

INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION RULES

(CONSTITUTION)

FOR

**VIETNAMESE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA - MELBOURNE
INCORPORATED**

TABLE OF PROVISIONS

<i>Regulation</i>	<i>Page</i>
PART 1—PRELIMINARY	4
1 Name	4
2 Purposes	4
3 Financial year	6
4 Definitions	6
PART 2—POWERS OF CHURCH	6
5 Powers of Church	7
6 Not for profit organisation	7
PART 3—MEMBERS, DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND GRIEVANCES	7
Division 1—Membership	7
7 Minimum number of members	7
8 Who is eligible to be a member	7
9 Application for membership	8
10 Consideration of application	8
11 New membership	8
12 Annual subscription and fee on joining	8
13 General rights of members	8
14 Associate members	9
15 Rights not transferable	9
16 Ceasing membership	9
17 Resigning as a member	9
18 Register of members	9
Division 2—Disciplinary action	10
19 Grounds for taking disciplinary action	10
20 Disciplinary subcommittee	10
21 Notice to member	10
22 Decision of subcommittee	11
23 Appeal rights	11
24 Conduct of disciplinary appeal meeting	11
Division 3—Grievance procedure	12
25 Application	12
26 Parties must attempt to resolve the dispute	12
27 Appointment of mediator	12
28 Mediation process	12
29 Failure to resolve dispute by mediation	13
PART 4—GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH	13
30 Annual general meetings	13
31 Special general meetings	13
32 Special general meeting held at request of members	13
33 Notice of general meetings	14
34 Proxies	14
35 Use of technology	14
36 Quorum at general meetings	15
37 Adjournment of general meeting	15
38 Voting at general meeting	15
39 Special resolutions	16
40 Determining whether resolution carried	16
41 Minutes of general meeting	16
PART 5—COMMITTEE	17
Division 1—Powers of Committee	17

42	Role and powers	17
43	Delegation	17
Division 2—Composition of Committee and duties of members		17
44	Composition of Committee	17
45	General Duties	18
46	President and Vice-President	18
47	Secretary	19
48	Treasurer	19
Division 3—Election of Committee members and tenure of office		20
49	Who is eligible to be a Committee member	20
50	Term of office, and declaring position(s) vacant	20
51	Nominations	20
52	Election of Committee etc.	20
53	Election of ordinary members	21
54	Ballot	21
55	Term of office	22
56	Vacation of office	22
57	Filling casual vacancies	23
Division 4—Meetings of Committee		23
58	Meetings of Committee	23
59	Notice of meetings	23
60	Urgent meetings	23
61	Procedure and order of business	23
62	Use of technology	24
63	Quorum	24
64	Voting	24
65	Conflict of interest	24
66	Minutes of meeting	25
67	Leave of absence	25
PART 6—FINANCIAL MATTERS		25
68	Source of funds	25
69	Management of funds	25
70	Financial records	25
71	Financial statements	26
PART 7—GENERAL MATTERS		26
72	Common seal	26
73	Registered address	26
74	Notice requirements	26
75	Custody and inspection of books and records	27
76	Winding up and cancellation	27
77	The making of Bylaws	28
78	Alteration of Rules	28
<hr/> <hr/>		28
APPENDIX		28
STATEMENT OF FAITH		28

Rules for Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia - Melbourne Incorporated

Note

The persons who from time to time are members of the Association (the Church) are an incorporated association by the name given in rule 1 of these Rules.

Under section 46 of the **Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012**, these Rules are taken to constitute the terms of a contract between the Association (the Church) and its members.

PART 1—PRELIMINARY

1 Name

The name of the incorporated association is "Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia - Melbourne Incorporated" (**The Church**)

2 Purposes

The Church exists to glorify God by denying our self, living for Christ in Melbourne and beyond.

(1) The Bible is our guide for belief and the instruction on how a church should function.

These Rules are intended, under the authority of Scripture, to deal with specific situations and therefore allow the Church to do the following:

- (a) Propagate the Christian faith and to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed through the Bible by all means of communication.
 - (b) Raise up fervent followers of Jesus Christ who will reach out and impact communities, cities and nations for the kingdom of God.
 - (c) Provide Biblical teaching that is sound in theory but useful in practice, Christ-centred, God-honouring, and Spirit-anointed, to instruct and inspire people to live a life that is fruitful in outcome, abundant in content, and faithful to the purposes of God for their lives. Teaching can include Bible, theology, practical ministry, world trends, futurology and or any other subject that teaches about God's Word and how to minister it to the world.
 - (d) Promote Christian education by establishing either separately or in connection with other schools, colleges, Bible schools and or universities for the education of children and or adults in every academic discipline in accordance with Biblical principles.
 - (e) Arrange and conduct meetings, classes, seminars, workshops, conferences, events, lectures on subjects that are in accordance with the aims and objects of the organization and to provide opportunities for study and research and to make the findings available to anyone who can use them for the benefit of mankind. Such meetings can be held in schools, churches, public meetings, or any other appropriate venue, locally and overseas.
 - (f) Arrange and conduct camps for adults, youth, and children to fulfil and achieve the purpose of the Church.
 - (g) Disseminate Biblically-based educational material in-person and or by any other means possible, audio, visual, electronic, Internet or any other present or future mode of delivery.
 - (h) Assist in the establishment of autonomous local churches and or ministries that are self-governing and self-propagating.
 - (i) Operate a local church under the leadership of the Senior Pastor and the Church Committee with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in accordance
-

with the teachings and commands and other provisions as set out in the Bible.

- (j) Act in support of daughter churches in Australia and abroad.
 - (k) Facilitate Christian meetings in small and large groups for worship, Bible study, fellowship, prayer and other like activities.
 - (l) Instruct, equip, train adults, youth and children in accordance to Biblical principles with the aim of raising up and establishing leaders for Christian ministry.
 - (m) Promote and support the cause of global missions, by any means possible, especially to support ministry training and church planting.
 - (n) Recognize, equip, and recommend other ministers of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to fulfil our purpose.
 - (o) Cooperate with other Christian and or Charitable organizations in order to fulfil our purpose.
 - (p) Act with charitable concern either directly or in connection with other community and welfare agencies to help people with needs in a manner consistent with biblical principles, and to develop and carry out programs of social action for the poor, widowed, orphaned, afflicted, underprivileged, aged or unborn persons or those who are otherwise disadvantaged.
 - (q) Offer a Biblically based ministry to assist the poor, needy and distressed with relief and development programs.
 - (r) Pursue any other purposes in accordance with our statement of faith.
- (2) To enable the Church to achieve its purposes, it may:
- (a) Raise funds by appealing to the public for donations;
 - (b) Organise public events such as concerts, exhibitions, sports events, entertainment or activities of any kind to fulfil our purpose and or for fund-raising;
 - (c) Invest money not immediately required for its purposes in any investments, securities or property;
 - (d) Secure repayment of monies borrowed to facilitate and carry out its ministries by giving securities to the lender over any of its properties;
 - (e) Take all necessary steps to remain an effective and sustainable organisation; and;
 - (f) Adopt any other appropriate methods or be involved in any other activities necessary for achieving the purposes set out in Rule 2(1) to the extent that they are permitted by law.
- (3) To further enable the Church to achieve its purposes, it may:
- (a) Erect and maintain church buildings, social halls, business, office, school buildings, recreation facilities, and such other structures as deemed necessary to promote Christian beliefs, activities and programs.
 - (b) Operate a dedicated Fund as set out in the “Rules governing the Objective, Establishment and Operation of the Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia - Melbourne Incorporated Building Fund”.
 - (c) Operate a dedicated Fund as set out in the “Rules governing the Objective, Establishment and Operation of the Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia - Melbourne Incorporated Fund for Marriage Education”.

