenda giving notice of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

### 9.3 Business Meeting

Regular Business Meetings of the church should be held at least quarterly for the transaction of business that requires congregational approval, and for the reporting to the congregation by the Deacons. Business Meetings may be convened:

- (a) by the Leadership of its own initiative
- (b) as often as is considered necessary by the leadership
- (c) with not less than 2 Sundays notice before the date of the meeting being given
- (d) with an agenda being produced and distributed giving notice of any matters requiring congregational approval not less than one Sunday before the date of the meeting.

### 9.4 Quorum

The quorum for a General Meeting or Business Meeting is 20% of the Church membership with a minimum of 8. If quorum is not achieved within 15 minutes of the start of the meeting, the meeting will be dissolved and rescheduled for another suitable time and place as decided by the Chairperson. Any meeting so called will have as its quorum 3 members present.

## 9.5 **Observers**

A person who is not a member may attend and/or speak at a General Meeting or Business Meeting only with the approval of the chairperson of the meeting.

## 9.6 **Resolutions**

(a) Proposed resolutions for a General Meeting must be:

- (i) seconded by another member at the General Meeting;
- (ii) decided by a show of hands at the General Meeting, unless decided beforehand by the Leadership otherwise.

(b) Unless otherwise required in this Constitution, the Church passes a resolution or gives its approval to any matter requiring the Church's approval by a simple majority of its members at a General Meeting.

## 9.7 **Voting**

Only members aged 18 years and over may vote at a General Meeting.

## 9.8 **Family forum**

A family forum is an informal meeting of the Church:

- (a) called by the Leadership
- (b) For which there is no minimum notification required, but at least 1 weeks' notice should be given if possible
- (c) at which the Leadership may seek the opinion of the Church with respect to any issue;
- (d) at which non-members may attend, speak and otherwise participate;
- (e) for which no quorum or any other formality is required; and (f) at which no binding resolutions may be made.

## 9.9 **Chairperson**

(a) The Chairperson will chair all General Meetings, Business meetings, family forums or any other meetings of the Church unless:

- (i) they are unable or unwilling to chair the meeting; or
- (ii) the Leadership or members decide to appoint somebody else as chairperson.

(b) The chairperson of a General Meeting or any other meeting of the Church only has a deliberative vote and not casting vote.

## 10. **Auditor**

### 10.1 **Appointment**

The Church shall appoint an auditor to audit the annual financial statements.

### 10.2 **Independence**

The auditor must not be a member of the Leadership.

### 10.3 **Financial Statements**

(a) The auditor shall submit audited financial statements to the Leadership prior to each AGM.

- (b) Copies of the audited financial statements shall be presented to the members at each AGM.

## **11 Common Seal**

### **11.1 Use of seal**

The common seal may only be affixed on documents and correspondence, as the case may be, in accordance with a resolution of the Leadership.

### **11.2 Attestation**

The affixing of the common seal must be attested to by the Chairperson and Secretary.

### **11.3 Custody**

The common seal will be kept in the custody of a person nominated by the Leadership.

### **11.4 Execution of Documents without a Seal**

The church may execute a document, including a deed, without a seal by having the document signed by two members of the leadership team.

## **12. Property and Assets**

12.1 The activities of any church group or external group that is using the church's name, property, buildings or equipment are subject to the approval and supervision of the Leadership Team.

12.2 When a church group ceases to function, the church becomes the owner of any property purchased or owned by that group, including donated items, and any money in its possession.

12.3 Should the church have fewer than 20 members, no property may be disposed of without the prior approval of Queensland Baptists.

12.4 Should the church have fewer than 12 members, representatives of Queensland Baptists Ministry Team will be asked to conduct a review regarding the future of the church.

12.5 Should the Whitsunday Baptist Church be closed for any reason, either at the recommendation of Queensland Baptist or by its own initiative, all property, assets and monies which remain after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall become the property of the Baptist Union of Queensland.

Notwithstanding any previous or following provisions, this clause shall not be rescinded or amended without the prior approval of the Baptist Union of Queensland.

## **13. Amendment of Constitution**

### **13.1 Special meeting**

Any amendment to this Constitution must be approved by an Extraordinary General Meeting called specifically for the purpose of Constitutional change. No other business may be conducted at this meeting

### **13.2 Notice of proposed amendments**

Any proposal to amend the Constitution must be made in writing to the members not less than 4 Sundays prior to the date appointed for the Extraordinary General Meeting.

### **13.3 Publication of proposed amendments**

The Secretary must publish the proposed amendment(s) to members not less than 2 Sundays before the Extraordinary General Meeting.

13.4 **Special majority**

Any amendment of the Constitution must be approved by a special majority of members present at the Extraordinary General Meeting.

14. **Operational Matters**

14.1 Accounting records are to be kept in accordance with Australian Accounting standards and legislative requirements.

14.2 Cheques and Electronic Money Transfers are to be signed or authorised by two members of the leadership.

14.3 Where offerings are received other than by electronic transfer, they are to be counted by two people, one of whom will be, where possible, the treasurer.

