



Deniliquin Baptist Church

Constitution

2004

(Amended February 2012)

(Amended August 2017)

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Section A Name

1. This Church will be known as: Deniliquin Baptist Church (hereafter abbreviated to DBC or the Church)

Section B Doctrinal Position of DBC

1. DBC holds to the following evangelical doctrines as summarised below:

- The nature and unity of the Godhead
- The deity and humanity of Christ
- The Holy Spirit
- The divine inspiration of the Scriptures
- The sinfulness of people
- Christ's atonement for the sin of people.
- The work of the Holy Spirit in salvation
- The Church
- The baptism of believers only, by immersion
- The communion
- The return of the Lord Jesus Christ
- The resurrection of the dead
- Rewards and punishments in a future state

Refer to Appendix 1 for the full **DBC Statement of Beliefs**.

Section C Government (i.e. Decision-making)

1. DBC will be affiliated with the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT accepting its responsibility to support and share ministries undertaken by the Denomination.
2. Recognising the headship of Jesus Christ and the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Church will be governed in line with the fundamental Baptist principle of the autonomy of the local church and congregational government. That is, the decision-making of DBC will be vested in the body of believers who compose its membership.
3. Notwithstanding this principle of autonomy, DBC recognises and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and co-operation which are common among Baptist Churches. Therefore, the Church will be interdependent as well as independent.

Section D Membership

1. Basic Qualifications

It is normal of a person, who belongs to the fellowship of DBC, to be a formal member. Membership is open to those people who:

- Have repented of their sins and placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and acknowledged his authority over their life,
- Have expressed this by being baptized or satisfied the requirement of Section D2.
- Have identified with DBC as the local body of believers with whom to fellowship and serve,
- Have read the Statement of Beliefs and are able to affirm such beliefs (Appendix 1),
- Have read and understood DBC's Vision and Mission Statements and are able to commit to be involved in outworking both (Appendix 2),
- Have read DBC's Values Statement and are able to identify with those values (Appendix 3).
- Do not belong to an organization that holds to beliefs contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ, and the Bible as a whole.

2. Baptism

- a. The normal practice of DBC will be to accept into membership those who have been baptised by immersion in water upon profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b. In particular circumstances membership is open to those who have been nurtured within another Christian tradition, have made a profession of faith, have been accepted into the membership of a congregation in that tradition and have been a member in good standing within that congregation.

3. Admission to Membership

a. The process for a person to be formally recognized as a member of DBC is:

- 1) The person will be interviewed by two DBC Members set apart by the Eldership Team.
 - 2) A report will be given to the Eldership which contains details on the person's faith in Jesus Christ, their spiritual journey, their baptism, and their spiritual gifts.
 - 3) Where the applicant for membership has been a member of another Baptist church, letters of transfer and/or commendation will be sought and will be taken into account when determining the application for membership.
 - 4) The name of the person will then be announced at the regular Sunday morning service on two (2) consecutive Sundays, as well as be printed in the next newsletter, to advise the church that they are seeking membership and inviting responses.
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- 5) The Eldership will then give final consideration: if there are no valid reasons to withhold membership, they will make the necessary arrangements for the person to be brought into membership.
 - 6) The person's entry membership will be celebrated on the next Communion Sunday.
- b. The normal practice of the Church is to consider baptism and church membership as a single step. Applicants for baptism will be encouraged to consider membership at the same time. Adequate teaching will be given and the process in Section D (3a) will be followed.

4. Responsibilities of Members

Membership of the church comes with responsibility. The responsibilities, identified for members of DBC are:

- To protect the unity of DBC by acting in love towards other members; by refusing to gossip or speak in a way that puts others down; by being committed to forgiveness and reconciliation; and by respecting, supporting and encouraging the appointed church leadership.
- To pray regularly for DBC, the church's ministries and leadership.
- To be within the decision-making process of DBC, which includes the appointment of people into ministry and leadership.
- To express their gratitude to God, and their responsibilities as His stewards by contributing regularly and wholeheartedly to the financial support of DBC and its ministry.
- To actively assist DBC to fulfil its purposes by involvement according to spiritual gifting, maturity and ability.
- To attend worship services and Church Family Meetings regularly and faithfully. Also, where possible, to be involved in a small group and/or ministry group.
- To seek to grow in Christ-likeness and to live a godly life which is evident to those within DBC, as well as non-believers.

