

# **Proposed Rivers Handbook**

**Version 1.0**

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## **Section B1 — Introduction**

This document is a companion document to the constitution of Rivers Baptist Church (subsequently referred to as “this Church” in this document) and sets out the major operating policies and procedures of Rivers Baptist. It is acknowledged that as this Church develops, some of these policies and procedures may change and develop. Accordingly, this document is one which is subject to progressive change in line with any changes in this Church’s size, ministry activities and structure.

Recognising that authority for the transaction of matters affecting this Church is vested in the members meeting, any amendments or revisions to this handbook will be subject to approval at a duly constituted members meeting in accordance with section B10 of this document.

It should be noted that this church handbook relates to other documents, namely the constitution and the church manual.

As a general principle, the constitution contains those matters affecting the life of this Church which are unlikely to change very often. Any changes or amendments will be subject to the requirements of section 11 of the constitution.

The church handbook contains items which have strategic medium-term significance (e.g. 2–5 years) and can be more easily amended by a motion at a duly constituted members meeting. Details of the process for any changes are set out in section B10 of the church handbook.

The church manual is a collation of policies and procedures covering the day-to-day running of this Church. It will in general contain documents, developed by the staff or ministry leaders, which have been submitted to the board for approval on behalf of the members. A copy of the church manual will be held in the church office for reference by any member who requests it. In addition, copies of the church manual will be available to senior staff. This document will be treated as a controlled document and any changes or amendments will be included in the document with a notation of when and by whom the changes were made.

## **Section B2 — Ministry Statements**

This section sets out this Church’s documented ministry statements as adopted by the church members. In developing these statements, the leaders and members of this Church have acknowledged the concept of being committed to doing whatever is necessary to be:

- ❖ culturally relevant in effectively presenting the good news about Jesus Christ to the community and other contacts members may have in their daily lives
- ❖ effective in developing growing disciples of Jesus Christ.

### **B2.1 Values Statement**

#### **B2.1.1 Lordship of Christ**

We acknowledge Christ as the head of our Church and personal lives, submitting ourselves and all our activities to His will and seeking always to do what pleases Him. (*Ephesians 1:22–23*)

### **B2.1.2 Bible-Centred**

We strive to communicate God's Word with integrity and authority so that all people may know Christ and mature in Him. We recognise God's Word as the final authority for what we believe and how we should live. (*2 Timothy 3:16*)

### **B2.1.3 Prayer**

We believe that God desires His people to pray and that He hears and answers prayer. We strive to rely on God through prayer in all that we do. (*Matthew 7:7–11; James 5:13–18*)

### **B2.1.4 People in Ministry**

We recognise all members as ministers. We seek to equip and place people in ministry according to their gifts. (*Ephesians 4:11–13*)

### **B2.1.5 Introducing People to Jesus**

We value those who do not know Jesus and seek to use any Christ-honouring means to introduce them to a personal relationship with Him and His family. (*Luke 19:10*)

### **B2.1.6 Godly Leadership**

We believe that those who serve in leadership should be suitably gifted, display the fruit of the Spirit and live in a way that commends the Gospel. (*Romans 12:6–8; Galatians 5:22–25*)

### **B2.1.7 Worship**

We acknowledge God's supreme value and worth. We seek to develop personal and relevant corporate worship. (*Romans 12:1–2*)

### **B2.1.8 Community**

We seek to encourage healthy relationships within our church community. We value small groups as the primary means for those within the church community to develop relationships and to care for and encourage each other in the faith. (*Ephesians 4:25–27, 32*)

### **B2.1.9 Spiritual Growth**

We seek to develop personal spiritual growth to enable each believer to become a mature Christian through understanding and applying the Word of God. (*James 1:22–25; Philippians 1:9–11*)

## B2.2 Mission Statement

The mission of this Church to God, to this Church's congregation and to those beyond this Church is represented by the following symbol and statements.

This symbol is a visual summary of Matthew 22:37–40: 'Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself." All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.'

### **Worship**

Connecting with God



### **Mission**

Connecting with people  
beyond this Church

### **Community**

Connecting with people in this Church

### B2.2.1 Worship

This is the active expression of our responsive love for God directed at God. We encourage worship in our services and home groups and through spiritual practices like prayer, praise, Bible study, etc.

### B2.2.2 Community

This is the active expression of our responsive love for God directed at people in this Church. We encourage community by meeting together, listening and supporting each other.

### **B2.2.3 Mission**

This is the active expression of our responsive love for God directed at people beyond this Church. We encourage mission by seeing our life situation as a mission context and by being ready to share Jesus through both words and deeds. Mission informs the direction of this Church.

### **B2.3 Vision Statement (to be developed)**

### **B2.4 Ordinances (Baptism and Lord's Supper)**

#### **B2.4.1 Baptism**

Baptism is the full immersion of believers upon profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and indicates the fellowship of the regenerate in His death, burial and resurrection. The senior pastor or his delegated representative will have the discretion to baptise born-again Christians who are members of or who undertake to become members of another Christian church.

Prior to baptism, candidates are required to:

- ❖ fill in an application for baptism
- ❖ undertake a course on baptism and membership regularly held by this Church or other suitable alternative course as agreed with the senior pastor.

*(Mark 1:10; John 3:23; Colossians 2:12)*

#### **B2.4.2 Communion (or Lord's Supper)**

We have been commanded to observe the Lord's Supper until He comes. Communion is the celebration given to the Church by Jesus Christ. It was first observed by Christ and the twelve just prior to His crucifixion.

The elements of communion are:

- ❖ the bread representing His body, given for our sins
- ❖ the fruit of the vine representing His blood, shed to give humankind a new covenant with God.

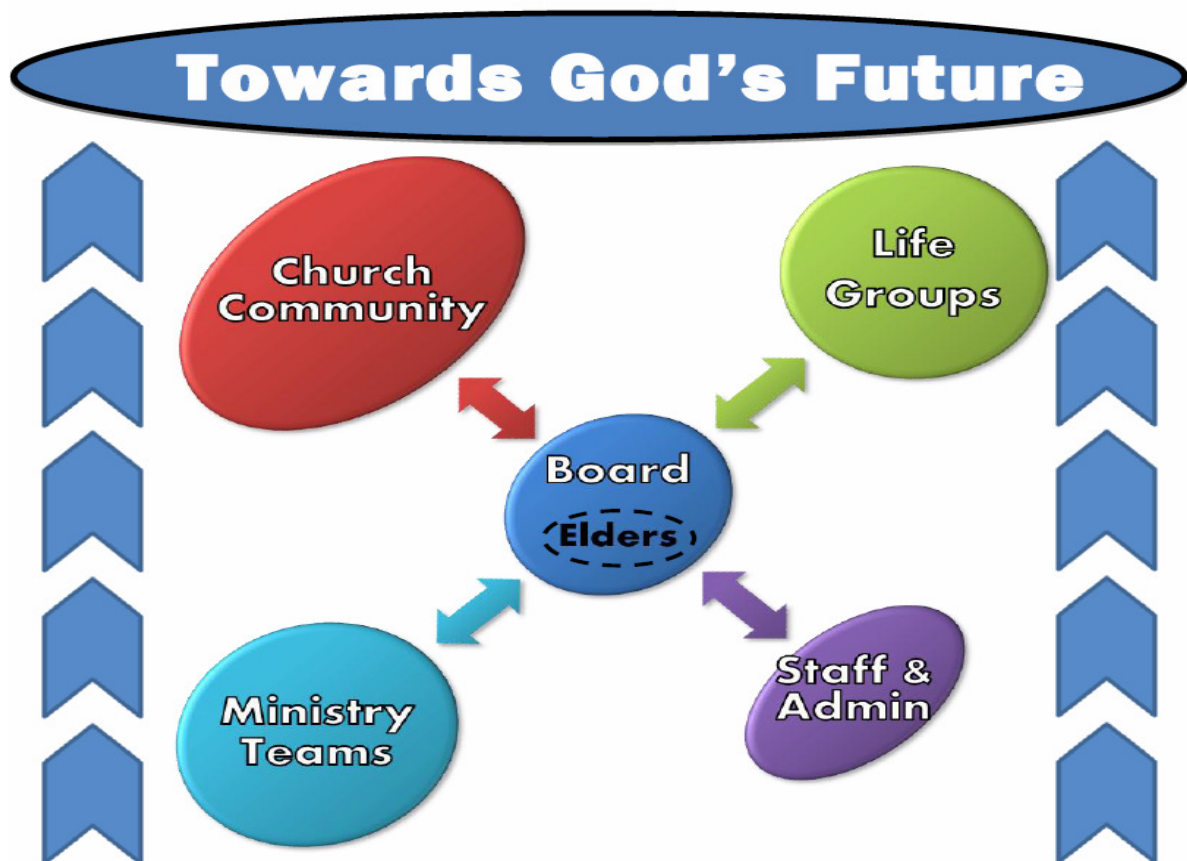
The ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be observed regularly by this Church at such times as may be arranged. It will be open to all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who are in fellowship with the Lord and His people. Wherever possible, a pastor or ministry leader will preside. Typically, this Church will observe the Lord's Supper monthly.

