



Constitution
28 June 2017

1. THE CHURCH

1.1 The name of the church is the Whangarei Central 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, directs 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 is 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 in water 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 Whangarei, Northland and 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 positions shall consist of the Senior Pastor together with the Elders, Pastoral Leaders and Ministry Leaders as outlined in clause 5.
- 3.3** The church may set up a Charitable Trust or Trusts to provide resources which will enable the Church through the Trust to minister to the community by seeking to meet the social, emotional, physical, spiritual and educational needs of the people of the community. The church shall elect Trustees when required under the relevant Trust Deed(s). Nominations and voting shall be in accordance with the election of Elders in sub-clause 5.2.1 of this Constitution with the exception that up to 25% of Trustees on any Trust may be non-members if allowed under the Trust Deed(s).
- 3.4** The church may set up a Charitable Company or Companies to provide resources which will enable the Church through each Company to minister to the community by seeking to meet the social, emotional, physical, spiritual and educational needs of the people of the community. The church shall elect Directors when required under the relevant Company Constitution. Nominations and voting shall be in accordance with the election of Elders in sub-clause 5.2.1 of this Constitution with the exception that up to 25% of Directors on any Company may be non-members if allowed under the Company Constitution.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1** Any person who confesses faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has been baptised as a believer, who 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.

4.2 Application for membership shall be made to a Pastor, Elder or Ministry Leader. After the applicant has attended any church membership training that the church may from time to time require, the Elders will consider the application and make a decision. The church shall be advised of the membership application. Any objection to the application must be made in writing to the Elders who will make the final decision (see Appendix 1).

4.3 A membership roll shall be kept.

The roll shall be reviewed annually by the Elders. Any member who has ceased to fulfil the spirit of the Member's Pledge shall be contacted, where possible, and given the opportunity to comment. The Elders will then decide which names, if any, shall be removed from the roll.

4.4 Resolution of differences and church discipline.

4.4.1 In cases of difference between church members, the Lord's words, as set out in Matthew 18:15 - 17 shall be followed.

The Elders shall have the power to admonish, suspend or expel any member for misconduct.

4.4.2 If an allegation of conduct inconsistent with the teaching of scripture is received the Elders shall arrange to have the allegation investigated.

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.

Where repentance and/or reconciliation does not result, the Elders may take appropriate action and/or bring a recommendation to a Members' meeting.

The person or persons concerned shall, where possible, be given an opportunity to speak at any meeting called to consider their membership.

5. LEADERSHIP

5.1 Senior Pastor

5.1.1 Pastoral Responsibility The Senior Pastor, along with the Elders shall be entrusted with the oversight of the church, other Pastoral Leaders, Ministry Leaders, employees, and volunteers. The Senior Pastor shall ensure an annual plan is produced for the church. This plan shall require the approval of the Elders and of the church members at the Annual General Meeting. The Senior Pastor shall be accountable to the Elders for the agreed outcomes in the plan.

5.1.2 Pastoral Vacancy When a vacancy occurs in the senior pastorate, the church may, on the recommendation of the Elders, appoint an Interim Pastor who shall temporarily take up this function. A search committee, comprising church members, shall be appointed by the church on the recommendation of the Elders. The committee shall be guided by the Baptist Union pastoral search protocols. The committee shall, after consultation with the Elders, bring one nomination to a Members' meeting called for that purpose. Two weeks' notice shall be given of the Members' meeting. No call to the pastorate shall be made except on the votes of at least 75% of the votes cast at that meeting. A quorum of 34% of the resident members is required. 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 75% of votes cast by secret ballot at a properly constituted special Members' meeting called for that purpose. A quorum of 34% of the resident church membership is required. While it is acknowledged that the Senior Pastor, and any person appointed under sub-clause 5.4 is not an employee, the church membership shall ensure that the Pastor is treated with fairness and dignity at all times 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 and the Senior Pastor and any other Pastoral Leaders appointed under sub-clause 5.4 will not be an employment relationship, but a relationship of spiritual service, and is not intended to create a legal relationship. The terms of this spiritual service shall be in accordance with Baptist Union “Terms of Call to a Pastorate” protocols.

5.2 Elders

5.2.1 Nominations Church members may submit names for Elders to the Elders at least four Sundays prior to a Members' meeting. Nominees must be church members. These shall be brought by the Senior Pastor, after consultation with the Elders, to a Members' meeting with the names(s) published at least two Sundays before the Members' meeting. A majority of not less than 66% of the votes cast by secret ballot is required. Elders shall serve for a term of two years and shall be eligible for re-election. Elders shall consist of a minimum of four people apart from the Senior Pastor.

5.2.2 Character Elders shall have exhibited the qualities of an elder as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and the Christian maturity described in Colossians 3:12-14.

5.2.3 Responsibilities The Elders, along with the Senior Pastor are responsible for the governance and direction of the church; seeking to bring into reality the vision and mission of the church, approval of the annual plan (see sub-clause 5.1.1) and are responsible for ensuring Christian conduct within the church (see sub-clause 4.4 and attending sub-clauses).