5. Members Roll:

- a. There will be an official roll of members, kept by the Secretary or Treasurer.
- b. The roll will be divided into three sections:
 - 1) **Resident:** That for active members. Persons in this category of membership hold voting rights subject to Section G (3e).
 - 2) **Absent/Health:** That for members temporarily absent from the district in the course of their occupation or who for health reasons find it difficult to attend regular Church Family Meetings but who request that their membership be continued and would otherwise qualify for Resident Membership status. Persons in this category of membership hold voting rights subject to Section G (3e).

- 3) **Reserve:** That for members who have permanently moved from the district and have not yet transferred their membership to another church. Persons in this category of membership **will not** hold voting rights.

6. Removal from Membership

- a. The Eldership Team will prayerfully review the Members' Roll at least every two years.
- b. Where the failure to participate in the worship of DBC relates to having permanently moved from the district in which DBC is situated, and then such members will be transferred to the Reserve Roll.
- c. Where the failure to participate in the worship of DBC relates to some reason other than removal from the district or where the member in question fails to honour other responsibilities of membership, every effort will be made to restore such members to worship and fellowship (Matt. 18:15-17). Where these efforts fail, a recommendation may be brought to DBC Membership that such member's names be removed from the roll (or transferred to the Absent Members' Roll, where appropriate).
- d. No member's name will be transferred or removed from either the Resident section or the Absent/Health or the Reserve section of the Member's Roll except after proper inquiry by the Eldership Team and, if possible, with the knowledge of the person concerned.

7. Transfer of Membership:

- a. Any member in good standing may request that a letter of commendation be sent to another Baptist Church he or she wishes to join. The Secretary or Treasurer may process the request reporting their action to the next Church Family Meeting for confirmation.

8. Discipline:

- a. Where a member becomes an offence to the Church by reason of immoral or un-Christian conduct, the Eldership Team will make every effort, in the spirit of love and meekness, to restore such a member to fellowship (Matt. 18:15 - 17). Where such efforts fail, the Church may, on recommendation of the Eldership Team, terminate or suspend for a specified time, his or her membership. Termination or suspension of membership will be only on the decision of 75% majority of members present and voting at a properly constituted Church Family Meeting.

- b. In the event of a dispute arising either between the members, the Pastor(s) and the members, or the Church and the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT, such dispute may, after every effort has been made to resolve it within the Church or through the services of Ministry Support and Development be referred for decision to the Panel of Arbitrators elected by the Assembly of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT if agreed to by all parties of the dispute.
- c. Matters of offence or dispute between members will not be brought before DBC unless the parties have first complied with the direction of Matt. 18:15-17.

Section E Ordinances

1. Baptism

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a public declaration of a person's faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In accordance with New Testament Scripture it should be administered only by total immersion which symbolises the believer's identification with Christ in death, burial and resurrection, the remission of sins and the believer's dedication to God to live and walk in newness of life.

2. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ instituted by Him to be celebrated with the elements of bread and wine by believers in Christ until the end of the age. It commemorates and declares our thanks for the Lord's substitutionary death. The celebration of the ordinance expresses our fellowship with and in the Lord Jesus Christ as members of the Body of which He is the Head.

Section F Church Officers

1. Pastor/s

- a. **Qualifications:** A Pastor will be a baptized believer who subscribes to the Statement of Faith of DBC. A Pastor will be selected on the attribute of godly character and gifting, and consents to become a member of DBC.
- b. **Spiritual Walk:** A Pastor needs to have an identifiable spiritual walk with Jesus Christ. This means a Pastor needs to: be responsive and open to God's Word, allowing God to work it out in his life; be controlled by the Holy Spirit; demonstrate integrity, consistency, authenticity - showing that there is an integration of belief and lifestyle.
- c. **Appointment:** For the appointment of a pastor, the church will appoint a Pastoral Search Committee. The Pastoral Search Committee will, in consultation with the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT recommend the process to be followed to a Church Family Meeting for approval.

- d. **Resignation or Removal:** The tenure of office of a Pastor may be terminated by two months' notice in writing by either DBC or the Pastor. A Pastor may be removed, following the recommendation of the combined leaders – the Elders and Ministry Leaders, by a 75% majority vote of the members present at a Church Family Meeting, which will be announced for at least two successive Sundays prior to its being held.
- e. **Role and Responsibilities:** The role and responsibility of a Pastor will be determined during the call process, and reviewed on a regular basis.