*(Matthew 26:1–30; Luke 22:1–40; 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 5:9; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26)*

## **Section B3 — Church Organisation**

### **B3.1 Our Structure**

A detailed organisation chart is included in the church manual. It is noted that this document will be amended periodically as the staffing structure develops and changes.



**Figure 1: Connecting the board with the wider Church**

## **Section B4 — Membership**

### **B4.1 Membership Admission**

All individuals who have satisfied the requirements in the constitution (section 4.1) and who desire to be committed to this Church as a local body of believers may become members by:

- ❖ attending an approved church-based teaching course on membership
- ❖ filling in an application for membership.

The names of those requesting membership are to be placed in the church newsletter for a minimum of three (3) consecutive weeks to allow for any relevant comments or objections.

Two (2) members appointed by the eldership team are to interview the applicant and write a report with their recommendation. During the visit, the following should be discussed:

- ❖ conversion and growth in Christ, including method of baptism
- ❖ current spiritual condition
- ❖ current or prospective areas of ministry for the applicant
- ❖ partnership commitment
- ❖ constitution of this Church
- ❖ church handbook.

The board is to approve or decline the applicant's membership in accordance with the constitution.

In addition, any person requesting a transfer of membership from another church will be considered after contact with their previous church has been made by a nominated person. Upon the applicant being received into membership, a letter will be sent to their previous church advising that they are now a member of this Church.

An applicant being baptised may be welcomed into membership at the same service. Anyone being admitted to membership through other means will be welcomed at the most convenient service.

All names of new members will be added to the active members roll or junior members roll and reported to the next members meeting.

## **B4.2 Updating Members Rolls**

### **B4.2.1 Requirements of an Active Member**

An active member will fulfil the following requirements:

- ❖ seek to live by the "Partnership Commitment" (see appendix C)
- ❖ accept the doctrinal and ministry statements of the Church (see section B2)
- ❖ regularly attend worship services.\*

\*Non-regular attendance will be defined as non-attendance for a period of more than six (6) consecutive months when not prevented by sickness, duty or distance.

### **B4.2.2 Procedure for Updating Members Rolls**

The members rolls will be updated in accordance with resolutions of the board. There will be an annual review of the members rolls (which may be conducted more often as directed by the board). Preferably this should be conducted before any statistics are sent to the Baptist Union of Queensland. This revision is to take place as follows:

- ❖ The board will appoint a membership taskforce of up to three (3) people to revise the roll.
- ❖ The membership taskforce will make recommendations to the board about members who may be removed as members or re-classified into different categories of membership.
- ❖ A list of names of members being deleted from the roll will be brought to the board by the membership taskforce. Those people will be contacted verbally and advised of the removal of their names from the roll or the proposed changes.
- ❖ This will then be formalised in writing by one of the membership taskforce.
- ❖ Should no telephone number or address be known, the person's name may be removed after all reasonable efforts to contact them have been made.

Names may be removed at other times as a result of:

- ❖ the written request of the member noting that a member may not resign to avoid discipline
- ❖ church discipline
- ❖ the death of the member.

Names may be transferred to a different category at other times as a result of non-attendance for a period of more than six (6) consecutive months when not prevented by sickness, duty or distance and after reasonable attempts have been made to contact the member to find out the reason for their absence.

Any member may request that their name be restored to the active or junior member roll subject to the active member requirements being met (refer to section B4.2.1).

### **B4.3 Records and Their Security**

Access to records of members' details will be limited to those assigned the responsibility for updating them, the pastoral staff, persons working under direction of the pastoral staff and the database manager.

Any member may request that any of their details not be published in the church directory. This request will be complied with. Printed copies of the list of members are to be kept in the church office and will be available at a nominated time for people to see after they have been updated — excluding any details referred to above.

It is the responsibility of members to notify the church office of any changes of address or additions to their family.

### **B4.4 Discipline**

Where this occurs, the membership will (subject to the discretion of the board) be informed at an appropriate time within two (2) months. When the member under discipline responds in restoration during the period of suspension, the church membership will (subject to the discretion of the board) be informed that the member under discipline has been restored to full fellowship with this Church.

Any suspension of ministry will remain in force for a period of time as decided by the board. This will be reviewed at least every three (3) months.

The member under discipline will be asked to make a recommitment to the partnership commitment prior to restoration to the active or junior member roll.

## **Section B5 — Members Meetings**

### **B5.1 Introduction**

This section contains guidelines for the conduct of the four (4) types of general meeting. The standing orders containing rules for their conduct can be found in appendix D.

### **B5.2 Annual General Meeting**

The board will give a minimum of four (4) weeks notice of an annual general meeting.

At the annual general meeting, the following business will be dealt with:

- ❖ presentation and receipt of written annual reports from key ministry leaders
- ❖ election of board members
- ❖ presentation of a list of key ministry leaders for voting.

### **B5.3 Regular Members Meetings**

The board will give a minimum of two (2) weeks notice of a regular members meeting.

A minimum of two (2) regular members meetings will be held in each twelve (12) month period for the conduct of ordinary business. These meetings will be in addition to the annual general meeting, special members meetings and forums. The purpose of the member's meeting is to discuss and approve a wide range of issues including:

- ❖ the annual church budget
- ❖ presentation of the audited financial report
- ❖ presentation of financial reports for the year-to-date period
- ❖ presentation of the annual church accounts at an appropriate meeting
- ❖ major acquisitions (i.e. items with a value in excess of five thousand dollars [\$5000]) and/or sale of property
- ❖ appointment of senior pastor
- ❖ reports on specific issues including church discipline
- ❖ appointment of people to fill key ministry positions
- ❖ appointment of senior staff
- ❖ major changes in ministry philosophy
- ❖ other issues as deemed appropriate by the board
- ❖ presentation of the auditor's report.

### **B5.4 Special Members Meetings**

The board will give a minimum of two (2) weeks notice of a special members meeting.

A special members meeting may be called at any time by the board on its own initiative or on the written and signed request of at least ten per cent (10%) of active members. Notice of a special members meeting will include the nature of the business to be discussed, which will be the only matter of business dealt with at the meeting.

## **B5.5 Forums**

The board will give a minimum of two (2) weeks notice of a forum.

A forum may be called at any time by the board to discuss matters where it is considered appropriate to allow exchange or communication of information or to allow opportunity for debate on particular issues. The forum is not a decision-making meeting and cannot pass resolutions or make decisions as if it were another type of general meeting of members.

## **Section B6 — Leadership**

### **B6.1 Introduction**

The relationship between the board and this Church is shown in figure 1 (in section B3) and ministry description sheets for key leadership positions are included in appendix B. A detailed organisation chart and ministry description sheets for staff and ministry positions are included in the church manual.

The board is the primary oversight body of this Church. To assist the senior pastor and senior staff in the spiritual oversight and ministry of this Church, suitably gifted members will be nominated to/from the board to function in the role of board elder. A board elder's call concludes with the end of their term as board member. There should be a minimum of two (2) board elders on the board. On the appointment of a new senior pastor, existing board elders will offer to relinquish their eldership function so a new eldership team may be formed (refer to section B6.2).

The appointment of the senior pastor is covered by section 6.3.2 of the constitution so the remainder of this section deals with the appointment board members and board elders, their function (also refer to appendix B of this handbook) and the appointment of senior staff other than the senior pastor.

### **B6.2 Election of Board Members (Including Board Elders)**

The board members (including board elders) will be elected in accordance with section 6.2.2 of the constitution and as further defined below.

At least three (3) months prior to the annual general meeting, the board will oversee the establishment of a board nominating team to receive nominations for the position of board member and board elder. This team will consist of four (4) active members and will serve for twelve (12) months to allow processing of board member nominations at times other than the annual general meeting. The team will include persons from each of the following areas:

- ❖ one (1) member being the Senior Pastor or his nominee from the eldership team
- ❖ one (1) existing board member
- ❖ two (2) active members drawn from the congregation. (These members will not be existing members of the board.)

These nominations for the board nominating team are then taken to the members for approval at the next members meeting. A special members meeting may be called.

The board nominating team may then begin to accept nominations for board members on the board member nomination form. Any member over 18 years of age may be nominated for the position of board member. Members may also approach other members they consider have the biblical qualities and gifts of a leader. Nomination for board elders are made only by the senior pastor with the agreement of the existing eldership (to be indicated by signing the board elder nomination forms). If the senior pastor position is vacant or there are no other members of the eldership team, a nomination process will be implemented which has been agreed to by this Church at a constituted meeting.

