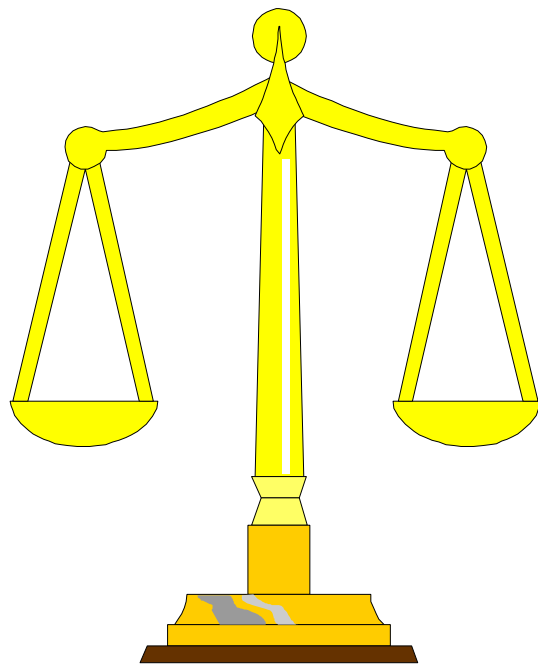


Rules of Grace Community Bible Church



Version 1.1
Adopted : 12 November 2006
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CERTIFICATE

I, the undersigned, being the Secretary of the Grace Community Bible Church, do hereby certify that the above Rules were adopted as the Rules hereof on the 12 November 2006, by the Board of Elders of said Incorporated Body in a regularly called meeting on the same date, to wit, the 12 November 2006.

I do further certify that the above Rules were adopted as the Rules hereof on the 12 November 2006 by the members of the church in a regularly called meeting on the same date, to wit, the 12 November 2006. Said Rules are, as of the date of the certification, the duly adopted and existing Rules of this Incorporated Body.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this 12 November 2006



Paul Keyter, Secretary
Grace Community Bible Church Inc.



Grace Community Bible Church

"Preach the WORD" 2 Timothy 4:2
10:30 am Worship and 5 pm Evening Service
Sundays at Maranatha Secondary College, 106-108 Reema Blvd, Endeavour Hills
Church Office : 2/17 Scott Street Dandenong VIC 3175 **Contact** : (03) 9769 2868
E-Mail: info@gracebiblechurch.org.au
Web: www.gracebiblechurch.org.au

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise,
are from the *New American Standard Bible*,
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ARTICLE I - Location of Offices

The name of this Incorporated Body is Grace Community Bible Church. It is a Victorian non-profit religious Incorporated Body with its principal offices in Melbourne, Victoria. The current office address is 2/17 Scott Street Dandenong Vic 3175.

ARTICLE II - Purpose

This Incorporated Body is organised for exclusively religious purposes (including charitable and religious purposes common to a pastoral church ministry as defined by Scripture). Our commission is summarised as follows: *“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age’”* (Matthew 28:18-20).

ARTICLE III - Statement of Faith

The statement of faith of this Incorporated Body is that which is incorporated in its Doctrinal Statement and Philosophy of Ministry and as made readily available to any persons.

ARTICLE IV - Corporate Membership

The Incorporated Body shall have no members. Any action which would otherwise require approval by a majority of all members shall only require approval of the Board of Elders. All rights which would otherwise vest in the members shall vest in the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE V - Church Membership

Section 1. Purpose of the Fellowship

The congregation of Christian believers who have applied for membership and have been duly accepted shall constitute a spiritual body, united for the spiritual purposes set forth in Article II of these Rules.

Section 2. Active Membership

Active membership in the Grace Community Bible Church shall be open to all persons who confess and know Christ as their Lord and Saviour and who have been baptised.

Section 3. Applications for Membership

All requests for membership shall be made to a Pastor, Elder, or Deacon. Upon making such a request, the person shall be given an application for membership, along with a copy of the Statement of Faith a copy of the Philosophy of Ministry and a copy of the Rules. A Pastor, Elder, or Deacon shall meet with the applicant following receipt of the application. Each applicant shall assent to the Statement of Faith, subscribe to the Rules, and shall testify as to this assent before at least two of the elders.

