

ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION REFORM ACT 2012

GOSPEL CHURCH INC

---

# CONSTITUTION

---

**ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION ACT 2012**  
**GOSPEL CHURCH INC**  
**RULES**

**I N D E X**

| <u>Clause</u> | <u>Subject</u>                          | <u>Page</u> |
|---------------|---|-------------|
| 1             | NAME                                    | 4           |
| 2             | STATEMENT OF PURPOSES                   | 4           |
| 3             | INTERPRETATION                          | 6           |
| 4             | APPLICATION FOR PARTNERSHIP             | 7           |
| 5             | ENTRANCE FEE                            | 8           |
| 6             | REGISTER OF PARTNERS                    | 9           |
| 7             | RESIGNATION OF PARTNERS                 | 9           |
| 8             | EXPULSION AND SUSPENSION OF PARTNERS    | 9           |
| 9             | ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING                  | 12          |
| 10            | SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING                 | 13          |
| 11            | BUSINESS AND QUORUM OF GENERAL MEETINGS | 13          |
| 12            | NOTICES OR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS      | 13          |
| 13            | PROCEEDINGS AT MEETINGS                 | 13          |
| 14            | CHAIRING GENERAL MEETINGS               | 14          |
| 15            | ADJOURNMENT OF GENERAL MEETING          | 14          |
| 16            | DETERMINATION OF QUESTIONS RAISED       | 14          |
| 17            | VOTING AT GENERAL MEETINGS              | 15          |
| 18            | TAKING OF POLL                          | 15          |
| 19            | VOTING BY PROXY                         | 15          |
| 20            | COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT                 | 15          |
| 21            | EXECUTIVE ELDERS                        | 16          |
| 22            | OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH                  | 16          |
| 23            | CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE           | 17          |
| 24            | APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS        | 17          |
| 25            | APPOINTMENT OF LEADERS                  | 19          |
| 26            | VACATION OF OFFICE                      | 20          |
| 27            | COMMITTEE MEETINGS                      | 21          |
| 28            | SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS                  | 22          |

|    |                                      |    |
|----|--------------------------------------|----|
| 29 | MINUTES                              | 22 |
| 30 | ACCOUNTS, RECEIPTS, EXPENDITURE      | 22 |
| 31 | REMOVAL OF COMMITTEE MEMBER          | 23 |
| 32 | FINANCES                             | 23 |
| 33 | COMMON SEAL                          | 23 |
| 34 | ALTERATION OF RULES AND PURPOSES     | 23 |
| 35 | SERVICE OF NOTICES                   | 23 |
| 36 | WINDING UP                           | 23 |
| 37 | KEEPING OF BOOKS AND DOCUMENTS       | 24 |
| 38 | SOURCE OF ASSOCIATION FUNDS          | 24 |
| 39 | DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST IN CONTRACTS  | 24 |
| 40 | INCOME AND PROPERTY – NOT FOR PROFIT | 24 |
| 41 | AUDIT                                | 25 |
| 42 | TRADING                              | 25 |
| 43 | SACRAMENTS                           | 25 |
| 44 | EMPLOYMENT POLICIES                  | 26 |
| 45 | INDEMNIFICATION                      | 26 |
| 46 | BY-LAWS                              | 26 |
|    | APPENDIX 1 – STATEMENT OF BELIEF     | 27 |
|    | APPENDIX 2 – ELDERS                  | 31 |

**ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION ACT 2012**  
**GOSPEL CHURCH INC**  
**RULES**

**1. NAME**

The name of the incorporated association is GOSPEL CHURCH INC (in these rules called "the church").

**2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSES**

The primary purpose for which the church is established is:

- 2.1 to be a Church in and around Newcastle/Hunter with a vision to:
- (a) Exist for the glory of God in accordance with the will of God as expressed in the New Testament; and
  - (b) Organise for local community missional-engagement; and
  - (c) Seek gospel-centred life and local community transformation.
- 2.2 without limiting the generality of the foregoing to be a religious institution and for any other purposes allowed under section 50-5, item 1.1 or item 1.2 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act (Cth) 1997* or any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof for the time being in force.
- 2.3 The church will seek to accomplish its vision through various further purposes and ministries, including but not limited to:
- (a) gathering in communal celebration to glorify and worship God, recognising Jesus as head of the Church and Lord of all;
  - (b) building up the body of Christ to unity and maturity through the teaching and preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ as contained in God's Word, the Bible, and through the public celebration of the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism;
  - (c) fostering the establishment of missional home groups throughout our local community for intimate prayer, discipleship, nurture, accountability and in-depth study, discussion and application of the radical call to follow Christ;
  - (d) training, equipping, enabling and mobilising its partners to be local missionaries and to use their God given gifts and talents in our gatherings and in the local community as led by the Holy Spirit;
  - (e) planting and supporting self-governing, self-propagating local churches as the opportunity affords;
  - (f) upholding the family as the basic social unit of society and marriage as between a man and a woman;

- (g) sending and supporting missionary enterprises in other countries with the view to establishing indigenous local churches;
- (h) being involved, as we are able and lead, in giving direct aid for the relief of poverty, sickness, destitution, suffering and misfortune, particularly as needed in our local community;
- (i) establishing any other initiatives or ministries as deemed necessary by the church.

2.4 Solely for the purpose of furthering those purposes set out above, the church shall have power to:

- (1) invest and deal with monies of the church not immediately required in such manner as is from time to time thought fit;
- (2) raise or borrow money upon such terms and in such manner as it thinks fit;
- (3) secure the repayment of monies so raised or borrowed or the payment of a debt or liability of the church by giving mortgages, charges or securities upon or over all or any of the property of the church; and
  - (i) give any guarantee or indemnity for the payment of money or the performance of any contractual obligation or undertaking entered into by or on behalf of a not-for-profit association or company; and
  - (ii) become surety or security for or on behalf of any not-for-profit association or company and without exception either alone or in association or jointly and severally or jointly and severally with other persons, trustees, companies, associations or entities; and
  - (iii) for the purpose of securing the payment of any money or the performance of any such contractual obligation or undertaking for which the church has become or may become liable under and by virtue of any guarantee indemnity or other contract pursuant to this paragraph, to mortgage or provide a lien or fixed or floating charge or to otherwise charge the whole or any part of the assets of the church (in the present or the future); and
  - (iv) no Lender shall be concerned to enquire into the necessity for any such borrowing or as to the purpose for which it is required or as to the application of money borrowed.
- (4) delegate in writing the exercise of all or any of the powers or discretionary authorities hereby conferred on the church and to execute any Powers of Attorney or other instruments necessary to

affect such a delegation;

- (5) act as trustee;
- (6) accept and hold upon trust real and personal property; and
- (7) do all other things that are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the purposes and the exercises of the powers of the church.