All nominations for the board, are to be given to the board nominating team. The board nominating team then interview and consider all nominated applicants and brings it's recommendation to the membership.

The following documents, which are included in appendix B, are to be used as a resource by the board nominating team in its considerations:

- ❖ relevant ministry description sheet for a board member or board elder
- ❖ profile of an ideal board member (to be used as a guide)
- ❖ checklist questions to ask before agreeing to serve on the board
- ❖ leadership commitment, which all board members are required to sign
- ❖ board member nomination form.

The board nominating team is to keep the board informed of the steps it is undertaking and its decisions.

Members will be notified in writing of the nominations considered suitable for the position of board member or board elder. This notification is to occur at least two (2) weeks before the vote to allow time for prayerful consideration of the nominations. If the vote is not at the annual general meeting, the length of term will be until the annual general meeting prior to the third anniversary of the vote.

Persons nominated to the board will be submitted to a secret ballot for confirmation by a majority of at least three-quarters (3/4) of active members voting.

Should the number of board elders fall below two (2), the eldership team can continue to operate with the selection process in place to provide at least two board elders.

Should a board elder need to relinquish their role of elder for reasons other than discipline, that person can continue in their position as board member for the remainder of their term.

### **B6.2.1 Election of Board Elders Directly from the Board**

The senior pastor, with the agreement of the eldership, may also recommend suitably gifted board members to the rest of the board for nomination to the membership as board elder. If the senior pastor position is vacant or there are no other members of the eldership team, a nomination process will be implemented which has been agreed to by this Church at a constituted meeting.

A minimum of two (2) weeks notice is to be given to board members of the nominations to allow for prayerful consideration. (Note: the board nominating committee is not involved in this process as nominees to the board elder role are already board members.)

On the agreement of the board, the nominated board elders' names, along with a ministry description of the eldership role will be given in writing to the membership at least two (2) weeks before the vote to allow time for prayerful consideration.

Persons nominated to the role of board elder will be submitted to a secret ballot for confirmation by a majority of at least three-quarters (3/4) of active members voting at a regular members meeting. A special members meeting may also be called.

Persons accepted as board elder in this way will serve in this role for the remainder of their term as a board member.

### **B6.3 Duties of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer**

The duties of the chairperson of the board, board secretary and treasurer are set out in the respective ministry description sheets in appendix B.

### **B6.4 Meetings**

The board will normally meet monthly to fulfil its functions as set out in this Church's constitution.

Within the board, those in the eldership function will meet together more frequently for prayer and to discern God's leading for this Church. Recommendations concerning ministry policies and future ministry directions will be brought to the rest of the board for approval and development.

With the board's agreement, church members may be invited to attend board meetings and participate in discussion. This may be on an ad-hoc basis or over a period of time (e.g. for the purpose of familiarising potential future board members or for ongoing ministry/administration information required by the board). These members may speak on motions with the agreement of the chairperson but will not be eligible to vote.

At the discretion of the meeting, a board member (including the senior pastor or a senior staff member) may be requested to absent themselves from the meeting if the matter being discussed relates to moral, ethical or relationship issues concerning that person or relates to issues where there is a potential conflict of interest.

Printed minutes including an attendance record will be kept of all board meetings. These minutes are to be confirmed as a true and accurate record at the subsequent meeting and prior to any business being dealt with.

The congregation will be regularly informed of general issues discussed and decisions made.

## **B6.5 Staff Other Than the Senior Pastor**

### **B6.5.1 Appointment and Reappointment of Senior Staff**

Senior staff are leaders providing pastoral oversight of ministry areas such as worship, mission and community, and are appointed after undergoing the following selection process.

This Church may appoint senior staff to undertake ministry as agreed by the board and the membership. The process will be as follows:

- ❖ The senior pastor and eldership, in conjunction with the board, will identify the need for additional staff and detail the proposed position.
- ❖ This matter is to be referred to the finance advisory team (see section B7.10) for advice on financial aspects.
- ❖ The board is to consider recommendations by the finance advisory team.
- ❖ The board will bring a recommendation to the members for the establishment of a staff placement process.
- ❖ A senior staff placement team is to be established by the board with the senior pastor (or a person nominated by him to act on his behalf) along with two board members and two active church members. The chairperson, nominated by the board, would normally be one of the board members.
- ❖ The senior staff placement team is then empowered to advertise, approach or arrange interviews as it considers appropriate.
- ❖ If a suitable applicant is found, a recommendation will be brought to the board, who will in turn bring the matter to the members for ratification.
- ❖ The vote by the members will be passed if three-quarters (3/4) of the active members voting are in favour of the motion. This vote will be subject to a secret ballot.
- ❖ If the motion is approved, a formal offer will be made to the person concerned.
- ❖ The appointment will be for a period as recommended by the senior staff placement team and as endorsed by the membership ballot.

Senior staff who are not yet accredited will be encouraged to undergo accreditation under Baptist Union of Queensland guidelines.

The letter of appointment for the senior staff member must reflect that in the event of a new senior pastor being appointed, this Church would reserve the right to amend the staffing structure as required to suit new ministry objectives that may be adopted under the new senior pastor.

If the senior staff member is subject to a call of a defined period, a senior staff review team will be formed six months before the end of the call. It will consist of the senior pastor (or a person nominated by him to act on his behalf) along with two board members and two active church members who are appointed by the board. The chairperson, nominated by the board, would normally be one of the board members.

The senior staff review team will bring its recommendation to the board. If the review team's recommendation is for the call to be renewed, the motion will be brought to this Church for a ballot as per the initial call procedure.

If the review team's recommendation is for the call not to be renewed, after due consideration by the board and the agreement of the senior staff member, this Church will be informed that the senior staff member's current call will not be renewed.

As senior staff are appointed by this Church, they can decide to pursue a recall vote, a report will be given in writing to the membership, with the notice of the ballot, stating that the board and senior staff review team does not support the motion renewing the call of the senior staff member.

The call can be terminated by either this Church or the senior staff member giving a minimum of three (3) months notice.

### **B6.5.2 Appointment of Support Staff (Paid and Unpaid)**

Support staff will include but not be limited to persons responsible for administrative and facility duties and to key ministry leaders (refer to section B7) on staff.

Any support staff should be employed in accordance with the church manual. This process will be overseen by the senior pastor and referred to the board for approval on behalf of the membership, except for key ministry leaders, who will be subject to a secret ballot by the church membership. The vote by the members will be passed if two-thirds (2/3) of the active members voting are in favour of the motion.

As part of this process, the board is to ensure that expenditure is within budget constraints.

### **B6.5.3 Staff Structure and Accountability**

The senior pastor will oversee the direction of staff that organise and manage the ministry or ministry teams. Staffing structure and lines of accountability will be defined by the senior pastor and submitted to the board for approval.

In the event of the senior pastor's position becoming vacant, requiring amendments to the staffing structure, every effort will be made to ensure that such amendments would be done over a period of not less than twelve (12) months from the date of the senior pastor's position becoming vacant. This would be the subject of consultation with all parties concerned so as to minimise disruption to the personal lives of staff and the ministry of this Church.

### **B6.5.4 Corrective Action and Termination**

In the case of unsatisfactory performance of a senior staff member, the senior pastor may recommend to the board proposed corrective action. If the circumstances are of sufficient magnitude, the senior pastor may recommend a review of the senior staff member's functioning in the role be undertaken by a senior staff review team. If the review team does not recommend the call be continued, after due consideration by the board and the agreement of the senior staff member, this Church will be informed that the senior staff member's call will not be continued.

As senior staff are appointed by this Church, they can decide to pursue a vote requiring three-quarters (3/4) of the active members voting in favour of the senior staff member continuing their call. However, a report will be given in writing to the membership, with the notice of the ballot, stating that the board and senior staff review team does not support the motion continuing the call of the senior staff member.

Should there be an impasse between the senior staff member and the senior pastor which is hampering ministry and “in-house” reconciliation procedures have been unsuccessful, either party or the board will be at liberty, without the authority of the members, to request that the Baptist Union of Queensland nominate a moderator to discuss the issue and, under God’s guidance, give advice. The board will be empowered to act on this advice.

The call can be terminated by either this Church or the senior staff member giving a minimum of three (3) months notice except in the case of a moral offence or misconduct (as judged by the Ministerial Committee of the Baptist Union of Queensland), where the call will terminate immediately.

In the case of unsatisfactory performance of a support staff member, the senior pastor may propose corrective action or dismissal if the circumstances are of sufficient magnitude. The senior pastor, in consultation with the board, will be empowered to act on this proposal.

In both of the above cases, care must be taken to ensure any legal requirements for this process are met including requirements for minimum notice.

#### **B6.5.5 Resignation**

Resignation of a senior staff member or support staff member is to be given in writing to the senior pastor.

### **Section B7 — Ministry Positions: Elections and Terms of Office**

A list of people filling \*key ministry positions will be prepared after a recruitment process and be published in the church newsletter for two (2) consecutive weeks prior to the annual general meeting to allow prayerful consideration and for any relevant comments or objections by the church membership to be given to the eldership team. After any issues have been addressed by the eldership team, the list will be submitted to the annual general meeting for voting.

The vote by the members will be passed if two-thirds (2/3) of the active members voting are in favour of the motion. This vote will be subject to a secret ballot.

\* Key ministries are expected to be headed by members of this Church and are ministries that:

- are essential to the healthy function of this Church
- have major access to and potential influence on the church community
- have significant interaction with people beyond the church community

Those filling these ministry positions will normally serve until the end of the calendar year.

Staff positions will be exempt from this requirement as such appointments will generally be for a specific role, subject to ongoing evaluation and be for periods longer than twelve (12) months.

For key ministry positions filled outside of the annual general meeting, the following procedure will be used:

- ❖ An applicant will be processed by the eldership.
- ❖ Their name along with the role to be filled will be placed in the church newsletter for a minimum of two (2) consecutive weeks to allow prayerful consideration and for any relevant comments or objections by the church membership to be given to the eldership team.
- ❖ At the following board meeting after any objections have been addressed by the eldership team, a vote by the board will be taken confirming the candidates in an “acting” role until confirmation in the role by a vote of members at the next general members meeting, or AGM as appropriate.
- ❖ During the entire process the candidate will be deemed as “acting” in the position, awaiting confirmation by a vote of the members.

A list of ministry positions is set out in the church manual. The senior pastor, in conjunction with the eldership team and ministry leaders, will be responsible for recruiting, training and motivating suitable gifted people for each ministry position.

All other positions will be filled in accordance with the church manual.

## **Section B8 — Finances**

### **B8.1 Administration**

A treasurer will be elected from the board annually. This person will hold this office for twelve (12) months and will be responsible for the oversight of this Church’s finances, ensuring that funds are administered and used wisely and that appropriate processes of accountability are in place. This person will be eligible for re-election.

The ministry description sheet for this position is included in appendix B of this document.

### **B8.2 Offerings**

All offerings will be counted and recorded on the sheet provided for this purpose.

All money will be banked on the following work day or as soon as it can be arranged with the finance institution where the church bank accounts are held.

Money will be counted in a secure area within the church premises as soon as the offerings are received.

Other money received will be counted by the person depositing along with a member of the office staff and placed in this Church’s secure area as soon as

possible. The amount will be written on an appropriate form, which is to be signed by the two (2) people who counted it and placed with the money in the secure area.

All offerings and money will be counted in the presence of at least two (2) people. Preferably one (1) of these should be either the treasurer or a member of the finance advisory team. The other person will be another active member.

### **B8.3 Accounts Records**

The treasurer will oversee the keeping of records of income and expenditure on the church computer and print out monthly reports which will be available to any active member on request. Only the treasurer, the treasurer's assistants, the finance advisory team and any others approved by the board may have access to the computer file used for this purpose.

### **B8.4 Financial Statements**

A printed report will be available to those attending the regular members meetings. Extra copies are to be made available upon request for those who are unable to attend these meetings.

### **B8.5 Budget**

As part of assessing the level of financial resource available for an upcoming year this Church may issue a "Request for Commitment" which should be done annually by means of a special function.

An annual budget proposal will be set by the treasurer, in consultation with the finance advisory team and senior pastor or eldership team representative, giving consideration to proposed ministry activities and submissions.

The annual budget proposal, accepted and authorised by the board, will be presented to an appropriate members meeting for adoption. This document will then be the basis of authorised expenditure for the following twelve (12) months and will be used by the treasurer and finance advisory team for monitoring the financial situation of this Church.

In the event of unexpected expenses, the board will be at liberty to consult with the finance advisory team and approve unbudgeted expenditure up to five thousand dollars (\$5000).

### **B8.6 Designated Gifts and Donations**

Until this Church approves otherwise, all gifts whether designated for a particular purpose or not will be treated as available for use in an activity of this Church in any way this Church may determine and free from any obligation to use or apply the gift in a particular manner or for a particular purpose.

Any donation offered may be refused at the discretion of the board.

### **B8.7 Appeals and Fundraising**

No appeals for finance for outside organisations will be circulated by any person without the prior approval of the board.

No church organisation will be able to appeal for funds without the express permission of the board or its delegate.

Special appeals are to be carried out under the guidance of the finance advisory team and with the approval of the board.

Fundraising activities must be approved by the board or its delegate.

### **B8.8 Auditor**

An independent auditor will be chosen annually by the board.

The auditor's report will be presented to the board and subsequently to the next regular members meeting.

### **B8.9 Organisations**

All organisational treasurers are to keep adequate financial records.

Each organisation will produce a financial report annually or as requested by the church treasurer.

### **B8.10 Finance Advisory Team**

The treasurer will form a finance advisory team, consisting of the church administrator (when the position is filled) and a minimum of three (3) active members recognised as having the gifts, passion and ability to handle finances of the size of this Church's budget. The names of the team members will be submitted to the board for ratification on behalf of the membership four (4) months prior to the presentation of the budget to the church to allow time for the budget's preparation. The team shall serve for twelve (12) months.

This team will meet regularly as decided by the treasurer and the board and in accordance with policies and procedures set out in the church manual.

### **B8.11 Contracts**

Before this Church enters into any contractual arrangements, they will be vetted by the finance advisory team, which is delegated by the board to approve contracts with contractual periods of up to two (2) years and which have been included in the church budget.

For contractual periods of more than two (2) years and for contracts which will require church approval, the finance advisory team will make a recommendation to the board for approval.

After the above processes have been completed, contracts are to be signed off by two (2) approved church signatories.

### **Section B9 — Use of Church Premises**

The use of church premises will in all cases be in accordance with the church manual. All organisations must book the parts of the facilities which they desire to use through the church office. This Church's own ministry activities take preference for bookings.

In the case of outside organisations using the church property or facilities, hire charges and conditions as set out in the church manual will apply.

### **Section B10 — Changes to Church Handbook**

This church handbook may not be amended without three-fifths (3/5) of the active members voting (i.e. 3/5 of active members voting in person or by absentee vote, at a properly constituted members meeting with a quorum present) being in favour of the proposed changes. A minimum of one (1) months notice of such meeting will be given in writing to all active and junior members. Such notice will set out full details of the proposed amendments including the wording of any motions to be moved at the proposed meeting.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **GLOBAL MISSIONARY POLICY**

**RIVERS BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**GLOBAL MISSIONARY POLICY**

**SECTION A: PURPOSE POLICIES**

**A1. PURPOSES OF MISSIONARY POLICY**

The constitution and ministry statements of Rivers Baptist Church highlight this Church's responsibility of being involved in proclaiming the message of salvation through Christ to all mankind both in our local community and to the ends of the earth. This policy sets out guidelines for the encouragement, development and administration of this Church's endeavours to present the Gospel to people outside the influence of this Church's local ministry.

In particular, the purpose of this policy is to:

- (1) ensure missionary involvement is an integral part of this Church's program
- (2) assist in setting clear direction for missionary involvement
- (3) set down principles which allow consistent decisions and recommendations to be made
- (4) ensure accountability and wise discipleship in areas of:
  - (a) finances
  - (b) programmed activities
  - (c) goal achievement
- (5) allow new church or committee members to become familiar with the general direction of this Church with respect to missions.

**A2. SCRIPTURAL BASIS**

1. Matthew 28:18–20

The Church is committed to the Great Commission because that is the clear teaching of Scripture. In particular, the Church is instructed to:

- (1) go into the world and proclaim the Gospel to all mankind
- (2) baptise those who are discipled as followers of Jesus Christ
- (3) teach them in all that Jesus taught His disciples to do.

2. 2 Peter 3:9

It is God's desire that the world be reconciled to Himself.

3. 1 John 5:12 and John 14:6

The Lord Jesus Christ came as the only means by which the world can be reconciled to God.

4. Acts 1:8 and Romans 10:13–15

Our mission as Christians is, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and under the controlling power of the Holy Spirit, to have an active involvement in taking the Gospel message to every part of the world.

**A3. DEFINITION OF MISSIONARY**

For the purposes of this policy, a missionary is defined as one from within this

Church who is set apart and sent out under the authority of the Holy Spirit to be involved in the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.

**Notes:**

- (1) In adopting this definition it is recognised that this is specifically for the application of this policy (i.e. there is a sense in which all Christians are missionaries).
- (2) As a general but non-exclusive principle, this policy will cover support and encouragement of individuals involved in mission activities outside the area of direct influence of the local congregation.
- (3) Involvement in the missionary task of taking the Gospel to the whole world can be through either the direct verbal proclamation (i.e. evangelist, pastoral ministry etc.) or in a supporting and serving role (i.e. medical missionaries, motor mechanics, computer specialists etc.)

**A4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MISSIONARY COMMITTEE**

The missionary committee's responsibilities are to:

- (1) coordinate and encourage this Church's missionary involvement as an appropriate response to the Great Commission (i.e. to encourage this Church to own its missionary activities)
- (2) help, stimulate, encourage and recruit volunteers for various elements of mission service including work parties
- (3) stimulate informed intercessory prayer for missionaries
- (4) provide ongoing care, support and encouragement for missionaries supported by this Church
- (5) develop and make recommendations to the church leadership regarding the administration and distribution of funds as part of the budgeting process
- (6) highlight any shortfall in support and encouragement for missionaries which this Church supports
- (7) interview applicants and make recommendations to this Church regarding those sensing God's call on their lives for active missionary service.

**A5. FLEXIBILITY OF INTERPRETATION**

This policy sets out guidelines for the consistent administration of missionary endeavours but, at the same time, recognises the need for some flexibility in handling emergency situations. This will include processes for setting budgets and allocation of funds (including approval procedures for expenditure of emergency funds). Any divergence from "normal" circumstances as set out in this policy shall be in conjunction with the board although some flexibility in this may be appropriate dependent on future developments in church governance. Such expenditure should be submitted to the board for ratification and also presented to the members for ratification at the next church business meeting or sooner if considered appropriate by the board.

**A6. GOAL SETTING**

The committee shall be responsible for implementation of a program of activities and events which it considers appropriate. Ideally, a long-term program covering, say, five (5) years and a detailed short-term program covering twelve (12) months shall be drafted in conjunction with the board and submitted for its approval. The missionary committee shall also implement a means for measuring the achievement of the goals set.

## **A7. REVISION OF POLICY**

This policy may require amendment as the size of this Church and circumstances change. Any amendments must be submitted to the board for ratification prior to being presented to the church membership as an item of business at a members meeting. If passed by the members, the amendment will become part of this policy and be implemented by the missionary committee.

## **SECTION B: STRUCTURAL POLICIES**

### **B1. SELECTION OF MISSIONARY COMMITTEE AND TERM OF OFFICE**

The chairperson of the missionary committee is to be nominated by the board and elected by the membership at the annual general meeting of this Church. This appointment is to be for a period of twelve (12) months. The chairperson will then select an appropriate number of committee members whose names are to be submitted to the board and the membership for ratification.

### **B2. CRITERIA FOR MISSIONARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

In selecting committee members, the following guidelines are set down for consideration by the chairperson. Members should be committed, faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ with some or all of the following qualities:

- (1) a strong interest in missions
- (2) a commitment to missionary support being a vital and integral part of the church's ministry
- (3) past missionary experience or knowledge
- (4) demonstrated communication or leadership skills
- (5) a sense of vision and direction for missions work in the life of this Church.

Note: It is desirable that a wide range of ages and experience be represented on the committee and that there be a balance of genders.

### **B3. SIZE OF THE MISSIONARY COMMITTEE**

The size of the committee is at the chairperson's discretion giving consideration to the following points:

- (1) the group must be large enough to be a fair representation of a cross section of the church family
- (2) there must be sufficient people to effectively perform the functions set out in this policy
- (3) it should be limited to a reasonable number so that the group functions effectively.

Note: Published literature suggests that approximately two-thirds (2/3) of churches have between six (6) and twelve (12) representatives on their missionary committees (Ref: Association of American Missions Committee Handbook).

### **B4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS OF THE MISSIONARY COMMITTEE**

In agreeing to serve as a member of the missionary committee a person should be prepared to:

- (1) maintain a regular prayer and devotional life
- (2) attend committee meetings regularly (usually once per month)
- (3) pray for missionaries which this Church supports
- (4) maintain an active interest in missionary activities

- (5) be supportive of other missionary committee members and respectful of their opinions
- (6) be familiar with this Church's missionary policy and committed to wise administration of same.

## **SECTION C: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES**

### **C1. PREPARATION AND APPROVAL OF MISSIONS BUDGET**

An integral part of the committee's responsibility is to advise on allocation of funds to missionaries and mission organisations. Each year, prior to the preparation of this Church's budget, the missionary committee is to make a submission to the board or finance advisory team as appropriate for a budget allocation of funds for the next financial year. This submission is to be considered prior to preparation of the proposed church budget for approval by the membership at the appropriate church members meeting. This proposal should be consistent with the long-term (say five-year) plan set by the missionary committee in conjunction with the board.

It should be noted that in accepting a budget figure the Church family is making a commitment which has a direct and significant impact on the lives of the missionaries and their families. In short, any shortfalls in these monies will have to be made up in other ways to ensure that missionaries' physical needs are met.

In setting this budget figure, consideration should be given to

- (1) our current missionary commitments
- (2) proposals for additional support
- (3) percentage of the missions budget to the overall church budget
- (4) this Church's responsibility to mission work as part of its response to the Great Commission
- (5) individuals being prepared to give extra gifts over and above their regular offering towards mission activities.

### **C2. STRATEGY FOR DISTRIBUTION OF BUDGET MONIES**

After approval of the church budget, the missionary committee shall liaise with the treasurer regarding distribution of funds on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Typically available money is to be distributed every three (3) months based on a recommendation from the committee to the treasurer.

In distributing the available money, a contingency fund should be kept aside for dealing with unforeseen circumstances (typically emergencies) which may arise. Any distribution of the contingency fund shall be done in consultation between at least three (3) people (typically the missionary committee chairperson or his/her representative, a member of the eldership team and the treasurer) and shall be submitted to the membership for ratification at the next members meeting. Distribution of funds will be reported to members via the missionary committee chairperson's annual report.

The following guidelines are to be considered when allocating funds:

- (1) It is desirable to maintain a deep commitment to a small number of missionaries rather than a fairly nominal commitment to a wider number.
- (2) Members of greater than two (2) years standing who are considering

- missionary service shall receive the highest priority.
- (3) Missionaries working in targeted geographic areas as identified by the missionary committee from time to time shall also receive priority.
  - (4) Some priority should also be directed to missionaries serving under agencies of our denomination (i.e. Australian Baptist Missionary Society and Mission to Queensland).
  - (5) Special circumstances may be considered whereby a special “once only” gift can be given as recommended by the missionary committee. (Note that in an emergency situation the chairperson could allocate money from the contingency fund as per the procedures set out in paragraph 2 of section C2 of this policy.)

### **C3. EVALUATION OF MISSIONARY CANDIDATES**

Evaluation of missionary candidates will generally be by an interviewing committee set up by the missionary committee and should include a member of the eldership team, a member of the missionary committee and at least one other person. An interview or series of interviews should be held after which a recommendation should be taken through the missionary committee to the board. If approved by the board, the recommendation is to be submitted to a church members meeting for final approval.

The following criteria shall be used to assess missionary candidates and missionary organisations. **Note particularly that the committee has a responsibility to seek, at all times, to discover the call of God on the candidate’s life in missionary service.**

#### Section A: Candidates

- (1) All missionaries are encouraged to serve with an evangelical mission whose doctrinal position is consistent with that of this Church.
- (2) Candidates are to be of good character and demonstrate integrity in dealing with others.
- (3) Candidates must be accepted by the relevant organisation as suitable for service prior to disbursement of funds.
- (4) Candidates must have demonstrated giftedness in the area of service they are proposing.
- (5) The endeavour must represent efficient use of financial resources.

#### Section B: Missionary Organisations

- (1) Mission organisations must prepare full, audited financial reports on a yearly basis.
- (2) Organisations will be evaluated with respect to the percentage of funds received which actually reaches the mission field.
- (3) Priority in support will be directed toward organisations whose primary work is proclaiming the Gospel to the world.
- (4) The endeavour must represent efficient use of financial resources.

### **C4. AMOUNT, SCOPE AND DURATION OF SUPPORT**

Support levels will be dependent on the available funds and as recommended to the board by the missionary committee in accordance with sections C1 and C2 of this policy. In determining individual levels of support for missionaries, the following guidelines are to be considered;

- (1) priority missionary: 10– 50% of total support required
- (2) other missionaries: 1– 10% of total support required
- (3) missionary organisations: amounts as approved by the board.

When recommending support of a particular missionary to the board, the missionary committee is to include the specific financial commitment proposed and the duration of support which is to be set at a maximum of four (4) years subject to the notes set out below.

Notes:

- (1) Commencement of support will be as recommended by the missionary committee. Options are:
  - (a) on acceptance of candidate by mission organisation
  - (b) when missionary commences training
  - (c) when missionary leaves for the field
  - (d) when missionary starts work on the field.
- (2) At the end of the first term the missionary committee can recommend support for a further term if it considers this appropriate. This would be subject to approval by the membership as previously defined.
- (3) Continuation of support is conditional on:
  - (a) continuation of service in the role and with the organisation on which assessment was based
  - (b) the missionary maintaining regular contact with this Church (i.e. at least every six [6] months)
  - (c) the missionary continuing to lead a lifestyle consistent with Christian principles
  - (d) the missionary having the call of God on their lives to mission work.

#### **C5. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS PREPARING FOR MISSIONARY SERVICE**

In the case of members and adherents, this subject is covered by this Church's student and intern policy. Generally this situation will not apply to people from outside the church family although if special circumstances arose, the missionary committee could make recommendations to the membership through the board.

#### **C6. METHODS OF HANDLING DESIGNATED GIVING**

The missionary committee chairperson shall liaise with the church treasurer in forwarding designated gifts to the appropriate mission organisation.

#### **C7. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING FUND SHORTAGES AND SURPLUSES**

The missionary committee is to monitor availability of funds to meet current commitments to missionaries. If a shortage of funds becomes obvious, it should recommend to the board appropriate action. Possible strategies would include:

- (1) notifying the members of the situation
- (2) calling the members to prayer on the issue
- (3) undertaking specific fund-raising activities
- (4) requesting a make-up from this Church's general budget.

In the case of a surplus of funds, the missionary committee is to make a recommendation to the board on disbursing the funds. Options would include:

- (1) sponsor a specific project
- (2) hold as a contingency
- (3) increase support for an individual

(4) one-off gift to an individual or organisation.

#### **C8. CONTINGENCY FUND**

Unforeseen emergencies do occur from time to time which require prompt attention. To cover this situation, a contingency account will be maintained. The amount kept in this account will be up to a maximum fixed sum as approved by the board from time to time. Any monies allocated from this fund will be subject to approval procedures set out in section C2.

#### **C9. HONORARIUM FOR VISITING MISSIONARY SPEAKERS**

Fees for visiting speakers will be in accordance with this Church's policy on visiting speakers. Any further allocation of funds will be subject to the approval procedures set out in this policy.

#### **C10. CARE OF VISITING MISSIONARIES**

It is the responsibility of the missionary committee to arrange for the care of visiting missionaries while they are home on furlough or visiting our area.

#### **C11. LIMITS OF INTERPRETATION**

Notwithstanding anything contained herein, the missionary committee may bring recommendations to the church leadership outside these guidelines and policies if, in all conscience before God, they deem the matters to be of sufficient importance to do so.

# **APPENDIX B**

**MINISTRY DESCRIPTION SHEETS,**

**BOARD SELECTION CRITERIA,**

**ELDERSHIP TEAM FUNCTION,**

**LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT AND**

**BOARD NOMINATION FORM**

**BOARD ELDER NOMINATION FORM**

**Assigned person:**

**Effective date:**

**Review date**

## **MINISTRY DESCRIPTION SHEET**

**TITLE OF POSITION:** Board member

**PURPOSE OF POSITION:** *The ministry role of the Board is to be the primary governance group of the church responsible to provide spiritual oversight and to ensure the ongoing health and growth of this church and its ministries.*

**REPORTS TO:** The membership

**RELATES CLOSELY WITH:** The other board members

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Providing spiritual leadership
- To appreciate, recognise and encourage those in ministry
- The direction of this Church, its values, mission and vision
- To review, refine, approve and track the direction of this Church
- To follow established governance processes
- Set policies, approve procedures and carry out legal requirements
- Supporting, evaluate and release the senior pastor
- Manage the finances
- Have an outward, future and proactive emphasis

### **GIFTS/ STRENGTHS ETC.:**

- Qualities from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1; godly character; love for Jesus and commitment to His Church
- Proven track record as a mature, growing follower of Jesus
- Leadership, strategic thinker
- Faith
- Administration
- Encouragement/discernment

### **TOP THREE MEASURABLE PRIORITIES FOR COMING YEAR**

**A**

**B** (To be determined each year)

**C**

**BUDGET AVAILABLE:** Nil

**SALARY/ HONORARIUM:** Volunteer

**TIME REQUIRED BY POSITION:** Av. 10–12 hrs/month for a three-year period

**ACCOMPANYING BENEFITS:** The joy of seeing this Church grow in maturity and membership

### **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/GENERAL INFORMATION:**

## **An “Ideal” Board Member Profile**

1. Meets scriptural qualifications (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1)
2. Has significant level of experience in situations that have demonstrated strong character qualities
3. Is God-oriented — with their life and sense of purpose
4. Is an active witness
5. Focused more on God than on personal achievements, family or a mission or program
6. Is motivated by a deep devotion to God
7. Is a person of prayer
8. Is able to be decisive
9. Sees the big picture — has a worldwide perspective
10. Is positive and focused on the future, yet is also realistic — aware of reality, but not shackled by it
11. Thinks critically, without a critical attitude
12. Is a natural encourager for the board
13. Believes strongly in the objectives of this Church
14. Feels at ease in an advising relationship with the senior pastor
15. Complements current board members
16. Is not a “rubber stamp” giving an automatic “yes”; nor a “devil’s advocate” with an automatic “no”
17. Enjoys a wide network of friends and contacts
18. Can think independently without insisting on “my way”
19. Is humble and not judgmental — gives priority to the “beam” in their own eye, not the “speck” in their brother’s eye
20. Keeps priorities clear while being able to sort many details in a confusing situation
21. Shows a willingness to adapt to meet needs
22. Demonstrates ability to delegate effectively
23. Has a supportive spouse who understands the role
24. Presents no conflict of interest
25. Has a servant–leader attitude — “How can I help the group?”
26. Able to maintain confidentiality
27. Has a good understanding of the activities of this Church
28. Has a desire to develop new skills and learn from others and experience

## **Danger Signals in a Board Candidate Profile**

- ❖ Has personal (hidden) agendas
- ❖ Is consistently negative, always focusing on why something can’t be done
- ❖ Is fearful of the future
- ❖ Is stingy
- ❖ Is extremely emotional, needy or self-centred

*Note:* Some of the above criteria are extracts from *Increasing Your Boardroom Confidence* by Bob Biehl and Ted Engstrom

## Ten Questions to Ask Yourself BEFORE Agreeing to Serve On the Board

*(As you think about your answers, record your thoughts in the space provided.)*

1. What will be expected of me as a responsible board member?
2. Can I make the time available to effectively serve on the board — to do the necessary homework, attend meetings and retreats etc.?
3. What qualifies me to serve on this board? What would I bring to the board in terms of my experience, abilities, interests, resources and relationships?
4. How long of a commitment am I willing to make to this organisation?
5. Do I really believe in the organisation?
6. Do I feel truly supportive of the senior pastor and the senior staff?
7. Is my spouse supportive of my serving on this board?
8. Are there any hidden things in my life that would disqualify me from serving if they were known?
9. Why should I *not* serve?
10. Do I sense God's leading in this decision?

*Note:* The above is an extract from *Increasing Your Boardroom Confidence* by Bob Biehl and Ted Engstrom

**Assigned person:**

**Effective date:**

**Review date**

## **MINISTRY DESCRIPTION SHEET**

**TITLE OF POSITION:** Board chairperson

**PURPOSE OF POSITION:** Facilitate effective board functioning

**REPORTS TO:** The board

**RELATES CLOSELY WITH:** Senior pastor and other board members

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:** N/A

### **CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Develop board agendas in conjunction with the senior pastor
- Ensure required information and materials are on hand at board meetings to aid good discussion and decision making
- To ensure meetings run to a schedule and time available is used wisely
- To maintain a positive tone at board meetings
- To ensure accurate minutes of board meetings are taken and maintained
- In conjunction with the senior pastor, monitor progress of tasks allocated to individuals at board meetings
- To be conversant with the constitution and ensure the affairs of this Church conform with its requirements

### **GIFTS/ STRENGTHS ETC.:**

- Qualities from 1 Timothy 3 and, Titus 1; godly character; love for Jesus and commitment to His Church
- Strategic thinker, proven track record
- Leadership
- Administration
- Discernment

