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Diamond Valley Baptist Church

CONSTITUTION

2025

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Adopted 23rd March 2025

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Constitution of the DIAMOND VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

1. Name

1.1 The name of the Church is Diamond Valley Baptist Church ('the Church').

2. Constituent Church

2.1 The Diamond Valley Baptist Church is a constituent church of The Baptist Union of Victoria.

2.2 The Baptist Union of Victoria is comprised of people who hold as their general tenets the doctrines set forth in Schedule B of *The Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1930 (Vic)* (which are also set out in the Doctrinal Basis), as amended from time to time.

2.3 The Church must comply with the Constitution of the Baptist Union of Victoria.

3. Basis of Church Fellowship

3.1 The Church is a body of Christian people who have responded to the Word of God and the call of the Holy Spirit and have been united to Jesus Christ and to his people in their own confession of faith and in their baptism.

3.2 The Church baptises professing believers, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as a sign of their salvation and their initiation into the membership of the body of Christ. Wherever practicable, baptism is practised by immersion into water as the form of baptism normative in the New Testament because it portrays "going down" into death with Christ and "coming up" into resurrection with Christ.

3.3 Recognising Christ's ministry to bring unity to all things in himself, and recognising that believers are baptised by one Spirit so as to form one body in Christ, the Church is a member church of the Baptist Union of Victoria. It affirms Baptist understandings of the Gospel and accepts as expressions of the Christian faith the Doctrinal Basis (Appendix 1) and the Principles and Ideals of the Baptist Faith contained in the Constitution of the Baptist Union of Victoria (Appendix 2).

3.4 This Church accepts its commission to participate in Christ's ministry to all creation, to proclaim and live out the gospel message of reconciliation to God and to one another. All members have been gifted by the Holy Spirit for their part in this ministry and are called to fulfil the meaning of their baptism by exercising their gifts together in nurturing the growth of Christian faith, peace and love.

4. Not-For-Profit

4.1 The assets and income of the Church shall be applied solely towards the Principal Purpose.

- 4.2 Office Holders must comply with any duties imposed on them by law, which may include duties under the ACNC Act.
- 4.3 Office Holders must exercise their powers and discharge their duties with reasonable care and diligence.
- 4.4 Office Holders must exercise their powers and discharge their duties in good faith in the best interests of the Church and for a proper purpose.
- 4.5 Office Holders and former Office Holders must not make improper use of their position or 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.
- 4.6 No part of the income or assets may be paid, transferred or distributed, directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus or other profit distribution, to any Member.
- 4.7 Clause 4.6 does not prohibit the Church from doing the following things, provided they are done in good faith:
 - 4.7.1 Paying a Member for goods or services the Member has provided or premises the Member has let or expenses the Member has properly incurred at fair and reasonable rates or rates more favourable to the Church.
 - 4.7.2 Making a payment to a Member in carrying out the Principal Purpose.
 - 4.7.3 Paying premiums for insurance indemnifying Office Holders, as allowed for by law.
- 4.8 The Church may only issue directions to the Baptist Union of Victoria regarding trust property held by it as trustee if such directions further the Principal Purpose of the Church.

5. Membership

- 5.1 The membership of the Church consists of people who are personally committed to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and to the mission of the Church, and who demonstrate reasonable participation in the activities of the church and commitment to each other.
- 5.2 Reception into membership requires the prior approval of the Church Council on behalf of the membership. It must be clear to the Church Council that the person:
 - 5.2.1 has made their own free decision to commit themselves to Christ and to the Church; and
 - 5.2.2 been baptised by immersion as a testimony of their own faith in and commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, as a symbol of the fellowship of the regenerate in His death, burial and resurrection
 - 5.2.3 has been regularly participating in worship at the Church for at least 6 months or is transferring membership from another Baptist church.
 - 5.2.4 has participated in appropriate membership preparation, and has affirmed the normative nature of believer's baptism by immersion as the ongoing practice of Diamond Valley Baptist Church.