### 3. INTERPRETATION

3.1 In these rules, unless the contrary intention appears:

- (a) **"Appointed Leaders"** means those persons appointed in accordance with clause 25.
- (b) **"Associate Pastor"** means all Pastors other than the Lead Pastor.
- (c) **"Church Partners"** means those people who are made partners in accordance with clause 4.
- (d) **"Church"** means Gospel Church Inc
- (e) **"Committee"** means those persons appointed or elected in accordance with clause 23 and 24.
- (f) **"Deacon"** in the church deacons are known as Ministry Leader / Leaders
- (g) **"Ministry Leaders"** means those persons elected as Ministry Leaders in accordance with clause 25.
- (h) **"Eldership"** means the group of Pastors and Elders appointed in accordance with clause 24.
- (i) **"Executive"** means the group of Pastors appointed in accordance with clause 21.
- (j) **"Financial year"** means the year ending on 30th June or such other date as the Committee may from time to time determine.
- (k) **"General Meeting"** means a general meeting of partners convened in accordance with Clause 11.
- (l) **"Partners"** means a member of the church.
- (m) **"Secretary"** means the elected Elder as set out in sub-clause 23.
- (n) **"Lead Pastor"** means -
  - (i) where there is only one Pastor appointed to the church - that person;

(ii) where there is more than one Pastor appointed to the church - the person so appointed as the Lead Pastor.

(o) **"The Act"** means the church's *Incorporation Act 2012*.

(p) **"The Regulations"** means regulations under the Act.

3.2 In these rules, a reference to the Secretary of the church is a reference -

(a) where a person holds office under these rules as a Secretary in accordance with clause 23, to that person; and

(b) in any other case, to the Public Officer of the church.

#### **4. APPLICATION FOR PARTNERSHIPSHIP**

4.1 A natural person who applies and is approved for partnership as provided in these rules is eligible to be a partner of the church.

4.2 A person who is not a partner of the church at the time of the incorporation of the church (or who was such a partner at that time but has ceased to be a partner) shall not be admitted to partnership unless the person -

(a) has confessed Jesus Christ as both Savior and Lord of his or her life in front of at least two partners;

(b) shows evidence of new birth by way of having faith in Jesus' atoning death on their behalf and repentance for sins committed;

(c) has been baptized as a believer in obedience to Christ's command or, in good conscience, holds to their baptism as an infant;

(d) is walking in daily fellowship with Jesus and also with His people;

(e) applies for partnership as provided in Sub-clause (3); and

(f) has admission as a partner first recommended by the Lead Pastor and then approved by the Eldership.

4.3 An application of a person for partnership of the church -

(a) shall be made in such form as is approved by the Lead Pastor; and

(b) shall be made to or lodged with any member of the Eldership; and

(c) must include a signed written statement that the person is in agreement with the Statement of Faith as set out in Appendix 1, the Statement of Purposes and the Rules of the church.

4.4 As soon as is practicable after its receipt, the application shall be referred to the Lead Pastor.

4.5 Upon an application being referred to the Lead Pastor, the Lead Pastor shall determine whether to recommend or to reject the application.

- 4.6 Upon an application being recommended by the Lead Pastor, the Eldership, at its next meeting, shall determine whether to approve or reject the recommendation of the Lead Pastor.
- 4.7 Upon an application being approved by the Eldership, the applicant and the other partners shall, with as little delay as possible, be notified that the applicant has been approved for partnership of the church.
- 4.8 The Secretary shall enter the applicant's name in the Register of Partners kept for the purpose and, upon the name being so entered; the applicant becomes a partner of the church.
- 4.9 The Eldership shall review the list of partners annually and may delete any persons that in the opinion of the Eldership should not continue as partners of the church.
- 4.10 For the purposes of Sub-clause (9), the criteria to be used by the Eldership may include consideration of whether the person, in the opinion of the Eldership, has, is or is likely to satisfy the following criteria -
- (a) the person cultivates a regular, quality time to be spent with the Lord;
  - (b) attends worship most Sundays;
  - (c) participates in some church related fellowship group on a regular basis;
  - (d) seeks to discover and exercise their spiritual gifts for the benefit of the church;
  - (e) consistently gives offerings to support the church's ministry;
  - (f) shares in commitment to, and the fulfillment of the purposes, philosophy and vision of the church; and
  - (g) comes under the authority and protection of the Eldership in accordance with Hebrews 13:17.
- 4.11 Subject to the matters contained in these rules, the Committee may from time to time determine the partnership requirements for church partners which, if not so determined, will be as set out in this clause 4.
- 4.12 A right, privilege or obligation of a person by reason of partnership of the church -
- (a) is not capable of being transferred or transmitted to another person;
  - (b) terminates upon the cessation of partnership whether by death or resignation or otherwise.

## 5. ENTRANCE FEE

There shall be no entrance fee or annual subscription fee, but partners are expected to consistently give financially to support the church's ministry.



## 6. REGISTER OF PARTNERS

The Secretary shall keep and maintain a register of partners in which shall be entered the full name, postal address, email address and date of entry of the name of each partner and the register shall be available for inspection by partners at the address of the Public Officer.

## 7. RESIGNATION OF PARTNERS

7.1 A partner of the church may resign from the church at any time by serving notice in writing to the Secretary. Such a resignation shall take effect immediately.

7.2 Upon the receipt of a notice given under sub-clause 7(1), the Secretary shall make in the register of partners an entry recording the date on which the partner resigned.

## 8. EXPULSION AND SUSPENSION OF PARTNERS

8.1 The Elders encourage reconciliation between individuals when offenses occur. However, where attempts at reconciliation are unsuccessful, then those who sought the offending partner's repentance may come to the Council of Elders. Subject to these rules, and the Biblical principles set out in Matt.18:15-17, 21-22; Gal. 6:1-5, Eph. 4:25-32 and 1 Cor. 5:9-13, the Eldership may determine to -

- (a) investigate any claims of unacceptable behaviour, including but not limited to the following Scriptural examples:
  - i. When a Christian sins against another Christian (Matt. 18:15–17)
  - ii. When someone knowingly encourages others to sin (Lk. 17:1-2)
  - iii. When someone is a gossip (Prov.16:28, 20:19; 2 Cor. 12:20–21)
  - iv. When someone who professes faith lives in immorality without repentance (1 Cor. 5:1-13, 6:9-10; 2 Cor 12:21)
  - v. When someone continually blasphemes God or the church (1 Tim.1:18–20)
  - vi. When a Christian sins and is unrepentant (Lk. 17:3-4; Gal. 6:1)
  - vii. When someone encourages false doctrine (Acts 20:28–30; 1 Tim.1:3–7; 1 Tim. 4:1–3; 2 Tim 2:16-18; Gal 1:6-9)
  - viii. When someone causes division (Titus 1:10-11, 3:9-11, Rom.16:17-18, Heb.13:17)
  - ix. When someone is a habitual doctrinal debater (2 Tim. 2:14–26)
  - x. When someone will only listen to false teachers (2 Tim. 4:1–5)

