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THE CONSTITUTION OF ECHUCA COMMUNITY CHURCH

Article 1 — Preliminaries

Section 1 — Name

The name of the church is Echuca Community Church, in the State of Victoria.

Section 2 — Purpose

The purpose of Echuca Community Church is that of fulfilling the Scriptural requirements for a church in these particulars:

1. To glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in our organization, outreach and message.
2. To serve as a church home for those of like precious faith in the area.
3. To conduct services of the church for the worship of God, the building up of its members and the practice of its regulations.
4. To warn the unsaved of the sure judgement of God and to share with them God's love through the gospel in order that they may be saved and have the assurance of eternal life.
5. To contend for the faith once delivered to the saints in standing true to the Word of God in opposition to modern apostasy.
6. To cooperate with other local churches who adhere to the same principles in order that we may, in this way, extend our missions outreach.

Section 3 — Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of Echuca Community Church is to turn nonbelievers into fully devoted followers of Christ.

Article 2 — Structure Of Faith

1. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, excluding the Apocrypha, are verbally inspired of God and without error in the original writing. We recognize no person, organization or book, to be equal or superior to the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:19-21). The translation to be used in the services of Echuca Community Church will be any sound translation based on a literal or reasonably literal rendering of the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek manuscripts.
2. We believe in one God existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe that He is absolutely sovereign, all wise, possessor of eternal life. We believe that God created the heavens and earth in six literal days. We believe that God has a great master plan He is working out in the universe and especially in relation to man. We believe that all three persons of the Godhead are involved in the great work of rescuing man from sin and the environment it has produced. (Isaiah 57:15, Ephesians 2:8-10, Romans 8:28-29)
 - a. We believe in the Father. We believe that He is eternal and that He is the source of every good thing. (James 1: 17)
 - b. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that he is co-equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit and that he has by Himself paid the full price of our sins by his death on the cross. We believe that he has the right to call Himself the Son of God in the sense of being related to the Father in a way that none of the human race ever could be. We believe Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary.
 - c. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person. We believe that He indwells every Christian, (one who is born again) and that His indwelling (filling) is outworked in each life to the extent that the life is yielded up to the

glory of God (Ephesians 5:32). We believe the Holy Spirit enters a person at the point of salvation. We recognize that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is often counterfeited.. Therefore we believe in testing the prophets (ie. the S/spirit in which he speaks) to see whether they are of God (1 John 4:1-3). We do not believe that the Holy Spirit is the author of confusion.

3. We believe that Man was originally created as a sinless being, capable of self-determination. But being tempted of the serpent, chose to rebel against God and therefore he and the entire human race fell into a condition of being hopelessly lost.
4. We believe in the reality of Satan. We believe that he is a real entity, a wicked spirit, who was originally an angel of God and, by rebelling against God, sinned and was cast out of heaven.
5. We believe in salvation by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. We do not believe that man's works help save him from sin, but that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has paid our sin debt (Good works, therefore, becomes the fruit of salvation). We believe that any man who rejects the Lord Jesus Christ as the sole means of salvation has neglected the only acceptable means of access into everlasting life. (Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5, John 14:6)
6. We believe in the literal bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, at the end of three days. We believe in the bodily ascension of our Lord to the right hand of the Father, and that he is at present involved in interceding for believers. (1 Corinthians 15:1-20, Acts 1: 10-11, Hebrews 4:14-16, 7:25)
7. We believe that all who believe and abide in Christ are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24). We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13,25-26; Titus 2:11-14).
8. We believe that Jesus Christ will return again soon for the Christian and that he will come personally (i.e. bodily). We believe that all Christians will be bodily removed from the earth at this time by an event the church calls the rapture. (John 14:2-3, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Titus 2:13).
9. We believe in the priesthood of all believers, that all believers have immediate access to God through the blood of Jesus, that we have no need of any human agent to pray for us before the throne of God and that Jesus Christ is our only way to God (Hebrews 10: 19-22, 1 Peter 2:9-10, Timothy 2:5).
10. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the believer and the unbeliever. We believe that the believer will be raised from the dead to occupy a home in heaven and the unbeliever will be raised to be punished eternally (John 5:21-30, 14:1-6, Daniel 12:2-3, Revelation 20:4-6, 11:15, 21:8, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10)
11. We believe the true church is the body of Christ, of which Christ is the head and the believers, Jew and Gentile alike, are the members (Ephesians 5:23-32, Matthew 16:18, Acts 2:147, Colossians 3:11)
 - a. We believe the Scriptures teach that the body of Christ is to be shown in local assemblies of believers, who have followed their Lord in believer's baptism, and that the purpose of the local church, (see article 2 concerning the purpose of the church) is to meet together regularly for the purpose of: a) worshipping God, b) building up of believers, c) teaching the Word, d) sharing around the Lord's table. (1 Timothy 3:15, Acts 2:41-47, 14:23, Ephesians 4:11-16)
 - b. We believe that the scriptural ordinances of the Church are Baptism and the Lord's supper.
 - c. We believe in the self-governing and independence of the local church from any centralized power, whether from other churches, denominations, or the state. We believe in obeying the laws of the land and being subject

