

2012 Constitution

CLAUSE 1 NAME & AFFILIATION

1.1 The name of the Church will be Church of Christ, Blackwood, hereinafter referred to as the Church.

1.2 The Church is a member of the Churches of Christ in South Australia and Northern Territory Incorporated and, therefore affiliated with the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia Pty Ltd.

CLAUSE 2 OBJECTS

2.1 To proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2.2 To restore and maintain a Church according to the pattern laid down in the New Testament as to faith, doctrine and life.

CLAUSE 3 POWERS

3.1 To acquire, hold lease, mortgage or sell properties in order to further the Objects.

3.2 To do all such other things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of the Objects or any of them.

CLAUSE 4 MEMBERS and DEFINITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

4.1 MEMBERS

A Member is any person who has either :

(1) Publicly acknowledged his or her faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God, has been baptised by immersion, and has been received into the membership of the Blackwood Church of Christ.
or

(2) Clearly demonstrated the desire to express their Christian faith and discipleship within the life of the Blackwood Church of Christ, and following the recommendation of the Elders, has been received into membership.

4.2 ISOLATED MEMBERS

An isolated member is a member who is unable to attend Church meetings and services due to distance or for health reasons and requests the elders to record his or her name as an Isolated Member. Isolated Members will be transferred to the Isolated Members' roll. These members may request a proxy vote for any business meeting.

4.3 INACTIVE MEMBERS

A member will be deemed to be an Inactive Member if they have not attended at least twelve (12) services in the past twelve (12) months, including at least three services on three separate days in the three months preceding any properly constituted Church Business Meeting, and have been advised by the Elders that they are to be transferred to the Inactive Members' Roll. Inactive members may not vote at any Church Business Meeting.

Inactive members who once again meet the criteria for being an active member, may, upon application to the Elders, have their name transferred to the Active Members Roll.

4.4 MEMBERSHIP TERMINATION

The membership of an individual member can be terminated by either:

(1) The member expressing the desire to terminate his or her membership.

or

(2) The member displays a lack of loyalty to Jesus Christ and the Blackwood Church of Christ. This will be determined jointly by the Minister(s) and Elders.

4.5 MEMBERSHIP ROLL

The Church secretary will maintain a Membership Roll which includes and identifies Members, Isolated Members and Inactive Members.

4.6 The Membership Roll will be reviewed by the Elders before Annual and Half Yearly business meetings.

CLAUSE 5 CHURCH OFFICERS

5.1 ELDERS

5.1.1 The Elders will be responsible for the general oversight of all areas of the Church's life and witness.

5.1.2 The Minister(s) will be Elders.

5.1.3 Should there not be any Elders other than the Minister(s), the responsibilities of the Elders will be vested in the Administration Committee.

5.1.4 The Elders will elect from within their number, a Chairperson who will chair Elders' Meetings.

5.2 DEACONS

5.2.1 Deacons will be elected by the Church after endorsement by the Elders. Deacons will include but not be restricted to Secretary, Treasurer and Property Manager.

5.2.2 The number of Deacons to be elected and their areas of responsibility will be determined by the Elders.

5.2.3 Deacons will be responsible for directing the various matters associated with the areas of responsibility for which they have been elected.

5.3 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

5.3.1 The Administration Committee will include but not be restricted to Minister(s), Secretary, Treasurer, Property Manager, and a representative from the Elders.

5.3.2 The Administration Committee is responsible for managing day to day operation of the Church.

5.4 KEY LEADERS

5.4.1 The Elders may appoint key leaders to positions, which may include but would not be restricted to Music, Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, and Worship.

5.4.2 Key Leaders will be responsible for directing the various matters associated with the areas of ministry for which they have been appointed, and will be responsible to the Minister(s).

5.5 MEETINGS OF ELDERS, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

5.5.1 Meetings of both the Elders and the Administration Committee will be held on a regular basis to ensure that the objects of the Church are being fulfilled.

5.5.2 A quorum for meetings will consist of a simple majority.

5.5.3 The Administration Committee will ensure that the Elders are provided with copies of the minutes of Administration Committee meetings.

CLAUSE 6 MEETINGS (Annual General Business, Half Yearly Business & Special Business)

6.1 Conduct of Meetings

6.1.1 The Chairperson of Business Meetings will be appointed by the Elders prior to such Business Meeting.

6.1.2 Twenty per cent (20%) of those eligible to vote and personally present will constitute a quorum at a Business Meeting.