**ROLE PREFERENCE:** N/A

### **TOP THREE MEASURABLE PRIORITIES FOR COMING YEAR**

**A**

**B**

As determined in conjunction with the senior pastor and board

**C**

**BUDGET AVAILABLE:** Nil

**SALARY/ HONORARIUM:** Volunteer

**TIME REQUIRED BY POSITION:** 5 hrs/month (over and above that for a board Member) for a one-year period

**ACCOMPANYING BENEFITS:** The joy of seeing the church grow in maturity and membership

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/GENERAL INFORMATION:** N/A

**Assigned person:**

**Effective date:**

**Review date**

## **MINISTRY DESCRIPTION SHEET**

**TITLE OF POSITION:** Church treasurer

**PURPOSE OF POSITION:** Oversight of church finances

**REPORTS TO:** The membership and the board

**RELATES CLOSELY WITH:** The other board members

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:** N/A

### **CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Setting of this Church's annual budget
- Accounting for and monitoring of church income and expenditure
- Ensuring timely and efficient distribution of funds to ministry areas
- Providing reports and interpretation of reports to the board on current and projected financial position of this Church
- To form and facilitate the finance advisory team
- To give direction to office staff on book-keeping policy issues

### **GIFTS/ STRENGTHS ETC.:**

- Qualities from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1; godly character; love for Jesus and commitment to His Church
- Strategic thinker, proven track record
- Faith
- Financial administration
- Discernment

**ROLE PREFERENCE:** N/A

### **TOP THREE MEASURABLE PRIORITIES FOR COMING YEAR**

**A**

**B**

As determined in conjunction with the senior pastor and board

**C**

**BUDGET AVAILABLE:** Nil

**SALARY/ HONORARIUM:** Volunteer

**TIME REQUIRED BY POSITION:** 10 hrs/month (over and above that for a board member) for a one-year period

**ACCOMPANYING BENEFITS:** The joy of seeing the church grow in maturity and membership

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/GENERAL INFORMATION:** N/A

**Assigned person:**

**Effective date:**

**Review date**

## **MINISTRY DESCRIPTION SHEET**

**TITLE OF POSITION:** Board minutes secretary

**PURPOSE OF POSITION:** Assist in effective running of board meetings

**REPORTS TO:** The board chairperson

**RELATES CLOSELY WITH:** The other board members

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:** N/A

**CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Recording and distribution of minutes of meetings
- Writing of letters as requested by the board

**GIFTS/ STRENGTHS ETC.:**

- Qualities from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1; godly character; love for Jesus and commitment to His Church
- Proven track record
- Administration
- Encouragement
- Discernment
- Wisdom

**ROLE PREFERENCE:** N/A

**TOP THREE MEASURABLE PRIORITIES FOR COMING YEAR**

**A**

**B**

As determined in conjunction with the senior pastor and board

**C**

**BUDGET AVAILABLE:** Nil

**SALARY/ HONORARIUM:** Volunteer

**TIME REQUIRED BY POSITION:** 2 hrs/month (over and above that for a board member) for a one-year period **ACCOMPANYING BENEFITS:** The joy of seeing the church grow in maturity and membership

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/GENERAL INFORMATION:**

Assigned person:

Effective date:

Review date

## **MINISTRY DESCRIPTION SHEET**

**TITLE OF POSITION:** Board elder

**PURPOSE OF POSITION:** This position is part of the board. The purpose is to function in a role on the eldership team, whose role is primarily to seek God's leading and direction for this Church, work with ministry teams and individuals within the church community, and support and develop healthy, vibrant relationships with God and with each other.

**REPORTS TO:** The board

**RELATES CLOSELY WITH:** The other board members, senior pastor, other members of the eldership team and wider church community

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

- As a board member, the same general responsibilities as shown in the board member ministry description sheet
- Meeting regularly with the eldership team to pray and seek God's leading by: Biblical reflection, prayerful consideration and consultation with the church community
- Assisting the pastors in the shepherding/pastoral care ministries
- Assisting the pastors in supporting and mentoring the key ministry leaders
- Being actively involved in developing and encouraging prayer ministries of this Church

**GIFTS/ STRENGTHS ETC.:**

Through a daily practice of being filled with the Spirit, and communing with God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, the following gifts/strengths should be evident:

- Qualities from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1; godly character; love for Jesus and commitment to His Church
- Proven track record in exhibiting godly wisdom and an ongoing willingness to become more Christ-like
- Servant heart
- Expectant of God doing great things
- Peace maker
- Exhibits encouragement and discernment

**Assigned person:**

**Effective date:**

**Review date**

## **MINISTRY DESCRIPTION SHEET**

**TITLE OF POSITION:** Senior Pastor

**PURPOSE OF POSITION:** To lead, encourage or actively participate in the church's core purposes:

- to worship God
- to fellowship with others
- to grow in faith
- to serve God through ministry
- to share His Word with others

**REPORTS TO:** Board

**RELATES CLOSELY WITH:** The Body of Christ (the Church) and other senior staff

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

### **1.0 Core Pastoral Functions**

- To pastor or 'shepherd' God's church – to feed, lead, guide and nurture (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2)
- To oversee or direct the affairs of God's church (1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5)
- To teach and preach (Eph. 4:12, 13; 1 Tim.3:2; 5:17)
- To represent the church (Acts 20:17)
- To pray for the sick (James 5:14)

### **2.0 Other Specific Tasks**

- Recruit, train and motivate lay ministers to achieve the position's purpose
- To plan and coordinate the church ministry calendar with ministry leaders
- To work with the Church Council in setting policy, planning for the future, monitoring, evaluating ministry and leading the congregation

**GIFTS/ STRENGTHS ETC.:**

Qualifications from 1 Tim. 3:

- Blameless (v.2; Titus 1:6)
- Husband of one wife (v.2; Titus 1:6)
- Temperate (v.2)
- Sober-minded (v.2; Titus 1:8)
- Of good behaviour (v.2)
- Hospitable (v.2; Titus 1:8)
- Able to teach (v.2; Titus 1:9)
- Not given to wine (v.3; Titus 1:7)
- Not violent, but gentle (v.3; Titus 1:7)
- Not greedy for money (v.3; Titus 1:7)

- Not quarrelsome (v.3)
- Not covetous (v.3)
- Rules own house well (v.4)
- Has submissive children (v.4; Titus 1:6)
- Not a novice (v.6)
- Has a good testimony (v.7)

Qualifications from Titus 1:

- Not self-willed (v.7)
- Not quick-tempered (v.7)
- A lover of what is good (v.8)
- Just (v.8)
- Holy (v.8)
- Self-controlled (v.8)
- Holds firmly to the Word of God in order to encourage and refute (v. 9)

**TOP THREE MEASURABLE PRIORITIES FOR COMING YEAR**

A

B As determined in conjunction with the Board

C

**SALARY/ HONORARIUM:** In accordance with Baptist Union ministerial remuneration guidelines

**TIME REQUIRED BY POSITION:** 40 hrs per week

**ACCOMPANYING BENEFITS:** Fringe benefit arrangements as per Queensland Baptists recommendation

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/GENERAL INFORMATION:**

- Commitment to the mission, vision and values of the church.
- Acceptance and support of our doctrinal statement (what we believe)
- Acceptance and support of our philosophy of ministry.

# Eldership Team Function

## Introduction

This Church's board exists to serve this Church in its role as defined in paragraph 6.2.1 of the church constitution. To assist the board accomplish its role, an eldership team has been formed to function as an integral part of the board. It does not have a higher status over other board members. However, it does have a specific function within the board. Its primary role is in the spiritual life of this Church, rather than the administrative function of it. The personal qualities of an elder are stated in 1 Timothy 3:1–8. In summary, elders should be clearly recognised as people of prayer, wisdom, discernment and spiritual maturity who are able to provide servant leadership to the church community through what they say, how they relate to people and through the way they are living.

## Who is on the eldership?

The eldership team is made up of:

- the senior pastor
- senior staff (if the role on the board and eldership team is included in their job description)
- board elders.

The senior pastor leads the team as the “first among equals”, as they, in conjunction with the board, seek God's will and direction for this Church.

## To whom does the eldership relate?

Because the eldership team is made up of the senior pastor, senior staff and board elders, it regularly communicates with the following:

- the board (primarily through the monthly board meeting)
- the management and administration teams (primarily through the senior pastor and senior staff being part of these teams)
- ministry leaders (primarily through regular meetings with the ministry leaders teams)
- the church community (primarily through interaction with small group leaders meetings, with other ministry teams in areas such as prayer and pastoral support, and with staff as part of their designated ministry roles).

This Church recognises the need to work together with other churches and organisations to see God transform our community. To this end, the eldership team or part thereof will normally be the initial contact point of this church with:

- other churches of the Queensland Baptist denomination
- churches of other denominations within our community with whom we can work together either regularly or for special events
- other Christian organisations with whom we can work together with common goals.

