

Constitution

Redlands Church of Christ

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1. Introduction

1.1. Preamble

- (a) This Constitution outlines how Redlands Church of Christ structures and governs itself. It comprises the fundamental principles and guidelines that prescribe the nature, function, and limits of the local Church and its mission and operation.
- (b) The Constitution's purpose is to ensure that the temporal running of the Church is carried out with order, accountability, and transparency and that the persons chosen to lead possess the competence, character and integrity consistent with values described in the scriptures.
- (c) The Constitution is not in any way meant to restrict the movement or leading of the Holy Spirit, whose guidance the leaders are compelled to seek to faithfully fulfil their responsibilities within the Body of Christ expressed through the local Church.
- (d) These procedures are intended to be PRACTICAL rather than TECHNICAL. Therefore if the spirit of these procedures conflicts with the letter of these procedures, the former shall be followed. Their purpose is to make clear to every member of the church the procedures to be adopted for the successful working of the church, so that each member of the church and each auxiliary of the church might serve efficiently and in harmony with the rest of the church and that "everything may be done in a fitting and orderly way." (1 Corinthians 14:40)

1.2. Title and Authority

- (a) This is the Constitution for the Redlands Church of Christ (Church)
ABN: 92651311934
- (b) The Church is an unincorporated association.

2. Definitions

In this Constitution:

- (a) **Administrator** means a person whose responsibility it is to ensure that all office, administration is completed for the effective operation of the Church.
- (b) **Treasurer** means a person whose responsibility for proper, efficient and lawful management of the financial affairs and physical assets of the Church.
- (c) **Leadership Team** means the collective body of leaders including the Senior Minister, who have the delegated authority from the Church membership to provide governance and spiritual oversight consistent with the Church's mission and values. The Leadership Team provides management oversight and direction in areas of regulatory compliance, finance and risk management.
- (d) **Church** means Redlands Church of Christ.
- (e) **Churches of Christ in Queensland** means an association of affiliated Churches, incorporated under Letters Patent, who are a Christ-following movement of people, and part of the broader Christian Church.

- (f) **Leader** means a person appointed for a fixed term by the Church membership to provide governance, spiritual oversight and pastoral care of the Church, both collectively and individually.
- (g) **Member** means a person who has the desire to serve his/her Lord wholeheartedly in and through the Church, and who has so indicated this desire to the Leadership Team and who has been accepted for membership by the Leadership Team.
- (h) An **Isolated Member** is a Member who wishes to remain on the church roll but whose circumstances make it impossible for him/her to regularly attend church services.
- (i) **Ministry** means any activity that is established and operated under the auspices of Redlands Church of Christ.
- (j) **Ordinary Resolution** means a resolution passed at a duly convened meeting of the Members of the Church by more than 50% of Members present and entitled to vote.
- (k) **Senior Minister** means the person appointed by, and responsible to, the Leadership Team for the provision of oversight and leadership of the ministry and staff team, and to implement the spiritual direction and development of the Church as established by the Leadership Team. The Senior Minister is an ex-officio member of the Leadership Team.
- (l) **Ministry Team Leaders** are people appointed by the Leadership Team and the Senior Minister to lead a specific area of ministry e.g. Worship, Oasis Training, Pastoral Care. They must possess the suitable experience and qualifications to fulfil their role, and give appropriate direction and nurture to those in their team.
- (m) **Special Resolution** means a resolution passed via private ballot or at a duly convened meeting of the Members of the Church where:
 - at least twenty-one (21) days written notice by the Leadership Team specifying the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution has been publicised to all Members of the Church;
 - voting is by private ballot; and
 - has been passed by not less than 70% of Members of the Church who voted.
- (n) **Leadership Manual** means a document defining various aspects of the Church's leadership structure, policies and procedures, expectations, values, and other definitions. Changes to the Leadership Manual are carried out by the Leadership Team.

3. Relationship to Churches of Christ Qld and Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC)

- (a) The Church shall be an affiliated member of Churches of Christ in Queensland, an incorporated body under Letters Patent, or its successors.
- (b) As an affiliated Church, we will honour our membership responsibilities as prescribed in the Constitution of Churches of Christ in Queensland.
- (c) The Church will be registered as a charity "for the advancement of Religion" with the ACNC.

