

CONSTITUTION OF KUMEU BAPTIST CHURCH

as approved on 12 July 2011

1. THE CHURCH

- 1.1 The name of the church is the Kumeu Baptist Church.
- 1.2 The church is a community of those who believe in God the Father, in God the Son Jesus Christ and in God the Holy Spirit – one God; who are repentant of their sin and who have been saved by personal faith in Jesus Christ through his atoning death and resurrection; who publicly proclaim their faith and are committed to the church's vision, aims and functions.
- 1.3 The church believes in:
 - 1.3.1 The true humanity and deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 1.3.2 The atonement made on the Cross by our Lord for the sin of the world.
 - 1.3.3 The person of the Holy Spirit as the one who sanctifies and who sets apart, empowers and imparts spiritual gifts to the church.
 - 1.3.4 The inspiration of the Bible and its authority in all matters of faith and practice.
 - 1.3.5 Salvation by faith in Jesus Christ alone.
 - 1.3.6 Membership of the church is for those who have received salvation.
 - 1.3.7 The immersion of believers as the only scriptural form of baptism.

2. AIMS AND FUNCTIONS

The aims and functions are:

- 2.1 To meet regularly for worship, prayer, teaching, encouragement and fellowship.
- 2.2 To engage in the task of mission, principally within New Zealand but also overseas (see Matthew 28:19 – 20).
- 2.3 To express God's love to the community through ministries of the Word and practical care.
- 2.4 In every possible way to seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ and bring them into his church.

3. STRUCTURE

- 3.1 The church is an autonomous body governed through its members, working closely with Regional and National Baptist Staff, the Baptist Churches of New Zealand and the wider body of Christ.
- 3.2 Leadership shall be provided by the Senior Pastor, together with the Elders.
- 3.3 Ministry Leaders may be appointed from time to time, as deemed appropriate by the leadership, to help fulfil the ministries of the church.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 Any person who confesses faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has been baptised as a believer, shows evidence of following Christ in newness of life and who is willing to uphold the commitments as outlined in the members' pledge may apply to become a church member. Anyone who is baptised 18 years of age or over is strongly recommended to become a church member. Anyone baptised below 18 years of age is strongly encouraged to become a church member when they reach the age of 18 years.

- 4.2** In the light of the Baptist principle of freedom of conscience, if a person genuinely believes that their baptism as an infant, and their subsequent confirmation of their faith is sufficient, that person will be permitted to apply for church membership.
- 4.3** Application for membership shall be made to a Pastor or an Elder. One or more Elders will normally meet with the applicant and the Elders will consider the application and make a decision. The church shall be advised of the new member at the following church meeting.
- 4.4** A membership roll shall be kept and shall be reviewed annually by the leadership (see 3.2). Any member who has ceased to fulfil the spirit of the member's pledge shall be contacted, and given the opportunity to comment. The Elders will then bring any recommendation to a members' meeting which shall decide which names, if any, shall be removed from the roll. A non-resident roll will also be kept and reviewed regularly.
Members who have not been attending Sunday serviced for 6 months or more without acceptable reason to church leadership, will be placed on an "Inactive Members" Roll. Such members will not be included among the total Church Membership when determining the quorum for any meetings.
Inactive members must attend Sunday services regularly for at least 3 months prior to any Members meetings to reactivate their membership.
- 4.5** Resolution of differences and church discipline.
- 4.5.1** In cases of difference between church members, the Lord's words, as set out in Matthew 18:15 – 17 shall be followed.
- 4.5.2** If an allegation of conduct inconsistent with the teaching of scripture is received the Elders shall arrange to have the allegation investigated.
- 4.5.3** If the allegation is found to have substance, appropriate action will be taken by the Elders to address the issue and to seek repentance and reconciliation.
- 4.5.4** Where repentance and/or reconciliation does not result, the Elders may take appropriate action and/or bring a recommendation to a church meeting.
- 4.5.5** The person or persons concerned shall, where possible, be given an opportunity to speak at any meeting called to consider their membership.
- 4.5.6** The Elders with the Senior Pastor shall have the power to admonish, suspend or expel any member for misconduct where the above process has failed.