2. Elder/s:

2.1 Qualifications.

- a) An Elder will be a resident member, who has been involved within the ministry of the Church, for a period of not less than 12 months.
- b) An Elder shall be selected based on the qualifications list in *Appendix 4: Eldership Team*
- c) Elders must also comply with the Safe Church Policies of the DBC Policy and Procedure Manual, by way of:
 - i. Completion of a *Working With Children Check* and supply relevant information to the Safe Church Officer.
 - ii. Attendance at a Baptist Association's *Creating Safe Spaces* training (or similar accredited training), or commits to attending as soon as is practical. (A refresher course is also to be attended every 3 years).
 - iii. Acceptance and signing of *The Leaders Code of Conduct*. A copy is to be given to the Safe Church Officer.

2.2. The Appointment Process

- a) An annual *Identification Form* will be circulated to the congregation seeking names of people they identify as potential Elders (including Elders whose terms expires).
- b) The Pastor is to collate and present the *Identification Form* results, including names to the Elders at a suitable time before the AGM or a Special Church Family Meeting called for the election of Elder/s.

In the absence of a Pastor, a continuing Elder is to undertake step b) above. The Secretary may be invited to be involved in this process, if the existing elders deem it necessary.

- c) Using *Appendix 4 Eldership Team* the Elders will discuss, and agree on, the suitability of nominees and determine recommendations to put to the members.
- d) The Pastor is then to approach those recommended to determine their acceptance of nomination.
- e) The names of those who have accepted nomination are to be published at least two Sundays before the AGM, a Church Family Meeting or a Special Church Family Meeting called for the election of Elder/s.
- f) If there are no valid written objections lodged with the Eldership one week prior to the meeting, nominations will proceed to the AGM or Church Family Meeting.
- g) A person will be confirmed as an Elder by a 75% vote of the votes cast. Voting is by secret ballot and only DBC Members are to participate.
- h) The number of Elders will be determined by way of recommendation from the existing Elders with regards to the needs of the congregation.
- i) The term of an elder is, ordinarily, two years.

2.3 Removal

An Elder may be removed, following the recommendation of the Elders and Pastor(s), by 75% majority vote of the members present at a Church Family Meeting, which will be announced for at least two successive Sundays prior to its being held.

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities

- a) The role and responsibility of an Elder are listed in *Appendix 4: Eldership Team*.

3. Ministry Leader/s

3.1 Definitions

- a) A **Ministry Team Leader** is a person who oversees a specific area of ministry.

The following positions are to be considered Ministry Team Leaders:

- Secretary & Treasurer.
- Admin Team
- Sunday School/Kids Church coordinator
- Music Team Leader
- Youth Team leader
- Crèche Coord.

- Small Group Leaders.
- Safe Church Officer.
- Other, as required and/or as determined by the Elders and/or Church Family Meeting.

3.2 Qualifications and Character

A Ministry Team Leader must:

- a) Be a resident member.
- b) regularly attend our church for at least 12 months before going through the recruitment process or six months if the person is known to the congregation and/or Elders.
- c) have an identifiable spiritual walk with Jesus Christ. This means a Ministry Leader needs to: be responsive and open to God's Word, allowing God to work it out in his or her life; be controlled by the Holy Spirit; demonstrate integrity, consistency, authenticity - showing that there is an integration of belief and lifestyle.
- d) Show a willingness to serve as a Team Leader within a designated ministry.
- e) Demonstrate suitable skills and abilities to lead a team and /or a willingness to develop the required skills.
- f) Also comply with the Safe Church Policies of the DBC Policy and Procedure Manual, by way of:
 - i. Completion of a *Working With Children Check* and supply relevant information to the Safe Church Officer.
 - ii. Attendance at a Baptist Association's *Creating Safe Spaces* training (or similar accredited training), or commits to attending as soon as is practical. (A refresher course is also to be attended every 3 years).
 - iii. Acceptance and signing of *The Leaders Code of Conduct*. A copy is to be given to the Safe Church Officer.

