

Church Membership By-Laws

25 September 2022

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 Purposes & Statement of Faith

Members shall take note of the Church Purposes [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 without giving a written notice of absence to the Senior Pastor or the Secretary is taken to have resigned as a member of the Church and his or her membership in the Church will automatically be removed without any written notice of this removal 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 reprimand, 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 (the 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.

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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 45 Pickett Street Footscray, Victoria 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.