- xi. When someone rejects doctrines of the Christian faith (1 Tim. 1:19-20, 6:3-5, 2 Jn 7-11)
  - xii. When someone is sincere but deceived (2 Cor. 11:3-4, 13-15)
  - xiii. When a teacher is in moral sin or doctrinal error (Jms 3:1)
  - xiv. When an Elder is in moral sin or doctrinal error (1 Tim. 5:19-21)
- (b) admonish a partner in order to improve proven unacceptable behaviour with a warning that public admonition (2 Thess. 3:14-15), suspension or expulsion could follow if the behaviour is not corrected;
  - (c) limit or remove from ministry opportunities and leadership roles while a disciplinary matter is being investigated;
  - (d) expel a partner from the church or suspend a partner from partnership of the church for a specified period if the Eldership is of the opinion that the partner -
    - (i) has refused or neglected to comply with these rules; or
    - (ii) failed to uphold and maintain Biblical standards, including but not limited to the matters set out in 8.1(a); or
    - (iii) has been guilty of conduct unbecoming a partner or prejudicial to the interests of the church.
  - (e) delete a partner from the Register of Partners if such partner has not, without reasonable excuse or leave of absence granted by the Lead Pastor or the Eldership, attended for any consecutive period of at least thirteen (13) weeks, the normal and regular gatherings of the church.
- 8.2 A determination of the Eldership under Sub-clause 8.1(d) or (e) does not take effect unless the Eldership, at a meeting held not earlier than seven (7) and not later than fourteen (14) days after the service on the partner of a notice under Sub-clause 8.3, confirms their determination after giving an opportunity for it to hear from the partner to be expelled or suspended.
- 8.3 Where the Eldership makes a determination under Sub-clause 8.1(d) or (e), the Secretary shall, as soon as practicable, cause to be served on the partner a notice in writing -
- (a) setting out the determination of the Eldership and the grounds on which it is based;
  - (b) stating that the partner may address the Eldership at a meeting to be held not earlier than seven (7) and not later than fourteen (14) days after service of the notice;
  - (c) stating the date, place and time of that meeting; and

- (d) informing the partner that the partner may do one or more of the following:
    - (i) attend that meeting;
    - (ii) give to the Eldership before the date of that meeting a written statement seeking the revocation of the determination.
- 8.4 At a meeting of the Eldership held in accordance with sub-clause 8.2, the Eldership -
- (a) shall give to the partner an opportunity to be heard;
  - (b) shall give due consideration to any written statement submitted by the partner; and
  - (c) shall by resolution in writing determine whether to confirm or to revoke the determination of the Eldership.
- 8.5 Where a determination is made under sub-clause 8.1(d) or (e):
- (a) the partner will be excluded from the privilege of participation in the public gatherings of the church and is excluded from the Lord's Table; and
  - (b) the Elders will inform the other partners the reasons for this decision and explain the duty of all partners relative to the suspended or expelled partner so they may participate in the discipline of that partner (Lk 17:3-4; 1 Cor. 5:11-13; Matt. 18:15-17); and
  - (c) if the suspended or expelled partner withdraws from any further involvement with the Elders and begins attending another church, the Elders are obliged to inform the new church of the partner's status.
- 8.6 If the suspended or expelled partner repents of the actions and behaviour that led to the disciplinary action, then a process of restoration may begin whereby the former partner may be restored to the full privileges that were withdrawn during their suspension or expulsion. Restoration will only occur if the Elders are satisfied that full repentance is a reality. If restoration is appropriate, the Elders will inform the church of the reasons for this decision and will explain the duty of all partners relative to the restored person (2 Cor. 2:5-11; Gal 6:1; Lk 17:3-4).
- 8.7 A partner aggrieved by the determination or a resolution of the Eldership shall have no right of appeal or to request a general meeting of the partners to consider such determination or resolution as the case may be.
- 8.8 By joining the church or the Church, a partner agrees that the method set out in this clause 8 shall provide the sole remedy for any dispute arising against the church and its agents, and they waive their right to file any legal action against the church in a civil court or agency.

- 8.9 The grievance procedure described here also covers any and all disputes or claims arising from or related to church partnership, doctrine, policy, practice, counselling, discipline, decisions, actions, or failures to act, including claims based on civil statute or for personal injury.
- 8.10 The Elders will not entertain anonymous accusations and any charges against an Elder must be supported by two or more witness (1 Tim. 5:19) as well as provided in writing and the matter will proceed as set out in clause 8.11.
- 8.11 Any credible charge of moral impropriety, doctrinal error, or anything else that could displease the Lord or harm Gospel Church as set out in clause 8.1(a), made against an Elder shall be investigated by a task force established by the Elders. During the investigation, the Elder in question shall not be allowed to vote on any church matters and shall be placed on temporary leave. If the Elder task force finds credible evidence of wrongdoing, the Elder in question shall be tried by the Elders according to the criteria of Scripture (e.g., James 3:1; 1 Timothy 5:19–21). A three-fourths vote of the remaining Elders is necessary in order to find an Elder guilty of the charges. If such a verdict is rendered by the remaining Elders, the consequences for such a finding shall be determined by the remaining Elders with reference to the options set out in this clause 8, with any action (up to and including removal) requiring a unanimous vote of the remaining Elders, abstentions allowed. In such instance, the partners of Gospel Church Church shall be notified in a partner's meeting of the process and results.

## **9. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

- 9.1 The church shall in each calendar year convene an annual general meeting of its partners.
- 9.2 The annual general meeting shall be held on such day as the Committee determines.
- 9.3 The annual general meeting shall be specified as such in the notice convening it.
- 9.4 The ordinary business of the annual general meeting shall be -
- (a) to confirm the minutes of the last preceding annual general meeting and of any general meeting held since that meeting;
  - (b) to receive from the Committee reports upon the activities and financial transactions of the church during the last preceding financial year;
  - (c) to receive notice of the appointment of any Elders or Pastors;
  - (d) to bring forward legitimate scriptural objections to be considered by the Eldership in relation to any partner being appointed to or continuing to hold partnership or an office of the church;

- (e) to receive and consider the statement submitted by the church in accordance with the Act;
- (f) to receive reports from the Lead Pastor and/or the Committee and/or the Executive and/or Ministry Leaders.
- (g) to notify partners of the appointment of the various other leaders and their assistants as appropriate;
- (i) appoint an Auditor.

9.5 The annual general meeting may transact special business of which notice is given in accordance with these Rules.

9.6 The annual general meeting shall be in addition to any other general meeting that may be held in the same year.

## **10. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

All general meetings other than the annual general meeting shall be called special general meetings.

## **11. BUSINESS AND QUORUM OF GENERAL MEETINGS**

11.1 The Committee may, whenever it thinks fit, convene a special general meeting of the church.

11.2 The partners may not in any circumstances call or convene a special general meeting of the church but may request the Committee to do so.

## **12. NOTICES FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

The Committee shall, at least twenty eight (28) days before the date fixed for holding a General Meeting of the church, cause to be given to each partner of the church a Notice stating the intention to hold a General Meeting so as to allow partners to propose items for inclusion in the agenda for that meeting but any such proposal must be approved by the Committee.

## **13. PROCEEDINGS AT MEETINGS**

13.1 All business that is transacted at a special general meeting and all business that is transacted at the annual general meeting with the exception of that specially referred to in these rules as being the ordinary business of the annual general meeting shall be deemed to be special business.

13.2 No item of business shall be transacted at a general meeting unless a quorum of partners entitled under these rules to vote is present during the time when the meeting is considering that item.

13.3 Five (5) partners personally present (being partners entitled under these rules to vote at a general meeting) constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a general meeting.

- 13.4 If within half an hour after the appointed time for the commencement of a general meeting, a quorum is not present, the meeting if convened upon the requisition of partners shall be dissolved and in any other case shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and (unless another place is specified by the Chair at the time of the adjournment or by written notice to the partners given before the day to which the meeting is adjourned) at the same place and if at the adjourned meeting the quorum is not present within half an hour after the time appointed for the commencement of the meeting, the partners present (being not less than three (3)) shall be a quorum.