Section 4. Denial of Membership

If, upon review of an application for membership or after meeting with a prospective member, the Board of Elders determines that the applicant does not confess and know Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Saviour, or that there is a lack of evidence of a godly lifestyle, membership shall be denied. The decision made by the Board shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.

Section 5. Admission of Applicants

Applicants admitted to membership shall, if possible, present themselves at a worship service designated by the Pastor-Teacher and Board of Elders, at which service such applicants shall publicly affirm their membership commitment and be publicly acknowledged as members.

Section 6. Responsibilities of Members

Members shall seek to exercise their spiritual gifts for the mutual benefit of all the church body and shall submit to the loving rule of the Elders.

Section 7. Church Discipline

- (a) The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 3 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1).
- (b) Members of this church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18. Before such dismissal, however,
 - (1) It shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring individual's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct such erring individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring individual does not heed this warning, then...
 - (2) The warning member shall again go to the erring individual, seeking his or her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. The first and second warnings may occur with no specified time interval. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then...
 - (3) It shall be brought to the attention of the Board of Elders. If the Board of Elders determines - after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19 - that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she has refused to repent, then the Elders shall inform the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual

demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect may be given at a regularly scheduled worship service. If, however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the church in its collective call to repentance, then...

- (4) He or she shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service. If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the Board of Elders, then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.
- (c) Notwithstanding the foregoing, the elders in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline, (i.e. the informing of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance) or to the fourth stage of church discipline, (i.e. the dismissal from the fellowship and/or membership of the church) when one or more of the following have occurred:
- (i) Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e. openly and to the offence of the whole Church (1 Cor. 5:1-5) ¹
 - (ii) Where the disciplined party has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the elders, then chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the elders (Romans 16:17); or
 - (iii) Where the disciplined party has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10-11).
- (d) The members of this church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of the dismissal or because of public statements to the congregation at the third or fourth stages of church discipline. Members who are under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraphs, forfeit and waive the right to resign from this church. Resignations from membership are possible only by members who are in good standing and who are not under any disciplinary action.
- (e) Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the elders (or a duly constituted subcommittee thereof), a member, non-member regular attendee, or other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.
- (f) Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the elders (or a duly constituted subcommittee thereof), the names of any members who have not attended a worship service, weekly fellowship group meeting at Grace Community Bible Church for a period of three months or longer may be removed from the membership rolls.

¹ Reflective of a historic position on church discipline as demonstrated by the Institutes of the Christian Religion (1559 ed.), Book IV, Chap. XII, pp. 454-457.

Section 8. Regular Meetings

A regular annual meeting of the church members shall be held at the principal office of the church (as the same shall be from time to time designated in the minutes of the Board) in October or November of each year. At such regular annual meeting, the members shall consider reports of the affairs of the Incorporated Body, and transact such other business as the Elders determine shall be brought before the meeting, including but not limited to affirmation of the appointments made by the Elders of those who shall serve as Elders for the ensuing year and the election of those qualified in the offices of Deacons.

Section 9. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the members may be called at any time by order of the Pastor-Teacher, the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders, or by a quorum of the members of the Board of Elders.

Section 10. Notice of Meetings

Notice of regular meetings shall be given from the pulpit by the Pastor or an elder for two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. In addition thereto, notice shall be published in the regular church bulletin for two successive Sundays prior to such meeting. Notice of special meetings shall be given from the pulpit at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting and shall also be published in the regular church bulletin on the Sunday immediately preceding the meeting.

Section 11. Quorum

At all meetings of the members, whether regular, special or adjourned, the members present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 12. Voting Rights

Those admitted to church membership do not constitute a legislative body, nor do they constitute members of the Incorporated Body, and they cannot vote, pass resolutions binding upon the Incorporated Body, nor shall they have any equity in the real property of the Incorporated Body, or rights to vote on its disposal. Said property of the Incorporated Body is dedicated to religious and charitable purposes as outlined in the Articles of Incorporation.

