

TRUST DEED

AND

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

SOUTHDALE BAPTIST

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1. NAME

The name and designation of the Church shall be the Southdale Baptist Church.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF BAPTIST UNION

The Southdale Baptist Church (hereinafter styled "the Church") shall be a member of the Baptist Union of S.A.

3. CHURCH GOVERNMENT

The Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as the Supreme Head of the Church, undertakes to manage all its affairs according to New Testament teaching and recognizes the sole authority of the Holy Scriptures in all matters of faith and conduct.

4. DECLARATION OF BELIEF

The Church believes

- (a) in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in their original writings as fully inspired of God and accepts them as final authority for faith and life;
- (b) in one God eternally existing in three persons Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- (c) that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, a substitutionary sacrifice, according to the Scriptures, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood;
- (d) in the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, His ascension into heaven, and His present life as our High Priest and Advocate;
- (e) that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed two ordinances - Baptism and the Lord's Supper - to be observed as acts of obedience and as perpetual witnesses to the cardinal facts of the Christian faith;
- (f) that Baptism is the immersion of the believer in water as a confession of identification with Christ in burial and resurrection, and that the Lord's Supper is the partaking of bread and wine as symbolical of the Saviour's broken body and shed blood, in remembrance of His sacrificial death till He come;
- (g) in the priesthood of all believers;
- (h) in the personal return of our Lord Jesus Christ'.
- (i) that the message of Christianity is unique, being based upon the deity, authority and exclusive claims of the historic Christ, Who alone is "the Way, the Truth and the Life"; and there is no Salvation in any other;
- (j) that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the sole object of our worship, and that we must not give to those who have gone before us that worship which is due to Him alone; that He must be worshipped from the heart in spirit and in truth, and not by means of outward images made with hands;

- (k) that the honouring of father and mother during their lifetime, being the "first commandment with promise", is incumbent of all, Christians, second only to obedience to our Heavenly Father.
- (l) that God has sanctioned marriage between a man and a woman, therefore we believe in heterosexual relationships between a natural man and a natural woman within the confines of lawful matrimony. Adherence to this stated principal of sexual behaviour is an inherent requirement for membership with the Church. The said declaration shall be agreed to and signed by all applicants for membership of the Church.

5. **STATEMENT OF BAPTIST PRINCIPLES**

PREAMBLE: We as Baptists share many areas of our faith with other members of the professing Christian Church. These include a belief in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; in the Supreme Lordship of Jesus Christ as Head of the Church; and in the Bible as the inspired Word of God, and as the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

There are however areas of principle and practice where we as Baptists make distinctive emphases arising out of our understanding of the Scriptures. It is to clarify these that the following statement is made.

We, as Baptists believe in:

1. The CHURCH as the whole company of those who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ and regenerated by the Holy Spirit. The local church, being a manifestation of the universal church, is a community of believers in a particular place where the Word of God is preached and observed. It is fully autonomous and remains so notwithstanding responsibilities it may accept by voluntary association.
2. BELIEVER'S BAPTISM as an act of obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ and a sign of personal repentance, faith and regeneration; it consists of the immersion in water into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. The principle of CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT, namely, that a constituted church meeting is under, the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the highest court of authority for the local church; and that each individual member has the inalienable right and responsibility to participate fully in the life and government of the church, including the appointment of its leaders.
4. The PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS, by which we understand that each Christian has direct access to God through Christ our High Priest, and shares with Him in His work of reconciliation. This involves intercession, worship, faithful service and bearing witness to Jesus Christ, even to the end of the earth.
5. The principle of RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, namely that no individual should be coerced either by the State or by any secular, ecclesiastical or religious group in matters of faith. The right of private conscience is to be respected. For each believer this means the right to interpret the Scriptures responsibly and to act in the light of his conscience.
6. The principle of SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE in that, in the providence of God. The two differ in their respective natures and functions. The Church is not to be identified with the State nor is it, in its faith or practice to be directed or controlled by the State. The State is responsible for administering justice, ensuring an orderly community, and promoting the welfare of its citizens. The Church is responsible for preaching the Gospel and for demonstrating and making known God's will and care for all mankind.

6. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH

The Church shall be constituted of and shall include among its members

- (a) those persons who have prior to the adoption of the constitution united themselves together with a view to the establishment of the Church and
- (b) such persons as may hereafter be received into its fellowship in accordance with the provisions of the next succeeding article.