#### **14. CHAIRING GENERAL MEETINGS**

- 14.1 The Lead Pastor, or in his absence, such person as appointed by him, or in that person's absence, an Associate Pastor or a Committee Member shall preside as Chair at each general meeting of the church.
- 14.2 If the Lead Pastor or the person appointed by him or all Associate Pastors and Committee Members are absent from a general meeting, then the partners present shall elect one of their number to preside as Chair at the meeting.

#### **15. ADJOURNMENT OF GENERAL MEETING**

- 15.1 The Chair of a general meeting at which a quorum is present may, with the consent of the meeting, adjourn the meeting from time to time and place to place, but no business shall be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting at which the adjournment took place.
- 15.2 Where a meeting is adjourned for fourteen (14) days or more, a like notice of the adjourned meeting shall be given as in the case of the general meeting.
- 15.3 Except as provided in Sub-clauses (1) and (2), it is not necessary to give notice of an adjournment or of the business to be transacted at an adjourned meeting.

#### **16. DETERMINATION OF QUESTIONS RAISED**

A question arising at a general meeting of the church shall be determined by simple majority on a show of hands and unless before or on the declaration of the show of hands a secret ballot or poll is demanded, a declaration by the Chair that a resolution has, on a show of hands, been carried or carried unanimously or carried by a particular majority or lost, and an entry to that effect in the Minute Book of the church is evidence of the fact, without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favor of, or against, that resolution.

- 16.1 An Ordinary resolution is a resolution passed by simple majority at a general meeting

16.2 A Special resolution is a resolution passed at a duly convened meeting of the partners of the church requiring

(a) At least 21 days written notice specifying the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution, and is given to all partners of the church; and

(b) It is passed at a meeting referred to in this paragraph by a majority of not less than three-quarters of such partners of the church as, being entitled to do so, vote in person at that meeting.

## **17. VOTING AT GENERAL MEETINGS**

17.1 Upon any question arising at a general meeting of the church, a partner has one vote only.

17.2 All votes shall be given personally.

17.3 In the case of an equality of voting on a question, the Chair of the meeting is entitled to exercise a second or casting vote.

## **18. TAKING OF POLL**

18.1 If at a meeting a secret ballot or poll on any question is demanded by not less than three partners it shall be taken at that meeting in such manner as the Chair may direct and the resolution of the secret ballot or poll shall be deemed to be a resolution of the meeting on that question.

18.2 A poll that is demanded on the election of a Chair or on a question of an adjournment shall be taken forthwith and a ballot or poll that is demanded on any other question shall be taken at such time before the close of the meeting as the Chair may direct.

## **19. VOTING BY PROXY**

There shall be no entitlement of any partner to vote by proxy as all voting must be made by the partner personally.

## **20. COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT**

20.1 The affairs of the church shall be managed by a Committee of Management constituted as provided in Clause 23.

20.2 The Committee of Management may also be referred to as the Council of Elders.

20.3 The Committee -

(a) shall control and manage the business and affairs of the church;

- (b) may, subject to these rules, the regulations and the Act, exercise all such powers and functions as may be exercised by the church other than those powers and functions that are required by these rules to be exercised by general meetings of the partners of the church; and
  - (c) subject to these rules, the regulations and the Act, has power to perform all such acts and things as appear to the Committee to be essential for the proper management of the business and affairs of the church.
- 20.4 The Committee may delegate the management of property, finances and all secular business and operations of the church to team or team(s) of leaders (eg. Finance Team, Management Team, Media Team) as required from time to time and all such teams will be led, trained and organised by an Elder.
- 20.5 Any team with delegated authority under sub-clause (4) must act in accordance with directions and formulated policy and vision set out by the Committee from time to time.

## **21. EXECUTIVE ELDERS**

- 21.1 The day-to-day affairs and activities of the church may be managed, at the discretion of the Eldership when and if necessary, by an Executive constituted as provided by Sub-clause (2). The Executive will have comprehensive oversight and influence over every aspect of the church and will lead the organizational vision and mission of the church.
- 21.2 The Executive shall comprise of the Lead Pastor and at least two (2) and not more than seven (7) other members of the Committee who will usually all be employees of the church.
- 21.3 Each Executive member other than the Lead Pastor shall be appointed by the Committee for a two year term and shall be eligible for re-appointment.
- 21.4 The Chair of the Executive shall be the Lead Pastor or his nominated representative.
- 21.5 Subject to these rules, the Committee may write by-laws regarding the further requirements or working of the Executive.

## **22. OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH**

- 22.1 The officers of the church shall be -
- (a) the Lead Pastor,
  - (b) the Associate Pastors (if any);
  - (c) the Public Officer;
  - (d) the Secretary (if any);



- (e) the other members from time to time of the Committee and where applicable, the interim-Committee or the Board of Reference.

22.2 Each officer shall, subject to these Rules and in particular Clause 26, hold office until that person -

- (a) resigns their position as officer;
- (b) is removed from their position as officer or as member of the Committee pursuant to these Rules.

## **23. CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE**

23.1 Subject to the Act the Committee shall consist of -

- (a) the Lead Pastor;
- (b) the Associate Pastors (if any);
- (c) the Secretary;
- (d) the Public Officer (if any); and
- (e) the Elders.

23.2 Each officer referred to in Sub-clause (1) shall hold office on the Committee until such time as he ceases to hold the position of an officer as provided in these Rules.

23.3 The Secretary shall be appointed from within the Committee at the first meeting of the Committee after the annual general meeting of the church in each second year and subject to these Rules shall hold office until the conclusion of the annual general meeting two years after the date of his appointment but is eligible for re-appointment for so long as he remains a member of the Committee.

23.4 In the event that the Lead Pastor is the sole Elder, the Lead Pastor may appoint an Interim-Committee from the initial partners or a Board of Reference, who will act as the Committee and will advise the Lead Pastor at the Lead Pastor's discretion, on matters pertaining to leading the Church, until such a time as Elders are appointed and the Council of Elders is formed.

## **24. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

### **24.1 Lead Pastor**

- (a) The appointment of Lead Pastor of the church shall be as the first among equals in a plurality of Elders and will be in recognition of his ministerial gift(s), initiative and teaching. It is the duty of the Lead Elder to help lead the Eldership and the rest of the church in obeying God's leading as revealed in Scripture and by follow the leading of Jesus, who is the Senior Pastor of Gospel Church (1 Ptr 5:1-4).

- (b) The Lead Pastor shall be selected and appointed by the Eldership after thirty (30) days notice to the partners has elapsed unless the Eldership receives a valid scriptural objection from two partners.
- (c) The Lead Pastor, and any Associate Pastors and members of the Eldership must meet the Biblical qualities for Elders as set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 and as further provided for and explained in Appendix 2.
- (d) The Lead Pastor (in conjunction with the Associate Pastors and the Elders) shall exercise leadership and discipline, preserve sound doctrine, teach, minister to the sick and initiate the spiritual program and vision of the church.
- (e) The Lead Pastor (in conjunction with the Associate Pastors and the Elders) may formulate any further Eldership training material and partnership courses and requirements as they deem appropriate.
- (f) The Lead Pastor shall be required to -
  - (i) Be the primary teaching Elder;
  - (ii) Be Chair of all councils or sub-committees within the church unless he otherwise determines;
  - (iii) Issue a letter of commendation, if requested, to partners being transferred to another Association or visiting other Associations.
- (g) Should the Lead Pastor resign his position or leave the church he may be invited by the Eldership to remain on the Eldership until such time as a replacement Lead Pastor is appointed. During such period he shall have the same powers as conferred by these Rules as if he had not resigned or left the church.
- (h) In the event of the Lead Pastor leaving the Church he shall, in conjunction with the Eldership, appoint a suitable replacement, and make every effort to ensure that the replacement Lead Pastor is installed with as little delay as possible.
- (i) The Lead Pastor, in consultation with the Eldership, shall have authority to terminate the position or office of any employee of the church.