4. Purpose

- (a) The Church exists to fulfil the Great Commission and Great Commandment of Jesus Christ (Matthew 22:37-40, 28:18-20). We are to love God, others and ourselves. Our mission is to make growing disciples who go on and do the same, to minister in Christ's name to the Redlands community, within the doctrine and practice of the Bible.

5. Church Powers

5.1 Application of Income and Property

- (a) The income and property of the Church, from wherever it is derived, must be applied solely towards the purpose of the Church as set out in clause 4.

5.2 No Distribution to Member

- (a) No portion of the income or property of the Church may be paid directly or indirectly to any individual Member or the collective body of the membership.
- (b) Clause 5.2(a) does not prevent:
 - (1) the payment of remuneration to any officer, employee or Member of the Church in return for any services actually rendered to the Church, or for goods supplied and in the ordinary way of business; or
 - (2) the reimbursement of approved expenses reasonably incurred by a Member on behalf of the Church.
 - (3) the distribution of welfare support that comes within the approved scope and budget of specific Ministries.

6. Membership

All born-again believers world-wide are members of The Church universal.

6.1 Conditions of membership of Redlands Church of Christ

We are happy to welcome into fellowship those who wish to worship with us on a regular basis, but if they wish to become members the following conditions apply.

- (a) Those who have publicly confessed faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and are endeavouring to live a life of conformity with the commands and teachings of the New Testament
- (b) Those who have been or are willing to be baptised by immersion.
- (c) Those who have been in regular attendance at the Redlands Church of Christ for at least 6 months or those who provide a letter of transfer from a recognised Christian Church

(d) Those who have the desire to serve the Lord wholeheartedly in and through the Church, and have made a written request indicating this commitment to the Leadership Team, and have been accepted into membership by them.

(e) Those who attend Church services regularly (at least once a month) and contribute to the Church's activities with their time, talent and resources.

(f) Those who attend Members' meetings unless it is impractical to do so.

(g) Those who seek to uphold peace and unity in the Church by:

1. Not taking part in subversive or divisive behaviour that seeks to promote their own position, beliefs or theology.
2. Honouring each person as valuable unto God.
3. Following biblical process for any dispute resolution (Matthew 18:15-17)

6.2 Functions of membership

(a) Ratify through Member's vote the annual budget as presented at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

(b) Nominate potential Leadership Team members.

(c) Ratify through Member's vote the appointment or re-appointment of the Leadership Team; and Senior Minister.

(d) Ratify through Member's vote any special expense that exceeds 10% of the Church's previously ratified budget.

(e) Ratify through Member's vote at an AGM or Members' meeting any business considered by the Leadership Team to need membership approval to be adopted.

6.3 Register of Members

(a) A list of Members shall be kept and reviewed annually.

(b) This list shall not be used for any commercial purpose.

6.4 Grievance

(a) To ensure a culture of inclusion, harmony and united purpose, the Church has appropriate grievance and corrective policies that serve to maintain a God-centred culture and a place where all people can thrive.

6.5 Termination of Membership

(1) The Leadership Team shall authorise a person's termination from membership in the following circumstances:

(a) if he/she requests it;

(b) if the conditions of membership are not fulfilled in that person's life, giving grounds for the Leadership Team to review, suspend or terminate the membership;

- (c) if he/she dies;
 - (d) if he/she becomes a Member of another church
 - (e) if he/she ceases attending for a period of 12 months without offering an acceptable reason for their absence.
- (2) The process leading to and resulting in termination will be in accordance with the Church's Grievance and Dispute policy.
- (3) Dismissal of Members is a serious matter and needs to be handled with prayer, grace, sensitivity, and in accordance with biblical principles.

6.6 Requests for information

- (1) A Member may make reasonable requests to inspect (at a reasonable time) the rules of the Church, Members meeting minutes. Members may only use information that is accessible under this clause for lawful and proper purposes related to the Church. The Church may refuse access if the documents contain confidential, personal, employment, commercial or legal matters, or if granting the request would breach a law or could cause damage or harm to the Church.