5. LEADERSHIP

5.1 Senior Pastor

5.1.1 Pastoral Responsibility

The Senior Pastor shall be entrusted with the day to day oversight of the church. The Senior Pastor shall produce an annual plan for the church. This plan shall require the approval of the Elders. The Senior Pastor shall be accountable to the Elders for the agreed outcomes in the plan.

The Senior Pastor will oversee the work of Pastoral Staff and Ministry Leaders and will be accountable to the Elders.

5.1.2 Pastoral Vacancy

When a vacancy occurs in the Pastorate, the church may, on the recommendation of the Elders, appoint an interim Pastor who shall temporarily take up this function.

A search committee shall be appointed by the church on the recommendation of the Elders. The committee shall be guided by the Baptist Union Pastoral placement protocols. The committee shall, after consultation with the Elders, bring one nomination to a church meeting called for that purpose. Two weeks notice shall be given of the meeting. No call to the pastorate shall be made except on the affirmative votes of at least 75% of the votes cast at that meeting. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

5.1.3 Termination of the Pastorate

Three months notice shall be given by the church or the Pastor before the Pastorate is terminated unless another period is negotiated between the parties. Any resolution to terminate the Pastorate shall require a vote of at least 66% of votes cast by secret ballot at a properly constituted special members' meeting called for that purpose.

While it is acknowledged that the Senior Pastor, and any person appointed under section 5.3.3, is not an employee, the church membership shall ensure that the Pastor is treated with fairness and dignity upon the conclusion of the Pastorate. Any dispute or difference arising out of the conclusion of the Pastorate must be referred to an independent party for resolution by way of mediation or such alternative dispute resolution process that is agreed as being appropriate. In the event it is not possible to reach agreement as to the identity of the independent party, a senior staff member of the Baptist Union shall appoint such an independent person.

5.1.4 Nature of the Relationship

Unless the parties agree in writing to the contrary, the relationship between the church (or membership) and the Senior Pastor and any staff appointed under section 5.3.3 will not be an employment relationship, but a relationship of spiritual service, and is not intended to create a legal relationship.

5.2 Elders

5.2.1 Nominations & Appointment

Nominations shall be brought by the leadership to a church meeting, said nominees being members of the church for at least 2 years at the time of election and have preferably served in our church so that their character and abilities may be evaluated. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

An affirmative vote of at least 66% is required for a person to be appointed.

Elders shall serve for a term of three years but no more than 2 consecutive terms after which they must step down for at least one year. The church will appoint no less than four Elders, ensuring that there is overlap of appointments to ensure continuity of experience. Where all the serving elders' term expire at the same time, and no new elders have been elected, it is permissible to extend some or all of the serving elders' terms by one year on approval of Members by 66.6% at a Members Meeting.

5.2.2 Character

Elders shall have exhibited the qualities as found in I Timothy 3:1-7.

5.2.3 Responsibilities

The Elders, along with the Senior Pastor and Assistant Pastors are responsible for the governance and direction of the church seeking to bring into reality the vision and mission of the church.

5.2.4 Meetings

The Elders shall meet regularly, and at least bi-monthly with the Senior Pastor. 75% is a quorum for any Elders meeting where binding decisions are to be made.

They shall appoint a Chairman and Secretary to ensure meetings are conducted correctly and records kept accurately.

5.3 Pastoral Staff and Ministry Leaders

5.3.1 Ministry Areas

The Senior Pastor and Elders shall determine the ministry areas of the church.

5.3.2 Pastoral Staff

This includes the Senior Pastor and other paid Pastoral Staff as deemed appropriate by the Elders.

5.3.2.1 Where the church decides that further paid Pastoral Staff are required, the procedure under Clause 5.1.2 *Pastoral Vacancy* shall be enacted.