ARTICLE VI - Elders

Section 1. Powers

Subject to the limitations of the Articles and these Rules and of pertinent restrictions of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981, all the activities and affairs of the Incorporated Body shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, who are responsible for shepherding and having oversight of the flock. Without prejudice to such general powers, but subject to these same limitations, it is hereby expressly declared that the Board shall have the following powers in addition to the other powers enumerated by these Rules:

- (a) To select and remove all the officers, agents, pastors, staff, and employees of the Incorporated Body; prescribe such duties for them consistent with the Scriptures, with law, with the Articles of Incorporation, or with these Rules; and fix the terms of their offices and their compensation.

- (b) To make such disbursements from the funds and properties of the Incorporated Body as are required to fulfil the purposes of this Incorporated Body as are more fully set out in the Articles of Incorporation, thereof and generally to conduct, manage, and control the activities and affairs of the Incorporated Body and to make such rules and regulations consistent with the Scriptures, with law, with the Articles of Incorporation, or with these Rules, as they may deem best.
- (c) To adopt, make and use a corporate seal, and to alter the form of such seal from time to time as they may deem best.
- (d) To establish policies and practices for the church consistent with the purposes of this Incorporated Body.
- (e) To administer and assist in the ordinances of Baptism and Communion.
- (f) To borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purposes of the Incorporated Body and to cause to be executed and delivered, in the corporate name, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations, or other evidences of debt and securities.
- (g) To carry on a business and apply any such profit that results from the business activity in which it may legally engage.

Section 2. Number of Elders

The authorised number of elders shall not be less than five (5). During times when the number of elders falls below five (5) due to the resignation – death or dismissal of an elder, other qualified men from the deaconate will “sit in” as “acting elders” until such time another qualified elder can be identified and installed into the office.

Section 3. Nomination, Selection, and Tenure of Office

Recommendations to fill the office of Elder shall be requested periodically from all church members in the form of elder nomination forms **posted out to each member**. The member must then fill out their nominations for the office of Eldership and return the completed form to the elders within a period of one (1) calendar month. The Board of Elders shall review all nominations and determine each nominee’s qualifications. A proposed slate of nominees prepared, along with any relevant comments.

All applicants to the office of Eldership at Grace Community Bible Church will need to be able to express his working knowledge of Scripture based on the following information contained in the Elder Training Manual.

The process of becoming an elder will proceed as follows:

1. The Applicant must be nominated by a majority of members of Grace Community Bible Church through the Affirmation/Nomination procedure.
2. The applicant must work through the Grace Community Bible Church Qualifications and Application for the Office of Eldership and complete to the elders satisfaction all the requirements contained therein.
3. The applicant must then proceed through the following councils of appointment:

First Council – (before entire elder and deacon board) (applicant not in attendance)

The first council reviews the candidate's conversion, giftedness, call to the ministry, character, conduct, former/current ministries, biblical qualification relative to an elder in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, and marital / parenting history. Prior to this first council, the first council elders must hear the candidate in a preaching/teaching situation either by tape or in person, plus have an intimate knowledge of his personal character and ministry.

If the candidate is affirmed by the first council, he will proceed to the second council.

Second Council

When approved, the second council must be completed within one calendar year.

The second council is primarily focused on the doctrinal preparation of the candidate for ministry and is designed to assess the candidate's strengths and weaknesses.

This council, is to be held during a regularly scheduled elders' meeting, and will follow a questioning and affirming format relative to all pertinent areas of theology, biblical knowledge, church ministry, and spiritual life. Questioning and affirming will then be received from all the elders on his life, his ministry, and his doctrine.

The doctrinal areas in which the candidate will be quizzed are presented in the "Bible Knowledge" section of this syllabus and in the "Systematic and Practical Theology" sections of Qualifications and Application for the Office of Eldership document.

Approval

When the qualifications and requirements are approved, the applicant will receive "the laying on of hands" by the elders in a subsequent public service and immediately assume the responsibilities of Eldership.

Section 4. Qualifications

Each member of the Board of Elders must be an active member of this church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

He shall be:

- (a) Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
- (b) Husband of one wife; a one-woman man (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
- (c) Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2)
- (d) Sober-minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- (e) Of good behaviour; orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)
- (f) Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- (g) Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching
1. (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
- (h) Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (i) Not violent; not pugnacious (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)
- (j) Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3)
- (k) Not a brawler; uncontentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)

- (l) Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)
- (m) Rules well his own house; his children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:7)
- (n) Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)
- (o) Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
- (p) Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
- (q) A lover of good men and things (Titus 1:8)
- (r) Just, fair (Titus 1:8)
- (s) Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)
- (t) Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)

Each prospective elder will, to the satisfaction of the current Eldership, complete and justify their qualifications and bible knowledge in accordance to the Grace Community Bible Church's Elders Qualifications and Application.

Section 5. Vacancies

Any Elder may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Chairman of the Board or the Secretary of the Board, unless the notice specifies a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation. If the resignation is to take effect at some future time, a successor may be selected before that time.

A vacancy or vacancies in the Board shall be deemed to exist in case of the death, resignation, or removal of any Elder, or if a need exists and the specified limit is not exceeded. No reduction of the authorised number of Elders shall have the effect of removing any Elder prior to the expiration of the Elder's term of office.

Section 6. Removal of Elders

Any Elder may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), after thorough corroborating investigation by the Elders, in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19. When an Elder is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly-scheduled worship service as prescribed in 1 Timothy 5:20.

Section 7. Place of Meetings

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary provided in these Rules, any meeting (whether regular, special, or adjourned) of the Board of Elders of the Incorporated Body may be held at any place within or without the State of Victoria

Section 8. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Board of Elders shall be held without call or notice on every second Wednesday unless otherwise modified by the Board. Regular meetings shall be open to church members at Elder's discretion.

Section 9. Quorum

Except as otherwise provided herein, a majority of the Elders currently serving shall constitute a quorum except when a vacancy or vacancies prevents such majority, whereupon a majority of the Elders in office shall constitute a quorum, provided such majority shall constitute either one-third of the authorized number of Elders or at least two Elders, whichever is larger, or unless the authorized number of Elders is only one. A majority of the Elders present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any meeting to another time and place. Whenever the matter to be considered concerns calling or dismissing a pastor, or buying or selling real estate, a quorum shall consist of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Board.

Section 10. Action Without Meeting

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Board shall individually or collectively consent in writing to a duly prepared resolution to such action. Such consent or consents shall have the same effect as a unanimous vote of the Board and shall be documented by attaching the signed resolution with the minutes of proceedings of the Board.

Section 11. Rights of Inspection

In accordance with the provisions of Associations Incorporation Act 1981, every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect and copy all books, records, and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of the Incorporated Body of which such person is an Elder, for a purpose reasonably related to such person's interest as an Elder.

Section 12. Decisions of the Board of Elders

Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration by unanimous vote in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.

Section 13. Fees and Compensation

Elders (as such) shall not receive any stated or fixed salary for their services, however, nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any Elders from serving the Incorporated Body in any other capacity and receiving compensation. Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from Grace Community Bible Church shall not be in a position to determine the nature or amount of said compensation.

ARTICLE V II - Deacons

Section 1. Qualifications

The Deacons shall consist of members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and shall be nominated by members of the church. The Board of Elders will compile and confirm the nominations and submit the names to the members for affirmation at the annual meeting. The Deacons shall serve for an undefined term. The Deacons shall assist the Elders in the shepherding of the saints, assist the Pastor at Communion and baptismal services, aid in the general spiritual care of the church, and perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders.

A Deacon shall be a man of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not fond of sordid gain, holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, first tested and found above reproach.

Section 2. Nomination and Selection

The nomination and selection of Deacons shall be done in the same manner as for Elders, as set forth in Article VI, Section 3 of these Rules, except they shall be affirmed at the annual meeting by the members of the church.

ARTICLE V III - Officers

Section 1. Officers

The officers of the Incorporated Body shall be a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Incorporated Body may also have, at the discretion of the Board of Elders, other officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of this article.

Section 2. Election

The officers of the Incorporated Body, except such officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 or Section 5 of this Article, shall be chosen annually by, and shall serve at, the pleasure of the Board of Elders. Each officer shall hold his office until he shall resign, be removed, or become otherwise disqualified to serve, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified.

Section 3. Subordinate Officers

The Board of Elders may appoint, and may empower the Chairman to appoint, such other officers as the business of the Incorporated Body may require, each of whom shall hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in the Rules or as the Board of Elders may from time to time determine.

Section 4. Removal and Resignation

Any officer may be removed upon disqualification and removal as an Elder per Article VI, Section 6 of these Rules. In accordance any officer may resign at any time without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the Incorporated Body under any contract to which the officer is a party, by giving written notice to the Board of Elders, or to the Chairman, or to the Secretary of the Incorporated Body. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein; and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Section 5. Vacancies

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in the Rules for regular election or appointment to such office, provided that such vacancies shall be filled as they occur and not on an annual basis.

Section 6. Inability to Act

In the case of absence or inability to act of any officer of the Incorporated Body and of any person herein authorised to act in his place, the Board of Elders may from time to time delegate the powers or duties of such officer to any other officer or other person whom the Board may select.

Section 7. The Chairman

The Chairman shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Incorporated Body and shall, subject to the control of the Board of Elders, have general supervision, direction, and control of the activities and officers of the Incorporated Body. He shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Elders, which are to be conducted according to the scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8. He shall be an ex officio member of all the standing committees, if any, and shall have powers and duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders or the Rules.

Section 8. Vice-Chairman

In the absence or disability of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall perform all the duties of the Chairman, and when so acting shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all the restrictions upon, the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as from time to time may be prescribed for him by the Board of Elders or the Rules.

Section 9. Secretary

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, a book of minutes at the principal office or such other place as the Board of Elders may order, of all meetings of the members, the Board and its committees, with the time and place of holding, whether regular or special, and if special, how authorised, the notice thereof given, the names of those present at the meetings, the Board and committees' meetings, and the proceedings thereof. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, at the principal office in the State of Victoria the original and a copy of the Incorporated Body's Articles and Rules, as amended to date.

The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Board and any committees thereof required by these Rules or by law to be given, shall keep the seal of the Incorporated Body in safe custody, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as prescribed by the Board.

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept at the principal office of the Incorporated Body, a church membership register, or a duplicated membership register, showing the names of the members and their addresses.

Section 10. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall ensure the stewardship of the physical and financial resources of the Incorporated Body, "taking precaution that no one should discredit us in our administration... for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Corinthians 8:20-21). He shall select "men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6:3) to implement and accomplish this responsibility.

The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct accounts of the properties and business transactions of the Incorporated Body. The books of account shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by any Elder as provided in Associations Incorporation Act 1981.

The Treasurer shall deposit, or cause to be deposited, all monies and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the Incorporated Body with such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Elders. He shall disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Incorporated Body as may be ordered by the Board of Elders, shall render, or cause to be rendered, to the Chairman and the Elders, whenever they request it, an account of all the transactions and of the financial condition of the Incorporated Body, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders. He shall make, or cause to be made, the financial reports at each regular Board meeting and at the annual meeting of members.

Distributions are prohibited to any members during the life of this Incorporated Body.

Section 11. Indemnification of Officers

- a) The Board of Elders may choose to indemnify and advance the church-related expenses of any officer, employee, volunteer or agent of the church.
- b) Subject to the provisions of paragraph c. of this section, the church shall indemnify any Elder or Deacon or former Elder or Deacon of the church against claims, liabilities, expenses, and costs necessarily incurred by him in connection with the defense, compromise, or settlement of any action, suit or proceeding, civil or criminal, in which such person is made a party by reason of being or having been an Elder or Deacon, to the extent not otherwise compensated, indemnified or reimbursed by insurance, if: (1) The conduct of the Elder or Deacon was in good faith; (2) The Elder or Deacon reasonably believed that his conduct was in the best interests of the church, or at least not opposed to its best interests; and (3) In the case of any criminal proceeding, the Elder or Deacon had no reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.
- c) The church may not indemnify an Elder or Deacon in connection with a proceeding brought against him by or in the right of the church, in which he was adjudged liable to the church, or where the Elder or Deacon is charged with receiving an improper personal benefit and he is adjudged on that basis.

ARTICLE IX - Ordination, Licensing, and Commissioning

Section 1. Ordination

Ordination refers to the unanimous recognition by the Board of Elders of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualification to serve. Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office.

Section 2. Commissioning

When local-church certification is required for ministry where ordination would be unnecessary or inappropriate, a person is commissioned by the Board of Elders to minister. This authorisation continues as long as the opportunity to minister remains in effect and as long as the person maintains the qualifications for ministry.