6.1.3 If at any such Meeting, which has been properly convened, a quorum is not present, then at the subsequent, properly convened Meeting, the members present will constitute a quorum.

6.2.1 An Annual General Business Meeting will be held during the months of April or May and must be announced to the Church at least forty-two (42) days prior to the meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be:

6.2.2 Elections, as required.

6.2.3 Presentation of Church and Auxiliary Reports.

6.2.4 Appointment of Auditors.

6.2.5 Conducting any other business as required to ensure the Objects are fulfilled.

6.3.1 Half Yearly Business Meetings will be held during the months of October or November of every year and must be announced to the Church at least forty-two (42) days prior to the Meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be:

6.3.2 Elections, as required.

6.3.3 Presentation of the Budget for the following year by the Treasurer or his representative.

6.3.4 Conducting any other business as required to ensure the Objects are fulfilled.

6.4.1 Special Business Meetings may be held from time to time as determined by the Elders or upon written application to the Secretary signed by no less than eight members of the Church, who are eligible to vote.

6.4.2 Special Business Meetings must be announced to the Church at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Meeting.

6.4.3 Special Business Meetings, at which there is to be an election of Elders and/or Deacons, and any changes to the Constitution, must be announced to the Church at least forty-two (42) days prior to the Meeting.

CLAUSE 7 VOTING AND PROXY RULES

7.1 All members whose names are recorded as Active Members or Isolated Members sixteen (16) years of age and over will be entitled to vote.

7.2 Voting on all business, except where otherwise provided, will be by show of hands. However, upon request for a ballot, the motion will be decided by secret ballot.

7.3 Notwithstanding that voting will be by show of hands or by secret ballot, ballot papers will be available to all eligible members attending the Business meeting in respect of items of business listed on the agenda for such Business meeting and of which Notice of Resolution has been advised to all eligible members prior to such Business meeting. Every ballot paper issued will be initialled by the Secretary or Returning Officer appointed by the Elders and a record kept.

7.4 Proxy appointment forms will be available prior to such Business meeting from the Secretary, to any eligible member who is unavoidably unable to attend such Business meeting.

7.5 Such eligible member may appoint as his/her proxy another eligible member who is attending such Business meeting, and will hand the completed proxy appointment form to that member.

7.6 An eligible member who had received a proxy appointment from another eligible member will receive additional ballot papers in respect of the proxy appointor or entering such Business meeting and upon handing over the proxy appointment form which will first be verified by the Secretary or Returning Officer and recorded.

7.7 A proxy will be valid only for items of business listed on the agenda for such Business Meeting and of which Notice of Resolution has been advised to all eligible members prior to such a Business Meeting.

CLAUSE 8 ELECTIONS

8.1 The Elders and Deacons, will be elected by Church members who are eligible to vote, at a properly constituted Business Meeting.

8.2 ELDERS

8.2.1 Nominations for Elders may be submitted in writing by any member eligible to vote, and must be in the hands of the Secretary twenty-one days before the date of the Business Meeting.

8.2.2 Only active members of the Blackwood Church of Christ will be eligible for nomination as an Elder.

8.2.3 The Elders will review the nominations and will inform the Church of the names of suitable and duly qualified persons, whom they have endorsed to serve as Elders, no later than the Sunday prior to the ballot papers being distributed.

8.2.4 After election, the Church will set these persons apart for service as Elders.

8.2.5 After a term of office of five years, Elders must place his/her name before the Church for election.

8.2.6 If an Elder fails to fulfil the requirements and responsibilities of the office and upon receipt of a recommendation from the Elders or upon a written submission to the Secretary signed by no less than eight members of the Church eligible to vote, the Church will consider the termination of the office of such Elder.

8.3 DEACONS

8.3.1 The Elders will declare vacant those Deacons positions for which nominations as Deacons are required.

8.3.2 Nominations for Deacons may be submitted in writing by any member eligible to vote, and must be in

the hands of the Secretary twenty-one days before the date of the Business Meeting.

8.3.3 Only active members of the Blackwood Church of Christ will be eligible for nomination as a Deacon.

8.3.4 The Elder will review the nominations and will inform the Church of the names of suitable and duly qualified persons, whom they have endorsed to serve as Deacons, at least one week prior to the first Sunday that the ballot papers are to be distributed.

8.3.5 After a term of office of two years, Deacons must place his/her name before the Church for election.

8.3.6 If a Deacon fails to fulfil the requirements and responsibilities of the office and upon receipt of a recommendation from the Elders, the Church will consider the termination of the office of such Deacon.