5.3.2.2 Pastoral Staff shall receive from the church a letter of call to their Ministry position (see 6.4). Clear "terms of call" shall accompany the appointment of that person together with the arrangements for termination of the appointment.

5.3.3 Ministry Leaders

The Senior Pastor and the Elders may appoint church members as Ministry Leaders to head up Ministry Teams on a voluntary basis. Where Church Members are not available, a regular worshiper with the right abilities may be considered for such positions.

Should the responsibilities of a Ministry Team Leader grow to require a person being paid, the church may approve such an appointment as per 5.1.2 above.

5.3.4 Each member of the Pastoral Staff and Ministry leader will develop an Annual Plan, including goals, expected outcomes and the resources required. This plan requires the agreement of the Senior Pastor and is to be incorporated in the Annual Plan of the church (see 5.1.1). Pastoral Staff and Ministry Team Leaders will be given the authority to develop their ministries and will be accountable to the Senior Pastor for achieving the agreed outcomes.

5.3.5 All Pastoral Staff and Ministry Leaders will be required to work according to the values and policies of the church and within the parameters of the church budget.

5.3.6 Pastoral Staff and Ministry leaders may appoint other church members to assist them in their ministry subject to the approval of the Elders.

5.3.7 An Administration Team shall be recommended by the leadership and ratified by a members' meeting to take care of the finances, equipment, property and records of the church. As part of its responsibilities, this team will prepare financial statements, statistical records and minutes of key meetings that adequately and accurately describe the state of the church.

5.3.8 An office manager, who will be ex-officio a member of the Administration Team, may be appointed by the leadership to take care of the day to day administrative details of the church and to assist the Pastoral Staff in management. If this is a paid position, the creation of the position must be ratified by a members' meeting.

6. GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

6.1 There shall be an annual church members' meeting and such other members' meetings as may be called from time to time by the Elders.

- 6.2** The church financial year shall end on the 31st March. The annual meeting shall be held in or near the month of May and shall include:
- 6.2.1** Consideration of the annual reports of ministries of the church
 - 6.2.2** Presentation of the audited accounts for the preceding year.
 - 6.2.3** Presentation of the unaudited accounts of the current year
 - 6.2.4** Approval of the budget for the financial year being entered into.
 - 6.2.5** The election of the Elders shall normally be made at this meeting but can be made at any members' meeting. The Elders may call other church members' meetings as necessary.

6.3 At least two Sundays' notice is required for any church members' meeting.

6.4 Purpose

The purpose of any church members' meeting shall be to seek to discover and confirm the mind of God on matters affecting the life and work of the church and its mission.

The following are matters that must be decided by majority affirmation of a members' meeting:

- 6.4.1** Calling of a Senior Pastor and other paid Pastoral Staff.
- 6.4.2** Appointment of Elders.
- 6.4.3** Approval of the church budget.
- 6.4.4** Approval of non-budgeted expenditure, outside the agreed parameters that have been delegated to leadership or Administration Team by the members.
- 6.4.5** Purchase of land and property.
- 6.4.6** Altering this church constitution.

6.5 Quorum

At least (30%) of the total church membership, excluding Inactive Members is a quorum for any church members' meeting where binding decisions are to be made, unless the leadership of the church decide a higher percentage is required.

6.6 Special Meetings

The Elders, on receipt of a request signed by at least 10% of the resident members, shall call a special meeting of the church within 21 days of the request being received. Normal notice of the meeting shall be given.

6.7 National Leader

The National Leader of the Baptist Union of New Zealand may call a special church members' meeting by making announcements, or arranging for announcements to be made, on at least two Sundays prior to the meeting. The National Leader or nominee will chair such a meeting.

6.8 Chairperson

The Elders will appoint a chairperson (except as in 6.7) for all the general meetings of the church (including as in 6.6) and must ensure that accurate records are kept.

6.9 Attendance and Voting

Both church members and others of the congregation can attend church meetings, but only members may speak and vote. Non-members may speak with permission from the Chair, but may not vote. A secret ballot shall be held if requested by not less than 10% of the members present at the meeting or if requested by the chairperson.

7. DECLARATION OF TRUST

- 7.1** Any land or any property including church buildings and manses shall be vested in the Baptist Union as Trustee, which shall hold them for and on behalf of the church; and shall deal with the property by consent and direction of the

church in accordance with the Trusts declared in the Sixth Schedule to the "Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1923".

8. ALTERATIONS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

- 8.1** Any recommended alteration to the constitution shall be publicised at least two Sundays before a members' meeting, either by including the details of the proposed change in the church newsletter or by posting it on a noticeboard in the church foyer. No alterations or additions shall be made to the constitution unless adopted by a majority of at least two thirds of the members present at a members' meeting.
- 8.2** Unless the church agrees to forgo its charitable status and income tax exemption, no alteration shall be made to this constitution which would in any way detract from the exclusively charitable nature of the church and in particular shall not alter the provisions of clauses 9 and 10 hereof.

9. NO PECUNIARY PROFIT FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL.

- 9.1** No decision of the church or its leadership shall be made which would allow a member or members to receive any private pecuniary profit provided that:
- 9.1.1** A member may receive reimbursement for all expenses properly incurred in connection with the affairs of the church;
- 9.1.2** The church may pay reasonable and proper remuneration to any officer or employee of the church in return for services actually rendered to the church;
- 9.1.3** Any member of the church may be paid for all usual professional business or trade charges for services rendered, time expended and all acts done by that member or by any firm or entity of which the member is a partner, employee or associate, in connection with the affairs of the church;
- 9.1.4** Any member may retain any remuneration properly payable to the member by any company or undertaking with which the member may in any way be concerned or involved for which the member has acted in any capacity whatever notwithstanding that member's connection with that company or undertaking is any way attributable to that member's connection with the church;
- 9.1.5** Nothing shall prevent the church from making payments to any individual (whether a member or not) in fulfilling any of the purposes expressed in clause 2 hereof.
- 9.2** Members or leaders of the church, in determining all reimbursements, remuneration and charges payable in this clause, shall ensure that the restrictions imposed by the following clause are strictly observed.
- 9.3** Notwithstanding anything contained or implied in this constitution, no member of the church or any person associated with a member, shall participate in or materially influence any decision made by the church in respect to the payment to or on behalf of that member or associated person, of any income benefit or advantage whatsoever.

10. WINDING UP PROVISIONS

Subject to clauses 17, 18 and 19 of the Sixth Schedule to the Baptist Union Incorporation Act, if the members resolve at a properly constituted meeting of the church adopted by a majority of at least two thirds of the members present

at such a church meeting that the church should be wound up then the Net proceeds arising from such winding up shall be applied, with the prior approval of the Baptist Union of New Zealand, to such charitable purposes within New Zealand as the members may determine or in default of such determination as may be determined by a Judge of the High Court of New Zealand on application by the members, and such proceeds shall not be paid or distributed amongst the members of the church.

11. BAPTIST CHURCHES OF NEW ZEALAND

It should be noted that churches are subject to Acts of Parliament such as the Race Relations Act, Employment Relations Act, Privacy Act and Human Rights Act.

Addendum to the Constitution

Member's Pledge

- To live at all times such a life as reflects a true Christian and a member of the church.
- To take an active and diligent part in the life and work of the church, regularly attending its services of worship as far as I am able, and being willing to help in whatever way I can.
- To be faithful in prayer for the church and its witness in the community.
- To share conscientiously in contributing to the funds of the church according to my means.
- To share in the government of the church by supporting and encouraging the leadership of the church and by attending church members' meetings.
- To do all in my power to deepen and enrich the spirit of fellowship in the church, always seeking to develop a spirit of love in this fellowship of Christ's people.
- To share by life and word in the supreme task of the church, namely by witnessing to the saving power of Jesus Christ our Lord.