7. Leadership Team

7.1 Role of Leadership Team

- (a) This Church is overseen by a Leadership Team, who act on behalf of the Church for all purposes connected with the spiritual and temporal running of the Church.
- (b) The Leadership Team must direct its activities towards the achievement of the purpose of the Church as set out in this document, and in a Christ-like manner.
- (c) The Leadership Team is responsible for the overall governance, pastoral care and spiritual direction of the Church.
- (d) This includes:
 1. *Prioritising safety in all that the Church does. This encompasses safe culture, safe places, safe relationships and safe care so that all in our Church community feel safe and nurtured with us and have a voice.*
 2. *oversight of the processes to develop the mission and vision of the Church community*
 3. *developing and monitoring policies*
 4. *monitoring the effectiveness of the Leadership Team*
 5. *monitoring the effectiveness of the Senior Pastor*
 6. *monitoring the effectiveness of the Church's development towards its mission*
 7. *establishing quality assurance and accountability systems*
 8. *reviewing financial performance and reporting*
 9. *approving and monitoring the progress of major capital expenditure, capital management and acquisitions*
 10. *ensuring the development of the effective administration of the Church's Risk Management systems*
 11. *ensuring the Risk Management Plan is reviewed, and updated with appropriate control strategies developed and managed to address identified risks*
 12. *managing compliance with external laws and regulations, in consultation with Churches of Christ in Queensland*
 13. *conducting formal annual evaluation of the performance of the Senior Minister*

- (e) All confidential information received by Leadership Team members in the course of their duties remains the property of the Church and must be stored on Church approved storage systems.
- (f) The Leadership Team shall be responsible for the good management and upkeep of all church property and assets.

7.2 Leadership Team Membership

The Leadership Team shall comprise:

- (a) Between four (4) and seven (7) duly elected Members of the Church;
- (b) The Senior Minister ex officio.
- (c) Each Leader can serve on the Membership Team for a maximum of 6 years concurrently. There must be at least 2 years before that member is eligible to serve on the Leadership Team again.

7.3 Leadership Team membership Qualifications

A member of the Leadership Team must:

- (a) have been a Member of the Church for at least 2 years.
- (b) have a sense of calling to lead the church in a Christ-like manner
- (c) have a current Blue Card or other required legal checks, and have undergone the Safe Ministry Check training.
- (d) New nominees must disclose any criminal convictions to the Leadership Team who will decide their suitability to serve on the Leadership Team.

7.4 Nomination of Leadership Team

- (a) Church Members will be asked to submit the names of potential Leadership Team members to the Chair of the Leadership Team as vacancies exist or are imminent.
- (b) The existing Leadership Team will prayerfully consider the nominations, and choose candidates to be submitted to the Members for their approval, after discussion with the candidate about the functions and requirements of a Leadership Team member.
- (c) The Members will vote on the appointment of each Leadership Team member.

7.5 Induction of Leadership Team members

- (a) The Chair of the Leadership Team will be responsible for the induction of newly-appointed Leadership Team members, to ensure they are adequately acquainted with their responsibilities, and the operations of the Church structure.

7.6 Leadership Team Principles

The Church Christian Management Australia's Essential Standards of Ministry governance as the guiding principles for Church Leadership. Specifically

- (a) Duty to act in good faith for a proper purpose. Leadership Team members must act in good faith in the interests of the Church as a whole according to the purpose of the Church. They must exercise their authority with appropriate grace, care, honesty and diligence that is reasonable in all circumstances.

- (b) Duty to exercise discretion. Leadership Team members must not place themselves in a position that renders them unable to exercise their discretion in the best interests of the Church. They are under a duty to avoid a conflict of interest or perception of a conflict of interest.
- (c) Duty to not misuse their position for their own or a third party's possible advantage.
- (d) Duty to not misuse knowledge. Leadership Team members must not improperly use their knowledge resulting from their position to gain advantage for themselves or 3rd party, or to cause detriment to the Church.
- (e) Duty to resolve differences of opinion in a confidential, professional and mature manner.
- (f) Duty to ensure that their statutory obligations are met.
- (g) Duty to participate in Leadership Team meetings, and meetings of any committee to which they have been appointed as a member of the Leadership Team.

7.7 Termination

Apart from the resignation of a Leadership Team member, a unanimous vote of the Leadership Team (excluding the Leadership Team member being considered for termination) shall be required for any termination of a Leadership Team member. If a unanimous vote is not obtained, the matter shall be referred to the Church for voting through a private ballot.

