



coastcommunity
church

CONSTITUTION

UPDATED 2023

1. NAME

The name is to be Coast Community Church. Coast Community Church is an autonomous body of Christians affiliated with Churches of Christ in New South Wales.

2. BASIS OF FAITH

We affirm our faith in Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour and Lord. We believe that He died for our sake and that only through faith in Him can we obtain salvation from the eternal punishment of sin and be brought into a right relationship with God.

We believe in one God who is almighty, unchanging and eternal, exercising His sovereign power in creation, providence and redemption. He is just and holy, gracious and merciful, existing through all eternity as one God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, eternally existing and of one Being with the Father.

This same Jesus came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit. He was born of the Virgin Mary and dwelt on the earth as man. He was crucified for the sins of mankind, suffered death and was buried. On the third day, He was raised from the dead by the power of God. He ascended in power and glory to heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father, from whence He will return at the appointed time to judge the living and the dead.

We believe that God, through the Holy Spirit, who is one with the Father and the Son, convicts mankind of sin and draws into His church all who truly repent of their sins and accept the Lordship of Christ.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is given to God's people to equip them with abilities and qualities, which are for the accomplishment of His divine purpose and will in the world.

We acknowledge the authority of the Bible as the inspired word of God for the salvation of mankind and the guidance and edification of His people.

3. VISION, VALUES & MISSION

Everything comes from and exists for the triune God (God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit).

i) **VISION**

Coast Community – Healthy, Growing and Full of Love (Eph 4:16)

ii) **VALUES**

Grace: Embracing God's unconditional love and offering it to others.

Growth: Partnering with God to become more like Jesus.

Gratitude: Responding with thankfulness to God in all circumstances.

Generosity: Choosing to live generously in all areas of life.

Genuineness: Being authentic with God and one another.

iii) **MISSION**

Partnering with Jesus to build up his church by:

Empowering people according to gifting

Equipping people for works of service

Encouraging people to go for it!

4. PARTNERSHIP

Those persons who affirm their faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and Lord, who accept the Basis of Faith, and who seek to express their faith in loving reliance on Christ are encouraged to become Partners in Coast Community Church.

Partners at Coast Community Church mean Church members in accordance with the concept of Church Membership articulated by Churches of Christ in NSW. Applications for Partnership may be made from the age of 16 for non-voting partners and from the age of 18 for voting partners – refer to the 'Classifications of Partnership' for definitions.

Persons desiring Partnership are to submit their names to the Board of Elders for consideration.

The responsibilities of Partnership are considerable and involve a commitment to the Partnership Principles, as described in the Application for Partnership form.

There are 4 classifications of Partnership at Coast Community Church:

- Active Partners Voting – are Partners who are in regular attendance at Coast Community Church services, being at least two times per month over the course of a year. It is also desired that these Partners be active in the life of the church and its ministries.
- Active Partners Non-Voting – are Partners aged under 18 years and not younger than 16 years of age who are in regular attendance at Coast Community Church services, being at least two times per month over the course of a year. It is also desired that these Partners be active in the life of the church and its ministries.
- Associate Partners – are Partners who attend Coast Community Church services less frequently than two times per month, but are still in attendance. Associate Partners may also include people who are unable to attend regularly due to geographic isolation, health or other reasons that prevent them from being able to attend when they otherwise would be in attendance at services.
- Permanent Record – Partners who are no longer Active Partners and/or are Associate Partners and have not attended a Coast Community Church service for more than 12 months become part of the Permanent Record.

The determination of the classification of Partners is to be made by the Elders.

The decision making responsibilities of the partnership include:

The appointment of:

- Senior Pastor.
- Elders.

The approval of:

- Changes to the Constitution.
- The Annual Budget.
- Purchase and sale of real estate.
- Issues that affect the whole church, as determined by the Elders.

5. THE ELDERS

They will be called upon to be responsible for the spiritual oversight and leadership of the church in keeping with the principles enunciated in the Scriptures, and will be those persons from within the partnership who exhibit consistent Christian character, spiritual maturity and gifts of leadership (1 Tim 3: 1-7, 5:17, Titus 1: 5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4).

The Eldership shall have all the necessary authority, subject to the general jurisdiction of the Church, to act on behalf of the Church for those purposes connected with its effective functioning.

The Elders shall be responsible for the nomination of Elders to the Church, without excluding the right of any individual Active Partner to submit names to the Elders for consideration.

There shall be a minimum of two (2) Elders (excluding the Senior Pastor), with a maximum of eight (8) Elders at any one time including the following:

- (1) The Senior Pastor (or equivalent); and
- (2) Up to 6 Elders elected by the Partners; and
- (3) Up to 1 Elder directly appointed by the Elders.