7. ADMISSION OF MEMBERS

Persons who have declared their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be admitted to the membership of the Church by

- (a) Vote of the Church.
- (b) Acceptance from other Baptist Churches.
- (c) Dual Membership.

Persons desirous of joining the Church under sub-section (a) shall make application to the Pastor or one of the officers of the Church. The Pastor and two members appointed by the Executive Committee of the Church shall interview such applicants and shall report to the Executive Committee who will, if satisfied with the report, submit the application to a Church meeting for approval. Alternatively, accepted forms may be provided for completion by applicants and if the Executive Committee considers such completed questionnaire satisfactory, they will submit the application to the Church meeting for approval.

Members of other Churches seeking fellowship with the Church under sub-section (b) shall produce letters of transfer from the Church in which their membership stands. Such letters shall be submitted to the Executive Committee, which shall decide on the application and report to the next Church meeting the names of the members so transferred.

The Church Executives and members shall exercise their discretion in the acceptance of members under sub-section (c) from evangelical churches other than Baptist Churches with the proviso that each case be considered on its own merits.

8. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

One church roll shall be kept by the Church Secretary. Any member who is absent from Divine Service for longer than 12 weeks without an acceptable reason to the Executive or Church, shall have his/her name placed on a subsidiary list for prayerful consideration. The Executive shall also make enquiries into the matter. Recommendation concerning Roll Revision may be brought up by the Church Members for further action. In the event of any allegation of unworthy conduct being brought against a member, the Executive shall make enquiry into the matter. After they have given the matter prayerful Consideration, their recommendation shall be conveyed to a Church meeting.

9. TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS

The Church shall function through the medium of its Executive Committee as hereinafter defined, who shall act as generally or specifically by the Church in general meeting assembled, or in accordance with regulations formed by the Church in General meeting, and who shall be accountable to the Church for the proper carrying out of all acts the performance of which may have been delegated to them and for the proper administration of all Church funds.

10. MEETINGS

The Church year shall end on the 30 June, and the Annual General Meeting of the Church shall be held as soon as possible after that date. At such Annual General Meeting the Executive Committee shall submit reports on the general activities of the Church during the preceding year, on the financial position of the Church and on matters affecting its spiritual and social welfare.

Ordinary general meetings of the Church may be held quarterly or as often as the business of the Church requires. At any of the aforesaid meetings the Executive Committee may require and the meeting may give direction for the guidance of such Executive Committee.

At such meetings any duly admitted member of the Church shall be entitled to vote, and any resolution passed by the majority of members at such meetings shall be binding upon the Church and its Executive Committee and until such resolution shall have been rescinded at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose in accordance with the provisions of the next succeeding article.

Ten (10%) per cent of the membership of the Church shall be deemed to constitute a quorum, except in the case of Special General Meetings when twenty (20%) per cent shall constitute a quorum.

11. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

Special General Meetings of the Church shall be held only after public notice has been given thereof, which notice shall state the whole business to be transacted thereat. For the purpose of this article a public notice which is intimated at Divine Service on the two successive Sundays immediately preceding the day appointed for the meeting and which is published by means of a printed or written notice affixed to the entrance door of the Notice Board of the Church building or porch or any other venue where the Church members may meet for mid-week services during the whole of the two weeks as aforesaid.

At any Special General Meeting only such admitted members of the Church shall be entitled to vote, as have been members for a period of at least six months and who have at the date of such a meeting attained the age of twenty-one years or more.

Special General Meetings may be convened at any time by the Executive Committee, and shall be so convened upon a request in writing signed by at least twenty-five (25%) per cent members qualified to vote at such meeting setting forth the reason for convening the meeting.

Resolutions at any Special General Meeting shall be decided by the majority of the vote's cast and votes shall be taken by ballot if demanded by not less than five members. This voting procedure shall not apply when dealing with the calling of a Pastor, the election of deacon/deaconess or the modification of this Trust Deed and Constitution.

12. THE MINISTRY

12.1 PASTOR/S

The choice and appointment of a Pastor is vested in the membership of the Church and if and when it is necessary to appoint a Pastor the procedure shall be as follows:

A Special General Meeting called for the purpose shall appoint not less than four members (other than members of the Church Executive Committee - vide Article 14A and 14B) to act with the Executive Committee as a special committee of the Baptist Union of S.A. to make the necessary enquiries, and to make a recommendation to the Church as soon as possible. The Committee's recommendation shall be considered at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose and no invitation shall be sent forward unless at least three fourths of the members present, when the matter is considered, vote in favour.