14.4 WBC indemnifies all employees and authorised volunteers against any loss or action resulting from loss while those employees or volunteers are operating on behalf of WBC

**Supplementary documents:**

**Process for the call or appointment of a Pastor**

Queensland Baptist shall be involved from the beginning of the call process to the end of the call process when calling a pastor for the role of Senior pastor, and will be involved as advisors for the call any subsequent pastors. Their assistance and advice will be considered and used wherever possible.

**Church Discipline**

"Church Discipline" refers not to a punishment or punitive right of the church, but to a set system of correction for members who, in the opinion of the Eldership and/or the church congregation, need correction in behavioural matters. Church discipline is not restricted to what is said here in its form, but its aim and goals will always be to bring the individual to repentance and to correct a lifestyle that is not God honouring. Church discipline may include the following, usually in combination:

- *Spiritual Guidance* – an individual is required to undergo guidance from the pastor or an appointed elder or individual with relevant experience and expertise for the purpose of lifestyle correction. This may also involve professional counselling and support.
- *Suspension of privileges* – privileges of membership may be suspended during the time of discipline.
- *Dis-fellowshipping* – an individual is restricted from the fellowship of the church community for a time for the purpose of healing within the fellowship.
- *Public confession* – as an act of repentance and of restoration to the community, an individual may be asked to confess their repentance away from the offending act or attitude.
- *Ongoing mentoring and support* – the individual may be required, as a condition of their continued membership and fellowship, to submit to ongoing mentoring and support, depending on the situation which led to their discipline.

A member or attendee who is placed under church discipline has the right to defend themselves, and church discipline will not be entered into unless all other avenues of reconciliation and restoration have been extinguished. As a matter of course, offences that have legal implications will be reported to police. Members who are placed under church discipline:

- Shall be asked to attend a special Elders meeting convened to address the issues in question. Prior to this meeting they shall be notified in writing as to the nature of the accusations or offences and shall have the right of reply.
- Shall have the right to face their accuser unless there are legal implications of this.
- Must submit to the discipline of the Pastor and Elders insofar as it is considered reasonable by the Pastor and Elders. If there is dispute regarding the fairness of the church discipline, a third party (usually from QB) or the church congregation may be appealed to.
- Shall not resign their membership in order to escape church discipline.

A member who is under church discipline removes themselves from fellowship and from the discipline of the church for a period of six (6) months shall be liable to have their membership cancelled without recourse.

**Grievance procedure**

If a grievance occurs between members or attendees of the church, the grievance procedure will be as follows, in accordance with Matthew 18:

- First, pray. Consider how you may be at fault in the grievance and if there are any grounds on which you should repent.
- Second, go and talk to the individual who has offended you in humility. Seek reconciliation at this stage.
- Third, if you have not reconciled, take another with you, preferably an elder or mature Christian.
- Fourth, if you still cannot find reconciliation, bring the matter before the pastor and Elders, who will assist you to find reconciliation.
- Fifth, if there can be no reconciliation found in the above steps, the Elders and Pastor will give both you and the other party an opportunity to share your story with the wider church and will recommend a course of action for one or both of you in order to achieve reconciliation.

If the matter involves a member of the leadership team other than the pastor, step three should include the pastor. If it involves the Pastor, step three should involve an elder.

The exception to this process is where the individual who is offended is a minor, and the offender is an adult. A minor should not speak to an individual who has offended them without a parent or legal guardian present.

Depending on the situation, it may also be appropriate to involve law enforcement officers. You do not need to consult with the church leadership in this situation, but it is recommended.

## The specific goals of Whitsunday Baptist Church

By the AGM of 2015, we aim to:

- Increase our active membership to 60
- Increase our congregation size to 200 regulars attenders (including visitors)
- Grow our youth ministry (average attendance) to 100
- Be involved in all major community events (e.g. Reef Festival, Carols) that happen in the Airlie Beach community
- Have 3 regular (weekly, monthly, etc.) outreach events or activities in the community
- Be a leader in the church community in regards to bringing and maintaining unity between churches.
- Hold regular/bi-annual united church events in the community (e.g. reef festival)
- Have youth and young adults outreach events
- Have 80% of our regular attenders involved in other-than-Sunday home groups and discipleship/bible study groups
- Be 100% financially sustainable
- Have plans for a building and funding options
- Have a program for growing and mentoring new leaders
- Have 10 home groups or age-specific groups operating
- Have a discipleship pathway program underway
- Have 1 community service project per year
- Have 100% of our congregation prepared and equipped to share the love of Christ through their existing relationships
- Have 50% of our congregation involved in or supporting outreach.
- Have food based projects underway
- Support 1 person to be involved in a ministry internship program

All of these goals are equally important and run parallel. They are not listed in any order of importance.