

# D1 CONSTITUTION



W A G G A  
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BAPTIST  
CHURCH

# **WAGGA WAGGA BAPTIST CHURCH**

## **CONSTITUTION.**

### **1. Name**

The name of the Church shall be Wagga Wagga Baptist Church.

### **2. Statement of Beliefs**

#### **2.1 THE NATURE AND UNITY OF THE GODHEAD**

There is one God, who is an eternal personal spirit. God is infinite in power, wisdom, holiness and love. He is triune in His essential being, revealing Himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

#### **2.2 THE DEITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST**

Jesus Christ as the second person of the Godhead is eternally one with the Father, of whose person and glory He is the accurate expression. To become man He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, so that the two whole and perfect natures, the nature of God and nature of man, were united in one Person; truly God and truly man.

#### **2.3 THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Godhead is eternally one with the Father and the Son. Yet He is sent by them to achieve the Divine Purpose in the Church and in the world.

#### **2.4 THE DIVINE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES**

The Scriptures comprising the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, are the inspired and infallible Word of God. They were written by holy men of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit; they not only contain but are in themselves the Word of God, and therefore have supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice. In acknowledging this authority we affirm that the Scriptures over-ride all church practice and tradition.

#### **2.5 THE SINFULNESS OF MAN**

Man was created in the image of God and to enjoy fellowship with Him. By deliberate disobedience of God's commands he fell from fellowship with God and his nature was corrupted. All men as a result, are spiritually dead, under Satan's control and dominion, and subject to God's wrath and condemnation. Therefore, apart from God's grace, man is helpless and hopeless, destitute and doomed.

#### **2.6 CHRIST'S ATONEMENT FOR THE SIN OF MAN**

In order to redeem man from the guilt, power and penalty of sin, Jesus Christ became man and died a sacrificial death as our representative substitute. By His resurrection, God's acceptance of His atoning death was demonstrated. This atonement is sufficient for the sin of the whole world, but effective only in those who receive it. The sinner is justified before God and reconciled to God, not by any personal merit; but solely on the ground of God's gracious gift of salvation in Jesus Christ, received through faith.

#### **2.7 THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SALVATION**

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is necessary for people to accept God's provision of salvation. The Holy Spirit convinces men of their sinfulness, drawing them to personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and so brings them to spiritual birth as God's children and to fellowship in Christ. Residing and working within the lives of the believers the Holy Spirit makes real the presence of Christ, witnesses to their relationship with God, leads into all that is truth, bestows gifts for effective service and produces grace and power for daily living.

## **2.8 THE NATURE AND ROLE OF THE CHURCH**

The church is the body of people whom God separated from the world through faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. All spiritually reborn persons are members of the church universal which takes local form wherever groups of believers unite for worship, fellowship and service in accordance with Scriptural principles. All believers are called to a priestly ministry in the offering of spiritual sacrifices and sent into the world to be witnesses. God calls individuals to positions of oversight and leadership or to special ministries. The church recognises such by setting apart pastors and elders, sending out missionaries, electing deacons and other officers, in accordance with New Testament practice.

## **2.9 THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS**

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a public declaration of a person's faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. In accordance with the New Testament it should normally be administered by total immersion. It symbolises the believers' identification with Christ in death, burial and resurrection, the washing of sin and the believer's dedication of himself to God to live and walk in newness of life.

## **2.10 THE PRACTICE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ, instituted by Him to be celebrated with the elements of bread and wine, by believers in Christ, until His return. It clearly and simply commemorates and declares our thanks for our Saviour's substitutionary death and is a means of grace. The celebration expresses our fellowship with and in the Lord Jesus Christ as members of the body of which He is head.

## **2.11 THE IMMINENT AND PERSONAL RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST**

At the end of this age in accordance with His promises, Jesus Christ will return to earth personally and visibly in His glory. The final consummation of the Kingdom of God awaits His return.

## **2.12 THE FINAL JUDGEMENT AND THE FUTURE STATE**

God has appointed a day of final judgement for the world, when Jesus Christ will judge every person, and each will receive rewards or punishment according to their deeds. Those counted righteous through faith in Jesus Christ will dwell forever in heaven with their Lord. The unrighteous will be consigned to hell, forever separated from the Lord.

## **3. Government**

- a) The Church shall be affiliated with the Baptist Union of NSW, accepting its responsibility to support and share the ministries undertaken by the Denomination.
- b) Recognising the headship of Jesus Christ and the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Church shall be governed in line with the fundamental Baptist principle of the autonomy of the local church and congregational government.  
Government shall be vested in the body of believers who compose its membership.
- c) Notwithstanding this principle of autonomy, the Church recognises and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist Churches. Therefore, the Church will be interdependent as well as independent.

## **4. Objects**

The Church adopts the following objects which it believes to be in harmony with the purpose of Christ's Church as declared in the New Testament.

*To glorify God through:*

- a) The inspiration and maintenance of active spiritual growth among its congregation by the regular assembling for public worship and the administration of the ordinances.
- b) The proclamation of the truths of the Bible by all means so that in hearing, people might be brought to faith in Christ.
- c) Teaching, training and discipling all who come to faith in the Lord Jesus so that they grow together in love, are loyal to each other and grow to maturity in Christ under the guidance of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
- d) Proclaiming the sole Lordship of Christ Jesus in the lives of the members of the congregation and seeking to fulfil His desires in the life of the community, nation and wider world through evangelistic and other missionary enterprise.
- e) To assist those who are in need in the belief that social action and evangelism are mutually our responsibility to the Gospel.

## **5. Membership**

Members shall be persons who give evidence of a sincere profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who have been baptised upon profession of faith and have been accepted into membership.

### **Alterations to the Constitution**

No alteration shall be made to the constitution except by a three-fourths majority of members present and eligible to vote at a meeting convened for that purpose.

Any changes requires 12 months notice of motion.

(This incorporates amendments accepted at AGM July 2003)