Any invitation shall be contingent upon the prospective Pastor being a minister or student of the Baptist Denomination or one approved by the Executive of the Baptist Union before he is approached by the Church and accepting in writing the provisions of this Trust Deed and Constitution a copy of which shall be supplied for his perusal.

Any engagement between the Church and the Pastor shall be terminable by three months notice in writing by either side, unless otherwise mutually agreed.

12.2 ELDERS

- (i) The spiritual oversight of the Church shall rest with the Pastor and Elder/s. The ideal is a plurality and equality of elders.
- (ii) A man nominated for the position of elder shall comply with the conditions to that office as contained in Titus 1 v 6-9 and 1 Timothy 3 v 1-7. Male members who have reached the age of 25 years are eligible for appointment, provided they have been members for a period of at least two years, except in the case of a Pastor who may be called from outside the Church. An elder may be required to serve a probationary period of three months, when his appointment may be confirmed and he is ordained as an elder.

Any member may at any time make recommendation in writing to the Executive, whereupon the Executive, having made the necessary enquiries and having obtained the consent of the proposed elder, may make recommendation to the general meeting which shall consider the recommendation of the Executive, provided that no person shall be ordained as elder unless at least 75% of the members present when the recommendation was considered, voted in favour. Voting shall be by ballot.

Names of proposed elders shall be posted on the Church notice board at least 14 days before the general meeting at which the voting shall take place, and must be announced from the pulpit on the two Sundays preceding the meeting, the members being urged to be much in prayer regarding the proposals.

- (iii) An elder shall be set aside by the laying on of hands by the Pastor, elders or a person appointed by the Executive.
- (iv) It is the duty of all elders to teach, administer and ordiances and discipline, lead the flock according to the Scriptures and ensure that pure doctrine according to the Scriptures and as set out in the Statement of faith is taught in the Church. Elders shall teach and preach in the Church according to their gifts.

- (v) An elder shall normally remain an elder as long as he is a member but his office shall be reviewed after a two-year term.
- (vi) The services of an elder may be terminated in one of the following ways:
 - (a) if an accusation brought against an elder with two or three witnesses, which will result in his being censured, is upheld by the Church meeting, after investigation by the Executive. Such accusation might include, moral lapses, failure to fulfill the duties of office, using privileges of office for personal gain or selfish prestige (1 Peter 5 v 2&3), investigating a party spirit.
 - (b) By resignation of the elder.

13. DEACONS/DEACONESSES

- (a) Nominees for the office of deacons/deaconess must have been members of the Church for a period of not less than twelve months.
- (b) From its baptised membership of the age of twenty-one years and over, the Church shall elect a minimum of four deacons/deaconesses, each holding office for two years. Each year, half of the number of deacons/deaconesses shall relinquish office in rotation. Retiring deacons/deaconesses shall be eligible for re-election at the following Annual General Meeting.
- (c) The election of deacons/deaconesses shall be by ballot. Election shall be after nomination, and nomination shall be submitted In writing to the Secretary of he Church at least seven days before the Annual General Meeting called for the purpose of electing deacon/ess or deacons/esses, and such nomination shall be posted on the Church notice board not later than the Sunday preceding the election. The nomination paper shall be signed by two members of the Church and the nominee.
- (d) To be elected ~ deacon/deaconess must receive more than fifty (50%) per cent of the votes of those present and eligible to vote.
- (e) In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of deacons/deaconesses during the year, such vacancy shall be filled in the manner aforesaid, at the next Annual General Meeting of the Church convened for the purpose. The person so elected holding the office until the Annual General meeting when he/she shall retire but be eligible for re-election.
- (f) Deacons who have completed their term of office are eligible for nomination by the members and can be elected at an Annual General Meeting.

14.

14A

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The Pastor together with the deacons/deaconesses shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Church, which shall transact the business of the Church, administer its funds and carry its directions as provided in Articles 8 and 9. The Executive Committee shall elect from its own members the Secretary and Treasurer of the Church. The Pastor may preside at all meetings except when questions affecting his own position is under discussion or whenever he shall elect to vacate the Chair, in which case one deacon/deaconess appointed by the Executive Committee shall act as chairman at that particular meeting of the Church or Executive Committee. The Chairman, at any meeting, shall have a casting vote but not a deliberative vote.