- (d) Operate a dedicated Fund as set out in the “Rules governing the Objective, Establishment and Operation of the Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia - Melbourne Incorporated Fund for Youth Services”.
- (e) All dedicated funds must be operated in the furtherance of, and all income and assets applied solely for, the purposes of this Church.

3 Financial year

The financial year of the Church is each period of 12 months ending on 30 June.

4 Definitions

In these Rules—

absolute majority, of the Committee, means a majority of the committee members currently holding office and entitled to vote at the time (as distinct from a majority of committee members present at a committee meeting);

associate member means a member referred to in rule 14(1);

Church means Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia - Melbourne Incorporated.

Chairperson, of a general meeting or committee meeting, means the person chairing the meeting as required under rule 46;

Committee means the Committee having management of the business of the Church;

committee meeting means a meeting of the Committee held in accordance with these Rules;

committee member means a member of the Committee elected or appointed under Division 3 of Part 5;

disciplinary appeal meeting means a meeting of the members of the Church convened under rule 23(3);

disciplinary meeting means a meeting of the Committee convened for the purposes of rule 22;

disciplinary subcommittee means the subcommittee appointed under rule 20;

financial year means the 12 month period specified in rule 3;

general meeting means a general meeting of the members of the Church convened in accordance with Part 4 and includes an annual general meeting, a special general meeting and a disciplinary appeal meeting;

member means a member of the Church;

member entitled to vote means a member who under rule 13(2) is entitled to vote at a general meeting;

special resolution means a resolution that requires not less than three-quarters of the members voting at a general meeting to vote in favour of the resolution;

Statement of Faith means the statement made under Appendix 1.

the Act means the **Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012** and includes any regulations made under that Act;

the Registrar means the Registrar of Incorporated Associations.

PART 2—POWERS OF CHURCH

5 Powers of Church

- (1) Subject to the Act, the Church has power to do all things incidental or conducive to achieve its purposes.
- (2) Without limiting subrule (1), the Church may—
 - (a) acquire, hold and dispose of real or personal property;
 - (b) open and operate accounts with financial institutions;
 - (c) invest its money in any security in which trust monies may lawfully be invested;
 - (d) raise and borrow money on any terms and in any manner as it thinks fit;
 - (e) secure the repayment of money raised or borrowed, or the payment of a debt or liability;
 - (f) appoint agents to transact business on its behalf;
 - (g) employ staff to carry out its requirements whether directly or via sponsorship;
 - (h) enter into any other contract it considers necessary or desirable;
 - (i) establish and operate any deductible gift recipient fund to fulfil its purpose;
 - (j) hold its assets in a property trust.
- (3) The Church may only exercise its powers and use its income and assets (including any surplus) for its purposes.

6 Not for profit organisation

The assets and income of the Church shall be applied solely in furtherance of its objects as stated in its Statement of Purposes in Rule 2.

- (1) The Church must not distribute any surplus, income or assets directly or indirectly to its members.
- (2) Subrule (1) does not prevent the Church from paying a member—
 - (a) reimbursement for expenses properly incurred by the member; or
 - (b) for goods or services provided by the member—if this is done in good faith on terms no more favourable than if the member was not a member.

Note

Section 33 of the Act provides that an incorporated association must not secure pecuniary profit for its members. Section 4 of the Act sets out in more detail the circumstances under which an incorporated association is not taken to secure pecuniary profit for its members.

PART 3—MEMBERS, DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND GRIEVANCES

Division 1—Membership

7 Minimum number of members

The Church must have at least 20 members.

8 Who is eligible to be a member

- (1) To become a member of the Church a person must satisfy all of the following criteria:
 - (a) Belief in Jesus Christ and acceptance of Him as Lord and Saviour;

- (b) Acceptance of the purposes of **the Church**;
- (c) Acceptance of these Rules, and **the Church** Membership By-Laws;
- (d) Successful completion of the Church membership class;
- (e) Having been baptized by immersion; and
- (f) Not being a member of any other church.

9 Application for membership

- (1) To apply to become a member of the Church, a person must submit a completed Application for membership to a committee member and amongst other instructions in the form, state that the person—
 - (a) wishes to become a member of the Church; and
 - (b) supports the purposes of the Church; and
 - (c) agrees to comply with these Rules.
- (2) The application must be signed by the applicant.

10 Consideration of application

- (1) As soon as practicable after an application for membership is received, the Committee must decide by resolution, or by delegated authority to its Membership Subcommittee, whether to accept or reject the application.
- (2) The Committee, or Membership Subcommittee, must notify the applicant of its decision as soon as practicable after the decision is made in writing.
- (3) No reason need be given for the rejection of an application.

11 New membership

- (1) On approval of a membership application, the Secretary must as soon as practicable record the name and address of the new member, and the date of becoming a member in the register of members.
- (2) A person becomes a member of the Church and, subject to Rule 13(4), is entitled to exercise his or her rights of membership from the date his or her name is recorded in the register of members.

12 Annual subscription and fee on joining (Not applicable)

13 General rights of members

- (1) A member of the Church who is entitled to vote has the right—
 - (a) to receive notice of general meetings and of proposed special resolutions in the manner and time prescribed by these Rules; and
 - (b) to submit items of business for consideration at a general meeting; and
 - (c) to attend and be heard at general meetings; and
 - (d) to vote at a general meeting; and
 - (e) to have access to the minutes of general meetings and other documents of the Church as provided under rule 75; and
 - (f) to inspect the register of members.
- (2) A member is entitled to vote if—
 - (a) the member is a member other than an associate member;

- (b) the member has participated in the Church activities for a minimum of at least three (3) months at the time of voting; and
- (c) the member's membership rights are not suspended for any reason.

14 Associate members

- (1) Associate members of the Church include—
 - (a) any members under the age of 16 years; and
 - (b) any other category of member as determined by special resolution at a general meeting.
- (2) An associate member must not vote but may have other rights as determined by the Committee or by resolution at a general meeting.

15 Rights not transferable

The rights of a member are not transferable and end when membership ceases.

16 Ceasing membership

- (1) The membership of a person ceases if:
 - (a) he or she resigns in writing; or
 - (b) he or she is expelled from the Church;
 - (c) he or she dies; or
 - (d) some other reason deemed appropriate by the Committee.
- (2) If a person ceases to be a member of the Church, the Secretary must, as soon as practicable, enter the date the person ceased to be a member in the register of members.

17 Resigning as a member

- (1) A member may resign by notice in writing given to the Church.

Note

Rule 74(3) sets out how notice may be given to the association. It includes by post or by handing the notice to a member of the committee.

- (2) A member is taken to have resigned if—
 - (a) the member ceases attending the Church service for a continuous period of three (3) months without giving a written notice of absence to the Senior Pastor or the Secretary; or
 - (b) the Secretary has made a written request to the member to confirm that he or she wishes to remain a member and the member has not, within one (1) month after receiving that request, confirmed in writing that he or she wishes to remain a member.

18 Register of members

- (1) The Secretary must keep and maintain a register of members that includes—
 - (a) for each current member—
 - (i) the member's name;
 - (ii) the address for notice last given by the member;
 - (iii) email address for service of notices;
 - (iv) phone number;
 - (v) the date of becoming a member;

- (vi) if the member is an associate member, a note to that effect;
- (vii) any other information determined by the Committee; and
- (b) for each former member—
 - (i) the date of ceasing to be a member; and
 - (ii) the reason(s) their membership ceased.
- (2) Any member may, at a reasonable time and free of charge, inspect the register of members.
- (3) The operation of the Register of members shall comply with current Privacy laws.

Note

Under section 59 of the Act, access to the personal information of a person recorded in the register of members may be restricted in certain circumstances. Section 58 of the Act provides that it is an offence to make improper use of information about a person obtained from the Register of Members.

Division 2—Disciplinary action

19 Grounds for taking disciplinary action

The Church may take disciplinary action against a member in accordance with this Division if it is determined that the member—

- (a) has failed to comply with these Rules and Church Membership By-Laws; or
- (b) refuses to support the purposes of the Church; or
- (c) has engaged in conduct prejudicial to the Church.

20 Disciplinary subcommittee

- (1) If the Committee is satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for taking disciplinary action against a member, the Committee must appoint a disciplinary subcommittee to hear the matter and determine what action, if any, to take against the member.
- (2) The members of the disciplinary subcommittee—
 - (a) may be Committee members, members of the Church or anyone else; but
 - (b) must not be biased against, or in favour of, the member concerned.

21 Notice to member

- (1) Before disciplinary action is taken against a member, the Secretary must give written notice to the member—
 - (a) stating that the Church proposes to take disciplinary action against the member; and
 - (b) stating the grounds for the proposed disciplinary action; and
 - (c) specifying the date, place and time of the meeting at which the disciplinary subcommittee intends to consider the disciplinary action (the *disciplinary meeting*); and
 - (d) advising the member that he or she may do one or both of the following—
 - (i) attend the disciplinary meeting and address the disciplinary subcommittee at that meeting;
 - (ii) give a written statement to the disciplinary subcommittee at any time before the disciplinary meeting; and
 - (e) setting out the member's appeal rights under rule 23.

- (2) The notice must be given no earlier than 28 days, and no later than 14 days, before the disciplinary meeting is held.

22 Decision of subcommittee

- (1) At the disciplinary meeting, the disciplinary subcommittee must—
 - (a) give the member an opportunity to be heard; and
 - (b) consider any written statement submitted by the member.
- (2) After complying with subrule (1), the disciplinary subcommittee may—
 - (a) take no further action against the member; or
 - (b) subject to subrule (3)—
 - (i) reprimand the member; or
 - (ii) suspend the membership rights of the member for a specified period; or
 - (iii) expel the member from the Church.
- (3) The disciplinary subcommittee may not fine the member.
- (4) The suspension of membership rights or the expulsion of a member by the disciplinary subcommittee under this rule takes effect immediately after the vote is passed.

23 Appeal rights

- (1) A person whose membership rights have been suspended or who has been expelled from the Church under rule 22 may give notice to the effect that he or she wishes to appeal against the suspension or expulsion.
- (2) The notice must be in writing and given—
 - (a) to the disciplinary subcommittee immediately after the vote to suspend or expel the person is taken; or
 - (b) to the Secretary not later than 48 hours after the vote.
- (3) If a person has given notice under subrule (2), a disciplinary appeal meeting must be convened by the Committee as soon as practicable, but in any event not later than 21 days, after the notice is received.
- (4) Notice of the disciplinary appeal meeting must be given to each member of the Church who is entitled to vote as soon as practicable and must—
 - (a) specify the date, time and place of the meeting; and
 - (b) state—
 - (i) the name of the person against whom the disciplinary action has been taken; and
 - (ii) the grounds for taking that action; and
 - (iii) that at the disciplinary appeal meeting the members present must vote on whether the decision to suspend or expel the person should be upheld or revoked.

24 Conduct of disciplinary appeal meeting

- (1) At a disciplinary appeal meeting—
 - (a) no business other than the question of the appeal may be conducted; and

- (b) the Committee must state the grounds for suspending or expelling the member and the reasons for taking that action; and
 - (c) the person whose membership has been suspended or who has been expelled must be given an opportunity to be heard.
- (2) After complying with subrule (1), the members present and entitled to vote at the meeting must vote by secret ballot on the question of whether the decision to suspend or expel the person should be upheld or revoked.
 - (3) A member may not vote by proxy at the meeting.
 - (4) The decision is upheld if not less than three quarters of the members voting at the meeting vote in favour of the decision.

Division 3—Grievance procedure

25 Application

- (1) The grievance procedure set out in this Division applies to disputes under these Rules between—
 - (a) a member and another member;
 - (b) a member and the Committee;
 - (c) a member and the Church.
- (2) A member must not initiate a grievance procedure in relation to a matter that is the subject of a disciplinary procedure until the disciplinary procedure has been completed.

26 Parties must attempt to resolve the dispute

The parties to a dispute must attempt to resolve the dispute between themselves within 14 days of the dispute coming to the attention of each party.

27 Appointment of mediator

- (1) If the parties to a dispute are unable to resolve the dispute between themselves within the time required by rule 26, the parties must within 10 days—
 - (a) notify the Committee of the dispute; and
 - (b) agree to or request the appointment of a mediator; and
 - (c) attempt in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation.
- (2) The mediator must be—
 - (a) a person chosen by agreement between the parties; or
 - (b) in the absence of agreement—
 - (i) if the dispute is between a member and another member—a person appointed by the Committee; or
 - (ii) if the dispute is between a member and the Committee or the Church—a person appointed or employed by the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria.
- (3) A mediator appointed by the Committee may be a member or former member of the Church but in any case must not be a person who—
 - (a) has a personal interest in the dispute; or
 - (b) is biased in favour of or against any party.

28 Mediation process

- (1) The mediator to the dispute, in conducting the mediation, must—
 - (a) give each party every opportunity to be heard; and
 - (b) allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party; and
 - (c) ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties throughout the mediation process.
- (2) The mediator must not determine the dispute.

29 Failure to resolve dispute by mediation

If the mediation process does not resolve the dispute, the parties may seek to resolve the dispute between themselves in accordance with the Act or otherwise at law.

PART 4—GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

30 Annual general meetings

- (1) The Committee must convene an annual general meeting of the Church to be held within 5 months after the end of each financial year.
- (2) The Committee may determine the date, time and place of the annual general meeting.
- (3) The ordinary business of the annual general meeting is as follows—
 - (a) to confirm the minutes of the previous annual general meeting and of any special general meeting held since then;
 - (b) to receive and consider—
 - (i) the annual report of the Committee on the activities of the Church during the preceding financial year; and
 - (ii) the financial statements of the Church for the preceding financial year submitted by the Committee in accordance with Part 7 of the Act;
 - (c) to elect the members of the Committee (if required).
- (4) The annual general meeting may also conduct any other business of which notice has been given in accordance with these Rules.

31 Special general meetings

- (1) Any general meeting of the Church, other than an annual general meeting or a disciplinary appeal meeting, is a special general meeting.
- (2) The Committee may convene a special general meeting whenever it thinks fit.
- (3) No business other than that set out in the notice under rule 33 may be conducted at the meeting.

Note

General business may be considered at the meeting if it is included as an item for consideration in the notice under rule 33 and the majority of members at the meeting agree.

32 Special general meeting held at request of members

- (1) The Committee must convene a special general meeting if a request to do so is made in accordance with subrule (2) by at least 50% of the total number of members entitled to vote.
- (2) A request for a special general meeting must—

- (a) be in writing; and
 - (b) state the business to be considered at the meeting and any resolutions to be proposed; and
 - (c) include the names and signatures of the members requesting the meeting; and
 - (d) be given to the Secretary.
- (3) If the Committee does not convene a special general meeting within one month after the date on which the request is made, the members making the request (or any of them) may convene the special general meeting.
- (4) A special general meeting convened by members under subrule (3)—
- (a) must be held within 3 months after the date on which the original request was made; and
 - (b) may only consider the business stated in that request.

33 Notice of general meetings

- (1) The Secretary (or, in the case of a special general meeting convened under rule 32(3), the members convening the meeting) must give to each member of the Church—
- (a) at least 21 days' notice of a general meeting if a special resolution is to be proposed at the meeting; or
 - (b) at least 14 days' notice of a general meeting in any other case.
- (2) The notice must—
- (a) specify the date, time and place of the meeting; and
 - (b) indicate the general nature of each item of business to be considered at the meeting; and
 - (c) if a special resolution is to be proposed—
 - (i) state in full the proposed resolution; and
 - (ii) state the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution.
- (3) This rule does not apply to a disciplinary appeal meeting.

34 Proxies

- (1) A member may not appoint another member as his or her proxy to vote and or speak on his or her behalf at a general meeting.
- (2) A member may request the Secretary to read out a written statement on the member's behalf at a general meeting other than at a disciplinary appeal meeting, prior to any vote being held, if the member gives the written statement to the Secretary at least 3 calendar days prior to that general meeting and the Secretary accepts that statement.
- (3) The Secretary may only accept the statement referred to in subrule (2) if it is accompanied by a written letter from a medical practitioner stating that the member cannot attend the general meeting for medical reasons.
- (4) The Secretary may refuse to accept the written statement at the Secretary's absolute discretion if the Secretary deems the statement to be offensive, inflammatory, contrary to the purposes of the Church, or inappropriate in any other way.

35 Use of technology

- (1) A member not physically present at a general meeting may be permitted to participate in the meeting by the use of technology that allows that member and the members present at the meeting to clearly and simultaneously communicate with each other.
- (2) For the purposes of this Part, a member participating in a general meeting as permitted under subrule (1) is taken to be present at the meeting and, if the member votes at the meeting, is taken to have voted in person.

36 Quorum at general meetings

- (1) No business may be conducted at a general meeting unless a quorum of members is present.
- (2) The quorum for a general meeting is the presence (physically, or as allowed under rule 35) of 50% of the members entitled to vote.
- (3) If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the notified commencement time of a general meeting—
 - (a) in the case of a meeting convened by, or at the request of, members under rule 32—the meeting must be dissolved;
 - (b) in any other case—
 - (i) the meeting must be adjourned to a date not more than 21 days after the adjournment; and
 - (ii) notice of the date, time and place to which the meeting is adjourned must be given at the meeting and confirmed by written notice given to all members as soon as practicable after the meeting.
- (4) If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the time to which a general meeting has been adjourned under subrule (3)(b), the members present at the meeting (if not fewer than 25% of the members entitled to vote) may proceed with the business of the meeting as if a quorum were present.

37 Adjournment of general meeting

- (1) The Chairperson of a general meeting at which a quorum is present may, with the consent of a majority of members present at the meeting, adjourn the meeting to another time at the same place or at another place.
- (2) Without limiting subrule (1), a meeting may be adjourned—
 - (a) if there is insufficient time to deal with the business at hand; or
 - (b) to give the members more time to consider an item of business.

Example

The members may wish to have more time to examine the financial statements submitted by the Committee at an annual general meeting.

- (3) No business may be conducted on the resumption of an adjourned meeting other than the business that remained unfinished when the meeting was adjourned.
- (4) Notice of the adjournment of a meeting under this rule is not required unless the meeting is adjourned for 14 days or more, in which case notice of the meeting must be given in accordance with rule 33.

38 Voting at general meeting

- (1) On any question arising at a general meeting—
 - (a) each member who is entitled to vote has one vote; and

- (b) members may choose not to vote; and
 - (c) except in the case of a special resolution, the question must be decided on a majority of votes.
- (2) If votes are divided equally on a question, the Chairperson of the meeting has a second or casting vote.
 - (3) Only members who were present at that meeting may vote.
 - (4) This rule does not apply to a vote at a disciplinary appeal meeting conducted under rule 24.

39 Special resolutions

A special resolution is passed if not less than three quarters of the members voting at a general meeting vote in favour of the resolution.

Note

In addition to certain matters specified in the Act, a special resolution is required—

- (a) to remove a committee member from office ;
- (b) to alter these Rules, including changing the name or any of the purposes of the Association.

40 Determining whether resolution carried

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), the Chairperson of a general meeting may, on the basis of a show of hands, declare that a resolution has been—
 - (a) carried by a majority (above 50%); or
 - (b) carried by seventy-five percent (75%); or
 - (c) carried unanimously; or
 - (d) lost—
 and an entry to that effect in the minutes of the meeting is conclusive proof of that fact.
- (2) If a poll (where votes are cast in writing) is demanded by 50% of members present at the meeting, on any question
 - (a) the poll must be taken at the meeting in the manner determined by the Chairperson of the meeting; and
 - (b) the Chairperson must declare the result of the resolution on the basis of the poll.
- (3) A poll demanded on the election of the Chairperson or on a question of an adjournment must be taken immediately.
- (4) A poll demanded on any other question must be taken before the close of the meeting at a time determined by the Chairperson.

41 Minutes of general meeting

- (1) The Committee must ensure that minutes are taken and kept of each general meeting and made available to any member upon request, within seven (7) days of the request;
- (2) The minutes must record the business considered at the meeting, any resolution on which a vote is taken and the result of the vote.
- (3) In addition, the minutes of each annual general meeting must include—
 - (a) the names of the members attending the meeting;
 - (b) the annual report of the Committee on the activities of the Church during the preceding financial year;

- (c) the financial statements submitted to the members in accordance with rule 30(4)(b)(ii); and
- (d) the certificate signed by two committee members certifying that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the Church;
- (e) any audited accounts and auditor's report or report of a review accompanying the financial statements that are required under the Act or under these Rules; and
- (f) A list of names and positions of the Committee members that will serve for the new financial year.

PART 5—COMMITTEE

Division 1—Powers of Committee

42 Role and powers

- (1) The business of the Church must be managed by or under the direction of a Committee.
- (2) The Committee may exercise all the powers of the Church except those powers that these Rules or the Act require to be exercised by general meetings of the members of the Church.
- (3) The Committee may—
 - (a) appoint and remove staff;
 - (b) establish subcommittees consisting of members with terms of reference it considers appropriate;
 - (c) appoint a replacement Committee member in the event of vacation of office due to the death, resignation, or expulsion (for disciplinary reasons) of a Committee member;
 - (d) appoint and remove members in non-Committee positions in the church.

43 Delegation

- (1) The Committee may delegate to a member of the Committee, a subcommittee or staff, any of its powers and functions other than—
 - (a) this power of delegation; or
 - (b) a duty imposed on the Committee by the Act or any other law.
- (2) The delegation must be in writing and may be subject to the conditions and limitations the Committee considers appropriate.
- (3) The Committee may, in writing, revoke a delegation wholly or in part.

Division 2—Composition of Committee and duties of members

44 Composition of Committee

- (1) The Committee consists of—
 - (a) Senior Pastor; and
 - (b) Secretary and Deputy Secretary; and
 - (c) Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer; and

- (d) Head and Deputy Head of Social Programs; and
- (e) Head and Deputy Head of Visitation; and
- (f) Head and Deputy Head of Maintenance; and
- (g) Head and Deputy Head of Evangelism & Discipleship

Note

The Senior Pastor is also the President of the Church, and holds the requisite credentials as a Christian minister.

- (2) In the event of absence of the holder of a Head position, the Deputy Head will assume that role during any period(s) of absence.
- (3) The composition of the Committee (other than Senior Pastor, Secretary and Treasurer) may be amended by the Committee by way of majority vote.

Note

Subrule 3 is intended to be exercised depending on the needs of the Church.

- (4) The committee may not have 2 or more immediate family members (spouse, sibling, parent or child) serving at any time.

45 General Duties

- (1) As soon as practicable after being elected or appointed to the Committee, each committee member must become familiar with these Rules and the Act.
- (2) The Committee is collectively responsible for ensuring that the Church complies with the Act and that individual members of the Committee comply with these Rules.
- (3) Committee members must exercise their powers and discharge their duties with reasonable care and diligence.
- (4) Committee members must respect the Committee's decisions, exercise their powers and discharge their duties—
 - (a) in good faith in the best interests of the Church; and
 - (b) for a proper purpose.
- (5) Committee members and former committee members must not make improper use of—
 - (a) their position; or
 - (b) information acquired by virtue of holding their position—
 so as to gain an advantage for themselves or any other person or to cause detriment to the Church.
- (6) Committee members must keep all discussions held during Committee meetings confidential, except for any information that the Committee agrees, by a majority vote held at a Committee meeting, to release.

Note

See also Division 3 of Part 6 of the Act which sets out the general duties of the office holders of an incorporated association.

- (7) In addition to any duties imposed by these Rules, a committee member must perform any other duties imposed from time to time by resolution at a general meeting.

46 Senior Pastor

- (1) The Senior Pastor must be selected and engaged, and for the tenure, in accordance with the By-Laws for the position of Senior Pastor.

- (2) Subject to subrule (3), the Senior Pastor is the Chairperson for any general meetings and for any committee meetings.
- (3) If the Senior Pastor is absent, or unable to preside, the Chairperson of the meeting must be—
 - (a) in the case of a general meeting— the Secretary, or if absent, a committee member elected by the other committee members present; or
 - (b) in the case of a committee meeting— the Secretary, or if absent, a committee member elected by the other committee members present.
- (4) The Senior Pastor has power to nominate one or more nominations for positions in the Committee under rule 51.

47 Secretary

- (1) The Secretary must perform any duty or function required under the Act to be performed by the secretary of an incorporated association.

Example

Under the Act, the secretary of an incorporated association is responsible for lodging documents of the association with the Registrar.

- (2) The Secretary must—
 - (a) maintain the register of members in accordance with rule 18; and
 - (b) keep custody of the common seal (if any) of the Church and, except for the financial records referred to in rule 70(3), all books, documents and securities of the Church in accordance with rules 72 and 75; and
 - (c) subject to the Act and these Rules, provide members with access to the register of members, the minutes of general meetings and other books and documents; and
 - (d) perform any other duty or function imposed on the Secretary by these Rules.
- (3) The Secretary must give to the Registrar notice of his or her appointment within 14 days after the appointment.

48 Treasurer

- (1) The Treasurer must—
 - (a) receive all moneys paid to or received by the Church and issue receipts for those moneys in the name of the Church; and
 - (b) ensure that all moneys received are paid into the account of the Church within 5 working days after receipt; and
 - (c) make any payments authorised by the Committee or by a general meeting of the Church from the Church's funds; and
 - (d) ensure cheques or payments are signed by at least 2 committee members.
- (2) The Treasurer must—
 - (a) ensure that the financial records of the Church are kept in accordance with the Act; and
 - (b) coordinate the preparation of the financial statements of the Church and their certification by the Committee prior to their submission to the annual general meeting of the Church; and
 - (c) ensure that the financial statements of the Church are checked by two other active members prior to their submission to the annual general meeting of the Church; and

- (d) ensure timely submission of financial reports to relevant government authorities as required by law if not otherwise provided for in these Rules.
- (3) The Treasurer must ensure that at least one other committee member has access to the accounts and financial records of the Church.

Division 3—Election of Committee members and tenure of office

49 Who is eligible to be a Committee member

A member is eligible to be elected or appointed as a committee member if the member—

- (a) is 21 years or over;
- (b) is entitled to vote at a general meeting; and
- (c) has been a member and has been participating in Church activities for at least the last eighteen (18) months.

50 Term of office, and declaring position(s) vacant

- (1) This rule applies to—
 - (a) the first annual general meeting of the Church after its incorporation; or
 - (b) any subsequent annual general meeting of the Church, after the annual report and financial statements of the Church have been received.
- (2) A Committee member, except for the Senior Pastor or a Committee holding office until the first Annual General meeting, held (office) two (2) years after that member is appointed.
- (3) In the event of the election could NOT be held or successfully completed at the annual general meeting after the declaration of vacant positions by the Chairperson of the meeting due to unexpected circumstances, the current Committee will be restored to continue serving The Church until the election can be held.
- (4) The Chairperson of the meeting must declare all positions on the Committee, except for the position of Senior Pastor or positions not yet held for the period stated in subrule (2), vacant and hold elections for those positions in accordance with Rules 51 to 54.

51 Nominations

- (1) Prior to the election of each position, the Chairperson of the meeting must call for nominations to fill that position.
- (2) An eligible member of the Church may—
 - (a) nominate himself or herself; or
 - (b) with the member's consent, be nominated by another member.
- (3) A member who is nominated for a position and fails to be elected to that position may be nominated for any other position for which an election is yet to be held.
- (4) In the event of the nomination of two or more immediate family members (spouse, sibling, parent or child) being received, only the first nomination is valid.

52 Election of Committee etc.

- (1) At the annual general meeting, separate elections may be held for each of the following positions, or a single election may be held to fill all of these positions:
 - (a) Secretary and Deputy Secretary; and

- (b) Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer; and
 - (c) Head and Deputy Head of Social Programs; and
 - (d) Head and Deputy Head of Visitation; and
 - (e) Head and Deputy Head of Maintenance; and
 - (f) Head and Deputy Head of Evangelism & Discipleship.
- (2) The candidate member must be present at the election to elected to the position.
 - (3) If only one member is nominated for the position, the Chairperson of the meeting must declare the member elected to the position.
 - (4) If more than one member is nominated, a ballot must be held in accordance with Rule 54.
 - (5) The position of Senior Pastor continues without becoming vacant, subject to Rule 55.

53 Election of ordinary members

- (1) The annual general meeting must by resolution decide the number of ordinary members of the Committee (if any) it wishes to hold office for the next year.
- (2) A single election may be held to fill all of those positions.
- (3) If the number of members nominated for the position of ordinary committee member is less than or equal to the number to be elected, the Chairperson of the meeting must declare each of those members to be elected to the position.
- (4) If the number of members nominated exceeds the number to be elected, a ballot must be held in accordance with Rule 54.

54 Ballot

- (1) If a ballot is required for the election for a position, the Chairperson of the meeting must appoint a member to act as returning officer to conduct the ballot.
- (2) The returning officer must not be a member nominated for the position.
- (3) Before the ballot is taken, each candidate may make a short speech in support of his or her election.
- (4) The election must be by secret ballot.
- (5) The returning officer must give a blank piece of paper to each member present in person;
- (6) If the ballot is for a single position, the voter must write on the ballot paper the name of the candidate for whom they wish to vote.
- (7) If the ballot is for more than one position—
 - (a) the voter must write on the ballot paper the name of each candidate for whom they wish to vote;
 - (b) the voter must not write the names of more candidates than the number to be elected.
- (8) Ballot papers that do not comply with subrule (7)(b) are not to be counted.
- (9) Each ballot paper on which the name of a candidate has been written counts as one vote for that candidate.
- (10) The returning officer must declare elected the candidate or, in the case of an election for more than one position, the candidates who received the most votes.

- (11) If the returning officer is unable to declare the result of an election under subrule (10) because 2 or more candidates received the same number of votes,—
 - (a) the returning officer must conduct a further election for the position in accordance with subrules (4) to (10) to decide which of those candidates is to be elected;
 - (b) In the case of final round and two candidates having equal votes, the older candidate shall be automatically elected.

55 Term of office

- (1) Subject to subrule (3) and Rule 56, a committee member, other than Senior Pastor, holds office until the position of the Committee is declared vacant at an annual general meeting.
- (2) A committee member may be re-elected.
- (3) A general meeting of the Church may—
 - (a) by special resolution remove a committee member from office; and
 - (b) elect an eligible member of the Church to fill the vacant position in accordance with this Division.
- (4) A member who is the subject of a proposed special resolution under subrule (3)(a) may make representations in writing to the Secretary or Senior Pastor of the Church (not exceeding a reasonable length) and may request that the representations be provided to the members of the Church.
- (5) The Secretary or the Senior Pastor may give a copy of the representations to each member of the Church or, if they are not so given, the member may require that they be read out at the meeting at which the special resolution is to be proposed.

56 Vacation of office

- (1) A committee member may resign from the Committee by written notice addressed to the Committee.
 - (2) A person ceases to be a committee member if he or she—
 - (a) ceases to be a member of the Church; or
 - (b) fails to attend 3 consecutive committee meetings (other than special or urgent committee meetings) without leave of absence under rule 67; or
 - (c) otherwise ceases to be a committee member by operation of section 78 of the Act.
 - (3) Reasons for vacating one's position on the committee include (but are not limited to):
 - (a) Death;
 - (b) Ill health, or mental or physical inability to hold office;
 - (c) Resignation;
 - (d) The Committee by majority deems that the committee member is disqualified on scriptural, moral, doctrinal or ethical grounds;
 - (e) The Committee by majority deems that the person's views, values, and or conduct is divergent or contrary to the Statement of Purposes in rule 2, or the Statement of Faith in Appendix, of the Church;
 - (f) The person becomes the subject of a disciplinary or criminal investigation, and or finding, in circumstances that may bring the Church, or the Church in general, into disrepute.
-

Note

A Committee member may not hold the office of secretary if they do not reside in Australia.

57 Filling casual vacancies

- (1) The Committee may appoint an eligible member of the Church to fill a position on the Committee that—
 - (a) has become vacant under rule 56; or
 - (b) was not filled by election at the last annual general meeting.
- (2) If the position of Secretary becomes vacant, the Committee must appoint a member to the position within 14 days after the vacancy arises.
- (3) If a position other than Secretary becomes vacant, the Committee must appoint a member to the position as soon as practicable.
- (4) Rule 55 applies to any committee member appointed by the Committee under subrule (1), (2) or (3).
- (5) The Committee may continue to act despite any vacancy in its membership.

Division 4—Meetings of Committee

58 Meetings of Committee

- (1) The Committee must meet at least 1 time each month at the dates, times and places determined by the Committee.
- (2) The date, time and place of the first committee meeting must be determined by the members of the Committee as soon as practicable after the annual general meeting of the Church at which the members of the Committee were elected.
- (3) Special committee meetings may be convened by the Senior Pastor.

59 Notice of meetings

- (1) Notice of each committee meeting must be given to each committee member no later than 7 days before the date of the meeting.
- (2) Notice may be given of more than one committee meeting at the same time.
- (3) The notice must state the date, time and place of the meeting.
- (4) If a special committee meeting is convened, the notice must include the general nature of the business to be conducted.
- (5) The only business that may be conducted at the meeting is the business for which the meeting is convened.

60 Urgent meetings

- (1) In cases of urgency, a meeting can be held without notice being given in accordance with rule 59 provided that as much notice as practicable is given to each committee member by the quickest means practicable.
- (2) Any resolution made at the meeting must be passed by 75% of the committee members present at the urgent meeting.
- (3) The only business that may be conducted at an urgent meeting is the business for which the meeting is convened.

61 Procedure and order of business

- (1) The procedure to be followed at a meeting of a Committee must be determined from time to time by the Committee.
- (2) The order of business may be determined by the members present at the meeting.

62 Use of technology

- (1) A committee member who is not physically present at a committee meeting may participate in the meeting by the use of technology that allows that committee member and the committee members present at the meeting to clearly and simultaneously communicate with each other.
- (2) For the purposes of this Part, a committee member participating in a committee meeting as permitted under subrule (1) is taken to be present at the meeting and, if the member votes at the meeting, is taken to have voted in person.

63 Quorum

- (1) No business may be conducted at a Committee meeting unless a quorum is present.
- (2) The quorum for a committee meeting is the presence (in person or as allowed under rule 62) of a majority of the committee members holding office.
- (3) If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the notified commencement time of a committee meeting—
 - (a) in the case of a special meeting—the meeting lapses;
 - (b) in any other case—the meeting must be adjourned to a date no later than 14 days after the adjournment and notice of the time, date and place to which the meeting is adjourned must be given in accordance with rule 59.

64 Voting

- (1) On any question arising at a committee meeting, each committee member present at the meeting has one vote.
- (2) A motion is carried if a majority of committee members present at the meeting vote in favour of the motion.
- (3) Subrule (2) does not apply to any motion or question which is required by these Rules to be passed by an absolute majority of the Committee.
- (4) If votes are divided equally on a question, the Chairperson of the meeting has a second or casting vote.
- (5) Voting by proxy is not permitted.

65 Conflict of interest

- (1) A committee member who has a material personal interest in a matter being considered at a committee meeting must disclose the nature and extent of that interest to the Committee.
- (2) The member—
 - (a) must not be present while the matter is being considered at the meeting; and
 - (b) must not vote on the matter.

Note

Under section 81(3) of the Act, if there are insufficient committee members to form a quorum because a member who has a material personal interest is disqualified from voting on a matter, a general meeting may be called to deal with the matter.

- (3) This rule does not apply to a material personal interest—

- (a) that exists only because the member belongs to a class of persons for whose benefit the Church is established; or
- (b) that the member has in common with all, or a substantial proportion of, the members of the Church.

66 Minutes of meeting

- (1) The Committee must ensure that minutes are taken and kept of each committee meeting within seven (7) days of the committee meeting;
- (2) The minutes must record the following—
 - (a) the names of the members in attendance at the meeting;
 - (b) the business considered at the meeting;
 - (c) any resolution on which a vote is taken and the result of the vote;
 - (d) any material personal interest disclosed under rule 65.

67 Leave of absence

- (1) The Committee may grant a committee member leave of absence from committee meetings for a period not exceeding 3 months.
- (2) The Committee must not grant leave of absence retrospectively unless it is satisfied that it was not feasible for the committee member to seek the leave in advance.

PART 6—FINANCIAL MATTERS

68 Source of funds

The funds of the Church may be derived from offerings, donations, fund-raising activities, grants, interest and any other sources approved by the Committee.

69 Management of funds

- (1) The Church must open an account with financial institution(s) from which all expenditure of the Church is made and into which all of the Church's revenue is deposited.
- (2) Subject to any restrictions imposed by a general meeting of the Church, the Committee may approve expenditure on behalf of the Church.
- (3) The Committee may authorise the Treasurer to expend funds on behalf of the Church (including by electronic funds transfer) up to a specified limit without requiring approval from the Committee for each item on which the funds are expended.
- (4) All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments must be signed by both Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer, or other Committee members assigned by the Committee.
- (5) All funds of the Church must be deposited into the financial account of the Church no later than 5 working days after receipt.
- (6) With the approval of the Committee, the Treasurer may maintain a cash float provided that all money paid from or paid into the float is accurately recorded at the time of the transaction.

70 Financial records

- (1) The Church must keep financial records that—
 - (a) correctly record and explain its transactions, financial position and performance; and
 - (b) enable financial statements to be prepared as required by the Act.

- (2) The Church must retain the financial records for 7 years after the transactions covered by the records are completed.
- (3) The Treasurer must keep in his or her custody, or under his or her control—
 - (a) the financial records for the current financial year; and
 - (b) any other financial records as authorised by the Committee.
- (4) Under any circumstances, changes to **The Church**'s account with financial institution(s) are NOT permitted without the authorisation of the Treasurer or Deputy Treasurer (in the Treasurer's absence).

71 Financial statements

- (1) For each financial year, the Committee must ensure that the requirements under the Act relating to the financial statements of the Church are met.
- (2) Without limiting subrule (1), those requirements include—
 - (a) the preparation of the financial statements;
 - (b) if required, the review or auditing of the financial statements;
 - (c) the certification of the financial statements by the Committee;
 - (d) the submission of the financial statements to the annual general meeting of the Church;
 - (e) the lodgement with the Registrar of the financial statements and accompanying reports, certificates, statements and fee.

PART 7—GENERAL MATTERS

72 Common seal

- (1) The Church may have a common seal.
- (2) If the Church has a common seal—
 - (a) the name of the Church must appear in legible characters on the common seal;
 - (b) a document may only be sealed with the common seal by the authority of the Committee and the sealing must be witnessed by the signatures of two committee members;
 - (c) the common seal must be kept in the custody of the Secretary;
 - (d) in the event of the current Secretary resigned or not re-elected, he or she must hand-over the Common Seal to the Senior Pastor.

73 Registered address

The registered address of the Church is—

- (a) the address determined from time to time by resolution of the Committee; or
- (b) if the Committee has not determined an address to be the registered address—
the postal address of the Secretary.

74 Notice requirements

- (1) Any notice required to be given to a member or a committee member under these Rules may be given—
 - (a) by handing the notice to the member personally; or

- (b) by sending it by post to the member at the address recorded for the member on the register of members; or
 - (c) by email or facsimile transmission; or
 - (d) by publishing it on the Church Website.
- (2) Subrule (1) does not apply to notice given under rule 60.
- (3) Any notice required to be given to the Church or the Committee may be given—
- (a) by handing the notice to a member of the Committee; or
 - (b) by sending the notice by post to the registered address; or
 - (c) by leaving the notice at the registered address; or
 - (d) by email to the email address of the Church or the Secretary.

75 Custody and inspection of books and records

- (1) Members may on request inspect free of charge—
- (a) the register of members;
 - (b) the minutes of general meetings;
 - (c) subject to subrule (2), the financial records, books, securities and any other relevant document of the Church.

Note

See note following rule 18 for details of access to the register of members.

- (2) The Committee may refuse to permit a member to inspect records of the Church that relate to confidential, personal, employment, commercial or legal matters or where to do so may be prejudicial to the interests of the Church.
- (3) The Committee must on request make copies of these rules available to members and applicants for membership free of charge.
- (4) Subject to subrule (2), a member may make a copy of any of the other records of the Church referred to in this rule and the Church may charge a reasonable fee for provision of a copy of such a record.
- (5) For purposes of this rule—

relevant documents means the records and other documents, however compiled, recorded or stored, that relate to the incorporation and management of the Church and includes the following—

- (a) its membership records;
- (b) its financial statements;
- (c) its financial records;
- (d) records and documents relating to transactions, dealings, business or property of the Church.

76 Winding up and cancellation

- (1) The Church may be wound up voluntarily by special resolution.
- (2) In the event of the winding up or the cancellation of the incorporation of the Church, the surplus assets of the Church must not be distributed to any members or former members of the Church.

- (3) Subject to the Act and any court order made under section 133 of the Act, the surplus assets must be given to a body that has similar purposes to the Church and which is not carried on for the profit or gain of its individual members.
- (4) The body to which the surplus assets are to be given must be decided by special resolution.

77 The making of By-Laws

The Committee may, from time to time, make and or amend By-Laws, that are not inconsistent with these Rules, in regard to the operational aspects of the Church including but not limited to:

- (a) The engagement and tenure of the Senior Pastor;
- (b) Church Membership Rules;
- (c) Spiritual events.

78 Alteration of Rules

These Rules of the Church, the Statement of Purposes under Rule 2, and the Statement of Faith in Appendix 1, may only be altered by special resolution of a general meeting of the Church.

Note

An alteration of these Rules does not take effect unless or until it is approved by the Registrar. If these Rules (other than rule 1, 2 or 3) are altered, the Association is taken to have adopted its own rules, not the model rules.

APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following Statement of Faith describes the beliefs of Vietnamese Evangelical Church In Australia - Melbourne Incorporated:

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10;17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honoured the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23;3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41;22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28;17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4;3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Mankind

Mankind is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest

sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.;5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20;3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24;2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11;Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31;25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural offices are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39;16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavour to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus

Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-

25; 20:35; *Romans* 6:6-22; 12:1-2; *1 Corinthians* 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; *2 Corinthians* 8-9; 12:15; *Philippians* 4:10-19; *1 Peter* 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; *Judges* 7:21; *Ezra* 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; *Nehemiah* 4; 8:1-5; *Matthew* 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; *Mark* 2:3; *Luke* 10:1ff.; *Acts* 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; *1 Corinthians* 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; *2 Corinthians* 8-9; *Galatians* 1:6-10; *Ephesians* 4:1-16; *Philippians* 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; *Leviticus* 6:2-5; *Deuteronomy* 10:12; 27:17; *Psalms* 101:5; *Micah* 6:8; *Zechariah* 8:16; *Matthew* 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; *Mark* 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; *Luke* 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; *John* 15:12; 17:15; *Romans* 12-14; *1 Corinthians* 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; *Galatians* 3:26-28; *Ephesians* 6:5-9; *Colossians* 3:12-17; *1 Thessalonians* 3:12; *Philemon*; *James* 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.



Church Membership By-Laws

21 December 2021

The Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia – Melbourne Incorporated (the Church) has the Church Membership Policy to govern and guide the membership in its conduct of church activities and member relationships while pursuing the fulfilment of the Great Commission of Lord Jesus Christ in extending the Kingdom of God in power and truth.

The **Church Membership By-Laws** are intended to enable members of the Church to be fully aware of what it means to be a member of the Church, how to relate to one another, and how things are done.

The Church Membership By-Laws are an extension of and support **the Incorporated Association Rules (the Constitution)** of the Church and where necessary, may point to other By-Laws, policies and guidelines, all of which may be updated from time to time.

1. Decisions of Church Committee

Members shall abide with the decisions made by the Church Committee.

2. Church Statement of Purpose & Statement of Faith

Members shall take note of the Church Statement of Purpose [see Rule 2 of Rules of the Church (Constitution)] and Statement of Faith [see Appendix of Rules of the Church (Constitution)] and by their best efforts abide by and adhere to the purposes of the Church including gaining knowledge and understanding, then making practical application of the biblical truths and principles in their daily lives.

3. Attendances at Church Services and Communion

Members shall by their best efforts attend Sunday Service weekly and the Communion of the Lord's Supper (subject to their eligibility) monthly.

4. Preserving the Church Unity and Peace

Members shall by their best efforts preserve the unity and peace of the church.

5. Offences and Disputes

Members shall not raise private offences, faults or disputes during the congregational services and activities.

Members shall not bring an accusation or allegation or complaint against the Senior Pastor or the Church Committee unless there are 3 witnesses.

Members may raise their concerns or issues to the Church Committee via the Feedback to Church Committee Process [see Annexure Point 8].

6. Intention to Cease Membership

Despite Clause 7 “Automatic Ceasing of Membership” below, a member may decide to cease or surrender his or her membership and give notice of his or her intention to cease or surrender membership in writing to the Secretary of the Church Committee (departing member).

The written notice will be considered at the relevant time, but no longer than 3 months from the date of the written concern or issue and provide a response to the departing member as soon as practicable in writing.

7. Automatic Ceasing of Membership

Notwithstanding Clause 6 "Intention to Cease Membership" above, a member who is absent from attending the Sunday Service for a continuous 3 months must give notice in writing to the Secretary of the Church Committee with reasons for the absences within the said 3-month period.

A member who is absent from attending the Sunday Service for a continuous 3 months is deemed to have left the Church and his or her membership in the Church will automatically be cancelled without any written notice of this cancellation of Church membership to this absent member.

8. Discipline Process

If a member opposes or acts in a way that contravenes or contrary to the Church Membership By-Laws, the Church Committee may make a decision to follow the Discipline Process (in the Rules of the Church) for the reproof, rebuke, suspension, and or exclusion of this member from the Church.

[See Annexure in the following pages]

Annexure

1. Why do we need rules?

The Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia – Melbourne Incorporated (Church) has the Church Membership By-Laws to govern and guide the membership in its conduct of church activities and member relationships while pursuing the fulfilment of the Great Commission of Lord Jesus Christ in extending the Kingdom of God in power and truth.

The Church Membership By-Laws are intended to enable members of the Church to be fully aware of what it means to be a member of the Church, how to relate to one another, and how things are done.

The Church Membership By-Laws are an extension of and support the Incorporated Association Rules of the Church and where necessary, may point to other By-Laws, policies and guidelines, all of which may be updated from time to time.

2. Why should one become a member?

It is a Biblical principle that Christians become an active part of a fellowship of believers. When you become a member of the Church you commit yourself to be a part of the fellowship of believers that comprise the Church while also actively sharing and participating in its Vision and Mission.

3. Who can become a member?

The membership is open to all who come to our church to worship with us and learn together about how to become followers of Lord Jesus Christ.

4. How do I become a member?

This is a two-step process.

The first one is to speak with the Senior Pastor or a member of the Church Committee, who will explain more and answer any questions you may have.

The second step is to obtain a **Membership Form** from the Secretary of the Church Committee to fill in and submit to the Secretary.

When your Membership Form is accepted, the Senior Pastor will welcome you into the church membership during a Sunday service.

Becoming a church member is not the same as joining an association or club but about making a covenant with the Church to serve God and be part of His universal church. In this way we express the real meaning of church membership as per His teachings.

5. What are my rights and privileges as a member?

As a member you can play a full part in deciding what our Church does. For example, what are its priorities; how its budget is spent; how the various church activities are run; and who are chosen to be the Pastors and Deacons (of the Church Committee). An important part of the God's church's values is the care and support, that is offered and received by all.

6. What are my responsibilities as a member?

As a church member, naturally you have responsibilities as well as rights. Below are some basic responsibilities but not an exhausted list for your reference:

- *attending worship;*
- *personal prayer and Bible study;*

- *attending the Communion of the Lord's Supper (providing you have already received the Baptism);*
- *helping the church outreach program whenever possible to advance the church's Vision and Mission;*
- *participating in church activities and meetings;*
- *respect of decisions made by the Church Committee;*
- *giving financial support to the church;*
- *upholding Christian values.*

7. Where can I get a copy of the complete the Melbourne Church Membership By-Laws?

The **Church Membership By-Laws** are available electronically on the website at www.vecamelbourne.com.au or as a printed copy upon request being made to the Secretary.

Church Membership By-Laws are an extension of and support the Incorporated Associated Rules for Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia – Melbourne Incorporated. In case of conflict between these two By-Laws and Rules, the latter (the Rules) will take precedence and be applied.

The Church Membership By-Laws may be updated from time to time.

8. Feedback to Church Committee Process is as follows:

- Members concerns or issues should be provided to the Church Committee in writing (via email or post).
- The Church Committee email address is secretary@vecamelbourne.com.au.
- The Church Committee postal address is P. O. Box 2114 Footscray, Vic.3011.
- The written concerns or issues should include the following details:
 - Date and day
 - Time
 - The persons involved
 - Details of the concerns or issues
 - What is the proposed solution for the concerns or issues
 - Any other relevant details or information or document
- The Church Committee will address the written concern or issue at the relevant time, but no longer than 3 months from the date of the written concern or issue.
- The Church Committee is not obliged to provide a response to the member but may respond with the next steps to resolve the concern or issue.



Engagement and Tenure of the Senior Pastor

By-Laws

21 December 2021

The Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia – Melbourne Incorporated (the Church) has the Church Policy that Jesus Christ is the Head and the Shepherd of The Church. The President is also the Senior Pastor of The Church and serves as the undershepherd of The Church. The Senior Pastor is responsible for providing the leadership to supervise all church activities and programs.

The Church Engagement and Tenure of the Senior Pastor By-Laws are intended to enable members of the Church to be fully aware of the process through which the Senior Pastor of the Church is engaged and for determining his term.

1. Term

The term of the Senior Pastor's contract must be passed at a general meeting.

2. Senior Pastor Selection Committee

- i. Upon the office of Senior Pastor becoming vacant, a Senior Pastor Selection Committee will be formed. The Committee shall nominate a Senior Pastor Selection Committee. The Church, by a majority vote of those voting members present, shall elect the members of the Senior Pastor Selection Committee.
- ii. The Senior Pastor Selection Committee shall seek out a suitable candidate for Senior Pastor. Any church member may make recommendations to the Senior Pastor Selection Committee. The Senior Pastor Selection Committee's recommendation will constitute a nomination.
- iii. The committee shall bring to the consideration of The Church only one candidate at a time.
- iv. The election shall take place at a church general meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice to all members of The Church has been given. The election shall be by secret ballot and an affirmative vote of at least seventy-five percent (75%) of those voting members present shall be necessary to extend a call to a candidate for Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or The Church's request.

3. Recall of Senior Pastor

- i. The Senior Pastor may be recalled by The Church at a church meeting called for that purpose, of which at least fourteen (14) days' notice to The Church has been given.
- ii. The recall vote shall be by secret ballot and an affirmative vote of a majority (i.e., above 50%) of the voting members present shall be necessary to recall the pastor at which time the office of Senior Pastor shall be declared vacant.
- iii. A recall meeting may be called by a written petition signed by not less than fifty percent (50%) of the members entitled to vote.
 - (a) The moderator for this recall meeting shall be the Church Secretary, or in the Church Secretary's absence, the Deputy Church Secretary shall call The Church to order and preside over the election of an acting moderator.
 - (b) The Senior Pastor will not serve as the moderator for this meeting.

- (c) In the event the Senior Pastor is recalled, termination will be immediate, and The Church may provide severance pay to the pastor of one sixth (1/6) of his total annual compensation, such severance pay being payable within thirty (30) days of termination.
- (d) In the event the Senior Pastor is recalled for gross misconduct, as may be solely determined by the voting members of The Church, then such severance pay shall be considered forfeited.

4. Senior Pastor Resignation

If the pastor wishes to resign from his position, it is requested he give at least four (4) weeks' notice.

5. Supply and Selection of Interim Pastor

During such time as The Church is without an elected pastor, the following procedure shall be followed:

- i. The Committee shall be responsible for obtaining pulpit supply (person to fulfill the preaching ministry of The Church).
- ii. The Committee may offer in nomination to The Church a person to be named to the position of "Interim Pastor."



Spiritual Events By-Laws

21 December 2021

The Vietnamese Evangelical Church in Australia – Melbourne Incorporated (Church) provides the following By-Laws as the Rules governing the running of spiritual events.

1. Baptism

Only the Senior Pastor or his assigns may conduct the Baptism ceremony for believers.

2. Communion of the Lord's Supper

- i. Only the Senior Pastor or his assigns may conduct the ceremony.
- ii. It must be held regularly.
- iii. Believers who have been baptised may take part in the Communion of the Lord's Supper.

3. Infant Dedication Ceremony

Only the Senior Pastor or his assigns may conduct the Infant Dedication Ceremony in accordance with Bible teaching.

4. Wedding Ceremony

Only the Senior Pastor or a person with his consent may conduct the wedding ceremony in accordance with the law of the land and Bible teaching.

5. Funeral Ceremony

Only the Senior Pastor or a person with his consent may conduct the funeral in accordance with the law of the land and Bible teaching.