8.4 ELECTION PROCEDURE

8.4.1 Election will be by secret ballot.

8.4.2 After nominations have been endorsed by the Elders, separate ballot papers will be prepared for each category of office involved.

8.4.3 On or before the Sunday prior to the meeting where an election is to be held, ballot papers will be available for issue to all eligible members on request. Every ballot paper issued will be initialled by the Secretary or Returning Officer, and a record of issued ballot papers will be maintained.

8.4.4 Ballot Papers, duly initialled by the Secretary or Returning Officer and recorded, will be available to eligible members who have received valid proxy appointments from other eligible members who are unavoidably unable to attend to voting personally during the specified time.

8.4.5 Voters will record the desired votes by marking the ballot papers in the appropriate manner in the square opposite the candidate or candidates for whom they wish to vote.

8.4.6 After voting, the ballot papers will be placed in the ballot box. Ballot papers must be lodged no later than the declared time of the commencement of the Business Meeting.

8.4.7 To be elected a candidate for Elder or Deacon must obtain the votes of at least seventy-five per cent (75%) of the members voting.

8.4.8 An election for Elders or Deacons will always be held even if insufficient nominations are obtained to fill vacancies.

8.4.9 Persons elected to positions will hold responsible office in those positions from the time of the election.

CLAUSE 9 VACANCIES

9.1 Casual vacancies for Church Secretary, Church Treasurer or Property Manager will, where required, be filled by an appointment by the Elders and will be current until the next Business Meeting.

9.2 Vacancy for an Elder must be filled by election at a duly convened Business Meeting.

CLAUSE 10 ENGAGEMENT OF MINISTER

10.1 The engagement of a Minister or the termination of the engagement will be decided by the Church at a properly constituted Business Meeting of the Church on a recommendation of the Elders.

10.2 Voting at such meeting will be by secret ballot and all voting procedures as described in Clause 8.4 will apply.

10.3 The Church will engage only a Minister or Ministers who have the endorsement of the Conference of Churches of Christ in South Australia.

10.4 The engagement of a Minister or the termination of the engagement shall require the votes of at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the members voting.

CLAUSE 11 FUNDS

11.1 The Assets and Income of the Church shall be applied solely in furtherance of the Objects and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Church except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the Church.

11.2 Control of funds shall be vested in the Treasurer who shall arrange regular banking of the same and submit an audited statement of receipts and expenditure at the Annual General Business Meeting. The Treasurer, in conjunction with other Officers approved by the Elders, shall be empowered to operate the bank account.

11.3 The Treasurer may delegate payment of accounts or other financial transactions, in accordance with Church policy.

11.4 Financial statements will be submitted to an Elders meeting as required by the Elders.

CLAUSE 12 AUXILIARIES

12.1 Church auxiliaries may be established, continued or terminated with the consent of the Elders.

12.2 No person will hold executive office in any auxiliary of the Church without prior approval of the Elders.

12.3 Should any auxiliary or club associated with the Church cease to exist at any time, any funds under their control will revert to the control of the Church.

CLAUSE 13 PROPERTY

13.1 The property of the Church, both real and personal, present and future, will be vested in the Churches of Christ in South Australia and Northern Territory Incorporated, and will be held for the Church according to the provisions of a deed of trust.

13.2 If a duly constituted meeting of the Church resolves to close the Church, any surplus assets will not be distributed amongst its members, but instead will be distributed in consultation with Churches of Christ in South Australia and Northern Territory Incorporated (or if that entity does not exist, in consultation with another church or incorporated association with similar objects), to be used where practical to support the establishment of new congregations and / or the revitalisation of existing congregations.

CLAUSE 14 PREVIOUS CONSTITUTIONS

14.1 All constitutions executed prior to the date of execution of this constitution are repealed.

14.2 Any appointment made or motion passed under previous Constitutions, if in force at the commencement of this Constitution, shall continue in force as far as practicable as if made or passed under this Constitution.

CLAUSE 15 ALTERATION TO CONSTITUTION

15.1 The Constitution may only be altered or amended by a seventy five percent (75%) majority of members attending and voting, inclusive of proxy votes, at a duly constituted Business Meeting, provided notice of the intention to amend the constitution has first been given to members at a previous and properly constituted Business Meeting.

15.2 A draft of any proposed amendment will be in writing and will be in the Secretary's hands at least forty-two (42) days prior to the Business Meeting at which the proposed amendment is to be voted upon.