- 5.2.5 holds as their general tenets the doctrines set out in the Doctrinal Basis of the Baptist Union.
- 5.3 Notwithstanding the doctrinal position of the Church concerning baptism by full immersion:
- 5.3.1 persons for whom immersion is impractical, unsafe or ill-advised may receive believers' baptism in another mode (e.g. pouring),
- 5.3.2 persons who have received believers' baptism in a mode other than full immersion and have in doing so professed their repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who declare their intention to live as a follower of Christ, may be admitted to membership,
- 5.3.3 persons who have received water baptism before the age of understanding and have subsequently confirmed their repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, may be admitted to membership,
- 5.3.4 in exceptional circumstances, the Church Council may admit others to membership
- 5.4 If a person seeks to become a member of the Church, having been a member of another church, a letter of commendation will be sought from that other church.
- 5.5 A roll will be kept of the names of the members of the Church ('Membership Roll').
- 5.6 A name may be removed from the Membership Roll at any time if the member:
- 5.6.1 becomes a member of another church;
- 5.6.2 requests removal from the Membership Roll;
- 5.6.3 dies; or
- 5.6.4 has their membership removed by a decision of the Church Council (see below).
- 5.7 The Membership Roll will be revised annually by the Church Council. Unless the Church Council notes that special circumstances apply (for example, age, infirmity, illness, mission service), the names of members who have not participated in any church activities in the past year can be removed. After careful enquiry the Church Council may remove a member's name from the Roll for disciplinary reasons.

6. Leadership

- 6.1 The Church is governed according to Congregational principles. That is, under the guidance of God and Scripture, the members, through the Church Members' Meeting, has final authority in deciding every matter which affects the Church's life.
- 6.2. The Church recognises the Church Council as its governing body and authorises it to manage the affairs of the Church subject to this Constitution and decisions of the Members' Meeting.

6.3 The Pastor(s)

- 6.3.1 The pastor(s) of the Church will be a person or persons whom the Church believes to have been called and gifted by the Lord of the church to fulfil a ministry of pastoral leadership within the Church.

- 6.3.2 To become a pastoral team member of the Church, a person must be personally committed to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and to the mission of the Church, be eligible for membership of the Church; affirm the Doctrinal Basis of the Baptist Union of Victoria (Appendix 1); and agree to abide by the current version of the '*Code of Ethics and Companion Guide.*' (Baptist Union of Victoria). The Lead Pastor/s must also be eligible for accreditation by the Baptist Union of Victoria.
- 6.3.3 A pastor must not be known to be guilty of perpetuating immoral conduct without repentance.
- 6.3.4 The Lead Pastor/s (previously referred to as Senior Pastor) will be recommended to the Church by the Church Council but must be appointed at a Special Meeting (refer to Clause 7.2).
- 6.3.5 The Lead Pastor/s is accountable to the Church Council and through it to the Church members.
- 6.3.6 Pastoral team members can be appointed by the Church Council, on behalf of the congregation, on recommendation by the Lead Pastor/s.
- 6.3.7 The purpose and scope of pastoral team roles will be set out in memorandums [statement] of understanding, which will include areas of responsibility, entitlements and accountability, as well as a review process.
- 6.3.8 The Lead Pastor/s, or their representative, shall be an *ex officio* member of all organised groups, portfolios, auxiliaries and committees of the Church.
- 6.3.9 The following decisions about a Lead Pastor/s of the Church each require a two-thirds majority of members who are present and who vote at a Special Church Meeting. This arises out of the requirements of Schedule B of The Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1930:
 - 6.3.9.1 The calling of a Lead Pastor/s.
 - 6.3.9.2 The approval of any extension of term if a Lead Pastor/s has been called for a specific term.
 - 6.3.9.3 The removal of a Lead Pastor/s. A proposal to remove a Lead Pastor/s should not be put to a church meeting before the church has consulted with the Director of Ministries of the Baptist Union about the matter.

