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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

2015



1. NAME AND STATEMENT OF FAITH

This Church shall be called the Kerang Baptist Church and its members shall consist only of such persons who give evidence of repentance towards God, of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and have been baptised by immersion and who believe in -

- A. Divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.
- B. The existence of the One God in Three Persons - The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- C. The Deity and Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Son of God, the second person in the Trinity.
- D. The fallen, sinful and lost estate of all mankind.
- E. The Salvation of men from the penal consequences and the 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.
- F. The immediate work of the Holy Spirit in the regeneration of men, in their sanctification, and in their preservation to the heavenly kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- G. The necessity, in order to salvation, of repentance towards God and on faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- H. The Priesthood of all believers.
- I. The resurrection of the Dead, the final judgment of all men by the Lord Jesus Christ.
- J. 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 symbol of the regenerate in His Death, Burial & Resurrection. The Lord's Supper being a memorial "until He come" of the sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- K. The Biblical model of marriage is between one man and one woman who have covenanted together according to Scripture.
- L. The literal and personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Admission to membership may be granted to: -

- A. Those Baptised by immersion before this church on profession of faith.
- B. Those transferred by letter from churches of like faith and order.
- C. Those who have been baptised immersion in sister churches but who have not been Members of same.
- D. Lapsed members whose restoration is satisfactory.

In cases of persons under A, B and C two members shall be appointed by the church, or if desirable to avoid delay by the Pastors, Elders or Deacons to interview candidates and report to the following Church Meeting: every such application shall require for its acceptance the vote of at least two thirds of the members present and voting at such Meeting. If the vote be not of the two thirds of members present and voting, two members shall be appointed to act with the Pastor as a committee of inquiry upon whose report and recommendation the decision shall rest. Members so admitted shall be granted the right hand of fellowship at the earliest convenient celebration of the Lord's Supper.

In the case of D. (lapsed members), the applicant is to be interviewed by the Elders who will bring a report to a church member's Meeting.

The church shall be maintained by voluntary contributions. All members should value this privilege and are advised to contribute regularly on the self-assessment principle, whether present or absent, using for this purpose the envelopes provided, regarding this loving liability as an offering made to Christ in person.



3. TRANSFER OR DISMISSION

Members removing to other places are expected to inform the Pastor or Church Secretary

Honourable dismission shall upon request be accorded to members who have attended the ordinances of the church and walked worthy of the profession.

4. DISCIPLINE

Any member charged with dishonourable conduct or who is absent from the Communion Service for 6 consecutive months (attendance at ordinary service on Communion Sunday is implied) without satisfactory reasons, may by vote of the Church, be suspended from membership or his or her name removed from the Roll. Any charge of dishonourable conduct shall first be investigated by the Pastors and Elders who shall submit a digest report of the charge and defence to the Church for voting purposes only.

No discussion shall be permitted thereon.

Revision of the Roll shall be annual and all doubtful names shall be submitted to the Elders before removal.

5. LEADERSHIP

Pastors and Elders are to be in good standing spiritually in accordance with 1 Timothy 3:1–7, Titus 1:5–9, 1 Peter 5:1–3, and Deacons in accordance with 1 Timothy 3:8–13

All those in leadership and teaching roles should give evidence of whole-hearted support of the work, teaching and prayer life of the church.

The church has a responsibility to uphold the biblical ideals of behaviour, especially as exemplified by its leadership. In cases where there is a lapse in behaviour, the church has an obligation, to restrict for a period of time, the person's involvement in leadership until it can be demonstrated that the present life of the person exemplifies biblical standards. Any actions or decisions in this area shall be made by the Elders.