ARTICLE X - The Pastor-Teacher

Section 1. Election

The Pastor-Teacher shall be selected by the Board and confirmed by the members of the church and such confirmation shall be a majority affirmation. The affirmation process is a period of time after which the candidate is presented to the Church. He shall remain in office an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations: The Elders reserve the right to dismiss the Pastor-Teacher upon giving him three month's written notice of its intention to dismiss. The Pastor-Teacher must give three month's notice if he intends to resign. The time limit of a Pastor-Teacher's resignation or dismissal is subject to a lesser time if both the Pastor-Teacher and the church by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

Section 2. Duties

The Pastor-Teacher shall be an ex officio member of all councils and committees, and he shall be responsible to the Board of Elders. The Pastor-Teacher shall arrange for and conduct all public and regular services of the church and shall be responsible for general oversight of the spiritual welfare of the church. In the absence of the Pastor-Teacher, the Board of Elders shall be responsible to arrange for the public and regular services of the church.

ARTICLE XI - Discipleship Counselling

- (a) All Christians struggle with sin and the effect it has on their lives and relationships (see Romans 3:23, 7:7-25; Galatians 5:19-23). Whenever a Christian is unable to overcome sinful attitudes or behaviours through private efforts, God commands that he should seek assistance from other members, and especially from the Elders, who have the responsibility of providing pastoral counselling and oversight (see Romans 15:14; Galatians 6:1-2; Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-4:2; Hebrews 10:24-25, 13:17). Therefore, this church encourages and enjoins its members to make confession to and seek counsel from each other, as clearly provided in James 5:16, and from the Elders.
- (b) We believe that the Bible provides thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, our discipleship counselling shall be based on Scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Neither the pastoral nor the lay counsellors of this church are trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such persons.
- (c) Some church members who serve as recognised pastoral or lay counselors on behalf of the church may also work in professional fields outside the church. In this situation it is understood that as counselors of the church, they provide discipleship counselling. They do not provide professional advice or services from retention in their professional practice or from their professional expertise, training, licensing, experience or capacity.

ARTICLE XII - Confidentiality

- (a) The Bible teaches that Christians should carefully guard any personal and private information that others reveal to them (Proverbs 11:13). Protecting confidences is a sign of Christian love and respect (Matthew 7:12). It also discourages gossip (Proverbs 16:28; 17:9; 20:19; 26:20), invites confession (Proverbs 28:13; James 5:16), and encourages people to seek discipleship counselling (Romans 15:14). Since these goals are essential to the ministry of the gospel and the work of this church, all members are expected to refrain from gossip and to respect the confidences of others. In particular, our Elders shall carefully protect all information that they receive through pastoral counselling, subject to the following guidelines.
- (b) Although confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible, there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when the Elders of the church believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people in the following circumstances:
1. When an Elder is uncertain of how to counsel a person about a particular problem and needs to seek advice from other Elders in this church or, if the person attends another church, from the leaders of that church (Proverbs 11:14; 13:10; 15:22; 20:18; Matthew 18:15-17).
 2. When the person who disclosed the information or any other person is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene (Proverbs 24:11-12).
 3. When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to institute disciplinary proceedings (Matthew 18:15-20), or seek the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (Romans 13:1-5).
 4. When required by law; e.g., to report suspected child abuse (Mark 9:36-37, 42; Matthew 18:1-14).
- c) Scripture commands that confidential information is to be shared with others only when a problem cannot be resolved through the efforts of a small group of people within the church (Matthew 18:15-17). Therefore, except as provided in Section b above (Points 1 to 4), an Elder may not disclose confidential information to anyone inside or outside this church without the approval of the Board of Elders or the consent of the person who originally disclosed the information. The Board of Elders may approve such disclosure only when it finds that all internal efforts to resolve a problem have been exhausted (1 Corinthians 6:1-8), and the problem cannot be satisfactorily resolved without the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (Romans 13:1-5), or when the Board of Elders deems it appropriate for the giving of testimony in a court of law, the reporting of physical or sexual abuse, or other cooperation with civil authorities.
- d) The Elders may, but need not, provide counselees with written notice of these confidentiality provisions, but these provisions shall be in effect regardless of whether such notice is given.