8. Role of the Chair of the Leadership Team

- 8.1 Appointed by the Leadership Team, the Chair of the Leadership Team is responsible for the performance of the Leadership Team as a whole and each member of it. The Senior Minister cannot be appointed as Chair of the Leadership Team.
- 8.2 The Chair has the primary responsibility for selecting matters and documents to be brought to the Leadership Team's attention.
- 8.3 The Chair is primarily responsible for ensuring that the Leadership Team accomplishes its stated role.
- 8.4 In addition to the major duty of chairing Leadership Team meetings, the Chair has the responsibility to ensure:
 - (a) that the Leadership Team provides spiritual leadership, governance and vision to the Church
 - (b) that the Leadership Team is pro-active in seeking and implementing God's will through the mission, goals, objectives, and policies of the Church
 - (c) that there is adequate monitoring of the effectiveness of the mission and goals and objectives of the Church
 - (d) that the Leadership Team has the information required for effective decision making

- (e) that the administrative tasks such as the circulation of Leadership Team papers, and paperwork distributed to Church Members in regard to AGM's, are carried out in a timely and appropriate manner
 - (f) that a close working relationship with the Senior Minister and the Administrator is developed
 - (g) that Leadership Team members receive appropriate training for their roles
 - (h) that there is ongoing development of the Leadership Team as a whole, and of the Leadership Team members individually
 - (i) that healthy, nurturing relationships are formed within the Leadership Team
- 8.5 The Leadership Team may appoint a Deputy Chair to assist the Chair, and to act as Chair in the Chair's absence.

2. Senior Minister

9.1 Role of Senior Minister

- (a) The Senior Minister is responsible to the Leadership Team to provide spiritual and pastoral leadership to the congregation of Redlands Church of Christ. The Senior Minister serves as the primary leader of the congregation so that the Church might fulfil its mission and purpose. The Senior Minister will preach, teach and provide leadership across all ministries of the Church.
- (b) The Senior Minister is responsible for leading the development of the vision in collaboration with the Leadership Team and other key stakeholders, and to lead the implementation of the vision once endorsed by the Leadership Team.
- (c) The Senior Minister, in consultation with the Chair of the Leadership Team, is responsible for the appointment, supervision, evaluation and dismissal of all Church staff, in accordance with governing workplace legislation, regulations, Church policies and resolutions of the Leadership Team.
- (d) The Senior Minister is responsible for formulating an annual budget in consultation with those who have financial oversight of the Church.

9.2 Call and Appointment

- (a) The Leadership Team shall conduct a selection process to arrive at a recommended applicant for the position of Senior Minister. The Leadership Team may work in consultation with the appropriate Churches of Christ in Queensland advisory body to make their choice. If the applicant is approved by a Special Resolution conducted via a private ballot of the Members of the Church, an invitation will be given by the Leadership Team.
- (b) The appointment of a Senior Minister shall be for an initial period of up to five (5) years. Re-appointment shall be considered at least six (6) months prior to the completion of the current term through the recommendation of the Leadership Team. A Special Resolution conducted via a private ballot of the Members of the Church is required for re-appointment.

- (c) All appointments, re-appointments, or terminations of appointment shall be ratified as soon as possible to the appropriate Churches of Christ in Queensland advisory body.
- (d) The Senior Minister shall perform the duties described in the Position Outcome Statement and be employed as per the relevant guidelines issued by the Churches of Christ in Queensland.
- (e) The Leadership Team have the authority to terminate the employment of the Senior Minister on the basis of misconduct or diminished performance as defined in the Senior Minister's Position Outcome Statement.

2. Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible to the Leadership Team to ensure financial control and accountability systems are implemented and managed
This includes:

- (a) Ensuring proper, efficient and lawful management of the financial and related affairs of the Church.
- (b) Assist the Senior Minister in the preparation of an annual budget.
- (c) Track progress against the budget on a monthly basis.
- (d) Bring financial reports to the Leadership meetings and the AGM.
- (e) Ensure Church accounts and financial statements are audited according to legal and statutory requirements.
- (f) Trouble shoot as necessary.
- (g) Oversee the work of the administrator and the bookkeeper to ensure invoicing, bill payments, record keeping and day-to-day financial tasks are appropriately managed.

3. Leadership Team Meetings

A quorum shall be more than 50% of the current members of the Leadership Team.

4. Indemnity Insurance

12.1 Insurance

The Church must provide adequate insurance to protect its Members, Leadership Team and employees against liability incurred by them while acting on behalf of the Church.