6.4 The Church Council

- 6.4.1 The Church Council will exercise oversight of those areas of the Church's life and ministry delegated to it by the Church Members Meeting and is always accountable to the Church members. Areas of responsibility will include, but are not limited to, ensuring the spiritual welfare of the pastors and the church, effectiveness of the church in its mission, including vision and strategic planning, and maintaining good governance of the church through appropriate policies, procedures, financial and legal compliance.
- 6.4.2 The Church Council is comprised of:
 - i. Six (6) members elected by the Church members.
 - ii. The Lead Pastor/s, who is not to act as Council Chair.

- 6.4.3 Members of the Church Council must have been active participants within the Church community for at least two (2) years; and have been Church members for at least one (1) year. Members must not be disqualified from being a Church Council member by the ACNC Act. Candidates for Council must be at least 18 years of age and demonstrate the required characteristics and competencies for Church Council members found in Appendix 4.
- 6.4.4 Members of the Church Council hold as their general tenets the doctrine set out in the Doctrinal Basis of the Baptist Union.
- 6.4.5 The quorum for Church Council meetings is four (4) elected members.
- 6.4.6 A Church Council member that has a perceived or actual material conflict of interest in a matter that is being considered by the Church Council will disclose that interest to the other Church Council members and will leave the meeting while the matter is under discussion. The disclosure of a conflict of interest, and the absence of that Church Council member during discussion must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 6.4.7 If all of the Church Council members have a similar conflict of interest, it will be disclosed to the Members at the next Members' Meeting.
- 6.4.8 A Church Council member's term will be for three (3) years.
- 6.4.9 Members may serve a maximum of three (3) consecutive terms and must take a break of at least two (2) years before being eligible for re-election.
- 6.4.10 An ordinary Church Members' Meeting may decide to amend the number of the Church Council, effective from the following Annual Church Meeting. Such a decision shall not shorten the term of any person serving on the Church Council.
- 6.4.11 The election of the Church Council members will be arranged so that normally two (2) members are elected each year.
- 6.4.12 Elections for positions on the Church Council will be by secret ballot.
- 6.4.13 For the purposes of Schedule B of The Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1930, the Church Council is deemed to be "the deacons".

6.5 Church Council General Duties

- 6.5.1 Church Council members must comply with any duties imposed on them by law, which may include duties under the ACNC Act.
- 6.5.2 As soon as practicable after being elected or appointed, each Church Council member must become familiar with this Constitution.
- 6.5.3 Church Council members must exercise their powers and discharge their duties with reasonable care and diligence.
- 6.5.4 Church Council members must exercise their powers and discharge their duties in good faith in the best interests of the Church and for a proper purpose.
- 6.5.5 Church Council members, and former Church Council members must not make improper use of their position or 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.

6.5.6 Church Council members may rely on any protections available at law or under the ACNC Act in respect of these duties.

6.6 Election

6.6.1. Nomination to the Church Council will be overseen by the Nominating Committee. The charter for the Nominating Committee is contained in Appendix 5. It may be amended by the Church Council and ratified by an ordinary Church Members' Meeting.

6.6.2. The Nominating Committee will call for nominations to the Church Council from Church members and publish the characteristics and competencies required for Church Council members.

6.6.3 The names of the nominees will be made known to the Church members not later than two (2) Sundays before the relevant Church Members' Meeting.

6.6.4. Each of the successful nominees must achieve a two-thirds affirmation vote from the members present. If there are more nominees than positions vacant, those nominees achieving the highest number of votes will be elected.

6.6.5. At its first meeting, following the Annual General Meeting, the Church Council will elect its Chairperson. The Chairperson will not hold a casting vote at Church Council meetings.

6.6.6. The Church Council will appoint a Secretary. If necessary, this person may be co-opted from outside the Church Council and as such will not have a vote on the Church Council.

6.7 Casual Vacancies

6.7.1 Should a casual vacancy occur on the Church Council, the Council upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee may appoint a member to fill the vacancy. The member so appointed will hold office until the next Annual General Meeting, when an election will be held.

6.7.2. The member so elected at the Annual General Meeting will hold office for the remainder of the term of the original incumbent who created the casual vacancy.

7. Church Meetings

7.1.1 Ordinary Church Members' Meetings to consider the life and ministry of the church will be held at least three times each year. These are an important opportunity for the Church to discern God's collective leading.