to the powers that be, except where those laws and powers would require us to be unfaithful to God and His Word (Romans 13:1-7, Acts 5:29, 13:1-5, 15:19-31).

12. We believe that it is the most consistent position for a Christian church to be opposed to the cults and that we have no part with these movements.

Article 3 — Ordinances

Section I. — Baptism

Those professing faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour shall become candidates for baptism and shall be fully immersed in water by a person authorised by the church in accordance with the scriptural teaching. Baptism is an outward sign and symbol of the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, as a testimony to the world of the Christians belief in the death, burial and resurrection with Him (Matthew 3:16, acts 8:26-40, Romans 6:3-5, Colossians 2:12). This ordinance, we believe, forms the dividing line between faith and unbelief and is so basic to the life of a Christian that any person desiring to be a member of this church must be baptized.

Section 2. — The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be served to the assembled church. Since it is the Lord's supper, his church may exercise the right to invite all true believers present to partake of the supper to show forth his death till He comes (1 Corinthians 11:23-28). It shall be the responsibility of the one who is directing the service to explain the significance of the Lord's Supper as well as the purpose. It is intended that the Lord's Supper be a memorial supper commemorating the death of our Lord. It is the responsibility of the one directing the services to charge all to examine themselves that they do not take it unworthily (1 Corinthians 11:20-34)

Article 4 — Membership

Section I — Reception of Members

1. Membership in Echuca Community Church shall be open to all persons who confess Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and who have been baptised. As the Scriptures do not conceive of a Christian who refuses to associate with a local church, all Christians who willingly choose to associate with Echuca Community Church will be encouraged to join, as members, in order that they may exercise the Biblical mandate of association with a local church.
2. We believe that it is the responsibility of every Christian to attend church regularly, read God's Word faithfully, pray earnestly for God's blessing upon the ministry of the church, support the ministry of the church by every means which may be at his disposal. We believe that every person who has, in the past, numbered himself in the fellowship of this church, would be in full agreement with this Constitution, or, finding that he cannot agree with this Constitution, he will through due parliamentary procedure, bring to the attention of the Eldership the matter in dispute. If it is found that, after consultation with the Eldership, any person does not feel he or she can support this Constitution, then it is that person's responsibility to withdraw from the fellowship in order that unity among the brethren may be preserved.
3. Anyone professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, giving evidence by word or deed of this fact, also declaring himself or herself in full agreement with the principles, practices and doctrines of this church may apply to become a member, using the written application form APPENDIX 1 (see page 14), in one of the following ways:
 - a. At baptism: by stating their desire to be included in the fellowship of the church (see Article 3., section 1. on the ordinance of baptism)
 - b. By testimony and letter of commendation from another church of like faith and order
 - c. By statement of Christian experience and scriptural baptism

d. By restoration to the Lord and fellowship with believers

Section 2 — Privileges of a Member

1. Attendance at and participation in regular and special Congregational gatherings,
2. The receiving of personal ministry and/or counselling from the Congregation,
3. Any other benefits as may from time to time be deemed appropriate by the Eldership.

Section 3 — Applications for Membership

1. All requests for membership shall be made to the Eldership. Upon making such request, the person shall be given an application for membership (APPENDIX 1), along with a copy of the Constitution. An Elder or Deacon shall meet with the applicant following receipt of the application. Each applicant shall subscribe to the Structure of Faith (Article 2), the Constitution, have been baptised as a believer and will be required to testify publicly before the Eldership or a committee appointed by the Elders. The submission of APPENDIX 1 does not constitute an automatic acceptance into membership.
2. Applications for membership shall be made known to members via the church bulletin and opportunity given for comment for two weeks prior to an Eldership decision.

Section 4 — Denial of Membership

1. If, upon review of an application for membership or after meeting with a prospective member, the Eldership determines that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Saviour, or that there is a lack of evidence of a godly lifestyle, membership shall be denied. The decision made by the Eldership shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.

Section 5 — Admission of Applicants

1. Applicants admitted to membership shall, if possible, present themselves at a worship service designated by the Eldership, at which service such applicants shall publicly affirm their Membership Commitment and be publicly acknowledged as members.

Section 6 — Responsibilities of Members

1. Members shall seek to exercise their spiritual gifts for the mutual benefit of all the church body and shall submit to the loving rule of the Elders.
2. Members wishing to serve may be required to agree to and sign a "Service Covenant" (see APPENDIX 2., page 15)

Section 7 — Removal from Roll

1. Letters of transfer will be granted upon request to any member in good and regular standing. Such letters must be addressed to some particular church of like faith and order. The member's name will remain upon the rolls of this church until notification has been received that the member has been received in to the church requesting the letter. Members not in good standing or those desiring to unite with a church not of our faith and order, may be given a letter of standing to date.
2. A member of the church who shall wilfully, without plausible reason or excuse, absent himself from the services of this church for a period of one 3 months shall be removed at the discretion of the Eldership.

Section 8 — Offences, Discipline, Grievances, and Appeals

1. In any matter of offence or dispute within the Congregation or between any member and another, regardless of position or office, the principles of Gal. 6:1-2, Matthew 5:23-24, 6:14-15, 18:15-35; 1 Corinthians 5:9-6:11 and any other applicable part of the Holy Scriptures shall provide the basis for resolution of that matter. In accordance with these standards, the following procedure shall be employed:

- a. *Whoever acknowledges that his brother has offended him shall go to his brother alone, tell him his fault, and attempt to be reconciled to his brother. Whoever suspects that he has offended his brother shall go to his brother and attempt to be reconciled.*
 - b. *If the brother will not be reconciled, the one going shall take one or two mature brothers or sisters to serve as witnesses and tell the brother his fault before the witnesses. If possible take witnesses who are actual witnesses of the offense.*
 - c. *If the brother still will not be reconciled, bring the matter before the Eldership as representing the Congregation. If the brother still will not be reconciled, the matter shall be made known in a meeting of the Congregation. Failure to repent, as determined by the Eldership according to biblical standards, shall constitute grounds for removal from membership in the Congregation.*
 - d. *The terms for repentance and restoration to membership shall be determined by the Eldership and made known to the offender. At the least the offender shall confess, repent, and make restitution for the wrongful behaviour.*
2. *Besides the matter of offences between brothers and sisters as described in section 8.1ff above, a member of the Congregation may become a proper subject for minor discipline in the following ways:*
- a. *Prolonged absences without good cause from the services of the Congregation.*
 - b. *Prolonged failure to support the Congregation financially.*
 - c. *Any behaviour not consistent with being a member in good standing.*
3. *Minor discipline shall be brought to the attention of the offending member by the Eldership, and the offending member shall be warned that his or her behaviour is not acceptable for a member in good standing. A person who is under minor discipline may be considered a member not in good standing and may, as a consequence, be censured and not permitted to minister in services nor speak in congregational meetings.*

The terms for repentance and restoration to membership shall be determined by the Eldership and made known to the offender. At the least the offender shall meet the standard of membership delineated in Article 4, section 1-3 of this Constitution and may be required to publicly confess, repent, and make restitution for the wrongful behaviour.

4. *After investigation, members who are guilty of the following offences shall be subject to greater disciplinary actions:*
- a. *Participation without repentance in sinful or anti-biblical practices, such as sexual immorality, covetousness, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness, and extortion.*
 - b. *Promotion of discord, division, schism or lack of harmony with the teachings and/or ministries of the Congregation (e.g. tongues).*

Greater disciplinary actions may include full or partial censorship, removal of membership in good standing and the benefits of membership, marking before the Congregation (see Romans 16:17-18 and Titus 3:10-11) by announcing the offender's sin to the Congregation, and/or dis-fellowshipping (see 1 Corinthians 5). Whether or not a disciplinary action is made public is based on the offence and the degree of repentance of the offender, as determined by the Eldership.

The terms for repentance and restoration to membership shall be determined by the Eldership and made known to the offender. At the least the offender shall meet the standard of membership delineated in Article 4, section 1-3 of this Constitution and may be required to publicly confess, repent, and make restitution for the wrongful behaviour.

5. *Anyone who is placed under Congregational discipline who believes he is not deserving of discipline may appeal to the Eldership.*

Article 5 — Elders

Section 1 — Powers

1. *Subject to limitations of the Constitution, all the activities and affairs of the Church shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Eldership, who are responsible for shepherding and having oversight of the flock. Without prejudice to such general powers, but subject to the same limitations, it is hereby expressly declared that the Eldership shall have the following powers in addition to the other powers enumerated in this Constitution:*
 - a. *To select and remove all the officers, agents, Pastors, staff and employees of the church, prescribe such duties for them as may not be inconsistent with law, with the Constitution, fix the terms of their offices and their compensation. In the event of proven moral lapse or criminal charge/s, the Eldership may dismiss an officer of the church immediately*
 - b. *To establish policies and practices for the church consistent with the purposes of this Constitution;*
 - c. *To assist the Pastor or Pastors in the administration of the ordinances of Baptism and Communion;*
 - d. *In furtherance of the objects of the church to buy, sell and deal in all kinds of articles, commodities and provisions, both liquid and solid, for the members of the church or persons frequenting the church's premises;*
 - e. *To purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire and otherwise acquire any lands, buildings, easements or property, real and personal, and any rights or privileges which may be requisite for the purposes of, or capable of being conveniently used in connection with, any of the objects of the church: provided that in case the church shall take or hold any property which may be subject to any trusts the church shall only deal with the same in such manner as is allowed by law having regard to such trusts;*
 - f. *To enter into any arrangements with any government or authority that are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the objects and the exercise of the powers of the church; to obtain from any such government or authority any rights, privileges and concessions which the church may think it desirable to obtain; and to carry out, exercise and comply with any such arrangements, rights, privileges and concessions;*
 - g. *To remunerate any person or body corporate for services rendered, or to be rendered, and whether by way of brokerage or otherwise in placing or assisting to place or guaranteeing the placing of any unsecured notes, debentures or other securities of the church, or in or about the church or promotion of the church or in the furtherance of its objects.*
 - h. *To construct, improve, maintain, develop, work, manage, carry out, alter or control any houses, buildings, grounds, works or conveniences which may seem calculated directly or indirectly to advance the church's interests, and to contribute to, subsidise or otherwise assist and take part in the construction, improvement, maintenance, development, working, management, carrying out, alteration or control thereof;*
 - i. *To invest and deal with the money of the church not immediately required in such manner as may from time to time be thought fit;*
 - j. *To take, or otherwise acquire, and hold shares, debentures or other securities of any company or body corporate;*
 - k. *In furtherance of the objects of the church to lend and advance money or give credit to any person or body corporate; to guarantee and give guarantees or indemnities or the payment of money or the performance of contracts or obligations by any person or body corporate, and otherwise to assist any person or body corporate;*
 - l. *To borrow or raise money either alone or jointly with any other person or legal entity in such manner as may be thought proper and whether upon fluctuating advance account or overdraft or otherwise to represent or secure any moneys and further advances borrowed or to be borrowed alone or with others as aforesaid by notes secured or unsecured, debentures or debenture stock perpetual or otherwise, or by mortgage, charge, lien or other security upon the whole or any part of the church's property or assets present or future and to purchase, redeem or pay-off any such securities;*
 - m. *To draw, make, accept, endorse, discount, execute and issue promissory notes, bills of exchange, bills of lading and other negotiable or transferable instruments;*
 - n. *In furtherance of the objects of the church to sell, improve, manage, develop, exchange, lease, dispose of, turn to account or otherwise deal with all or any part of the property and rights of the church;*

- o. To take or hold mortgages, liens or charges, to secure payment of the purchase price, or any unpaid balance of the purchase price, of any part of the church's property of whatsoever kind sold by the church or any money due to the church from purchasers and others;
- p. To take any gift of property whether subject to any special trust or not, for any one or more of the objects of the church;
- q. To take such steps by personal or written appeals, public meetings or otherwise, as may from time to time deemed expedient for the purpose of procuring contributions to the funds of the church, in the shape of donations or otherwise;
- r. To print and publish any newspapers, periodicals, books or leaflets that the church may think desirable for the promotion of its objects;
- s. In furtherance of the objects of the church to associate with any one or more churches having objects altogether or in part similar to those of the church;
- t. To make donations for patriotic, charitable or community purposes;
- u. To do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the objects of the church.

Section 2 — Nomination, Selection, and Tenure of Office

1. Those recommended for the Eldership must be men because of the Scriptural requirement that all elders be male (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6). Recommendations to fill the office of Elder shall be requested once a year from all church members. The Eldership shall then approve, disapprove or add to the list of nominees. The Eldership shall publicly post the nominees approved by the Elders at least four weeks prior to the annual meeting of the church members. After receiving comments from the members, the Eldership shall present the approved nominee/s to the members. The newly appointed Elder/s shall assume office immediately. Each Elder shall serve for a two (2) year term.
2. As soon as possible, the new Elder/s shall be publicly set into office via the laying on of the hands by the Eldership.
3. The number of Elders shall be at least three (3) or, in the event that the number of Elders falls below three (3), the remaining Elders, in conjunction with the Deacons shall, temporarily, oversee the church.

Section 3 — Qualifications

Each member of the Eldership must be an active member of this church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He shall be:

- a. Blameless as a steward of God. Above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7).
- b. Husband of one wife. A one woman man (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6).
- c. Temperate. Sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2).
- d. Sober minded. Prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8).
- e. Of good behaviour. Orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2).
- f. Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8).
- g. Apt to teach. Able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9).
- h. Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- i. Not a bully or violent pugnacious (1 Tim. 3:3, Titus 1:7).
- j. Patient. Moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3).
- k. Not a brawler. Uncontentious; slow to anger (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- l. Not covetous. Not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7).
- m. Rules well his own house. His children are faithful; not accused of rebellion to God (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6).
- n. Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6).
- o. Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7).
- p. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7).
- q. A lover of good virtue (Titus 1:8).
- r. Just; fair (Titus 1:8).
- s. Holy; devout (Titus 1:8).
- t. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8).

Section 4 — Resignation

Any Elder may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Eldership, unless the notice specifies a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation. If the resignation is to take effect at some future time, a successor may be selected before that time.

Section 5 — Removal of Elders

Any Elder may be removed from office if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or his inability to serve is established in the minds of the remainder of the Eldership.

Section 6 — Place of Meetings

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary provided in this Constitution, any meeting (whether regular, special or adjourned) of the Eldership of the church may be held at any place within or without the State of Victoria.

Section 7 — Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Eldership shall be held with call or notice given to all elders. However, a meeting must be held a least once each calendar month, unless otherwise modified by the Eldership. Regular meetings shall be open to church members, however the Eldership may designate an entire meeting or a portion of a meeting as being limited to Elders only.

Section 8 — Quorum

Except as otherwise provided herein, a majority of the Elders currently serving shall constitute a quorum. The minimum percentage of Elders necessary for a meeting of the Eldership is sixty-six percent. A majority of the Elders present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any meeting to another time and place.

Section 9. Adjournment

A majority of the Elders present, may adjourn any Elders' meeting to another time and place. Notice of the time and place of holding an adjourned meeting need not be given to absent Elders if the time and place be fixed at the meeting adjourned, except as provided in the next sentence. If the meeting is adjourned for more than 48 hours, notice of any adjournment to another time or place shall be given prior to the time of the adjourned meeting to the Elders who were not present at the time of the adjournment.

Section 10. Action Without Meeting

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Eldership may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Eldership shall individually or collectively consent in writing to a duly prepared resolution to such action. Such consent or consents shall have the same effect as a unanimous vote of the Eldership and shall be documented by attaching the signed resolution with the minutes of proceedings of the Eldership.

Section 11. Rights of Inspection

Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect and copy all books, records and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of the church of which such person is an Elder, for a purpose reasonably related to such person's interest as an Elder.

Section 12. Decisions of the Eldership

Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself. If a vote is not unanimous, the decision will be postponed until the next Elder's meeting. If a vote is still not unanimous, the decision will be further postponed until the next Elder's meeting. If at that time the vote is not unanimous, a vote of sixty-six percent will pass the resolution.

Section 13. Fees and Compensation

1. Elders (as such) shall not receive any stated or fixed salary for their services, however, nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any Elders from serving the church in any other capacity and receiving compensation.
2. Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from Echuca Community Church shall not be in a position to determine the nature or amount of said compensation.

Article 6 — Other Councils and Committees/Office of Deacon, Treasurer and SecretarySection 1. Councils and Committees

1. To promote efficient handling of Eldership matters, the Eldership may appoint various councils and committees from within its membership, the staff and from the church at large. These councils and committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Eldership. The general functions of councils and committees are:
 - a. To bring considered recommendations to the Eldership concerning ministries.
 - b. To provide a wider base of counsel to the Elders having the oversight of specific ministries.
 - c. All councils and committees shall exist for the period specified by the Eldership.

Section 2. Deacons

The Deacons shall consist of members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and shall be appointed at the annual meeting for a term of two (2) years. Deacons must be male because of the Scriptural requirement that all Deacons be men (1 Timothy 3:12). The Deacons shall assist the Elders in the shepherding of the saints, assist the Pastor/Elder at communion and baptismal services, aid in the general spiritual care of the church, and perform other duties as assigned by the Eldership. A Deacon shall be a man of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not fond of sordid gain, holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, first tested and found beyond reproach. The nomination and selection of Deacons shall be done in the same manner as for Elders, as set forth in Article 5, Section 2 of this Constitution.

Section 3. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy among the Deacons during the period between annual appointments, the Eldership may fill such vacancy for the unexpired term.

Section 4. Treasurer

1. A Treasurer shall be appointed by the Elders from, preferably but not limited to, the Eldership or Deaconate. At the very least he or she must fulfil the qualifications required of Deacons.
2. The Treasurer shall receive all money given to the church and apply same as directed by the Eldership; give an audited balance sheet at the annual business meeting or when otherwise directed by the Eldership. Money received shall be deposited as quickly as possible in a bank selected in advance by the Eldership. Counting of any church collections must be done by a minimum of two people. Collection amount to be entered in a suitable book and signed by both counters.

Section 5. Secretary

1. A Secretary shall be appointed by the Elders from the Eldership. The secretary shall keep a fair and complete record of the proceedings covered in each Eldership or Church business meeting, be responsible for records, keep a complete up-to-date register of all members, indicating full name, age, sex, and date of birth. The Secretary must post in the membership register the termination of any member either by death, dismissal or letter.

Article 7 — Pastor/Teaching Elder

Section 1. Appointment

A Pastor/Teaching Elder shall be selected by the Eldership and presented to the members of the church at its annual meeting or at a special business meeting. He must fulfill the qualifications of an Elder and will be a member of the Eldership. Unless a time period is stated, and subject to Art. 5., Sec. 1a., he shall remain in office indefinitely subject to the following reservations: The Elders reserve the right to dismiss a Pastor upon giving him three month's notice. A Pastor may resign upon giving three month's notice. The time limit of a Pastor's resignation or dismissal is subject to a lesser time if both the Pastor and the church by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

Section 2. Duties

Pastors shall be responsible to the Eldership. While recognising the general pastoral responsibilities of every member of the Eldership, Pastors will be men selected by the Eldership to dedicate themselves more fully to the Pastoral affairs of the church. Their responsibilities will include:

1. SHEPHERD (Acts 20:28). Pastors must give an account for the flock entrusted to their care (Heb 13:17). They must be men who are above reproach and an example to the flock. Their task as a shepherd will include visitation (home and hospital), counselling, encouragement and protecting the sheep from spiritual dangers.
2. TEACHER (2 Tim 4:1-2; Tit 1:4). The Word of God is one of the chief means given to the saints for edification. Thus, the men who would stand before a congregation must be skilled in accurately handling the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15). They must be faithful to the text and deliver the Word with passion and conviction.
3. EQUIPPER (Eph 4:11-16). The goal of Pastors must be to present every man complete in Christ (Col 1:29). This will involve training on two levels.
 - a. DISCIPLESHIP: Pastors must be actively involved in discipling men who will be the leaders of the church (2 Tim 2:2). They must build relationships with them, teach them and be an example of Christ to them.
 - b. TRAINER: On a larger level, Pastors should be involved in facilitating the equipping of the saints through the various programs of the church.
4. SERVANT (John 1:15). Pastors must set the example of serving the body of Christ rather than lording it over their flock (1 Peter 5:3).
5. LEADER (1 Peter 5:3). The vision and initiative for the direction of the church should come from the Eldership and the Pastor/s will be responsible for clearly communicating these initiatives from the pulpit.
6. EVANGELIST (2 Tim 4:5). The salvation of souls is one of the prime tasks of Pastors. They must set the tone for the spiritual temperament of the church with regard to evangelism.
7. INTERCESSOR FOR THE FLOCK (Acts 6:4). Pastors must be actively interceding at the throne of grace on behalf of the flock entrusted to his care.

Section 3. Duties of the Pastoral Staff.

At the discretion of the Eldership, men will be added to the Pastoral Staff. If more than one man is on the Pastoral Staff, then the responsibilities expected of each man shall be clearly delineated by the Eldership.

Article 8 — Settlement of Disputes

Section 1. General

In any dispute arising between church members, Pastors, or staff pertaining to any matters of spiritual teaching or practices, church finances or title to property purchased with church contributions, the dispute shall be resolved by the Elders of the church. A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself. The decision of the Eldership will be final.

Article 9 — Other Provisions

Section 1. Endorsement of Documents, Contracts

The Eldership, except as in the Constitution otherwise provided, may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents, to enter into any contract or execute any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the church. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized by the Eldership, no officer, agent or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the church by any contract or agreement, or to pledge its credit, or to render it liable for any purpose or to any amount.

Section 2. Amendments

This Constitution may be amended and new and additional Articles may be made from time to time by the Eldership in the exercise of the power granted to said Eldership in this Constitution. However, any amendment to this Constitution and the Structure of Faith contained in this Constitution must be made by a unanimous vote of the Eldership reached at three successive meetings.

Section 3. Record of Amendments

1. Whenever an amendment or new Article is adopted, it shall be copied in the book of minutes with the original Constitution, in the appropriate place. If any Article is repealed, the fact of repeal with the date of the meeting at which the repeal was enacted or written assent was filed shall be stated in said book.
2. Amendments shall be distributed to members, and members shall give written acknowledgement on receipt of a copy.

Article 10 — Receipt, Investment, and, Disbursement of Funds

Section 1.

The church shall receive all moneys or other properties transferred to it for the purposes for which the church was formed (as shown by the Constitution). However, nothing contained herein shall require the Eldership to accept or receive any money or property of any kind if it shall determine in its discretion that receipt of such money or property is contrary to the expressed purposes of the church as shown by this Constitution.

Section 2.

The church shall hold, manage, and disburse any funds or properties received by it from any source in a manner that is consistent with the expressed purposes of this church.

Article 11 — Corporate Records and Reports

Section 1. Records

The church shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books and records of its business and properties.