ARTICLE X III - Settlement of Disputes

In any dispute arising between church members, pastors, or staff pertaining to any matter of spiritual teaching or practices, church finances, or title to property purchased with church contributions, the dispute shall be resolved by the Board of Elders of the church. A

decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration, in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself and striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3).

- a) This church is committed to resolving in a biblical manner all disputes that may arise within our body. This commitment is based on God's command that Christians should strive earnestly to live at peace with one another (see Matthew 5:9; John 17:20-23; Romans 12:18; Ephesians 4:1-3) and that when disputes arise, Christians should resolve them according to the principles set forth in Holy Scripture (see Proverbs 19:11; Matthew 5:23-25; 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Galatians 6:1). We believe that these commands and principles are obligatory on all Christians, and absolutely essential for the well being and work of the church. Therefore, any and all disputes in this church shall be resolved according to biblical principles, as provided in these Rules.
- b) When a member of this church has a conflict with, or is concerned about the behaviour of another member, he shall attempt to resolve the matter as follows:
 - (1) The offended or concerned person shall prayerfully examine himself and take responsibility for his contribution to a problem (Matthew 7:3-5), and he shall prayerfully seek to discern whether the offence is so serious that it cannot be overlooked (Proverbs 19:11; see also Proverbs 12:16; 15:18; 17:14; 20:3; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13; 1 Peter 4:8).
 - (2) If the offence is too serious to overlook, the offended person shall go, repeatedly if necessary, and talk to the offender in an effort to resolve the matter personally and privately, having first confessed his own wrongdoing (Matthew 18:15).
 - (3) If the offender will not listen and if the problem is too serious to overlook, the offended or concerned person shall return with one or two other people who will attempt to help the parties resolve their differences (Matthew 18:16); these other people may be members or officers of the church, or other respected Christians in the community. At the request of either party to the dispute, the church shall make every effort to assist the parties in resolving their differences and being reconciled.
- c) Conflicts involving doctrine or church discipline shall be resolved according to the procedures set forth these Rules on church discipline.

ARTICLE X IV - Other Provisions

Section 1. Endorsement of Documents, Contracts

The Board of Elders, except as in the Rules otherwise provided, may authorise any officer or officers, agent or agents, to enter into any contract or execute any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Incorporated Body. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorised by the Board of Elders, no officer, agent or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the Incorporated Body by any contract or agreement, or to pledge its credit, or to render it liable for any purpose or to any amount.

Subject to the provisions of applicable law, any note, mortgage, evidence of indebtedness, contract, conveyance, or other instrument in writing and any assignment or endorsement thereof executed or entered into between this Incorporated Body and any other person, when signed jointly by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, and the Secretary and the Treasurer of this Incorporated Body shall be valid and binding on this Incorporated Body in the absence of actual knowledge on the part of the other person that the signing officers had no authority to execute the same.

Section 2. Amendments

These Rules may be amended and new and additional Rules may be made from time to time at any time by the Board of Elders in the exercise of the power granted to said Board of Elders in these Rules.

Any amendment to the Rules or Statement of Purpose shall be approved by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Section 3. Record of Amendments

Whenever an amendment or new Rules is adopted, it shall be copied in the book of minutes with the original Rules, in the appropriate place. If any Rules is repealed, the fact of repeal with the date of the meeting at which the repeal was enacted or written assent was filed shall be stated in said book.

ARTICLE X VI - Corporate Records and Reports

Section 1. Records

The Incorporated Body shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books, and records of its business and properties. All such books, records, and accounts shall be kept at its principal place of business in the State of Victoria, as fixed by the Board of Elders from time to time.

Section 2. Inspection of Books and Records

Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect all books, records, documents of every kind, and the physical properties of the Incorporated Body, and also of its subsidiary organisations, if any.

Section 3. Fiscal Year of the Incorporated Body

The fiscal year of the Incorporated Body shall begin on the first day of July and end on the last day of June in each year.

ARTICLE X VII - Dissolution

Upon dissolution of this Incorporated Body, the Board of Elders shall cause the assets herein to be distributed to another Incorporated Body with purposes similar to that identified in Article II of these Rules. No distributions shall be made to members upon the winding up of this Incorporated Body.