5.2.4 Elders shall not normally hold the position of Ministry Leader.

5.2.5 Meetings The Elders shall meet at least five times a year with the Senior Pastor.

5.3 Ministry Leaders

5.3.1 Ministry Areas The Senior Pastor and Elders shall determine the ministry areas of the church. Ministry areas shall be led by Ministry Leaders.

5.3.2 Role of Ministry Leaders Each Ministry Leader member will develop an annual plan, including goals, expected outcomes and the resources required. This plan requires the agreement of the Senior Pastor and will be incorporated in the Annual Plan agreed to by the Elders (see sub-clause 5.1.1).

The Ministry Leaders will be required to work according to the values and policies of the church and within the parameters of the budget allocated to that ministry. They will be given the authority to develop their ministry and will be accountable to the Senior Pastor for achieving the agreed outcomes.

A Ministry Leader may appoint other church members to form a team to assist them in their ministry. With the approval of the Senior Pastor, non-church members may be part of a ministry team.

5.3.3 Appointment of voluntary Ministry Leaders The Senior Pastor and Elders shall appoint church members to be Ministry Leaders. The church will be informed of these appointments, which will be required to be ratified at the next Members' meeting.

5.3.4 Appointment of paid Ministry Leaders Where leadership of a ministry area cannot be achieved by a volunteer but requires the appointment of a full or part time person, the Senior Pastor and Elders shall recommend the name of the person, along with the appropriate budget, to a Members' meeting for appointment.

Where the appointment is that of a Pastoral Leader, then the appointment process in sub-clause 5.4 would apply.

5.4 Other Pastoral Leaders Those persons considered "Pastoral Leaders" in the life of the church shall have the same appointment and termination process as that of the Senior Pastor as outlined in sub-clauses 5.1.2 to 5.1.4. Clear "Terms

of Call” shall accompany the call to that person, together with the arrangements for the termination of the call.

6. GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

Ultimately the church is governed by its members (see sub-clause 3.1). Such governance is exercised through Members' meetings.

There shall be an Annual General meeting at least one other Members' meeting each year. The Annual General meeting shall be held before the end of November, which shall include:

Presentation of the draft annual plan.

The consideration of the annual report.

Ratification of Ministry Leader positions.

Approval of the budget for the forthcoming financial year.

The church financial year shall end on the 31st December. The church annual plan will coincide with the calendar year.

The election of Elders shall normally be made at this meeting but can be made at any Members' meeting.

Another Members' meeting shall be held before the end of June, and shall include:

Senior Pastor's report.

The consideration of the audited accounts for the preceding year.

The Elders and/or Senior Pastor may call any other Members' meeting as necessary.

At least two Sundays notice is required for any Members' meeting.

6.1 Purpose The purpose of any 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. Where possible decisions are achieved by consensus, otherwise an open or secret ballot may be held (see sub-clause 6.6). The following are matters that must be decided by a Members' meeting:

6.1.1 Calling of a Senior Pastor and other Pastoral Leaders (see sub-clause 5.4)

6.1.2 Appointment of Elders.

6.1.3 Appointment of trustees.

6.1.4 Appointment of company directors.

6.1.5 Approval of the church budget.

6.1.6 Approval of the annual plan.

6.1.7 Approval of non-budgeted expenditure, outside the agreed parameters that have been delegated to leadership by the members.

6.1.8 Purchase/sale or development of those land and properties subject to sub-clause 7.1.

6.1.9 Ratification of Ministry Leader appointments (see sub-clause 5.3.1).

6.1.10 Altering this church constitution.

6.2 Quorum At least 20% of the resident church membership shall be the quorum for any Members' meeting where binding decisions are to be made. The exceptions will be when Members' meetings are convened to consider sub-clause 5.1.2 (Pastoral Vacancy), sub-clause 5.1.3 (Termination of the Pastorate), and sub-clause 5.4.1 (Other Pastoral Leaders), where a quorum will be at least 34% of the resident church membership.

6.3 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

members within 21 days of the request being received. Normal notice of the meeting shall be given.

6.4 National Leader The National Leader of the Baptist Union of New Zealand may call a special 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.

6.5 Chairperson The Senior Pastor will appoint a chairperson for Members' meetings.

6.6 Attendance Both church members and others of the congregation are able to attend Members' meetings, but only members may 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.

6.7 Records Minutes will be kept of all Members' meetings together with an attendance record.

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 four Sundays before a Members' meeting. 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.

Addendum to the Constitution

Member's Pledge

By God's grace

To live at all time, 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 the ministry and mission of the church in whatever way I can, according to my God-given gifts.

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 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.

Steps to Membership

↓ Application for membership

↓ Having a living faith in Jesus & Baptised

↓ Completed WCBC membership preparation

↓ Meet with Elders' representative

↓ Initial approval

↓ Church advised of application

↓ Final approval

Welcome into membership