#### 24.2 **Associate Pastor(s)**

- (a) The Eldership may appoint an Associate Pastor or Associate Pastors to work with the Lead Pastor in such areas of Ministry as the Eldership and Lead Pastor may determine.
- (b) An Associate Pastor shall hold the same qualifications for appointment as a Lead Pastor and shall be appointed by the same process as a Lead Pastor.

- (c) In addition to carrying out the Ministry for which he was appointed, an Associate Pastor shall assist and co-operate with the Lead Pastor in all ways and shall, in the absence of the Lead Pastor, undertake and perform the duties and obligations of the Lead Pastor.
- (d) Once appointed, an Associate Pastor will also become a member of the Eldership.

### 24.3 Eldership

- (a) Any Elder or partner of the church may recommend to the Eldership such men considered suitable for appointment to the Eldership and the Elders, at their discretion, will evaluate those recommendations in accordance with the qualifications and process set out in Appendix 2.
- (b) In the event that there is no Lead Pastor or no serving Elders the Committee, and in the absence of a Committee, the partners of the church, may exercise the power to appoint a Lead Pastor or an Elder pursuant to this clause but must seek advice on and approval of that appointment from a Board of Reference which must include at least one member of the Acts 29 network.
- (c) The Eldership shall assist the Lead Pastor in exercising leadership, discipline, preserving of sound doctrine, teaching, ministering to the sick and initiating the spiritual program and vision of the church.
- (d) The Eldership shall assist the Lead Pastor in giving of direction and formulation of policy to the Committee or delegated teams in regard to the management of property, moneys and all secular business of the Church.
- (e) Selection as an Elder confers the authority to teach, administer the sacraments prescribed in clause 43 below, marry, and enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to licensed or ordained ministers under secular law.
- (f) The Elders may determine that an Elder needs an extended Sabbath for a season because of a legitimate need (e.g., illness, tragedy), then that Elder can transition to an inactive and non-voting Elder for a set period of time as determined by the Elders.
- (g) An Elder who senses God's call to leave the Church to help plant another church should make his desire known to the Council of Elders. If the Elders confirm his calling, the Elder will be sent out with blessing to help lead that church-plant.

## 25. APPOINTMENT OF LEADERS

### 25.1 Appointed Leaders and Ministry Leaders

- (a) The Eldership may appoint such persons as it considers appropriate in accordance with 1 Tim 3:8-13 for such period as the Eldership determines to serve as appointed Leaders or Ministry Leaders. They

have no authority to act outside of their set task and will not meet together but report directly to their supervising Elder/s or Lead Pastor.

- (b) All appointments made pursuant to Sub-clause (a) shall be revocable at any time by the Eldership.
- (c) Leaders and Ministry Leaders will be required to work in conjunction with the Eldership by -
  - (i) Devoting themselves to the service of the church; and
  - (ii) Caring for the immediate needs of the people in the church; and
  - (iii) Ensuring the smooth running of the various teams, activities and ministries of the church; and
  - (iv) Meeting specific designated needs in the congregation and broader community; and
  - (v) Providing encouragement, support and help to the Elders in their ministry.
- (d) these positions may be full-time, part-time, voluntary or remunerated positions as the Eldership sees fit.
- (e) Any person appointed as a Leader or Ministry Leader who is not already a partner must first become a partner and meet the partnership requirements as set out in clause 4.

## 25.2 **Secretary and Treasurer**

- (a) A Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed by the Committee at the first meeting of the Committee after the annual general meeting of the church in each year and subject to these Rules each shall hold office until the conclusion of the annual general meeting next after the date of his or her appointment but is eligible for re-appointment.
- (b) The Treasurer will be part of the Finance Team headed up by an Elder or Ministry Team leader.

## 26. **VACATION OF OFFICE**

- 26.1 For the purposes of this Constitution, the office of an officer of the church or of a member of the Eldership or any other appointment made pursuant to this Constitution becomes vacant if the officer or partner ceases to be a partner of the church; or resigns by giving written or oral notice of resignation to the Lead Pastor; or is removed from office by consensus of the Eldership on the grounds that the Elder or partner is disqualified on scriptural grounds as set out in and following the process in clause 8.
- 26.2 In addition to the requirements of sub-clause (1), the office of Secretary of the church shall become vacant if the Secretary becomes an insolvent under

administration within the meaning of the Corporations Law 1989 or resigns from office by notice in writing given to the Lead Pastor.

- 26.3 In addition to the requirements of clause 26.1, any two partners may bring forward at any time valid scriptural objections to be considered by the Eldership in relation to any partner being appointed to an office in the church or continuing to hold partnership in the church. Such matters will be handled according to the discipline procedure set out in clause 8.

## **27. COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- 27.1 The Committee shall meet at least six (6) times in each year at such place and such times as the Committee may determine.
- 27.2 Special meetings of the Committee may be convened by the Lead Pastor or by any two of the members of the Committee.
- 27.3 Notice shall be given to partners of the Committee of any special meeting specifying the general nature of the business to be transacted and no other business shall be transacted at such a meeting unless notice is given to members of the Committee of that possibility.
- 27.4 The Lead Pastor, or any person appointed by him pursuant to Sub-clause 14(1) or the Associate Pastor (if any), together with any two (2) members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the Committee.
- 27.5 No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present and if within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting a quorum is not present the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same place and at the same hour of the same day in the following week unless the meeting was a special meeting in which case it lapses.
- 27.6 At meetings of the Committee the Lead Pastor or in his absence the person appointed by him from the members of the Committee, or in his absence an Associate Pastor shall preside.
- 27.7 Questions arising at a meeting of the Committee or of any sub-committee appointed by the Committee shall be determined by simple majority on a show of hands or, if appropriate or if demanded by a partner, by a poll or secret ballot taken in such manner as the person presiding at the meeting may determine.
- 27.8 Each member present at a meeting of the Committee or of any sub-committee appointed by the Committee (including the person presiding at the meeting) is entitled to one vote and, in the event of an equality of votes on any question, the person presiding may exercise a second or casting vote.
- 27.9 Written notice of each Committee meeting shall be served on each partner of the Committee by delivering it to him by post or email at least two (2) days before the meeting.

- 27.10 Subject to Sub-clause (4) the Committee may act notwithstanding any vacancy on the Committee.
- 27.11 All acts done by any Committee or sub-committee shall not be invalidated by a subsequent discovery that there was a defect in the appointment of a Committee or sub-committee member.
- 27.12 A resolution in writing signed by all of the Committee Members for the time being entitled to receive notice of a Committee Meeting and being entitled to vote on the resolution shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Committee duly convened and held. Any such resolution may consist of several documents in like form each signed by one or more Committee members.
- 27.13 The contemporaneous linking together by telephone or other form of audio, video or digital communication of a number of Committee members not less than the quorum specified in Sub-clause (4) whether or not any one or more of the Committee members is out of Australia shall constitute a Committee Meeting and all the provisions of these rules as to Committee Meetings shall apply to such meetings.
- 27.14 For the purpose of Sub-clause (13) a Committee member may not leave the Committee Meeting by disconnecting unless he has previously obtained the express consent of the Chair of that meeting and a Committee member shall be conclusively presumed to have been present and to have formed part of the quorum at all times during Committee Meeting unless he has previously obtained the express consent of the Chair to leave the meeting as aforesaid.
- 27.15 A minute of the proceedings at meetings convened by digital means shall be sufficient evidence of such proceedings and of the observance of all necessary formalities if certified to be a correct minute by the Chair.