7.1.2 One meeting will be an Annual General Meeting which will include the:

- i. presentation of the annual report and audited financial reports;
- ii. election of Church Council members.

7.1.3 One meeting will consider and approve the Church's annual program and budget.

7.1.4 One meeting, not the Annual General Meeting, will include the election of members to the Nominating Committee.

- 7.1.5 Additional (extraordinary) meetings can be called, if requested, by the Lead Pastor/s, the Church Council or one sixth of the church membership. If requested by the members, the request must be in writing and must state the purpose for which the meeting is called. Only that business will be dealt with at that meeting. Such a meeting must be held within eight (8) weeks of the request being received by the Chairperson of the Church Council. If the Church Council does not convene an Extraordinary General Meeting within that time, the members making the request (or any of them) may convene the Extraordinary General Meeting. If a quorum is not attained the meeting will lapse and will not be reconvened.
- 7.1.6 Notice of the time, place and major business of Church Members' Meetings must be given on at least the two (2) consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting by announcement at each worship service and by publication in printed and electronic media.
- 7.1.7 Every Church Members' Meeting must have an agenda prepared by the Church Council.
- 7.1.8 Records of the decisions of all Church Members' Meetings must be kept and a copy made available to Church members at least two Sundays prior to the next meeting.
- 7.1.9 The quorum for any Church Members' Meeting other than Special Meetings shall be 25% of the membership of the church. If a quorum for a Church Members' Meeting is not attained within thirty (30) minutes of the scheduled time for commencement of the meeting, the meeting may continue but will not be official. The Church Council may reconvene the meeting for another time. The normal notice requirements will apply unless the meeting is to be held in the next ten (10) days, in which case, one (1) weekend's notice will be sufficient. No business other than that in the original notice of the meeting will be considered at the reconvened meeting. The quorum will remain at 25% of members on the roll.
- 7.1.10 The Church Council will appoint a Chairperson for the Church Members' Meeting, not necessarily the same person each time. Traditionally the Chair of Council chairs Church Members' Meetings.

7.2 Special Meetings

- 7.2.1 A Special Meeting may be convened by:
- i. The Pastor(s) or Church Council
 - ii. At least one-sixth of the members, if the Church Council or Pastor(s) do not convene the meeting after receiving a written request to do so by one-sixth of the Members.
 - iii. The Baptist Union of Victoria, if the Church Council or Pastor(s) do not convene the meeting after receiving a written request to do so from the Baptist Union of Victoria. The Baptist Union of Victoria must be provided with a copy of the Membership roll to enable it to convene a Special Meeting if the meeting is to deal with property held by the Baptist Union of Victoria under Schedule B.
- 7.2.2 Notice of a Special Meeting must be given no less than 14 days before the meeting and:
- i. Informing the Members during the usual time of giving notices in each church service on the two Sundays that precede the meeting; or
 - ii. Posting an obvious written notice on or inside the Church building.

- 7.2.3 The quorum for a Special Meeting will be the presence of the nearest whole number that is above 40 percent of the total number of Members or 90 Members, whichever is the lowest. If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the notified commencement time of a Special Meeting, a resolution or resolutions may be passed but will not take effect unless and until approved by Union Council.
- 7.2.4 A Special Meeting will be held to consider:
- i. the appointment or removal of the Lead Pastor/s. Voting shall be by secret ballot
 - ii. the renting, sale, purchase, exchange or mortgage of property held in trust by the Baptist Union of Victoria for the Church; or the use of money received from the sale, mortgage or insurance of such property.
- 7.2.5 The first order of business at every Special Meeting must be to elect a Chairperson for that meeting.
- 7.2.6 The minutes of a Special Meeting must be signed by the Chairperson of that meeting, or by the Chairperson of the next meeting. In the case of any Special Meeting where there was no quorum present at the time the meeting proceeded to business, the minutes must not be signed by the Chairperson until they record that fact.

