

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SHORE BAPTIST CHURCH AND A COVENANT FOR MEMBERS

NAME

The name of the Church is Shore Baptist Church and will be referred to as “the Church” or “Church” in this document.

AIMS AND FUNCTIONS

The aim and function of the Church as a community of people who believe in the one God - the Father, The Lord Jesus Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit – is to proclaim the good news of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to call people to faith in Him as Lord, to instruct believers in the word of God and to encourage members by regular assembly to grow in faith and knowledge.

The Church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church and the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, having been given by inspiration of God, as the only sufficient, certain and infallible rule of our faith and practice and the judge of controversies.

The Church adopts as the fullest expression of our faith the London Confession of Faith of 1689.

MEMBERSHIP

The ordinance of baptism, submitted to by those professing repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus, is a prerequisite for Church membership. The elders will examine each applicant as to his or her conversion, Christian experience and doctrinal belief. A two week period will be allowed for objections or questions to be raised by any member concerning any applicant recommended by the elders to the Church. Those applicants who receive the commendation of the elders shall be publicly received into membership on the Lord’s Day. If at any time a member finds himself or herself out of harmony with the Constitution and Confession of the Church, or if his or her conduct or belief is called in question, then that member may expect to be admonished and in certain cases removed from membership, (Matt 18:15-20, 1 Cor 5: 1-13, Gal 6:1). It is the duty of the Church to forgive and restore to membership those persons who give satisfactory evidence of repentance.

ELDERS

The Church is to appoint to the eldership those men among the members of the Church whom God has equipped and who are willing, to be servants of the Church in teaching, governing, and shepherding. Members may submit names to the elders for their consideration, however, nominations to the Church for this office are to come from the eldership. An elder may be removed from the office by the Church if he fails to fulfil his duties as defined in God’s Word, (1 Tim 3:1-7), Tit 1:5-9), or if his life and teaching violate the Constitution and confessional standard of the Church.

DEACONS

The Church is to appoint to the deaconate those men and women among the members whom God has equipped to be servants. Their duties are to encourage generosity, to distribute the gifts of the Church and to be vigilant for opportunities to do good to all people in need, especially those in need in the Church. They have no authority. The same method of appointment applies as for the elders. A deacon may be removed from office by the Church if he fails to fulfil the duties of deacon as defined in God's Word, (1 Tim 3:8-13, Acts 6:1-4), or if his life and beliefs violate the standards of the Church. The deacons are to regularly and thoroughly acquaint the elders of their decisions and activities as deacons.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Congregational meetings are to be held annually. Meetings of the members of the Church are to be held once a year and when the need arises. All members are expected to be present if at all possible at such meetings. The appointment or removal of elders and deacons and amendments to the Constitution shall be made when no less than two-thirds of the membership vote in favour of the motion by secret ballot. A simple majority vote of the members shall be required to make any other resolution valid. Notice of all congregational meetings is to be given by the elders at regular worship services on the two successive Sundays immediately prior to the meetings. If haste is necessary for the discussion of a matter by the members then the elders may see fit to call an earlier meeting by taking all reasonable steps to have all the members contacted personally. The Church shall seek the oneness in spirit and purpose mentioned in the Scriptures, (Phil 2:2), whenever the members are faced with decisions of whatever kind.

CHARITABLE MATTERS

Any income, benefit or advantage received by the Church must be used to advance the charitable purposes of the Church and may not be used for the private pecuniary profit of any individual.

No member of the Church or person associated with that member if standing to benefit charitably in the normal course of the Church's activities may influence the administration or application of that benefit.

Any payments to a member of the Church or person associated with that member must be for goods or services that advance the charitable purpose of the Church and be reasonable and relative to the payment that would have been made between unrelated parties.

Should dissolution of the Church be deemed appropriate the assets of the Church shall be disposed of to Christian charities within New Zealand.

No alteration to the Constitution shall be permitted which will alter the charitable status of the Shore Baptist Church.

A COVENANT FOR MEMBERS

“With the Lord’s help,

I commit myself to making Him known, both to my family and to those around me and to supporting those who make Him known both here and overseas.

I commit myself to the Body of Christ of which I am a part by His grace: to regularly meeting with the Church on the Lord’s Day and on that evening set aside for Bible study and prayer and to ensuring that some form of regular fellowship is maintained especially with other Churches subscribing to the London Confession of Faith of 1689”.