14B. CHINESE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Until such time as Article 13 and 14A are practicable, all such Executive powers as are vested in the Pastor(s) and Deacons/Deaconesses are applicable to the Chinese Supervisory Committee.

15. ORGANISATIONS – (Nomination and election procedure for departmental leaders.)

1. Nominees shall be church members in good standing for a period of not less than 12 months.
2. Elections shall take place at the A.G.M. of the Church.
3. Nominees shall be made:
 - (a) by a member of each department and will be submitted to the Executive for confirmation at the A.G.M.
 - (b) By any member choosing to nominate a person for a particular position.

All nominations shall have the prior consent of the nominee and shall be signed by two witnesses.

A majority vote of those present and eligible to vote shall be required for valid election. Voting shall be by show of hands or by ballot if requested by a member.

The term of office shall be two years after which the position shall be reviewed. In the event of a vacancy occurring mid-term, the nomination procedure above can be followed.

16. REGULATIONS

The Church may at any meeting frame and enact such regulations as it may deem necessary for the management of the affairs of the Church.

17. CHURCH PROPERTY

All property, which the Church may acquire, whether movable or immovable, shall be held and administered for the furtherance of its objectives and the propagation of its principles. In the event of the Church at any time ceasing to exist, all property or rights to the property owned by it shall ipso facto vest in the Baptist Union of S.A., which shall hold and administer the same as the said Union may deem best fitting to secure the furtherance of the object and the propagation of the principles of the Church as hereinbefore mentioned.

The Church shall be deemed to have ceased to exist when the dissolution of the Church shall have been resolved upon in accordance with Article 20 or when the members of the Church shall have become totally dispersed or when the public worship of the Church shall have been discontinued (in connection with the Church) for a period of three calendar months.

18. REGISTRATION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All immovable property hereinafter acquired by the Church shall be registered in the name of the Trustees of the Baptist Union of SA. As the trustees of the said Southdale Baptist Church.

19. TRANSFER OF MORTGAGE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Any purchase or lease of immovable property on behalf of the Church shall be effected upon the authority of a resolution of the Church passed at a Special General Meeting. Any sale, donations, exchange, or mortgage, or other alienation or encumbrance of the whole or any part of the immovable property of the Church shall be effected upon the authority of a resolution passed at a Special General Meeting of the Church provided further that the consent in writing of the Baptist Union of S.A. to such sale, donation, exchange, mortgage or other alienation or encumbrance shall be obtained before the said resolution of the Special General Meeting shall come into operation or be acted upon.

20. APPLICATION OF PROCEEDS OF SALE OF PROPERTY

The proceeds derived from the sale or other disposal of any property of the Church shall be applied and devoted in such manner as the Church or in the event of the Church having ceased to exist the Baptist Union of S.A. may deem best fitted to secure the furtherance of the objects of the Church and the propagation of its principles.

21. DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH

The Church may at any time be dissolved by resolution of a majority of two-thirds of the members present and entitled to vote at a Special General Meeting of the Church. In the event of such a resolution being passed the Executive Committee, or in the event of there being no such Committee, other persons appointed by the Church shall take the necessary steps to wind up the affairs of the Church and in particular to transfer the property of the Church in due and proper form to the Baptist Union of S.A.

22. MODIFICATION

It shall be lawful for the Church at any time or times, by a Resolution passed by two-thirds or more of members present at a Special Church meeting specially convened for the purpose, to revoke, add to, amend or alter all or any of the provisions of this Constitution provided the amendment is duly confirmed by a two-thirds vote at the next Quarterly Church Meeting.

Church Covenant

Having being led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour and on the profession of our faith through baptism, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and gladly enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We promise, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also promise to maintain family and personal devotions; to raise our children in the training and instruction of the Lord; to seek the salvation of our family and acquaintances; to live for Christ in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our behavior; to avoid slander, backbiting and anger, to live as the light and salt of the earth and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We further promise to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian graciousness in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and forgiveness.

“As God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, we clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bearing with each other and forgiving whatever grievances we have against one another, we forgive as the Lord forgave us and over all these virtues we put on love which binds them all together in perfect unity.” (Colossians 3 v 12 – 14.)