7.3 Voting

- 7.3.1. Members who are recorded on the Membership Roll are eligible to vote at all Church Members' Meetings with the exception of Special Meetings where special provisions apply.
- 7.3.2 At a Special Meeting, Members can only vote if:
- i. the Member is 18 years old or above,
 - ii. the member has been a member for at least 6 months, and
 - iii. the member has been present for communion at least twice in the previous six months
- 7.3.3 The vote of the Church will be ordinarily taken by a show of hands. All voting for the appointment or removal of the Lead Pastor/s and the election of members of the Church Council and the Nominating Committee will be by secret ballot and will require the affirmation of at least two-thirds of the voting members present. A meeting may require a secret ballot on other matters where it is considered appropriate.
- 7.3.4 A motion put to a Church Members' Meeting will be carried by a simple majority (50% plus 1 of members present, unless otherwise provided for in this Constitution or unless the Meeting decides that a particular decision will require a larger majority).
- 7.3.5 Motions considered at Special Meetings and alterations to this Constitution require a two-thirds majority of members present.

7.3.6 Absentee voting and proxy voting are not permitted, though an electronic church meeting may be held if an in-person meeting is not practical. Guidelines and instructions for participation, consistent with this Constitution, will need to be issued to all members by the Church Council two (2) clear weeks before the meeting.

7.3.7 Each member will have one vote. In the case of a tied vote, the motion is not passed. The Chairperson does not have a casting vote.

7.4 Chairperson

The Chairperson is responsible for the conduct of a General Meeting, and for this purpose must give Members a reasonable opportunity to make comments and ask questions.

8. Management of Funds

8.1 The Church Council may approve expenditure on behalf of the Church, in accordance with the approved finance policy.

8.2 The Church Council will prepare an Annual Budget which will be presented to a Church Members meeting for approval by that meeting.

8.3 Financial records

8.3.1 The Church must keep financial records that:

i. correctly record and explain its transactions, financial position and performance; and

ii. enable financial statements to be prepared as required by the ACNC Act (if any).

8.3.2 The Church must retain the financial records for seven years after the transactions covered by the records are completed.

8.3.3 A Church Council member has a right of access to the financial records of the Church at all reasonable times.

8.4 Financial statements

For each financial year, the Church Council must ensure that the requirements under the ACNC Act (if any) relating to the financial statements of the Church are met. Without limiting this clause, those requirements may include preparation of the financial statements and reviewing or auditing of the financial statements.

9. Cessation of worship

9.1 If the Church is reduced to less than 29 members

If the number of Members of the Church has reduced to 29 or less, and as a result Union Council determines that it is necessary or advisable that decisions of the Church be subject to oversight by Union Council, then any resolution of the Church:

i. to issue directions to the Baptist Union of Victoria regarding trust property held by it as trustee for the purposes of the Church; or

- ii. regarding the land, buildings or other significant asset of the Church that has the capacity to affect significantly the Church's financial standing; or
- iii. to appoint or remove a person from the Church Council;

will not have any effect unless and until approved by the Union Council.

9.2 If the Church is reduced to less than 13 members

Union Council may, by resolution passed by two-thirds of the members of the Union Council present and voting at a special meeting of Union Council called for the purpose, exercise any powers exercisable by the Members under this Constitution, to the exclusion of any decision of the Church in General Meeting in the following circumstances:

- i. The Church's Members have been reduced to 12 or less.
- ii. The Church has ceased to meet for the public worship of God for 6 months or more.
- iii. The Church membership has been reduced to 13-29 Members, and after exploring all options that appear to Union Council to be reasonable to reinvigorate the Church, Union Council forms the view that the Church is no longer a viable Church.

10. Winding Up

- 10.1 If a church group ceases to function, the Church becomes the owner of any property purchased or owned by that group and any money in its possession.
- 10.2 The Church may be wound up or dissolved voluntarily at a General Meeting with at least three quarters of the Members who vote at the meeting voting in favour of the resolution, or as otherwise provided in this Constitution
- 10.3. In the event of the winding up or dissolution of the Church, any assets of the Church remaining after payment of the Church's liabilities shall, subject to any requirements imposed by the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission, be transferred to:
 - i. the Baptist Union of Victoria, provided that at the time of such transfer the Baptist Union of Victoria is charitable at law and is not carried on for profit or gain of the individuals within the Baptist Union of Victoria; or,
 - ii. in default of the Baptist Union of Victoria; such other income tax-exempt entity or entities as decided by the Baptist Union of Victoria.