## **28. SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- 28.1 The Committee may delegate any of its powers to a sub-committee as it thinks fit. The Committee may determine the members of the sub-committee and shall in the exercise of the powers so delegated conform to these rules and to any regulations that are imposed on it by the Committee.
- 28.2 A sub-committee may elect a Chair of its meetings but if no Chair is elected or if at any meeting the Chair is not present within half an hour after the time appointed for holding the same members of the sub-committee present may choose one of their number to be Chair of the meeting.
- 28.3 A sub-committee may meet and adjourn as it thinks proper.
- 28.4 Subject to this clause, the provisions of Clause 27 shall apply to sub-committee meetings.

## **29. MINUTES**

The Secretary of the church shall keep minutes of the resolutions and proceedings of each general meeting and each Committee meeting in books provided for that

purpose together with a record of the names of persons present at Committee meetings.

**30. ACCOUNTS, RECEIPTS, EXPENDITURE**

30.1 The Treasurer of the church -

- (a) shall collect and receive all monies due to the church and make all payments authorised by the church; and
- (b) shall keep correct accounts and books showing the financial affairs of the church with full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of the church.

**31. REMOVAL OF COMMITTEE MEMBER**

A Committee member may only be removed according to the procedure set out in clause 26.

**32. FINANCES**

All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments or electronic funds transfers shall be signed or approved by two members of the Committee.

32.1 The church will operate according to the business financial year

**33. COMMON SEAL**

33.1 The Common Seal of the church shall be kept in the custody of the Secretary.

33.2 The Common Seal shall not be affixed to any instrument except by the authority of the Committee and the affixing of the Common Seal shall be attested by the signatures either of two members of the Committee or of one member of the Committee and of the Public Officer of the church.

**34. ALTERATION OF RULES AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSES**

These Rules and the Statement of Purposes of the church shall not be altered except by a unanimous decision of the Committee and a special resolution of the church.

**35. SERVICE OF NOTICES**

35.1 A notice may be served by or on behalf of the church upon any partner either personally, by email to the partner to his or her email address shown in the Register of Partners or by sending it by post to the partner at his or her address shown in the Register of Partners.

35.2 Where a document is properly addressed prepaid and posted to a person as a letter, the document shall, unless the contrary is proved, be deemed to have been given to the person at the time at which the letter would have been delivered in the ordinary course of post.

**36. WINDING-UP**

The church may be wound up in the manner provided for in the act. In the event of the church being dissolved, the amount that remains after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall not be paid to or distributed among the partners of the church but must be transferred to another organization with similar purposes as the church and which is not carried on for the profit or gain of its individual partners, such organization determined by the Committee at or before the time of dissolution and in default thereof by application to the Supreme Court for determination.

**37. KEEPING OF BOOKS AND DOCUMENTS**

37.1 Except as otherwise provided in these rules, the Secretary shall keep in his custody or under his control all books, documents and securities of the church.

37.2 All accounts, books, documents and securities of the church shall be available for inspection and copying by any partner of the church upon request.

**38. SOURCE OF ASSOCIATION FUNDS**

The funds of the church shall be derived from gifts, freewill offerings, donations and such other sources as the Committee determines.

**39. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST IN CONTRACTS**

39.1 A member of the Committee who is interested in any contract or arrangement made or proposed to be made with the church shall disclose his interest at the first meeting of the Committee at which the contract or arrangement is first taken into consideration, if his interest then exists or in any other case at the first meeting of the Committee after the acquisition of his interest;

39.2 If a member of the Committee becomes interested in a contract or arrangement after it is made or entered into he or she shall disclose his or her interest at the first meeting of the Committee after he becomes so interested;

39.3 No member of the Committee shall vote as a member of the Committee in respect of any contract or arrangement of which he is interested and if he does vote it shall not be counted.

**40. INCOME AND PROPERTY – NOT FOR PROFIT**

40.1 The assets and income of the church shall be applied solely in furtherance of the objects and purposes of the church as set forth in the Statement of Purposes and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the partners of the church except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the church..

40.2 Notwithstanding Sub-clause (1) nothing herein contained shall prevent:



- (a) the payment in good faith of remuneration to any officer, partner of the Committee, member of the church, employee or agent of the church, in return for services actually rendered to the church or for goods supplied in the ordinary and usual way of business nor prevent the payment of interest on money borrowed from any member officer, member of the Committee, partner of the church or employee or agent of the church or reasonable and proper rent for premises demised or let by any partner, officer, or member of the Committee, partner of the church or employee or agent of the church.
- (b) Any partner, officer or member of the Committee, partner of the church or employee or agent of the church being appointed to any salaried office of the church or any office of the church paid by fees.
- (c) The bona fide relieving or assisting of partners or the spouses, widows, widowers, families or relatives of partners who are poor or in necessitous circumstances.

#### **41. AUDIT**

- 41.1 An auditor shall not be an Officer of the church.
- 41.2 At the discretion of the Committee, an auditor shall be appointed at each Annual General Meeting and nominations for the position of auditor shall be taken at or before each Annual General Meeting.
- 41.3 An auditor may be removed by resolution of a General Meeting.
- 41.4 Where an auditor resigns or is removed in accordance with Sub-clause (3), the committee may appoint another person, not being an officer of the church or Committee member, to be the auditor.
- 41.5 The auditor shall remain as auditor until the holding of the succeeding Annual General Meeting.
- 41.6 The auditor shall have power at all times to examine the books and documents of the church and shall, after the close of the financial year in each year and prior to the Annual General Meeting each year, audit the balance sheet and statement of receipts and expenditure setting forth the financial business of the church since the end of the preceding year. Any report of the auditor shall be submitted to the Annual General Meeting.

#### **42. TRADING**

The church is authorised to trade in accordance with Section 51 of the Act.

#### **43. SACRAMENTS**

- 43.1 The church will teach and practice baptism for the believer as an outward expression and testimony of the inward spiritual change, regeneration, which God does in the believer's life when God brings him/her to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that water baptism is symbolic of the fact that we have repented from and been cleansed of our sins and

God has forgiven us, we have been buried with Christ in death and have risen with him in newness of life (Isaiah 1:18; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36–38; Romans 6:3–5; Colossians 2:12; Acts 10:47; Titus 3:4-7).

43.2 The church will observe the Lord's Supper weekly.

**44. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

The church will not discriminate in employment policies for reasons of race, colour, religion, sex, or national origin except in those situations that are in clear disagreement with Scripture and the status of the church as a religious institution under section 50.5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

**45. INDEMINIFICATION**

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the Elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The church may purchase appropriate insurance to meet these potential liabilities.

**46. BY-LAWS**

The Committee may, from time to time, make by-laws not inconsistent with these Rules for the official working of the church and may alter, amend or rescind those by-laws as it thinks fit.