3.3 The Appointment Process

- a) Nominations to be called for, ordinarily, in the period before the AGM.
- b) Nominees must be approached as to their willingness to accept the nomination.
- c) Each nomination must have two signatures – the signatories being members.
- d) The Elders are to ascertain the suitability of the nominee based on 3.2 above.

- e) In the event of more than one nominee for a leadership position, the Elders will interview each nominee with the aim that there will no more than one person per position nominated at the AGM or Church Family Meeting.

Exceptions are as follows:

- i) The Admin Team, in addition to the Secretary and Treasurer, where multiple nominations are necessary;
 - ii) Small Group Leaders, where there is to be one leader per group. If warranted, a co-leadership of no more than two people will be accepted.
 - iii) Other ministry leadership positions where a co-leadership of not more than two people is warranted.
- f) Nominations will be presented to the congregation at least two Sundays before the AGM or Church Family Meeting
 - g) If there are no valid written objections to the Eldership one week prior to the meeting, nominations will proceed to the AGM or Church Family Meeting.
 - h) Ministry Team Leadership positions will be affirmed by a 75% majority vote in a secret ballot of the DBC Membership in attendance at the AGM or Church Family Meeting.
 - i) In the event of a casual vacancy:
 - Elders to appoint a person to the ministry leadership position on a temporary basis. Formal appointment to the position to follow the above procedure.
 - k) Ministry Team Leaders must comply with the Safe Church Policy by way of:
 - i. Completion of a *Working With Children Check* and supply relevant information to the Safe Church Officer.
 - ii. Attendance at a Baptist Association's *Creating Safe Spaces* training (or similar accredited training) or commits to attending as soon as is practical. (A refresher course is also to be attended every three years).
 - iii. Acceptance and signing of *The Leaders Code of Conduct*. A copy is to be given to Safe Church Officer.

3.4 Duration of Term and Review Process

- a) The term of Secretary and Treasurer will be two years after which the positions shall be open for nominations as per 3.3 above.

Other Ministry Team Leader positions are on a perpetual basis, subject to b) below.

- b) A formal review every two years will be conducted by the Eldership of each Team Leader.
- c) The appropriate ministry review form will be used as a guide during these interviews.
- d) A summary report relating to completed reviews will be presented at Church Family Meetings on an ongoing basis.
- e) Completed forms are to be maintained and filed according to due process & procedure.

3.5 Removal

A Team Leader may be removed, following the recommendation of the Elders and Pastor(s), by 75% majority vote of the members present at a Church Family Meeting, which will be announced for at least two successive Sundays prior to its being held.

4. Ministry Team Members.

4.1 Definitions

- a) A **Ministry Team Member** is a person who participates in a specific ministry area under the leadership of a Ministry Team Leader.
- b) A **Helper** is a person who, from time to time, with the agreement of the Ministry Team Leader assists in a particular area of ministry e.g. Creche helper, an occasional Sunday School assistant.
- c) Helpers under the age of 18yr will:
 - i) sign *The Leaders Code of Conduct*
 - ii) minister only under adult supervision.

The following positions are to be considered Ministry Team Members:

- Sunday School/Kids Church teachers
- Creche team members
- Music team members
- Youth team members
- Safe church team members
- Other, as required and/or as determined by the Elders and/or Church Family Meeting.

4.2 Qualifications and Character

Ministry Team Members must

- a) regularly attend our church for at least 12 months before going through the recruitment process or 6 months if the person is known to the congregation and/or elders.
- b) have an identifiable spiritual walk with Jesus Christ. This means a Ministry Team Member needs to: be responsive and open to God's Word, allowing God to work it out in his or her life; be controlled by the Holy Spirit; demonstrate integrity, consistency, authenticity - showing that there is an integration of belief and lifestyle.
- c) show a willingness to serve as a team member within a designated ministry.
- d) demonstrate suitable skills and abilities to be a member of a leadership team and /or a willingness to develop the required skills.
- e) Ministry Team Members must comply with the *Safe Church Policy* by way of:
 - a. Completion of a *Working With Children Check* and supply relevant information to the Safe Church Officer.
 - b. Attendance at a Baptist Association's *Creating Safe Spaces* training (or similar accredited training), or commits to attending as soon as is practical. (A refresher course is also to be attended every three years).
 - c. Acceptance and signing of *The Leaders Code of Conduct*. A copy is to be given to Safe Church Officer.