11. Cessation of Constituent Status

- 11.1 If the Church ceases to be a constituent church of the Baptist Union of Victoria, the Members will be deemed to have resolved to dissolve the Church for the purposes of any property held by the Baptist Union of Victoria as trustee under the provisions of Schedule B.

12. Policies

12.1 The Church Council may adopt new policies or alter existing policies on various matters for the purpose of governing aspects of the Church's life and mission, or for the purpose of expressing a collective opinion about something that is happening in the wider church or society.

13. Grievance, Disciplinary and Safety Procedures

13.1 Church Council will develop and maintain policies to ensure appropriate management of grievance, disciplinary and safety issues.

14. Auditors

14.1 An auditor or auditors must be appointed at the Annual General Meeting to act for the following twelve months and will be empowered to audit the financial operations of the Church and all groups and organisations of the Church. The annual audited financial statements will be made available to the Church.

15. Groups and Organizations

15.1 All groups and organisations using the name of Diamond Valley Baptist Church, or associated with the Church, must operate under a Constitution or upon a basis approved by the Church Council.

15.2. The Lead Pastor/s, or the Lead Pastor/s's representative, may attend and chair any meeting of such bodies.

15.3. The assets of any such body and any monies will become the property of the Church if that body disbands.

16. Associated Entities

16.1 The Church may not pass any resolution in respect of separately incorporated ministry arm or trust fund unless the Church is satisfied that the resolution will have the effect of furthering the Church's Principal Purpose.

17. Alteration to this Constitution

17.1 The Church may only alter this Constitution by resolution passed at a Members' Meeting with at least two thirds of the Members who vote at the meeting voting in favour of the resolution, and subject to the following:

17.1.1 An amendment or alteration to this Constitution will not take effect unless and until it has been approved by the Union Council of the Baptist Union of Victoria.

17.1.2 The Church must not amend or alter this Constitution in any way that would result in the Church ceasing to pursue Christian ministry purposes.

17.2 No proposed alteration to this Constitution can be brought to a church meeting unless notice of the wording of the proposed alteration has been given to members at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date.

17.3 This Constitution remains in operation until it is revised or replaced by a Church Members' Meeting. It is recommended that a review of this Constitution's continuing suitability should be undertaken at least once every five (5) years, and a Church Members' Meeting asked to either reaffirm it or revise it.

Definitions

In this Constitution—

'ACNC Act' means the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cth).

'Act' means *The Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1930* (Vic).

'Baptist Union of Victoria' means the body corporate established by *The Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1930* (Vic). aptist_25225_304.docx v10 30

'Basis of Fellowship' means the Basis of Fellowship set out in the clause of this Constitution headed "**Basis of Fellowship**".

'Church' means the association named in clause 1.

'Doctrinal Basis' means the Doctrinal Basis of the Union as amended from time to time, as set out in the Constitution of the Baptist Union of Victoria. The Doctrinal Basis as at the time of adoption of this Constitution is set out in Schedule 1 to this Constitution.

Office Holder means any of the following: Church Council Member, Pastor or a person, including an employee of the Church, who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of the operations of the Church or who has the capacity to significantly affect the Church's financial standing.

'Principal Purpose' means principal purpose for which the Church is established, which is the Basis of Fellowship set out in the clause of this Constitution headed "**Basis of Fellowship**".

'Schedule B' means Schedule B to the Act, as amended from time to time, that sets out the terms of trust upon which the Baptist Union of Victoria holds property as trustee for a number of Churches within the Baptist Union of Victoria.

'Special Meeting' means a meeting convened and held in accordance with the clause of this Constitution headed "**Special Meeting**" and that meets the other requirements set out in this Constitution for a Special Meeting.

'Union Council' means Council of the Baptist Union of Victoria.

Interpretation

In this Constitution:

Words importing the singular include the plural and vice-versa and words importing any gender include all genders, unless the contrary is expressly provided.

Reference to an Act includes every amendment, re-enactment, or replacement of that Act and any subordinate legislation made under that Act.

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Appendix 1

The Doctrinal Basis from the Constitution of the Baptist Union of Victoria

1. The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.
2. The existence of one God in three persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
3. The deity and incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, the second person of the Holy Trinity.
4. The fallen, sinful and lost estate of all people.
5. The salvation of men and women from the penal consequences and power of sin through the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, His atoning death, His resurrection from the dead, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His unchanging priesthood.
6. The immediate work of the Holy Spirit in the regeneration of men and women, in their sanctification, and in their preservation to the heavenly Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. The necessity, in order to know salvation, of repentance towards God and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
8. The resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment of all people by the Lord Jesus Christ.
9. The two ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are of perpetual obligation: Baptism being the immersion of believers upon the profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a symbol of the fellowship of the regenerate in His death, burial and resurrection; the Lord's Supper being a memorial, until He comes, of the sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Appendix 2

The Principles and Ideals of the Baptist Faith from the Constitution of the Baptist Union of Victoria

Whilst holding many phases of Christian Truth in common with other denominations, Baptists place a distinctive emphasis upon the following fundamental principles of the Christian Faith, as revealed in the New Testament.

1. The Child in the Kingdom.

- (a) Baptists believe that infants are God's little ones, whether children of Christian or non-Christian parents, and accept without modification the word of the Lord, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven". This Christian view of the child makes the external act of "Infant Baptism" unnecessary.
- (b) Baptists approve of the presentation of children to God by parents, if thereby they solemnly undertake to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, in the home and in the Church.

2. The Significance of Conversion.

- (a) To all who at the stage of personal responsibility, ignore God's law, and wander as prodigals from the Father's Home, Baptists preach the gospel of the Father's love, and the message of the cross, as the Way of Life. Conversion is acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
- (b) This acceptance of Christ is a personal and deliberate act, involving the assent of the mind, the decision of the will, and the love of the heart.
- (c) This avowal of allegiance to Christ implies a constant endeavour to live a life worthy of, and well-pleasing to Him in all things.

3. The Church — a Spiritual Society.

Baptists hold that the Church, as established by the Lord Jesus Christ should consist of persons who have personally and intelligently accepted Him as Saviour and Lord, and pledged themselves to discipleship and service in the Kingdom of God.

4. The Lordship of Christ in the Church.

- (a) Baptists hold and teach that Jesus Christ alone is the Head of the Church, and that without any human intervention or ritualistic ceremony.
- (b) Therefore, He is the sole authority in all matters of faith and conduct, in the life both of the Church and of the individual.
- (c) This involves liberty of thought and conscience, and the rights of the Believer and the Church, freed from any ecclesiastical or other external authority, to interpret His mind.

5. The Standard of Belief.

- (a) Believing that the voice of the Church is subordinate to the voice of Christ and that the mind of the Master is the Standard of Christian beliefs, Baptists do not subscribe to any formal Church Creed lest it hamper the development of Christian thought.
- (b) Further, in their interpretation of the Lord's farewell declaration, "When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth", Baptists accept the principle that God has yet "more light and truth to break forth from His Word".
- (c) Therefore, Baptists claim the personal privilege, and accept the Christian responsibility of courageously thinking God's thoughts after Him, under the guidance and inspiration of the Spirit of Truth.

6. The Ministry of Leadership.

- (a) In adopting the Congregational Principles of Church government, with no formal creed, with no external authority, and no defined ecclesiastical policy, and each member having equal rights and responsibilities, the Baptist Church is largely dependent on the reality and vigour of the spiritual life of its individual members.
- (b) This spiritual life is generated by the understanding and inspiration of Christ's ideals, and by the creation and maintenance of a spiritual atmosphere, in which all that is unworthy dies, and in which Christian life becomes healthy and aggressive.
- (c) Baptist ministers accept their office from the Lord of the Church, and while they are "servants of the Church" the Church is not master over them. They are the spiritual leaders in the life and ministry of the church.
- (d) Associated with the ministers in the spiritual oversight of the Church are men and women chosen for their Christian gifts and graces, who are called to be examples to the members of the Church, in conduct, zeal, self-denial and generosity.
- (e) Church officers are appointed as spiritual leaders to work in sympathetic cooperation with the minister and Church members.
- (f) The periodic Church Business Meeting is the centre of the Church's Christian activities, and is the seat of authority in the management of Church business.

7. The Christian significance of Baptism.

- (a) Christian Baptism, by which is meant the immersion of believers as instituted by our Lord, is a personal, public confession of the believer's identification with Christ, and also a means of grace to the Christian.
- (b) Baptism is an outward act which symbolises, but does not effect regeneration, and salvation is not dependent on it.
- (c) Baptism is a glorious privilege and a personal responsibility, and is a help to all believers in reminding them of their spiritual union with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection.

8. The Fellowship of the Lord's Supper.

- (a) To Baptists the Church is not so much an organisation as a fellowship, effective only as there is spiritual association with the Head of the Church.
- (b) The Lord's Supper is a service of spiritual fellowship whereby, through remembrance of His Life and Death believers may experience in supreme degree the reality and influence of His Presence.
- (c) It is an opportunity of entering into close fellowship with the Lord in the Holy of Holies, where there is a rekindling of love and a reconsecration of life to His service.

9. The Church and the Kingdom.

Baptists recognise their responsibility to strive for the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the world and teach that membership in the Church implies service and sacrifice. This involves a stewardship of time, talents and money which aims at being worthy of the Son of God who loved and served humankind, even unto death.

Appendix 3

Characteristics and Competencies for Church Council Members

1. Must demonstrate mature spiritual character.
2. A strongly active participant in Diamond Valley Baptist Church for at least two (2) years and a member for at least 1 year.
3. At least 18 years of age.
4. A character of prayerfulness and motivation to serve.
5. A demonstrated gift of discernment of what is God's will.
6. Being of appropriate character and reputation, and having no legal impediment or disqualification by the ACNC Act.
7. An understanding and commitment to the Diamond Valley Baptist Church vision.
8. An ability to put the welfare of the Church before personal interests.
9. Demonstrating ability or experience in one or more of the following areas:
 - Legal Compliance
 - Financial Management
 - Human Resources
 - Theology
 - Pastoral/Shepherd Heart
 - Servant Leadership
 - Strategic Planner
 - Business Expertise
 - Baptist Governance
 - Governance Knowledge
 - Risk Management

Appendix 4

Church Nominating Committee Charter

Responsibilities

The Nominating Committee will:

1. Seek nominations for the Church Council from the Church members.
2. Review the nominees based on the agreed Character and Competencies for Church Council members found in Appendix 5.
3. Put forward all qualifying nominees for Church Council membership to the Church members for election.
4. Inform the Church Council when there are vacancies on the Nominating Committee.

Eligibility

Members of the Nominating Committee must have been active participants in the life of the church for at least two (2) years, and members for at least one (1) year, and be at least 18 years of age and demonstrate the required characteristics and competencies for Nominating Committee members found in this charter.

Composition

The Nominating Committee will comprise:

1. Two (2) members elected by the Church members. Election will be by secret ballot.
2. One (1) member appointed annually by the Church Council from among its number.
3. The Nominating Committee will appoint its own Chairperson.
4. The Lead Pastor/s will act as an advisor and consultant to the Committee.
5. The quorum for Nominating Committee meetings will be all three (3) members present.

Terms of Service

Nominating Committee members will be elected for a term of four (4) years with the elections arranged so that one (1) member is elected every two (2) years.

It is recommended, but not mandatory, that Nominating Committee members serve a maximum of three (3) terms of four (4) years and then take a break of one (1) year before considering re-election.

Characteristics and Competencies

1. Must demonstrate mature spiritual character
2. A character of prayerfulness and motivation to serve
3. A demonstrated gift of discernment
4. Be of appropriate character and reputation, and have no legal impediment
5. An understanding and commitment to the Diamond Valley Baptist Church vision
6. An ability to put the welfare of the Church before personal interests