

DRAFT: Carlingford Baptist Church Constitution

Approved at a Church Members' Meeting on __ / __ / __

(To be read in conjunction with Carlingford Baptist Church Policy and Procedures)

1. The Basis of the Church

The church, known as Carlingford Baptist Church, shall consist of members who give evidence of a sincere profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who affirm the Statements of Belief set out in the Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1919 (Private Act) (NSW) and amplified by the 1979 Baptist Union of NSW Assembly and amended in 2002 & 2003.

2. The Purpose of the Church

The purpose of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ extending the Kingdom of God by sharing the gospel with others.

3. Government of the Church

- 1) The church will act under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and the teaching of the Bible.
- 2) The church shall be a member of and support the Association of Baptist Churches in NSW & ACT.
- 3) The church shall be governed in accordance with the principle of congregational government. The final authority for decision-making shall rest with the church members except decisions delegated or authorised under a church policy or procedure.
- 4) The church will appoint leaders with due regard for biblical principles of leadership and those appointed shall be members of the church in accordance with the Church Membership Policy.
- 5) Members of the Leadership Team, which shall consist of Pastors, Deacons and Ministry Council (team of ministry leaders), shall be appointed at the church Annual Church Meeting, or at a Special Church Meeting called for that purpose.
 - a) **Pastors** are responsible for the general pastoral oversight of the Church with the Senior Pastor also responsible for imparting the vision and direction of the Church. Pastors will be appointed at a Special Church meeting called for that purpose. The church meeting will follow the church policy in appointing all pastors.
 - b) **Deacons** are required to be members of the church for at least 6 months and to have been baptised by full immersion. They will oversee and manage the implementation of policies, processes, and the strategic plan of the church.
 - c) **Ministry Council** is responsible for the oversight of the ministries of the church. The Church Secretary, or their appointed representative, shall chair all Ministry Council meetings and members of the Ministry Council are to provide a written report to each quarterly meeting of the Council and an annual report to be included in the Church Annual report.

4. Membership

Church members shall be persons who:

- 1) Give evidence of a sincere profession of faith in Jesus Christ and have been baptised, by full immersion or if not baptised by full immersion, be willing to uphold the Statement of Faith.
- 2) Commit to the life and ministry of this church through prayer, Bible study, financial support and regular attendance at church services, ministries and events

5. Church Members' Meetings

- 1) Church Members' Meetings shall occur at least twice in each calendar year with one being an Annual General Meeting.
- 2) Additional Church Members' Meetings may be convened by the Deacons and Pastors. Such meetings may be called for a specific purpose and will only consider matters where written notice has been given. In addition, church members may raise matters with the Ministry Council and if there is a significant matter requiring consideration at a church meeting, subject to Ministry Council approval, members may:
 - a) Request the matter be included on the agenda of a church meeting
 - b) Request a motion be considered at a church meeting
- 3) Notice of all Church Members' Meetings must be given at the church worship services held during the two weeks preceding the meeting.

- 4) The Church Secretary, or their appointed representative, shall ensure an Annual Report, including an Annual Financial Statement, is submitted to the Annual Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Finance Policy.
- 5) The quorum for any Church Members' Meeting shall be 25% of all current and active members. For the purpose of establishing a quorum, members who are absent from the area, hospitalised, or on the Absent Members Roll are not included in the current and active membership numbers.
- 6) In the event of a Church Members' Meeting having to be recalled due to the lack of a quorum, then the quorum at the recalled meeting shall be 15% of all current members.
- 7) Non-church members may be invited to be present at, and to take part in, the whole or any part of a Church Members' Meeting and can vote on all recommendations except for recommendations relating to the call of a pastor/s or any recommendation relating to property purchases or sales.
- 8) Only active and current members in attendance at the Church Meeting will be able to vote on all recommendations relating to the call of a pastor/s or any recommendation relating to property matters.

6. Offence & Dispute

- 1) The church will actively pursue and maintain a culture of peace, acknowledging commitment to peace is fundamental to being and making disciples.
- 2) The church acknowledges that there will be times in its life when disagreement and conflict may arise.
- 3) Members of the church agree to follow the church conflict resolution policies and processes with the aim of bringing about forgiveness, peace, and restoration

7. Property Ownership & Dissolution

- 1) The Trustees of all church property shall be the Baptist Churches of NSW Property Trust.
- 2) The Deacons shall arrange adequate insurance relating to the assets of the church (buildings and contents), workers compensation (employees and voluntary workers), Public Liability, professional indemnity and any other insurance as required. The insurances are to be reviewed annually.
- 3) The assets and income of the church shall be used for the extension of God's kingdom through the sharing of the gospel.
- 4) In the event of the church being dissolved, the amount that remains after dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall:
 - a) In the case of property held in trust pursuant to the Baptist Churches of NSW Property Trust Act 1984, be dealt with in accordance with that Act (Section 29) which provides that no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the church.
 - b) In all other cases be transferred to the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT or to any other organisation with similar purposes and which has rules prohibiting the distribution of its assets and income to its members and which is exempt from income tax.

8. Alterations to the Constitution

- 1) No alteration shall be made to this constitution except by a 75% majority of members present who are eligible to vote and the vote is taken at a Church Members' Meeting which is convened for the purpose.
- 2) The quorum for such a meeting shall be 50% of the active and current membership, not including those members who are absent from the area, hospitalized, or on the Absent Members Roll.
- 3) Any proposed change to the constitution shall be given in writing as a Notice of Motion to the Church Secretary, or their appointed representative, who shall ensure details of any proposed changes are distributed to all members no less than one month before the date of the Meeting where the constitution changes will be presented.
- 4) The Church Secretary, or their appointed representative, in consultation with the Deacons shall ensure any proposed changes do not compromise affiliation requirements with the Association of Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT.