



**“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.” - Matthew 11:28**

PAKURANGA CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH

Constitution

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1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 The “Pakuranga Chinese Baptist Church” was established on 6th Dec. 1992, and hereafter will be referred to as “the Church.**
- 1.2 The Church is dedicated to the fulfilment of the Great Commission as given by the Lord Jesus Christ, to spreading the gospel, to leading people to Christ, to shepherding believers, to upholding the biblical Truth, to promoting fellowship among members and in serving God in accordance with the spirit of the principle of the New Testament Church.**
- 1.3 Unless stated otherwise, where the meaning in the English version and the Chinese version differs, the meaning in the Chinese version shall take precedence.**

2. THE ARTICLES OF FAITH

The faith fundamentals of the Church is :

- 2.1 That the Holy Bible, completed with its sixty-six Scriptures, all being Infallible inspiration of God, is without error, and serves as the utmost guidelines in all aspects in life and living of believers. °**
- 2.2 That there is only one God and in the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine essence and glory.**
- 2.3 That Lord Jesus Christ conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Virgin Mary, tempted but did not sin, crucified and died on the cross for the salvation of all mankind, has risen from the dead after three days and ascended into Heaven. He shall come again in full glory to rule and judge the world. The righteous and the sinners will rise together but only the righteous will be saved whilst the sinners shall be condemned.**
- 2.4 That the Holy Spirit is a person, who convicts man of sin, show salvation of Christ to the unsaved, and who guides and sanctifies the believers.**
- 2.5 The fall of our original parents has plunged the whole human race into eternal condemnation. Since then, all men are sinful by nature, disobeying God and befriending Satan. By themselves, they cannot be saved without help. However man is still permitted to turn to God by volition.**
- 2.6 That justification is by Grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Grace wise: God sent His only begotten Son to the world to be crucified as atonement for the sin of all mankind. Faith wise, when a person is convicted by the Holy Spirit to confess of his/her sin and willingly accepts Jesus Christ as his/her personal saviour and commits his/her life to Jesus. Once saved, always saved.**

- 2.7 That believers should have the experience of being born again and should exercise the responsibilities of being a royal priest. Each believer also should examine the Scriptures studiously and pray to God fervently.
- 2.8 That the Church was established in accordance with the provision given within the Principle of Church in the New Testament. It is hence referred to as a 'New Testament Church', who is a spiritual body initiated and organised by a local group of regenerated believers in a given community. Christ is worshipped as the Head, and the members is the Body, in which everyone is equal in all aspects of rights and responsibilities.

3. THE ORDINANCES

- 3.1 In accordance with the Scriptural teachings of New Testament, the Church has established two ordinances of which both are only symbolic in nature and are not conducive to Salvation. These are to be administered either by the Pastor or a deacon of the Church, and in their absence, a volunteer pastor from another Baptist Church. Assistance to observing these ordinances may come from the deacons or church committee members.
- 3.2 Baptism Baptism is observed by raising the person after the total immersion of him/her into water and this action has no implication whatsoever on effecting the cleansing of sin. This Believer's Baptism is symbolic in essence. For all who believed and are saved and then received Baptism, such witnessing shows that each of the baptised is now united with Christ in His death, His burial and His resurrection. Through the observance of Believer's Baptism he/she becomes a member of the Church
- 3.3 The Lord's Supper This is an ordinance for the members of the Church to commemorate together the sacrifice of Christ and His Redeeming Grace. The bread is symbolic of the body of Christ and the cup, symbolic of the precious blood of Christ. Members should observe this strictly and always examine themselves carefully before partaking in the Lord's Supper.

4. AIMS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE CHURCH

- 4.1 To meet regularly for worship, prayer, teaching, encouragement and fellowship
- 4.2 To promote the love of God via the ministry of gospel preaching and the practical care for the community.
- 4.3 To lead people to join our church and build them up as disciples in accordance with biblical teachings in all circumstances.

- 4.4 To engage in the local and overseas mission to spread the good news of the Kingdom of Heaven.
- 4.5 To provide appropriate assistance to the needy through practical actions.

5. ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

- 5.1 The Structural Organisation of the Church is basically ‘Congregational’, with the Lord Jesus Christ as the supreme head. The Members’ Meeting makes ultimately the decisions for all church affairs in the guidance of God. As such, the Members Meeting is vested with all the utmost decision-making powers of the Church.
- 5.2 While working closely with the Baptist Churches of New Zealand, the Church is an independent body governed through her own members, recognising that the Church is but one of the members of the wider body of Christ.
- 5.3 The leadership refers to the “Church Council” which is made up of
 - *the Deacons’ Board
 - *the Departmental Leaders’ Board
 - *the Church Secretary
 - *the Church TreasurerAll reporting to all the members for the functioning and development of the Church in one mind.
- 5.4 The Pastor’s Board:
A Pastors’ Board may be set up to include all the serving pastors of the Church, and may as well invite other retired pastors or those pastors not serving other churches to become members, so long as this is endorsed by the Members’ Meeting of the Church.
- 5.5 The Deacons’ Board:
The Deacons’ Board is made up of deacons who shall be responsible both for the supervision of, and providing assistance to the pastors in shepherding of the flock, and for the setting out the Church’s broad objectives and directions of the Church. The representatives from the Deacons’ Board are the ex-officio chairman in both the Church Council Meetings and Members’ Meeting (Please refer to the Constitution Supplement 4 for detailed qualifications and duties of Deacons.
- 5.6 The Department Leaders’ Board:
The Department Leaders’ Board is made up of department leaders, who shall be responsible for the daily operations and administration of the church in accordance with their respective departments. (Any references to “Church Committee Members” in

this Constitution are to be taken as synonymous to “Department Leaders”.)

5.7 Church Secretary:

The Secretary elected by the “Active Members” oversees all secretarial duties of the Church.

5.8 Church Treasurer:

The Treasurer elected by the “Active Members” oversees all financial matters of the Church.

5.9 Depending upon the needs of the situation, ‘ad hoc committees’ may be set up to handle tasks of a specific nature. Such ad hoc committees do not constitute part of the “Church Council”.

5.10 The Church does not align itself with any political organization.

6. MEMBERSHIP

6.1 There are two conditions of Memberships.

6.1.1 The “Active Members” are members whose names are recorded in the “Active Membership Roll”.

6.1.2 The “Inactive Members” are members whose names are recorded in the “Inactive Membership Roll”.

6.1.3 Inactive Members do not have voting rights.

6.1.4 The Membership Rolls shall be kept and reviewed annually.

6.2 A person who wishes to become a member of the Church must satisfy any one of the following requirements:

6.2.1 As a believer, who receives Believer’s Baptism, after he/she has made a decision to commit to following Christ, such baptism is performed under the endorsement of the Members’ Meeting upon the recommendation of, either a pastor and/or a deacon, who have examined and are assured of the respective application’s faith and walk of life in accordance with the salvation requirements of Bible. (For interim arrangement in the absence of pastors or deacons, see Constitution Supplement 1)

6.2.2 A Member of other [Baptist] churches, whose faith and baptism are equivalent to those of the Church (please refer to clause 2 “The Articles of Faith” & clause 3 “The Ordinances”), who wishes to become a member shall:

6.2.2.1 submit a letter of recommendation from the original church; or

6.2.2.2 be recommended by 2 members of the Church; or

6.2.2.3 be recommended by pastor of a Baptist Church. After being examined and are assured of his/her faith and walk of life by either a pastor and/or a deacon, the respective applicant will be recommended to the Members’ Meeting for acceptance into membership.

(For interim arrangement in the absence of pastors or deacons, see the Constitution Supplement 1)

- 6.2.3** A member of any other non-Baptist churches, who wishes to become a member but do not intend to be baptised again in this Church, may do so given the fulfilment of any one of the following requirements:

6.2.3.1 submit a letter of recommendation from the original church; or

6.2.3.2 be recommended 2 members of the Church; or

6.2.3.3 be recommended by a pastor of a Baptist Church.

The Principle Pastor and two members of the Deacons Board shall assess the person jointly, after which, the applicant may be recommended to the Members' Meeting for acceptance into membership. The person will enjoy equal rights as the other Church Member, but cannot be selected for deacon appointments. The 25 Founding Members of the Church are exempted from the above restrictions and can be appointed deacons.