6. PASTOR(s)

- A. An invitation to the pastorate shall be extended on the vote of at least two thirds of those personally present at a special Meeting of the enrolled members of the Church called for that purpose by the Secretary. At least one Sunday's notice of such Meeting shall be given.
- B. When a vacancy is about to occur in a Pastorate, application shall first be made by the Secretary to the Advisory Board of the Baptist Union for advice.
- C. Upon the nomination to the Pastorate being received, such names shall first be considered by the Elders and Deacons, and shall then be submitted to a Special Meeting of the Church Members. A majority of two thirds of those present and eligible to vote shall be necessary before a call may be extended. The Pastor shall be expected to give satisfactory replies to our doctrinal statement.
- D. After each appointed term of service, re-affirming of Pastors shall be by a pastoral review followed by a secret ballot at a Church Meeting. A two thirds majority of those voting will be required for such a re- appointment.
- E. The Senior Pastor shall be ex-officio member of all organizations connected with the Church,
- F. The appointment of pulpit supplies during temporary absence of the Pastor shall be at the discretion of the Pastors, Elders and Secretary.
- G. The Church may call other Pastors to assist and be responsible to the Senior Pastor in the Church's ministries. Their calling will be by the same procedure as for the Senior Pastor.



7. ELDERS

- A. The Senior Pastor or Pastors called by the church to the oversight of the congregation are recognized to be Elders.
- B. In addition to the Pastors, other men who are members of the Church may be appointed as Elders. They are to assist in pastoral work, working alongside the Pastors in spiritual oversight and leadership, Meeting regularly with them at the Senior Pastor's discretion. Elders shall be elected in the same manner as the pastor.
- C. After each three (3) year term of service, re-affirming of Elders shall be through secret ballot at an Annual Meeting with two thirds majority of those eligible to vote be required for such re-appointment.
- D. At least one Pastor or Elder should attend the Deacons Meeting.
- E. No new organisation shall be commenced without the recommendation of the Eldership.

8. DEACONS

- A. All people over the age of twenty one (21) years, who have been members of this church for a period of at least 12 months immediately preceding, shall be eligible for election to the Diaconate.
- B. The Deacons shall not exceed nine (9) in number. The number of male Deacons shall exceed the number of female Deacons. Deacons shall be chosen by nomination and ballot on the vote of two thirds majority of the members present at the Annual Business Meeting of which two Sundays notice shall be given. At the Business Meeting of the diaconate fifty percent of elected Deacons form a quorum.
- C. All nominations for the office of deacon to be signed by both nominator and nominee, and such nominations shall be called for on the third and fourth Sundays before the Annual Meeting

and close at 9.00pm on the third Sunday prior to the Meeting.

- D. On the occurrence of any vacancy or vacancies on the Diaconate, nominations for the filling of same may be invited and the Deacon/s so elected shall hold office for the remainder of the term in respect of which such vacancy has occurred.
- E. Any deacon unable to satisfactorily perform his/her duties for an extended period shall submit a letter of resignation, or request leave of absence. This request or resignation shall be submitted to a church Members Meeting. Should a vacancy occur in this or any other manner, nominations may be called for with at least two (2) Sundays notice prior to the election taking place.
- F. The term of office shall be for three (3) years. Three Deacons shall retire each year but are eligible for re-election.
- G. Deacons shall annually elect the Chairman of Deacons, church Secretary, Treasurer and other office bearers as needed. These positions shall be affirmed at a Church Meeting at a later date. Should an office-bearer vacancy occur the Deacons shall have power to make an interim appointment.
- H. Administrative matters will primarily be the responsibility of the Deacons. They will liaise closely at all times with the Pastors and Elders. Deacon's Meetings shall be held monthly for business and prayer.
- I. The Secretary shall enter in a minute-book a faithful record of all business transacted at Church Meetings.
- J. The Treasurer shall receive all monies and pay all Church accounts, and shall submit to each Church Meeting a financial statement, and at the Annual Meeting a balance-sheet, which shall be audited and signed by at least one Auditor appointed at the Annual Meeting.
- K. No major financial expenditure may be undertaken by any organisation of the Church without first receiving the sanction of the Diaconate.



9. DIACONATE EXECUTIVE

The Diaconate Executive shall consist of the Senior Pastor, Chairman of Deacons, Secretary and Treasurer.

10. CHURCH PROPERTY

The control of the Church property shall be managed by the Deacons. They shall be held responsible for all Church property and have authority to carry out what repairs they deem necessary.

Alterations or additions to Church property shall only be carried out with the authority of the Church Members Meeting.

11. LOCAL PREACHERS

All local preachers shall be approved by the Eldership.