4.3 Ministry Team Appointment

- a) Ministry Team Leaders are to request approval of the Eldership of potential Team Members, prior to the potential Team Member being asked to join a ministry team.
- b) All Ministry Team Members are to be approved by the Eldership prior to being appointed.

Ministry Team Leaders and Elders must give consideration to a potential Team Member's character and abilities as per 4.2 above.

- c) The congregation is to be notified of all new Team Member appointments.

4.4 Duration of Term and Review Process

- a) Ministry Team Member positions are on a perpetual basis, subject to b) below.
- b) An informal review, via the formal review by the Elders of the Team Leader, is to be conducted every two years.

4.5 Removal:

A Ministry Team Members' term may be terminated by way of mutual agreement by the Team Leader and the Elders.

Section G Leadership and Ministry Structure

1. The Eldership Team

The Eldership Team is comprised of the Pastor/s and elected Elders.

The role and responsibilities of the Eldership Team are listed in Appendix 4 – Eldership Team.

The Eldership Team is accountable to the Body of the Church.

2. Body of the Church

Church government is by the local Body of the Church that is the local DBC Family (congregation).

a. Church Family Meetings

- 1. **Participation:** All people who consider DBC as their home church are welcome to attend Church Family Meetings, Special Church Family Meetings, and the Annual Church Family Meeting. Although they may participate in discussion, they may not vote unless holding current Resident or Absent/Health membership. The Chairperson may at their discretion or at the request of the majority of members present instruct non-members to leave the meeting.

- 2. **Quorum:**

- (a) A quorum will consist of 35% of the Resident Members eligible to vote according to Section G (3c). If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the appointed starting time of the meeting, the meeting will stand adjourned usually to the same day, time and place in the next week. Notice of the adjourned meeting will be given at the intervening Sunday morning service. Such meetings will be competent to deal with the matters adjourned notwithstanding the absence of a quorum.

(b) If a member fails to attend a Family Meeting within a 12-month timeframe, their membership will be moved to the Absentee/Health Roll to facilitate meeting quorum requirements.

3. **Coordination:** The Secretary or Treasurer will be responsible for the coordination of the Church Family Meeting.

A chairperson will be appointed by the Secretary or Treasurer. In all matters concerning the Pastorate, the Pastor will vacate the chair. When that matter has been dealt with, the Pastor may, if he so desires, resume the chair.

4. A Church Family Meeting will be held at least quarterly, or at such times as the Secretary or Treasurer and/or Church Leadership may deem necessary.
 5. Any matters affecting the management and general interest of DBC are to be submitted to the Secretary or Treasurer, who will consider them for presentation at a Church Family Meeting. However, the Secretary or Treasurer may forward such matters to the Pastor, Eldership Team and/or relevant Ministry Leader/s.
 6. An agenda, copies of financial statements by the Church Treasurer, and any other relevant information will be made available no later than seven days prior to the Church Family Meeting.
 7. At one of these Church Family Meetings an audited financial statement for the past financial year is to be presented by the Secretary or Treasurer.
- b. **Special Church Family Meetings:** Extra-ordinary meetings may be called by the Elders and/or the Secretary or Treasurer, or by written request of 20% of the membership of the Church to the Secretary or Treasurer. The meeting will only consider the matters of which notice has been given.
 - c. **Annual Church Family Meeting:** The Annual Church Family Meeting will normally be held in the month of November, or as otherwise determined by the Church.
 1. Business will include a budget presented by the Secretary or Treasurer for consideration and acceptance, and reports from the Pastor/s, the Eldership Team and Ministry.
 2. The Annual Report, the Draft Budget for the ensuring year and an Agenda will be made available no later than seven days prior to the Annual Church Family Meeting.
 - d. **Notice** of all Church Family Meetings, Extraordinary Church Family Meetings and Annual Church Family Meetings will be given at services on at least the two Sundays prior to the meeting.
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- e. **Voting:** All members, except those whose names are on the Reserve Roll or are under the age of 18 years, are able to vote.

A member, who is not over the age of 18 years, will be unable to vote in the following situations:

- The purchase or disposal of real estate
- As a delegate to the Assembly of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT

All matters will be decided by a simple majority, except where otherwise provided in this constitution.