(For names of the 25 Founding Members, see the Constitution Supplement 1)

(For interim arrangement in the absence of pastors or deacons, see the Constitution Supplement 1)

- 6.3** Transferring Membership to another church; As membership of the Church are taken up voluntarily, any member wishing to be transferred to another church may apply for a letter of recommendation, which will be issued upon endorsement at the Members' Meeting.

- 6.4** Transferring to "Inactive Membership Roll":

6.4.1 Any member, for the past 2 years or more, who:

6.4.1.1 has not participated regularly in the Church's worship services; or

6.4.1.2 cannot be contacted; or

6.4.1.3 has not fulfilled the Members' duties, The Church may suggest to transfer their names to the "Inactive membership Roll" upon the endorsement at the Members' Meeting.

(For Members' Duties, see the Constitution Supplement 1)

- 6.4.2** Any member who, due to emigration or other reasons, will not be able to participate regularly in the worship services or will not be able to fulfil the Members' duties, may apply to have his/her name transferred to the "Inactive Membership Roll". This takes effect upon endorsement at the Members' Meeting.

(For Members' duties, see the Constitution Supplement 1)

- 6.5** Cancellation of membership:

If any member who is found to have violated in any one of the following situations, in spite of repeated admonishments from members of the Pastors' Board and/or the Deacons' Board

according to the teachings of the Bible, fails to repent, the Pastors Board and Deacons Board shall recommend to the Members' Meeting to have the member's membership cancelled. Upon endorsement at the Members' Meeting, the member will be notified of the cancellations in writing, These situation include:

- 6.5.1 Participating in cults or heresy violating " The Articles of Faith" of the Church; or
- 6.5.2 Bringing shame unto the name of the Lord; or
- 6.5.3 Failure to uphold the Christian faith; or
- 6.5.4 Deliberately harming the reputation of the Church; or
- 6.5.5 Deliberately harming the interests of the Church.
(For interim arrangement in the absence of pastors or deacons, see the Constitution Supplement 1)
- 6.6 Restoration of Membership
 - 6.6.1 An " inactive Member" may apply to have his/her name transferred to the "Active Membership Roll", in the following ways:
 - 6.6.1.1 give reason for the request
 - 6.6.1.2 the Pastors Board and Deacons Board will assess the application. In light of a satisfactory assurance of the intention for continued commitment in the future, the applicant will be recommended to the Members' Meeting for restoration of 'Active Membership'
(For interim arrangement in the absence of pastors or deacons, see the Constitution Supplement 1)
 - 6.6.2 An ex-member, whose membership has been cancelled, wishes to re-join the Church must fulfil the following requirements:
 - 6.6.2.1 give reason for the request; and
 - 6.6.2.2 the Pastors Board and Deacons Board will assess the application. In light of a satisfactory assurance of the intention for continued commitment in the future, the applicant will be recommended to Members' Meeting for restoration of 'Active Membership' ; and
 - 6.6.2.3 the applicant has to give a public confession to show genuine repentance at a Members' Meeting. The Members' Meeting shall then decide whether the Membership shall be reinstated.
(For interim arrangement in the absence of pastors or deacons, see the Constitution Supplement 1)

7. MINISTERS AND OFFICER

- 7.1 The Church may employ the following salaried staff (For job description and employment criteria, see the Constitution Supplement)
 - 7.1.1 The Principal Pastor
The Principal Pastor, who Being an ex-officio member of all committees of the church, is entrusted with the spiritual oversight

of the church. The Principal Pastor shall oversee the preaching of the Word in all meetings.

7.1.2 Pastors, Assistant Pastors and Other ministers: Pastors: Assistant Pastors and other ministers may be employed to assist with the pastoral duties of the Church.

7.1.3 Church Clerks: Church Clerks may be employed to assist with operational duties of the church.

7.1.4 Others

Additional staff may be employed from time to time to facilitate the work of the Church as required.

7.2 The church may appoint the following volunteers (For job description and election criteria, see the Constitution Supplement 3)

7.2.1 Deacons : Deacons are spiritual leaders who are entrusted with the duties for the supervision of and providing for assistance to the pastors in shepherding of the flock, and for the setting out of the Church's Broad objectives and directions of the Church.

