



Constitution & Bylaws

May 2018

OPENING STATEMENT

As a member Church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance of New Zealand (“The Alliance”), Blockhouse Bay Community Church (“The Church”) is governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of The Alliance.

OUR CALLING

As a local Christian church, we exist to serve God in our community, and have influence throughout our nation and around the world. We believe we have a calling which explains God’s purposes for us in general terms:

We’re called by God to be a tangible expression of Jesus to the world, empowered by the Spirit to proclaim the Gospel, reconcile lost people back to God, and transform them into fully devoted followers of Christ.

Article 1 – NAME

The Church shall be known as Blockhouse Bay Community Church, a Church of The Alliance.

Article 2 - MEMBERSHIP AND DOCTRINE

A. Qualifications for Membership

1. Members must have experienced the “new birth” through Jesus Christ, and have made a public confession of faith through water baptism.
2. Members shall be committed to the calling, culture and ministries of The Church, and will endeavour to support them by regular attendance, by submitting to its Leadership as unto the Lord, and by the stewardship of their finances, time and giftings.
3. Members shall have full acceptance of “The Doctrinal Statement of the Alliance” and be in agreement and cooperation with the principles and objects of the Alliance.
4. Members must be at least sixteen (16) years of age.

B. Applications for membership in The Church shall be examined by the Elders Board and upon a unanimous affirmative vote membership will be extended

to the applicant. The congregation shall be notified of the receipt of membership as soon as possible.

- C. Members, whose conduct or beliefs are contrary to the membership qualifications, shall be dealt with by the Elders Board according to Scriptural principles. Such a member may be suspended or dismissed from membership and/or office upon a two thirds majority decision of the Elders Board. If said member is also a member of the Elders Board, a majority decision shall be constituted by the remaining members of the Elders Board. They shall be notified in writing of the termination or suspension of their office and/or membership. Members having been dismissed from office, upon evidence of sincere repentance and their personal testimony in word and action, may be reinstated upon the majority affirmative vote of the Elders Board. Members having forfeited their membership, upon evidence of sincere repentance and their personal testimony in word and action, may be reinstated upon a two thirds majority affirmative vote of the Elders Board.

- D. Members who are absent for three (3) months or longer without satisfactory reason, during which time reasonable efforts have been made to encourage their attendance and cooperation, may have their names removed from the members roll or placed on the inactive Members Roll (non-voting members). They shall be notified in writing of the termination of their active membership. Recommendations concerning these matters are to be made by a majority affirmative vote of the Elders Board. Members may be returned to the Active Member Roll by the same voting process as reception.

- E. The Elders Board shall review and update the Members Rolls annually, prior to the Annual General Meeting.

- F. Members in good standing on terminating their membership in The Church may request letters of recommendation to be sent to other churches with which they may desire to unite.

- G. No Member of The Church, or anyone associated with a Member, is allowed to take part in, or influence any decision made by the organisation in respect of payments to, or on behalf of, the member or associated person of any income, benefit, or advantage.

H. Any payments made to a member of the organisation, or person associated with a member, must be for goods or services that advance the charitable purpose and must be reasonable and relative to payments that would be made between unrelated parties.

Article 3 - ORDINANCES AND MINISTRATIONS

- A. Baptism is by immersion and is recognised as a Scriptural ordinance.
- B. Communion shall be celebrated regularly.
- C. The Elders Board shall anoint and pray for the sick, and/or shall administer Communion to those who are confined, on request.
- D. Parents may arrange with the Pastoral Team for public dedication of their children to the Lord.

Article 4 - ELDERS BOARD

A. Formation

The Elders Board shall consist of the Senior Pastor, the Associate Pastor, and members elected as Elders at the Annual General Meeting. Elders may be men or women who satisfy the character requirements for church leadership as set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

The Senior Pastor or member appointed by him shall be the Chair. In the event of there being no Senior Pastor, the Elders Board shall elect their Chair.

B. Function

The Elders Board Is the highest functioning authority of The Church and will provide oversight of the ministries and operations of The Church. The Elders Board is responsible:

1. To oversee preaching and teaching
2. To make decisions on matters of doctrine and practice affecting The Church.
3. For the overseeing of pastoral care, including visitation, counselling, anointing and prayer for the sick, and support of Ministry and Management Team leaders.

4. For interviewing people for membership, baptism, and disciplinary issues, and for keeping the Membership rolls accurate.
5. To appoint on an annual basis Ministry & Management Team Leaders and to oversee the Church's programmes to ensure their harmony and contribution to the purposes of The Church.
6. To issue calls to Senior Pastoral candidates with the approval of The Church membership and the National Director of the Alliance. All other new church positions to be approved by the Elders Board.
7. To appoint a Secretary who shall keep the minutes of all Elders Board meetings.
8. To approve offerings solicited from the congregation.