Article 12 — Dissolution

Upon dissolution of this church, the Eldership shall cause the assets herein to be distributed to another church with purposes similar to that identified in Art.1, Sec. 2 of this Constitution.

Article 13 — Miscellaneous Provisions

Section I. Instruments in Writing

All checks, drafts, demands for money and notes of the church and all written contracts of the church shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, as the Eldership may from time to time by resolution designate.

MEMBERS AGREEMENT FOR
ECHUCA COMMUNITY CHURCH

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptised by immersion in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit we do now in the presence of God, and of this assembly, most sincerely and joyfully enter into agreement with one another as one body in Christ.

We agree, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, in holiness, and comfort, to promote its prosperity and spirituality, to sustain its worship, its regulations, disciplines, and doctrines; to support its constitution, by-laws and resolutions and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of its ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel.

We also agree to maintain family and private dedication to God, to religiously educate our children, to practice separation from the world as taught in the Scriptures, to be just in our dealings, to avoid all tattling, back stabbing and excessive anger and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of our Saviour.

We further agree to watch over one another in love, to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to show compassion and courtesy, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and to secure forgiveness without delay.

We agree that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this agreement and the principles of God's Word.

FULL NAME: _____ SIGNATURE: _____ FULL NAME: _____ SIGNATURE: _____	DATE OF BAPTISM: _____ DATE: _____ DATE OF BAPTISM: _____ DATE: _____
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In fulfilling their God-given mandate to oversee, nurture and protect the church, the Elders desire all who serve the Lord in the various departments and ministries of this local Church to be aware of the requirements and responsibilities that they take upon themselves as they commit to service each calendar year.

In addition to the practical requirements of commitment to training and excellence in presentation, workers are required to conduct themselves in an ethical manner which upholds the responsibility of their work and the honour of the Lord. Standards of behaviour which in the light of Scripture are deemed to be irresponsible and/or dishonouring to the Lord will be subject to appropriate correction. Eldership's desire is to provide for growth and encouragement for people of all ages in a context of safety and respect. The minimum standards required by the Elders are as follows:

1) Maintaining a Godly Christian Life

The Elders expect that each worker will aspire to live a godly Christian life. The Elders also hold that the responsibility for a godly Christian life and character belongs to the individual worker. God's plan is that we "be conformed to the likeness of his Son..." (Rom. 8:39)

2) Respect for the Theological position of the church

Every worker, irrespective of their personal membership status, will be expected at all times in the fulfilment of their role of service, to uphold the theological position and distinctives' of the Echuca Community Church as outlined in the Constitution.

3) Respect for the Congregation

Every worker will be expected to honour the people, leadership and witness of the Echuca Community Church. Ill-considered talk revealing attitudes of arrogance, disrespect for leadership and/or insensitivity, will be treated as acts of irresponsible behaviour.

4) Attendance at Worship

The Elders expect that each worker will be keen to add to the depth and joy of congregational life. Prolonged non-attendance at church services may indicate an inability to function at a level appropriate for one who serves, and presents an ethical dilemma with living out what the worker symbolises.

5) Teamwork

The Elders assert that how the work is done is just as important as what is done. Teamwork is expected from every worker. Each should respect and support the role and function of all others in their team. Each worker should make team meetings, rehearsals, training sessions etc a priority.

6) Matters Relating to Money

The Elders expect that all workers will be scrupulously honest in all matters relating to money. Any offence against honesty, or having a sloppy or negligent attitude concerning congregational monies will reveal an individual as unfit to be a church worker.

7) Sexual Behaviour

The Elders will rule a violation of responsible ministry and/or ethics where a worker engages in inappropriate sexual contact, sexual behaviour or sexual harassment with a person to whom they have been entrusted to minister.

Indeed, should a worker at any time cease to satisfy the Scriptural requirements for service in the church, they shall automatically disqualify themselves from serving in that area of ministry. The Church's Child Protection Policy and Procedures will operate in the context of children under the age of 18 yrs.

I agree to abide by this Service Covenant:

Signed _____ Dated _____

Appendix 1
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