Elders must be Active Partners and shall be appointed for the following terms

- (1) The Senior Pastor is an ongoing appointment
- (2) Elders elected by the Partners have a term of two (2) years on the approval of at least two-thirds of the votes cast by the voting partners. An Elder may not be appointed for more than three (3) consecutive terms, following which there will be a minimum stand down period of twelve (12) months, before being eligible for nomination for re-election or direct appointment by the Elders.
- (3) A directly appointed Elder has a term until the next Annual Business Meeting at which time if they are to remain an Elder they are to do so through election by the Partners. Their appointment term may not be renewed by the Elders without going before the Partnership for election.

The Senior Pastor shall be considered an Elder and participate in the regular meetings of the Eldership, unless, because of special circumstances, either the Senior Pastor or the Eldership, consider it would not be appropriate to do so.

As far as possible the Elders shall meet monthly for the conducting of Church business, keeping a minuted record of their meetings.

Decision making responsibilities of the Elders will include:

- Maintaining Vision and Direction for the Church.
- Governance and Policy Formulation.
- Pastoral Care.
- Discipline.
- Recommendation on Budget.
- Approve applications for Partnership and determination of classification of Partnership
- Appointment of all Ministry Team and Support Staff, with the exception of the Senior Pastor.

6. APPOINTMENT OF SENIOR PASTOR

The negotiations for the calling and appointment of the Senior Pastor shall be entrusted to the Elders, who shall make recommendations to the Active Partners and advise the basis of the appointment. The adoption of such recommendations shall require a majority of at least two-thirds of the formal votes cast. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

7. CHURCH MEETINGS

Annual Business Meetings

An Annual Business Meeting will be called by the Elders, at a date prior to Celebration Sunday, to deal with any matters deemed by the Elders to require a decision or discussion by the church partnership, and to elect any persons nominated for the position of Elder.

A secretary will be appointed for the duration of the Business Meeting to record proceedings.

Reports from each Ministry Area and a full financial report shall be presented to the church prior to this meeting.

Details of the proposed motion(s) shall be distributed for the information of the Active Partners, at least two weeks prior to the vote being taken.

Amendments to proposed motions may be made at any Business Meeting.

Special Business Meetings

Special Meetings of the Church may be called by the Elders, or shall be held following a written request to the Elders, signed by not less than one-fifth of the Active Partners. The request for such a meeting should clearly indicate the nature of the business to be dealt with.

Details of the proposed motion(s) shall be distributed for the information of the Active Partners, at least two weeks prior to the vote being taken.

Information Meetings

An Information Meeting or Meetings shall be held prior to any Business Meeting at which matters will be presented to the Church, upon which, those in Active Partnership will be requested to vote.

8. PROCEDURE

The Chairman for all meetings of the Church shall be appointed by the Elders.

All Church Business Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the recognised rules of debate. The order of business to be followed at the meetings of the Church shall be as the Elders may, from time to time, direct.

All matters shall only require a simple majority vote unless otherwise specified in this constitution.

9. QUORUM

One fourth of the Active Partners eligible to vote shall constitute a Quorum.

In the absence of a Quorum at a duly constituted Business Meeting, recommendations presented to the Church at that meeting may proceed to, and be determined by, a Postal or Electronic Vote. Such recommendations must be accompanied by minuted comments made by Active Partners at that Business Meeting on the recommendations presented. At least one fourth of the Ballot papers must be received to establish a voting quorum.

10. VOTING

Voting shall be confined to Active Partners eighteen (18) years and over.

Ballot papers distributed to the Active Partners at the Business Meeting, may be completed and lodged in a Ballot Box at that Meeting or returned up to 14 days after the close of the Business Meeting. Active Partners not present at the Business Meeting will be sent Ballot Papers for completion and return no later than 14 days after the Business Meeting.

The Ballot Papers for all votes shall be accompanied by written advice outlining the purpose of the motion and any matters which may arise in making an informed decision.

Scrutineers will be appointed at the Meeting to supervise the Ballot and to confirm the final results, following a two-week period for the receipt of Postal or Electronic votes.

11. ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEETINGS

Announcements of all Church Business Meetings shall be announced in church services and published for two weeks preceding the meeting.

12. REAL ESTATE

All Church real property is owned by Coast Community Church, and shall be registered under the Churches of Christ Incorporation Act, 1947, with the Churches of Christ property Trust being its duly appointed Trustees.

13. NON-PROFIT CLAUSE

The Assets and Income of Coast Community Church shall be applied solely in furtherance of its vision which are considered the objects of the Church and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Church except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of Coast Community Church.

14. DISSOLUTION CLAUSE

In the event of Coast Community Church being wound up, any surplus assets remaining after the payment of liabilities shall be transferred to another organisation in Australia which is a Non-Profit entity for the purposes of any Commonwealth taxation Act.

15. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution, when carried, shall require at least a two thirds majority of the formal votes cast.