12.2 Indemnity

- (a) To the extent permitted by its insurance policy, Redlands Church of Christ, indemnifies every person who is, or has been, an employee of Redlands Church of Christ against

any civil liability incurred by that person in his or her capacity as an employee of the Church.

4. Meeting of Members

13.1 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- (a) The Annual General Meeting will be held between July and September each year unless extenuating circumstances require it to be held prior or post July to September each year.
- (b) The Leadership Team will give 4 weeks notice of the proposed date of the AGM to the Church Members.
- (c) Any Church Member requiring to have a matter brought to an AGM of the Church shall prepare the proposal/statement in writing, and give such notice to the Chair of the Leadership Team no later than (2) two weeks prior to the set date of the AGM.
- (d) The Annual General Meeting shall:
 - (1) Receive annual reports from the Chair of the Leadership Team, Senior Minister, and Ministry Leaders two weeks prior to the AGM.
 - (2) Vote on the proposed budget for the following financial year. If the budget is rejected a further Member's meeting will be called within 30 days to vote on an amended budget.
 - (3) Vote on the election of Leadership Team members
 - (4) Consider business presented as notice of motion

13.2 Special Meetings of Members

- (1) A special meeting of Members to consider any matter may be held from time to time –
 - (a) as determined by the Leadership Team or
 - (b) upon written application signed by no less than 20% of the Members.
- (2) Notice of a special meeting of Members must be announced to the congregation at least two (Sundays prior to the proposed meeting).

13.3 Voting

- (a) A quorum for a duly convened Members meeting where resolutions are to be considered, and positions are to be voted on, shall be 50% of the voting Members.
- (b) If no quorum is present at such a Members' meeting within 15 minutes after the advertised commencement time, the meeting is to be dissolved. The meeting is to be re-convened within 3 weeks at a time nominated by the Leadership Team. At least 7 days' notice is to be provided to the Members.
- (c) If no quorum is present within 15 minutes of the advertised commencement time of the re-convened meeting, if the number of Members present is greater than 30% of the voting Members, shall be deemed to be a quorum.

- (d) A resolution shall only be binding on the Church if a quorum is present.
- (e) Voting on Resolutions shall be by show of hands, except where five (5) or more Members request that the motion be decided by a private ballot.
- (f) In the event of a tie, the Chair of the AGM shall have the casting vote.

13.4 Private ballot

A private ballot as it applies at the Church means a ballot:

- (a) where voting occurs on a valid electronic or hard copy ballot paper;
- (b) where eligible Members on the roll are permitted one vote each;
- (c) where votes are kept secured until they are counted by 2 appointed Returning Officers and the results declared. If possible, record of the voting will then be destroyed
- (d) A quorum for a private ballot is the same as for a duly convened Members meeting.

Absentee Voting

- (a) An absentee ballot is a vote cast by a member who is unable to attend a meeting.
- (b) Absentee votes may be lodged via electronic or paper means. Electronic forms will appear on the website in the “Members” area. Paper forms will be available at worship services and in the same time frames required to call the meeting.
- (c) Absentee votes must be lodged no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting, and will be tallied with votes received at the meeting.

14. Alterations

- 14.1 Proposed alterations to this Constitution must be presented in writing to the Leadership Team two (2) clear months before a duly convened meeting of Members.
- 14.2 This Constitution shall only be altered by a Resolution of the AGM, carried by a 65% majority.
- 14.3 This Constitution must not be amended in such a way as to render the Church no longer a charity.

15. Winding up

- 15.1 The Church can be wound up by its Members through a Resolution at a duly constituted Members meeting.
- 15.2 If the Church has ceased to exist, or is unable for whatever reason to call a general meeting, then the Conference Council of the Churches of Christ in Queensland may, following discussions with remaining Church Members (if any exist), resolve to wind up the Church.

15.3 If the Church is wound up, after it has paid all debts and other liabilities (including the costs of winding up), any remaining assets:

(a) must not be distributed to the Members or former Members of the Church, and

(b) subject to the requirements of Australian laws and any Australian court order, must be distributed to another organisation or other organisations, with similar purposes, which is/are charitable at law, and which is/are not carried on for the profit or personal gain of Members.

15.4 In making distributions upon winding up, the Church must satisfy any obligations that apply to assets over which a trust exists.