## **APPENDIX ONE – STATEMENT OF BELIEF**

The doctrinal position of the church is outlined in the following statements:

**A. WE BELIEVE GOD WROTE THE BIBLE THROUGH MEN WITHOUT ERROR.** The Old and New Testaments, in their entirety, constitute the written Word of God and are without error in the original manuscripts. They were written by men, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and are therefore fully authoritative in all matters of faith and practice for the follower of Christ (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Ptr 1:20-21, 3:2, 15-16; Matt. 5:18; Jn 16:12-13).

**B. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD EXISTS ETERNALLY IN TRINITY: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT.** There is one God, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, love, justice, goodness, and truth, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who desires that we should know Him intimately and live a life of fulfillment through the pursuit of His glory (Deut. 6:4; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Ptr. 1:2).

**C. WE BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER, AN INFINITE, PERSONAL SPIRIT, PERFECT IN HOLINESS, WISDOM, POWER, AND LOVE.** We believe that He infallibly and sovereignly knows all that shall come to pass according to His will, that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of people, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ (Jn 1:18, 3:16, 5:26; Eph 3:3).

**D. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY WHO BECAME A MAN, LIVED A SINLESS LIFE, DIED ON A CROSS, WAS BURIED, ROSE BODILY FROM THE GRAVE TO REDEEM SINFUL HUMANITY AND IS CURRENTLY REIGNING AS LORD AND KING OVER ALL CREATION.** He is True God of True God, begotten, not made. Sent by the Father, He became human, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and made His dwelling among us, living a full life without sin. His perfect life, death on the cross and resurrection provides the only atonement that satisfies the righteous requirements of God for the sinner. The death of Jesus Christ fully and finally paid for sin, and was redemptive, substitutionary, and efficacious for all who believe. The historic fact of Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead testifies powerfully to His deity, is the proof his sacrifice is acceptable to the Father, is the first fruits of eternal life and is itself humanity's ultimate hope. Jesus Christ will make a personal and imminent return to the earth; this return is a sanctifying hope having vital bearing on the life of every Christian (Jn 1:1-2, 14; Lk 1:35; Col. 1:15-20; Rom. 3:24; 1 Ptr 2:24; Eph.1:7; 1 Ptr 1:3-5; Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 7:25, 9:24; Rom. 8:34; 1 Jn 2:1-2; 1 Ptr 4:5; Rom. 14:9; 2 Tim. 4:1).

**E. WE BELIEVE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SUPERNATURAL AGENT IN SALVATION, BAPTIZING ALL CHRISTIANS INTO THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AT CONVERSION, INDWELLING AND SEALING THEM UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST'S RETURN.** The Holy Spirit bears persuasive testimony to the realities of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the personal, divine third member of the Godhead. He convicts the world of sin and its consequences; He brings repentance and faith to the believer; He indwells the believer with the radical life of Jesus Christ; He gives gifts to every believer for mutual service within the Body of Christ; He unites each believer in the Body of Christ and seals them in that relationship; He bears the fruit of Christian character in the lives of every believer; He guides, instructs, and empowers the believer for godly living and service. He is worshipped with the Father and the Son, having been sent by them (Jn 16:8-11; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:13-14, 5:18).

F. WE BELIEVE ALL HUMANS ARE SINFUL AND IN NEED OF SALVATION. SALVATION IS THE GIFT OF GOD BROUGHT TO HUMANS BY GRACE ALONE, AND RECEIVED BY PERSONAL FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. A TRUE CHRISTIAN WILL BE KEPT BY GOD'S POWER FOREVER. God has created every person in the image of God, but we have fallen into sin, and are therefore lost; only through the regeneration by the Holy Spirit can we obtain salvation and spiritual life. All humans are sinners and face the judgment of God. The shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification. Those who are called by God will place their faith in Jesus Christ and commence a relationship with God on the basis of the work of Christ and are delivered from the wrath of God toward sin required by His holy character. Those who receive Jesus Christ by faith are said by Holy Scripture to be justified, regenerated, redeemed, and adopted into the divine family as co-heirs with Christ of all the blessings of the Godhead. We proclaim that all persons must consciously repent of their sins and confess that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord (Gen.1:26-27; Rom.3:22-23; 5:12; Eph.2:1-3, 8-12; Jn 1:12; Eph.1:7; 1 Ptr 1:5, 18-19; Jn 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1, 38-39; 1 Cor 1:4-8; Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

G. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS CREATED ALL HUMANS IN HIS IMAGE. HE HAS CREATED THEM UNIQUELY MALE AND FEMALE. All humans are created in God's image; therefore all human life is sacred. In creating humans as male and female, God communicated His image in harmonious interpersonal relationships, equality of personhood, equality in salvation and importance, with distinction in roles and authority in family and church. We hold that marriage must be between one man and one woman as taught in Scripture (Gen.1:27, 2:18, 24; 1 Cor.11:3-12; Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:18-19; Gal.3:28-29; 1 Ptr. 3:1-7; 1 Tim. 2:12, 3:1-15, 5:17; Titus 1:5-9, 2:1-5).

H. WE BELIEVE THAT THE CHURCH IS A SPIRITUAL ORGANISM MADE UP OF ALL BELIEVERS EVERYWHERE FOR ALL TIME. All Christians in all times and in all places have been united into a single body by the sovereign election of God. This resultant union is called the Body of Christ, the invisible, Universal Church (1 Ptr. 2:9; Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 2:19-22).

I. WE BELIEVE IN THE AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND RECOGNIZE BELIEVER'S BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER. Christ commanded that all Christians band together in assembly for instruction, worship, service, and fellowship. These visible assemblies are called local churches. As a local church, Gospel Church Church embraces the rich and vibrant traditions and authorised creeds of the orthodox, Universal Church, and in particular, the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. Partnership in the local church is essential to both the health of the believer and the local church body and is the context in which sanctification occurs. Baptism of believers by immersion and the Lord's Supper are the only two sacraments to be observed by the local church in the present age. These sacraments are not to be regarded as means of salvation. Still, they are vital to Christian holiness and piety (Acts 13:1-4, 14:27, 15:19-31; 20:17,28, 18:22; 1Tim.3:1-3; Titus 1:5-11; Rom.16:1,4; 1 Cor 3:9,16, 5:4-7, 13; 1 Ptr 5:1-4; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41, 42; Acts 18:8; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

J. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS WILL RETURN TO EARTH TO JUDGE ALL PEOPLE AND TO RULE AND REIGN WITH HIS SAINTS FOREVER. All people will be resurrected to give account of their lives before God. The believer in Christ will be resurrected to everlasting blessedness and joy in the presence of God. The unbeliever will be resurrected to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment (Jn. 5:22-29; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Ptr 4:5; Rom. 14:9; 2 Tim. 4:1).

Based on our understanding of Biblical teachings, we affirm the following:

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood ([Gen 1:26-27, 2:18](#)).
2. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart ([Gen 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor 11:7-9; 1 Tim 2:12-14](#)).
3. Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin ([Gen 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor 11:7-9](#)).
4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women ([Gen 3:1-7, 12, 16](#)).
  - In the home, the husband's loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife's intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation or servility.
  - In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility, and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.
5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women ([Gen 1:26-27, 2:18; Gal 3:28](#)). Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community ([Gen 2:18; Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; 1 Tim 2:11-15](#)).
6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.
  - In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership ([Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; Tit 2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7](#)).
  - In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men ([Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 11:2-16; 1 Tim 2:11-15](#)).
7. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission-domestic, religious, or civil-ever implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin ([Dan 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Pet 3:1-2](#)).
8. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries ([1 Tim 2:11-15, 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9](#)). Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.
9. With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world ([1 Cor 12:7-21](#)).
10. We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches, and the culture at large.