Voting will normally be by show of hands, or by secret ballot if requested. Should a secret ballot be decided upon, two scrutineers will be appointed to count the voting results. The election of Pastor/s and Officers will be by secret ballot.

In pursuit of unity within the Body, where the opinion of the members is divided, the Chairperson may, with the consent of the meeting, defer the vote until a later meeting, urging members to seek the mind of God through prayer and His word, that the Lord's will may be discerned.

No form of Absentee or Proxy voting is permitted.

Section H: Church Organizations

1. DBC will bring into existence such organizations as will make its work for the Kingdom of Christ more effective. Each organization will be considered a vital part of DBC.
2. All organizations, clubs or auxiliaries, their office-bearers and all activities, financial or otherwise, will function under the direct approval of the Church Family meeting
3. Property purchased by or donated to any organization, if it disbands or ceases to function, will become the property of DBC.
4. Programs, rules and each syllabus of any organizations, clubs or auxiliaries connected with DBC will be subject to approval by the Eldership before being published, circulated or performed.
5. Every effort should be made to see that all officers of these organizations are active Church members; but exception may be made in particular cases approved by the Eldership.
6. No organization will use the name of DBC without the consent of the Eldership.

Section I: Church Property

- 1 The Secretary or Treasurer will be responsible for the management and use of DBC property, which includes ensuring all DBC property is properly insured.
- 2 Trustees of all DBC property will be the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT Property Trust’.
- 3 Application of DBC Assets and Income: The assets and income of the church will be applied solely in the furtherance of its charitable purpose and the advancement of religion and no portion will be distributed directly or indirectly to those people within DBC except as bona fide reimbursement of expenses incurred on behalf of the church or a charitable donation to those in need.

Section J: Church Dissolution

In the event of DBC being dissolved, the amount that remains after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities will:

1. in the case of property held in trust pursuant to the Baptist Churches of NSW Property Trust Act 1984, be dealt with in accordance with that Act and in particular Section 29 which said trusts provide that no portion will be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Church:
2. in all other cases be transferred to the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT or to any other organization with similar purposes and which has rules prohibiting the distribution of its assets and income to its members and which is exempt from income tax.

Section K: Constitutional Alterations

- 1 Alterations to this Constitution will only be made by adhering to the following process:
 - a. Proposed changes will be considered and approved by both the Eldership and Church Members.
 - b. Notice of the change will be circulated with the agenda prior to a Church Family Meeting.
 - c. Discussion regarding the changes is to be presented, and response allowed, for at this Church Family Meeting.
 - d. The proposed changes are to be tabled until the next scheduled Church Family Meeting.
 - e. Any amendments to the proposed change are to be circulated with the agenda prior to the Church Family Meeting at which a final decision is to be made.

- f. Constitutional changes require a 75% support by the members present and eligible to vote and who do vote.
- g. Such change if duly approved will become effective immediately.

2 Circulation of the Constitution:

- a. A copy of this Constitution will be made available to every present member of DBC and also to each prospective member.

Appendix 1 DENILQUIN BAPTIST CHURCH STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

THE NATURE AND UNITY OF THE GODHEAD

‘There is one infinitely immense, self-existent God Who is eternal personal Spirit... He created all things from nothing, and sustains all things. He always has been, and ever will be infinite in power, wisdom, knowledge, holiness, righteousness, justice, goodness, truth and love. God is Triune in essential being and revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.’

THE DEITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ as the second Person of the Godhead is eternally one with God the Father of whose person and glory Jesus is the accurate expression. To become human He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, so that two whole and perfect natures, the nature of God and human nature, were united in one Person, truly God and truly human.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity is eternally one with the Father and the Son yet He is sent by Them to achieve the divine purpose in the world and in the Church.

THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

The Scriptures, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, are the infallible Word of God. They were written by holy people of God inspired by the Holy Spirit and have supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

THE SINFULNESS OF PEOPLE

People were made in the image of God and for fellowship with God. By transgression of God's command humankind fell from fellowship with God and their nature was corrupted. As a consequence, all people are spiritually dead under Satan's dominion and control and subject to God's wrath and condemnation. Therefore, apart from God's grace, people are helpless and hopeless.