12. ORGANISATIONS

Deacons shall appoint people to roles and ministries in the church from time to time. Those appointments shall be confirmed at the annual Church Meeting in accordance with the following process:

1. Individual Elders and Deacons shall have oversight of defined ministries.
2. The Elders and Deacons shall appoint people to each position as and when the need arises after having consultation with existing members of those committees or ministries.
3. The lists of appointments will be handed out to church members three weeks before each Annual Meeting.
4. If anyone in the church would like to suggest a name for a position or has a concern about a proposed appointment they should see the Elder or Deacon responsible. If they are not satisfied with the response they should take it up with the Chairman of Deacons or another Elder.

5. The list of appointments would then be presented to the church at the Annual Meeting for affirmation.

The Church Auditors shall be appointed at the Annual Church Meeting.

Treasurers should keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditure and hand their books to the Church Auditors at least once a year for audit.

13. CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Kerang Christian Community School Ltd. shall be operated as a ministry of the Church. Its aim shall be to provide a Christ-centred education to children primarily from Christian homes in the Community.

The management of the School shall be vested in the School Board in accordance with the Articles of Association. Final discretion is vested with School Company Meetings.

The Principal and Chairman of the School Board should give evidence of whole-hearted support of the work, teaching and prayer life of the church. It is preferred that they both be church members.

14. BUSINESS MEETINGS

Business Meetings of the Church shall be convened by the Secretary from time to time as occasion demands, and at least three times per year including the Annual Meeting. All Church Meetings shall be announced on the preceding Sunday.

A quorum of at least 25% of resident church members is required for all Church Meetings. Special Meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor at the request of two or more Deacons, two or more Elders, or at least 10 (ten) Church members. The vote of two thirds of the members then present at such Church Meetings shall be required for the passing of any motion.

Church Meetings shall be open to non-members except on special occasions. These occasions shall be at the discretion of the Elders and Deacons.

Whilst people of any age may speak to a motion at

a Church Business Meetings, voting rights extend to only those eighteen (18) years of age and over. Only members shall vote on matters relating to staff/ leadership, property, church discipline, membership, constitution, finances or other issues at the discretion of the leadership.

No person shall be allowed to speak to any motion more than once, nor for more than ten (10) minutes except by permission of the Chairman or a majority of the members present.

The decisions of Church Meetings shall be made known to the remainder of the church fellowship unless the Meeting decides otherwise. Church members shall exercise discretion in discussing any matters raised at Church Meetings. The Chairman of any Church Meeting may direct that a matter is confidential.

It shall be the duty of the members to assist in the work of God by private prayer, by diligent attendance at the services and Meetings, by financial help, by reporting to the Pastor or Elders any cases of sickness or trouble among members or adherents, or misconduct on the part of members.

15. ORDER OF BUSINESS

All Meetings of the Church shall be opened by prayer. The usual order of business shall be as follows:—

- A. Reading and confirmation of the minutes.
- B. Business arising there from
- C. Correspondence.
- D. Business arising there from
- E. Financial Statement
- F. Applications for membership.
- G. Notices of motion.
- H. Recommendations from Diaconate & Eldership.
- I. General Business.

16. TRUSTEES

- The Number of trustees should be kept in the range of three to five;
- The minimum number of trustees required to sign legal documents is a majority of trustees;
- The trustees shall be appointed by election at a church business Meeting.

The role of the trustee is to:

- Be legal custodians of the church titles;
- Implement decisions of the church in relation to church titles;
- Be accountable to the Deacons for the execution of these decisions.

17. CONSTITUTION AND RULES

A copy of these Rules and Constitution shall be supplied to every present Church Member, and presented to each new member hereafter.

All previous rules affecting the above matters are hereby cancelled, and no alterations, amendments, or additions shall be made unless on the vote of two-thirds of members present at a Church Meeting specially convened for that purpose, and after one (1) month's notice has been given in writing.

Exceptions to the Constitution can be made in the same way as alterations to the Constitution.



I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

You are already clean because of the Word I have spoken to you.

Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself: it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me.

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, He will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.

If anyone does not remain in Me, He is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in Me and My Words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

This is to My Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love.

If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed My Father's commands and remain in His love.

I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

My command is this; Love each other as I have loved you.

Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends.

You are My friends if you do what I command.

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business.

Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from My Father I have made known to you.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last.

Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in My Name.

This is my command;

Love each other.

John 15: 1-17



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