**Total Depravity:**

Sin has affected all parts of man. The heart, emotions, will, mind, and body are all affected by sin. We are completely sinful. We are not as sinful as we could be, but we are completely affected by sin.

The doctrine of Total Depravity is derived from scriptures that reveal human character: Man's heart is evil (Mark 7:21-23) and sick Jer. 17:9). Man is a slave of sin (Rom. 6:20). He does not seek for God (Rom. 3:10-12). He cannot understand spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14). He is at enmity with God (Eph. 2:15). And, is by nature a child of wrath (Eph. 2:3). The Calvinist asks the question, "In light of the scriptures that declare man's true nature as being utterly lost and incapable, how is it possible for anyone to choose or desire God?" The answer is, "He cannot. Therefore God must predestine."

Calvinism also maintains that because of our fallen nature we are born again not by our own will but God's will (John 1:12-13); God grants that we believe (Phil. 1:29); faith is the work of God (John 6:28-29); God appoints people to believe (Acts 13:48); and God predestines (Eph. 1:1-11; Rom. 8:29; 9:9-23).

**Unconditional Election:**

God does not base His election on anything He sees in the individual. He chooses the elect according to the kind intention of His will (Eph. 1:4-8; Rom. 9:11) without any consideration of merit within the individual. Nor does God look into the future to see who would pick Him. Also, as some are elected into salvation, others are not (Rom. 9:15, 21).

**Limited Atonement:**

Jesus died only for the elect. Though Jesus' sacrifice was sufficient for all, it was not efficacious for all. Jesus only bore the sins of the elect. Support for this position is drawn from such scriptures as Matt. 26:28 where Jesus died for 'many'; John 10:11, 15 which say that Jesus died for the sheep (not the goats, per Matt. 25:32-33); John 17:9 where Jesus in prayer interceded for the ones given Him, not those of the entire world; Acts 20:28 and Eph. 5:25-27 which state that the Church was purchased by Christ, not all people; and Isaiah 53:12 which is a prophecy of Jesus' crucifixion where he would bore the sins of many (not all).

**Irresistible Grace:**

When God calls his elect into salvation, they cannot resist. God offers to all people the gospel message. This is called the external call. But to the elect, God extends an internal call and it cannot be resisted. This call is by the Holy Spirit who works in the hearts and minds of the elect to bring them to repentance and regeneration whereby they willingly and freely come to God. Some of the verses used in support of this teaching are Romans 9:16 where it says that "it is not of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God who has mercy"; Philippians 2:12-13 where God is said to be the one working salvation in the individual; John 6:28-29 where faith is declared to be the work of God; Acts 13:48 where God appoints people to believe; and John 1:12-13 where being born again is not by man's will, but by God's.

All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out," (John 6:37).

#### **Perseverance of the Saints:**

You cannot lose your salvation. Because the Father has elected, the Son has redeemed, and the Holy Spirit has applied salvation, those thus saved are eternally secure. They are eternally secure in Christ. Some of the verses for this position are John 10:27-28 where Jesus said His sheep will never perish; John 6:47 where salvation is described as everlasting life; Romans 8:1 where it is said we have passed out of judgment; 1 Corinthians 10:13 where God promises to never let us be tempted beyond what we can handle; and Phil. 1:6 where God is the one being faithful to perfect us until the day of Jesus' return.

K. We hold these truths in humble conviction. Scriptures for reference and not exhaustive.

### **APPENDIX TWO – ELDERS**

(A). ELDER QUALIFICATIONS: To be considered as an Elder, a man must have been called by God into leadership at Gospel Church (Acts 20:28) and be a man of the highest Christian character, following Christ with accountability and repentance, according to the qualifications of Scripture (1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9) including but not limited to:

1. Relation to God
  - a. A man – male, biblically masculine leader
  - b. Above reproach – repentant to God and accountable to others
  - c. Able to teach – effective Bible communicator
  - d. Not a new convert – mature Christian
2. Relation to Family
  - a. Husband of one wife – one-woman man, sexually pure (can be single)
  - b. If married, loving his wife as himself and not being harsh towards her (Col. 3:19; 1 Ptr 3:7; Eph. 5:25-28)
  - c. Pastor and Shepherd to his children (can be without children)
  - d. Manages family well – provides for, leads, organizes, loves
3. Relation to Self
  - a. Temperate – mentally and emotionally stable
  - b. Self-controlled – disciplined life of sound decision-making
  - c. Not given to drunkenness – without destructive addictions
  - d. Not a lover of money – financially content and upright
4. Relation to Others
  - a. Respectable – worth following and imitating
  - b. Hospitable – welcomes strangers, especially engages with non-Christians
  - c. Not violent – even-tempered
  - d. Gentle – kind, gracious, loving

- e. Not contentious – peaceable, not quarrelsome/divisive
- f. Good reputation with outsiders – respected by non-Christians

Additionally, he must competently and consistently accomplish the biblical duties of an Elder/pastor which include:

1. Praying and studying Scripture (Acts 6:4)
2. Leading the church (1 Timothy 5:17)
3. Managing the church (1 Timothy 3:4–5)
4. Caring for people in the church (1 Peter 5:2–5)
5. Giving account to God for the church (Hebrews 13:17)
6. Living an exemplary life (Hebrews 13:7)
7. Rightly using the authority God has given him (Acts 20:28)
8. Teaching the Bible correctly (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:15)
9. Praying for the sick (James 5:13–15)
10. Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings (Titus 1:9)
11. Working hard (1 Thessalonians 5:12)
12. Rightly using money and power (1 Peter 5:1–3)
13. Protecting the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17–31)
14. Disciplining unrepentant Christians (Matthew 18:15–17)

(B). ELDER SELECTION: The process of becoming an Elder/pastor involves at least the following steps:

1. He must be a Partner in good standing at Gospel Church who has demonstrated the calling, character, and competency of an Elder.
2. He must make his desire to become an Elder known to one of the Elders and be interviewed by the lead pastor for approval.
3. His nomination must be approved without objection from anyone on the Council of Elders.
4. If accepted as an Elder nominee, the man will then undergo a period of training and testing.
5. Training, prior to becoming an Elder, will include whatever is deemed necessary to enhance the nominee's understanding of an Elder's responsibilities as outlined in Scripture.
6. Upon completing his training and testing process, the man must be approved by all Elders without objection to be introduced to the church partners as an official Elder candidate.
7. If approved as an Elder candidate by the partners, partners of Gospel Church will be notified that he has met the criteria of an Elder. Anyone in or out of the church having a concern regarding the man's qualifications to lead as an Elder will have four weeks to notify the Elders, who can investigate the matter to determine if there is any reason to disqualify the man.
8. Consensus approval from the Elders and a congregational affirmation, indicated by a majority vote, are required prior to installation of an Elder.



9. If there are no objections to his installation from any Elder, the man will be installed by the laying on of hands, after which he shall be considered an ordained and licensed minister of the gospel.
10. Selection as an Elder does not result in contract rights as an employee. All employees are "at will" and the employment relationship may be terminated without regard to such person continuing to serve as an Elder.