C. In the absence of an Elders Board:

1. If there is no Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor or elected Elders to serve on the Elders Board, The Alliance will be asked to form an Advisory Team to provide leadership over The Church.
2. The Church Membership may also request that an Alliance Advisory Team is formed if there is no Senior Pastor for more than 6 months. All Officers, Committees, and Ministries, except the Nominating Committee, will be accountable to the Alliance Advisory Team.

D. Other Guidelines

1. A majority of the Elders Board shall constitute a quorum
2. The Elders Board shall meet at least monthly for prayer and business.
3. All Officers, Committees, Ministries except the Nominating Committee are amenable to the Elders Board.
4. If an Elder is considered by fellow Elders to be living contrary to scriptural standards of Eldership, the Elders Board may, by a two thirds majority vote of the remaining members, call for the resignation of that Elder.
5. The Elders Board is accountable to The Church membership and the National Leadership Team (NLT) of The Alliance.
6. Elders who have served faithfully in the ministries of The Church and retire from serving in an official capacity can be appointed Elder Emeritus by the Elders Board in recognition of their ministry.

Article 5 - MINISTRY & MANAGEMENT LEADERS

- A. Ministry & Management Leaders are appointed by the Elders Board to provide leadership over specific ministry areas as determined by the Elders Board.
 - 1. A minimum of two Management Leaders are required to look after the Financial and Property responsibilities of The Church. The responsibilities of these leaders are listed in role descriptions held by the Elders Board and shall include:
 - a. An annual audit of The Church accounts, made available to The Church membership within six months of the closing balance date.
 - b. Compliance with the Charities Act 2005 and the requirements of Charities Services as regulator.
- B. Ministry & Management Leaders are to be church members in good standing whose lives are consistent with the standards of leadership expressed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- C. Ministry & Management Leaders shall meet with the Elders Board at least 3 times per year.

Article 6 – OFFICERS

A. The Officers of The Church

There shall be five Officers of The Church. Priority is given to the Senior Pastor, the Associate Pastor, the Finance Team Leader, the Property Team Leader, and one other member as determined by the Elders Board. In the event that some of these people are unavailable, or the positions are vacant, the Elders Board shall determine the Officers of The Church.

B. Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor shall have primary responsibility for oversight of the Elders Board and The Church, and he shall function within the job description approved by the Elders Board.

The Senior Pastor is a member ex-officio of all committees of The Church.

The Senior Pastor shall be called by the Elders Board upon approval by The Church membership and the National Director of the Alliance. The Elders Board shall not negotiate with any candidate without the approval of the National Director. The Senior Pastor may resign from The Church by giving three months notice of his intention to both the National Director and the Elders Board. The Elders Board may seek the resignation of the Senior Pastor after seeking approval from the National Director. (For possible conflicts of interest when the Senior Pastor is also the Alliance National Director see *Article 7 – Relationship*)

C. Associate Pastor

The Associate Pastor supports the Senior Pastor as per the job description approved by the Elders Board. The Associate Pastor shall be called by the Elders Board upon approval by The Church membership. The Associate Pastor is a member ex-officio of all committees of The Church.

D. Election and Appointment of Officers

The Elders shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Church members. All other Officers shall be appointed by the Elders Board.

E. Trustees

Where required, Trustees shall be appointed by the Elders Board. Their duties and ministries shall be determined by the Elders Board at the time of their appointment.

F. Term of Office

The term of office for all elected positions shall be for the period from the date of election until the following Annual General Meeting.

Article 7 - RELATIONSHIP

The parent body of this church is The Alliance. The Church is subordinate to the constitution of that body. The Church shall contribute financially towards the work of the Alliance as determined by the Alliance Council.

When there is a need to deal with the National Director of the Alliance, and that person is also the Senior Pastor of this church, and it is determined by the Elders Board that there is a possible conflict of interest, the Elders Board shall refer instead to the Chairman of the Licensing and Ordination Committee of the Alliance.

Article 8 – GOVERNMENT

A. Annual General Meetings

1. There shall be an Annual General Meeting (“AGM”) of all members held at a time fixed by The Church Bylaws where officers are elected and reports from the Pastoral Team, Elders Board, Ministry and Management Leaders, and others as determined by the Elders Board are received. This will include a proposed budget for the forthcoming year.
2. On general church matters in which no legal questions are involved, it is understood that all members in good and regular standing who have reached the age of 16 years are entitled to vote. In matters involving the title to property of legal procedures, the law of New Zealand shall determine the age at which members are eligible to vote.
3. Elections shall be by secret ballot
4. The statistical and financial year shall be from 1st January – 31st December.
5. The AGM shall be held by the end of March.
6. A quorum shall be one half of the active church membership.