CHRIST'S ATONEMENT FOR THE SIN OF PEOPLE

In order to redeem people from the guilt, penalty and power of sin, Jesus Christ became human and died a sacrificial death as our representative substitute. By His resurrection, God's acceptance of His atoning death was demonstrated. This atonement is sufficient for the whole world, but effective only in those who received it. The sinner is justified and reconciled to God, not through any personal merit, but solely on the basis of God's gracious gift of salvation in Jesus Christ received through faith.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SALVATION

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is necessary for the acceptance of God's provision of salvation. The Holy Spirit convinces sinners of their sinfulness, leads them to personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and so brings them to spiritual birth as God's children and to fellowship in Christ. Working within the life of believers the Holy Spirit makes real the presence of Christ, witnesses to their relationship with God, leads into all truth, bestows gifts for effective service and produces graces for holy living.

THE CHURCH

The Church is the body of people whom God has separated from the world through faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. All regenerate persons are members of the universal Church of God which takes local form wherever groups of believers unite for worship, fellowship and service in accordance with scriptural principles. All believers are called to a priestly ministry in the offering of spiritual sacrifices and sent into the world to be witnesses. God calls individuals to positions of oversight and leadership or to special ministries. The Church recognises such by ordaining pastors, commissioning missionaries, appointing deacons and other leaders, following New Testament practice.

THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS ONLY BY IMMERSION

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a public declaration of a person's faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In accordance with New Testament Scripture it should be administered only by total immersion which symbolises the believer's identification with Christ in death, burial and resurrection, the remission of sins and the believer's dedication to God to live and walk in newness of life.

THE COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ, instituted by Him to be celebrated with the elements of bread and wine by believers in Christ until the end of the age. It commemorates and declares our thanks for the Lord's substitutionary death. The celebration of the ordinance expresses our fellowship with and in the Lord Jesus Christ as members of the Body of which He is the Head.

THE RETURN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

At the end of this age, according to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in His glory to the earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom of God awaits His return.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

At the end of the age, there is to be a resurrection both of the righteous and the unrighteous. After death the people's bodies return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God - the righteous to be with Him and the unrighteous to be reserved for the judgment.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS IN A FUTURE STATE

God has appointed a day of final judgment for the world. At that time Jesus Christ will judge every person and each will receive reward or punishment according to their deeds. Those judged righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment.

Appendix 2 DBC Vision and Mission Statements

Vision Statement:

‘Called by God to be a community captured by Jesus Christ and His cause.’

Mission Statement:

‘To impact our world for Jesus Christ.’

Appendix 3 DBC Values Statement

We Value:

Teaching

- We value being Biblically based
- We value Biblically-based preaching and teaching which challenges and transforms
- We value being both culturally relevant and innovative

Worship

- We value living life fully devoted to Jesus Christ
- We value pursuing the Kingdom of God first and foremost
- We value living life with a morality that does not contradict Biblical revelation
- We value living life that reflects the fruit of the Spirit
- We value excellence in ministry because excellence honours God and inspires people
- We value being both culturally relevant and innovative

Compassion

- We value each person

Evangelism

- We value lost people and accept the call to go and tell

Community (Fellowship)

- We value each person
 - We value authenticity and integrity
 - We value loving relationships
 - We value unity in diversity
 - We value intentional conflict resolution
 - We value team work
 - We value that each person has a God-given spiritual gift/s
 - We value being lead by leaders
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Appendix 4 Eldership Team

As approved by the DBC Family Meeting 18th May 2003

PURPOSE: To be an appointed group of Elders to oversee the Church.

[Ref. 1 Timothy 3:5; 5:17]

STRUCTURE: Pastor and Elders

QUALIFICATIONS:

Elders are selected on the attribute of godly character and gifting.

An Elder needs to have an identifiable spiritual walk with Jesus Christ. This means a Elder needs to:

- Be responsive and open to God's Word, allowing God to work it out in their life
- Be controlled by the Holy Spirit
- Demonstrate integrity, consistency, authenticity - there is an integration of belief and lifestyle

Christian Leadership Characteristics

Three Bible statements on Christian leadership are 1 Timothy 3:1-14, Titus 1:5-9, and Acts 6:1-7. These statements provide a summary of characteristics (qualifications) for leaders, which need to be observable in the life of an Elder. An Elder needs to:

- Be above reproach
- Be well spoken of by Christians and non-Christians alike
- Be hardworking and thoughtful
- Be orderly and not given to drunkenness
- Be humble, gentle, kind, not given to arguing for arguments sake
- Not be money hungry
- Be honest in all they do
- Fulfil family responsibilities
- Be hospitable
- Be able to impart Christian truth
- Be wise (not clever): able to use his or her knowledge to help others
- Be faithful in ministry tasks and challenges
- Be sexually pure and faithful in marriage to one partner

Other characteristics, which need to be observable in the life of an Elder, are:

- Team player
- Innovative, a risk taker, prepared to try new ideas
- Personal growth, development and equipping – willingness to continue to grow and develop new and existing gifts and talents
- Forgive, confess error, or right a wrong.

Spiritual Gifts

At least one of these spiritual gifts needs to be observable in the life of an Elder, who forms part of the Eldership Team:

Discernment
Leadership
Teaching and Preaching
Visionary
Wisdom

Role and Responsibilities:

The Eldership Team always needs to remember that they have distinctive responsibilities within a community of servants. Therefore, they need to act with the attitude of a servant or a slave, to the other members of the community [*Matthew 20:26-27*] and 'be examples to the flock' [*1 Peter 5:3*].

Spiritual Well-Being and Nurture of the Church

The spiritual well-being of the Church is an important responsibility for the leaders of the local church.

Leaders are to watch over the spiritual health of the congregation with the same attention they give to the nurture of their own spiritual lives [*Acts 20:28*].

Leaders are to watch over the spiritual health of the congregation in the same way as a shepherd does over his flocks. We are told that a shepherd will lay down his life for his sheep [*John 10:11*].

The Eldership Team would therefore do things such as praying and fasting for the church and its people [*James 5:14*]; encouraging teaching which is Biblical, equips, builds up and promotes spiritual growth [*1 Timothy 5:17*; *Titus 1:9*]; and ensure there are adequate processes for the resolution of conflict. Specifically, the Eldership Team will need to deal appropriately with conflict, not overbearing and high handed, but gentle - responding not reacting.

Vision and Mission of the Church

Another important responsibility for the leaders of the local church is to facilitate the process for forming the church's vision and mission statements. Particularly, the Eldership Team is responsible for eliciting ownership and creating motivation for its accomplishment.

The Equipping of People for Ministry

The equipping of God's people to do ministry is an important responsibility for the leaders of the local church [*Ephesians 4:11-13*].

Leaders, within a community of servants, are there to support the congregation to do ministry. This means the Eldership Team is to encourage the congregation to do the ministry of the church, 'by preparing God's people for the works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up' [*Ephesians 4:12*], they are not to take it upon themselves to do the ministry exclusively, but anoint people for ministry [*1 Timothy 4:14*].

The Eldership Team is to ensure adequate opportunity for each person to discover their spiritual gifts and utilise their spiritual gifts within the ministry of the church. [*1 Peter 4:10*]

Church Discipline – The Ministry of Intervention in Situations of Crisis

Disciplinary action, aimed at the preventing of crisis or resolving them should they occur, is an important responsibility incumbent on the leaders of the local church.

Under normal circumstances, there is no need for Eldership Team to intervene forcefully or to exercise authority as they oversee the life of the Church. Such approaches are only counterproductive. However, the Church is not immune to infiltrations of sin, error and dissension. This can result in a person/s wilfully, deliberately acting in a way that is detrimental to the Church.

This is why the Eldership Team needs to be on the alert to defuse potentially harmful situations and to deal decisively with trouble when it develops. For example, Paul foresaw trouble ahead for the church at Ephesus and warned the elders of the church of impending disasters and told them, *'Be on your guard' [Acts 20:31]*.

The disciplinary action the Eldership Team takes is not punitive or vengeful. It is intended to protect the Church from harmful influences and to bring a person under discipline to repentance and to eventual restoration [*2 Thessalonians 3:15*].

Under normal circumstances the Eldership Team are supportive servants, however, in situations of crisis they must assume the role of wise judges. [*1 Corinthians 6:4-5*]

Accountability:

The nominated Elders will be accountable to the Church Body for the effective functioning of the Eldership Team within the body. Elders will be looked upon to encourage, support and respect one another in the outworking of the Eldership Team roles and responsibilities.

Selection Process:

Pastor – as per DBC Constitution: Section F (1c)

Elders – as per DBC Constitution: Section F (2b)