7.2.2 Department Leaders: Department Leaders are leaders of the departments, elected to manage and implement operational duties of respective departments.

7.2.3 Church Secretary: The Secretary is to be elected by the "Active Members". The Secretary shall oversee all secretarial duties of the Church. The Secretary is the Leader of the Secretarial Department.

7.2.4 Church Treasurer: The Church treasurer is to be elected by the "Active Members" The treasurer shall oversee all financial matters of the Church. The Treasurer is the Leader of the Finance Department.

8. MEETING

8.1 Purpose

The purpose of meeting shall be to discern and confirm the will of the Lord on all matters of the Church.

8.2 The Structural Organisation of the Church is basically 'Congregational' with the Lord Jesus Christ as the supreme head. The Members' Meeting makes ultimately the decisions for all church affairs in the guidance of God. As such, the Members Meeting is vested with all the utmost decision-making powers of the church.

8.3 Members Meetings consist of:

*** Regular Meetings**

*** Annual General Meetings**

*** Special Members' Meetings**

8.3.1 Regular Meetings:

The Regular Meetings shall be held regularly, to discuss church business.

(For the dates, frequency and procedure of Regular Meetings, see the Constitution Supplement 5)

8.3.2 Annual General Meetings:

The Annual Meetings shall be held once a year on a scheduled date. The agenda shall include annual reports, appointment of auditor, financial reports, financial budgets and any other business.

(For date and procedure of the Annual General Meetings. See the Constitution Supplement 5)

8.3.3 Special Meetings:

The Special Meetings are to be called by the Deacons Board to deal with special matters raised. If need be, this may also be initiated through a request to the deacons' board by a designated number of "Active members". Notices of special meetings shall be given to the members at least 7 days prior to the meeting date and at the Worship Service preceding the Special Meeting. Where this is not possible, every attempt shall be made to notify the members.

(For the designated number, see the Constitution Supplement 5)

(For interim arrangement in the absence of pastors or deacons, see the Constitution Supplement 5)

8.4 All Members' Meeting shall be conducted democratically based on established parliamentary procedures. Each Active Member shall have equal voting rights. Meetings shall be held on pre-scheduled dates. All members of the Church should attend the meetings. The generally required quorum is 25% of all members on the "Active Membership Roll".

8.5 Resolutions of the Members' Meeting shall be decided by a simple majority vote but shall not be less than 10 votes cast, except in matters requiring special voting decision rule.

8.5.1 Secret ballot may be used when requested by 10% or more of the "Active Members" present at the meeting. (For example and voting criteria of Special Resolutions, see the Constitution Supplement 5)

8.6 A representative of the Deacons' Board is responsible for the calling of all meetings. A representative from the Deacons' Board shall chair both the Church Council Meetings and the Members' Meetings. The Secretary shall be secretary of the Members' Meetings. In the absence of the Chairman or Secretary, an attending "Active Member" shall be appointed to take up this position. (For interim arrangement in the absence of deacons, see the Constitution Supplement 5)

9. CHURCH GATHERING

- 9.1 Church Gatherings include Worship Services, Sunday School, Prayer Meetings, Fellowship Meetings, Bible Study classes, etc. Members should participate in these gatherings and encourage family and friends to join in.**
- 9.2 The church should actively organise evangelistic events to promote both spiritual growth and outreach work, and to teach the Biblical Truth of Salvation to the non-believing friends and family. Members should participate in these events themselves and should also encourage family and friends to join in.**

10. FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS

- 10.1 The finance of the Church will be derived exclusively from offerings made by members of the Church on a voluntary basis. Any donation from any other organizations shall not be accepted unless endorsed at the Members' Meeting,**
- 10.2 It is responsibility of the members to practise tithe offering in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures.**
- 10.3 Proper financial records shall be kept and be ready for open inspection. Financial reports shall be prepared on a timely basis and these shall be published or distributed regularly to the congregation. Receipts shall be available for registered donors on request.**
- 10.4 Financial records are managed under a unified accounting system. Receipts and expenditure of each department shall be managed under the Church Accounts.**
- 10.5 The Church Bank Account.**
- 10.5.1 The operation of the Church Account must be supervised by two out of three appointed Deacons or Department Leaders.**
- 10.5.2 Every Bank cheque must be signed by two out of three appointed Deacons or Department Leaders.**
- 10.6 No private pecuniary profit for any individual is allowed.**
- 10.6.1 No Decision of the church or its leadership shall be made which would allow a member or members to receive any private pecuniary profit provided that;**
 - 10.6.1.1 A member may receive reimbursement for all expenses properly incurred by that member in connection with the affairs of the church;**
 - 10.6.1.2 The church may pay reasonable and proper remuneration to any officer or employee of the church in return for services actually rendered to the church;**

- 10.6.1.3** Any member of the church may be paid for all usual professional business or trade charges for services rendered, time expended and all acts done by that member or by any firm or entity of which that member is a partner, employee or associate, in connection with the affairs of the church;
- 10.6.1.4** Any Member may retain any remuneration properly payable to the member by any company or undertaking with which the member may in any way be concerned or involved for which that member has acted in any capacity whatsoever notwithstanding that member's connection with that company or undertaking is in any way attributable to that member's connection with the church.
- 10.6.1.5** Nothing shall prevent the church from making payments to any individual (whether a member of the church or not) in fulfilling any of the purposes expressed in Section 4 (Aims and Functions of the Church) hereof. 10
- 10.6.2** Members or leaders of the church, in determining all reimbursements, remuneration and charges payable in the terms of this clause, shall ensure that the restrictions imposed by the following clause(ie 10.6.3) are strictly observed.
- 10.6.3** Notwithstanding anything contained or implied in this constitution, no member of the church or any person associated with that member shall participate in, or materially influence, any decision made by the church in respect to the payment to or on behalf of that member or associated person of any income benefit or advantage whatsoever.
- 10.7** Sections 10.1 to 10.6 are recommended by the {Baptist Union in accordance with the requirement of the "Charities Act"(2005). Where the meaning differs in the English wording and in the Chinese wording, the meaning in the English version takes precedence.

11. TRUSTEE

- 11.1** Any land or any property including church buildings and manses shall be vested in the Baptist Union as Trustee, which shall hold them for and on behalf of the church and shall deal with the property by consent and direction of the church in accordance with the trusts declared in the Sixth Schedule to the Baptist Union Incorporation Act (1923)
- 11.2** Winding up provisions In reference to Section17, 18, 19 of the Sixth Schedule to the Baptist Union Incorporation Act 1923, if the members resolve at a properly constituted procedure of the church adopted by a majority of at least 85% of all the "Active Members" that the church should be wound up then the net proceeds arising

from such winding up shall be applied with the prior approval of the church members and the prior approval of the Baptist Union of NZ to such charitable purposes within NZ as the members may determine or, in default of such determination, as may be determined by a Judge of the High Court of NZ on application by the members, and such proceeds shall not be paid or distributed amongst the members of the church (For winding procedures, see Constitution Supplement 6)

- 11.3 With reference to Section 11.2 where the meaning in the English version and the Chinese version differs the meaning in English version shall take precedence.

12. THE CHURCH CONSTITUTION

- 12.1 Unless the church agrees to forgo its charitable status and income exemption, no alteration shall be made to this constitution which would in any way detract from the exclusively charitable nature of the church and in particular shall not alter the provisions of section 10.6 (No private pecuniary profit for any individual) and section 11.2 (winding up provisions) hereof.
- 12.2 Amendments to this Constitution may be initiated by a written request to the Deacons Board, signed by designated number of “Active Members”. Upon receipt of the request, the Deacons Board shall call a Special Members’ Meeting within a month to discuss the proposed amendment. (For requirement of a Special Members’ Meeting and designated number of Active Members, see the constitution Supplement 7)
- 12.3 Amendments to the Constitution require a majority of at least two-thirds votes of all “Active Members”.
- 12.4 However, no change shall be made to Section 2 “The Articles of Faith” and Section 3 “The Ordinances” without recommendation from the Deacons Board, in which case, a majority of at least 85% votes of all “Active Members” is required) (For interim arrangement in the absence of pastors or deacons, see the Constitution Supplement 7)