7. All elected positions will be for a term of one (1) year and shall be elected by a minimum of two thirds majority of the total valid votes cast. Abstentions shall not be included in the total numbers. Results of the secret ballot shall be recorded with full details of votes cast for each candidate.
8. Offices vacated before the term is ended may be filled by the Elders Board until the elections at the next AGM.
9. The terms of office for all elected persons shall begin immediately after their election at the AGM.
10. Notice of the AGM and a draft report of nominations for elections shall be made available to the Members at least ten (10) days immediately preceding the scheduled meeting date.
11. The Annual Report package, as determined by the Elders Board, shall be printed and distributed at least ten (10) days preceding the AGM.
12. Each Church ministry which operates a bank account must present a financial report as part of their annual report. This financial report must include details of receipts, payments and the closing balance of the account.
13. The Elders shall appoint a Chairperson for Members meetings.
14. Minutes of Members meetings will be recorded and made available to members within 3 months of the meeting.

B. Special Members Meetings

Special Members meetings may be called by a majority vote of the Elders Board. Announcement of such meetings must be made **ten (10) days** preceding the meeting.

Article 9 - NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- A. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Senior Pastor, two (2) Members elected by the Elders Board and at least two (2) members elected by the Membership at least one (1) month prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- B. The Nominating Committee shall present a draft report of nominations to the members at least ten (10) days immediately preceding the scheduled meeting date. A final report of nominations for Elders shall be submitted at the Annual General Meeting.
- C. Suggestions for nominations may be submitted in writing to the Nominating Committee for their consideration at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Article 10—MISSIONS CONFERENCE

A Missionary Conference shall be held annually as scheduled by the Alliance National Leadership Team.

Article 11 – PROPERTY

A. Real Property

The title to all real property shall be held by The Alliance. The Alliance National Leadership Team shall provide a declaration of trust indicating that the property is held in trust for The Church. The Church may acquire, sell, convey, exchange or encumber real property by order of The Church membership through the Elders Board. Where Trustees are required, the order of Membership shall proceed through them.

B. Personal Property

The Church may acquire, sell, improve, encumber and convey personal property for church purposes.

C. Dissolution

Should the Church cease to exist or cease to be subject to the constitution of the Alliance, then all of its property, appurtenances, and effects, then owned or held by it shall enure to the benefit of, and then become the property of, The Alliance.

Article 12 – RECORDS

- A. The official records of all Officers of The Church, and all of their departments, are the property of The Church.
- B. All financial records shall be audited annually or at any time on order of the Elders Board and presented to the church membership at a special meeting by the end of June.
- C. In the event of the death or resignation of the incumbent, or upon the election of their successor, the current records necessary for fulfilling the obligations of the office shall be passed on to the newly elected Officer.
- D. All records, other than current records, shall be kept in a safe repository selected by the Elders Board.
- E. All records and correspondence of secretaries and other officers shall be given to the Elders Board when such books and records have been completed, and shall be the property of The Church, and be preserved as permanent records of the activities of The Church. Records shall be retained for a minimum of ten (10) years at which time they may be ordered destroyed by the Elders Board.

Article 13 – AMENDMENTS to the CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

- A. The Elders Board may propose amendments to the Constitution and By Laws to the Congregation at the Annual General Meeting or Special Members Meeting, accompanied by the recommendation to adopt, amend or reject the amendments. This notification is to be given at least two weeks ten (10) days before the meeting.
- B. A group of at least ten percent of active members may present proposed amendment(s) to the Constitution and By Laws to the Elders Board. Such proposed amendment(s) are to be submitted to the Elders Board in writing at least sixty (60) days before the submission to the Congregation for action. The Elders Board shall then present the proposed amendment(s) to the Annual General Meeting or a Special Members Meeting at least two weeks before the

meeting accompanied by a recommendation to adopt, amend or reject the amendment(s).

- C. A two thirds majority vote at the Annual General Meeting or Special Members Meeting is required for adoption of proposed amendments.

Article 14 – BYLAWS

Local By-Laws not in conflict with the provisions of the Constitution may be adopted by a Members Meeting of The Church. A copy of such a By-Law shall be filed with the National Leadership Team. Any By-Law in conflict is null and void. The Alliance Rules Committee shall determine if any local By-Law is in conflict with the Constitution.

Article 15 – GENERAL

- A. Distribution of Church keys shall be at the discretion of the Elders Board who shall keep a record of all key holders.
- B. All delegates to the Annual General Council of The Alliance shall be appointed by the Elders Board.
- C. All bank accounts operated by ministries of The Church must have at least three signatories, two of which are required to authorise payments. No bank accounts shall be opened in the name of the Church without the prior approval of the Finance Team.
- D. The current rules of order as deemed by The Alliance shall be used to determine all matters of procedure not covered by the Constitution and By-Laws.
- E. No person or leadership group shall incur non-budgeted expenditure on any single item on behalf of The Church in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) without the prior approval of the congregation.

BLOCKHOUSE BAY COMMUNITY CHURCH

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