## How will the eldership operate?

The eldership team's prime function is in seeking God's will and direction for this Church. To achieve this it undertakes to meet regularly together to pray. Psalm 127 says “Unless the Lord builds the house its builders labour in vain...”

In seeking God's will and as part of discerning His leading, the eldership meets with the teams listed above and listens to the concerns, needs and leading God has placed on the hearts of His people. If the eldership team together discern God is leading this Church in a new direction, the matter will be brought to the board for their consideration and prayer. If agreed, the board in conjunction with the eldership team will carry out the administrative processes and consultation needed to bring a proposal to the church membership for voting. If the eldership discern God's leading in areas that are already within the agreed ministry direction and existing resources of the church, the senior pastor will oversee the implementation of the matter by the appropriate ministry teams or staff. A report from the eldership team will be brought to the board by the senior pastor at its monthly meeting informing the board of such matters.

As part of seeking God's will and leading, it is accepted that God can sometimes speak to His people through a variety of ways. In this Church such communication will be prayerfully considered by the eldership team and, when in agreement, acted upon as described in the previous paragraph.

In serving God and this Church, the eldership team, in conjunction with the board and other ministry teams when appropriate, also has responsibilities and participation in the following:

- overseeing the prayer ministry of this Church
- pastorally caring and shepherding this Church (Acts 20:28–35)
- recruiting and preparing of God's people for works of service (1 Timothy 5:17 and Ephesians 4:12)
- guarding this Church against false teaching from within and without (Acts 20:29–31)
- praying for and anointing those who are sick (James 5:14–15)
- directing the affairs of the church (1 Timothy 5:17)
- teaching and equipping the saints (1 Timothy 3:2; Ephesians 4:11–13)
- overseeing the mentoring of key ministry leaders
- overseeing the discipline process
- overseeing deliverance/healing ministries in this Church.

The eldership team as a group of spiritual peers with the senior pastor also has a role in providing the senior pastor and each other with accountability, support and encouragement.

Due to passion and zeal in serving God and often due to a breakdown of communication or other factors, sometimes disputes occur in the church. In these situations, the board on becoming aware of such disputes, will normally nominate two members of the eldership team or, if more appropriate, one member of the eldership team and another suitably gifted member to help facilitate reconciliation between the parties. If this is not achieved, the board may implement the appropriate processes as outlined in the church handbook.

## Leadership Commitment

*Knowing that God has spoken clearly in His Word concerning the character and responsibility of a leader, I do solemnly commit myself to God and to the other leaders of this church to do the following:*

I will:

1. seek to maintain a close, intimate walk with the Lord by regularly spending time alone with Him in His Word and in prayer.
2. be a diligent student of God's Word.
3. endeavour to walk continually in the Spirit.
4. pray regularly for those who serve with me as church leaders, for the pastor of the church and for the staff.
5. pray regularly for the ministry of this Church.
6. faithfully attend all meetings of the board unless I am unable to for a compelling reason such as illness, work commitments or travel. When unable to attend, I will notify the chairperson.
7. prepare for each board meeting by doing any preparation and by submitting myself anew and afresh to the Holy Spirit.
8. work together as a unified team in the best interests of the entire church.
9. care about, respect and trust others on the board (1 Timothy 3:2, 2 Timothy 2:2).
10. maintain an open and teachable attitude.
11. maintain board confidentiality.
12. be involved in church activities other than the board.
13. strive to be an example of a true follower of Christ in every area of life.
14. support board decisions even when they differ from my personal position.
15. not necessarily be a preserver of the status quo but be open to more effective ways of doing ministry.
16. deal quickly and properly with any disagreements within the board.
17. have no authority over others except when acting corporately as a board.
18. not act as a mouthpiece for any other person's views or criticism but rather direct that person to take up their concerns directly.

**I have studied these statements of commitment and have prayed over them, and I believe God would have me serve this Church as a board member according to this covenant.**

Rivers Baptist Church

**BOARD NOMINATION FORM**

I ....., an active member of Rivers Baptist Church,  
wish to nominate the following person for the position of board member.

.....(Name of person nominated)

Signed by: .....

Nominator: .....  
*(Please print)*

I ....., an active member of Rivers Baptist Church,  
second the following person for the position of board member.

Signed by: .....

Secunder : .....  
*(Please print)*

I ....., being in agreement with the three (3)  
attachments, accept the nomination for the position of board member.

**Attached documents**

- 1. Leadership Commitment
- 2. Ministry description Sheet
- 3. Board Selection Criteria Form

Accepted and signed by::.....Date: ..../.../.....

Rivers Baptist Church

**BOARD ELDER NOMINATION FORM**

I ....., Senior Pastor of Rivers Baptist Church  
nominate the following person for the position of board elder.

.....(Name of person nominated)

Signed by: ..... (Senior Pastor)

We.....

.....

.....

being members of the eldership team of Rivers Baptist Church, agree with the  
nomination of following person for the position of board elder.

Signed by: ..... .....

..... .....

..... .....

I ....., being in agreement with the three (3)  
attachments, accept the nomination for the position of board elder.

**Attached documents**

- 1. Leadership Commitment
- 2. Ministry description Sheet
- 3. Board Selection Criteria Form

Accepted and signed by::.....Date: ..../.../.....

# **APPENDIX C**

## **PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENT**

# Partnership Agreement

God, by His grace alone, has led me to repent of my sin and believe upon Jesus Christ, trusting Him alone as my Saviour and Lord. I have been baptised as a believer in Christ and desire to unite with this church family. In humble reliance upon the Holy Spirit, I endeavour to do the following:

## **Worship**

I will seek to be obedient to Christ in my daily living and to strive for attitudes and actions that will reflect the Holy Spirit working through me. I will nourish my relationship with God through spiritual practices like prayer and Bible study and avoid those experiences and habits that will harm the body and mind and negatively affect my witness.

I will strive to honour God with my material resources, giving regularly, generously and cheerfully to support this church and its mission.

## **Mission**

I will strive to be a part of this church community where the lost may find Christ, sinners find pardon and seekers may find acceptance.

Believing that our call is to be witnesses for Christ in our world, I will seek to win others to faith in Christ; strive for justice, freedom, dignity and peace for all people; and be a minister of God's reconciling love at home, at work and in the world about me.

## **Community**

I will meet regularly with my church community and seek to acknowledge and support the leaders, love one another, remember one another in prayer, share each other's joys and sustain each other in times of sadness.

I will use my God-given gifts and abilities to serve God by serving in this church community and beyond.

# **APPENDIX D**

## **STANDING ORDERS FOR MEETINGS**

## **Standing Orders for Meetings**

- (a) The chairperson will have overall control of the meeting. If any member objects to a ruling of the chairperson, such objection will take the form of a point of order (refer section (p) of the standing orders).
- (b) All meetings will commence at the advertised time and time allocated to various business items will be adhered to as scheduled unless the chairperson deems it appropriate to make amendments.
- (c) If no quorum is present within thirty (30) minutes of the advertised starting time, the meeting will lapse. Subject to any resolution previously passed, the chairperson will fix the time of the next meeting. All business on the agenda of the lapsed meeting will be included on the agenda of the next meeting and will take precedence over new business.
- (d) As a general principle, business introduced for a decision will be in the form of a written motion circulated prior to the meeting to enable prayerful consideration of issues prior to a vote. In keeping with this principle, motions raised from the floor will be referred back to the board prior to being reintroduced to a members meeting.
- (e) All motions will be moved and seconded and speeches must be relevant to the matter being considered. No member may speak to a motion until it has been moved and seconded. A motion or amendment lapsing for want of a seconder will not be recorded in the minutes.
- (f) A motion or amendment before the chair will not be withdrawn except by its mover and seconder and with the leave of the meeting. No motion will be withdrawn while an amendment is under discussion or after any amendment has been adopted.
- (g) When an amendment is before the chair, discussion will be confined to that amendment. No further amendment will be proposed until the amendment before the chair has been dealt with.
- (h) A motion or amendment before the chair may be reworded by the mover subject to the leave of the seconder and the meeting.
- (i) All discussion must be addressed to the chair and not to individuals.
- (j) A member proposing a motion may speak for three (3) minutes. The proposer of an original motion, however, will have the right to reply at the conclusion of the discussion, which will be limited to two (2) minutes and will be confined to points raised in the debate.

- (k) The time allowed for the seconder of a motion will be two (2) minutes. The mover of an amendment will be allowed two (2) minutes, but will not have the right of reply, a seconder will also be allowed two (2) minutes. A member seconding a motion without speaking to it may reserve the right to speak to it subsequently.
- (l) The time allowed to all subsequent speakers will be two (2) minutes, unless extension of time is granted by the chairperson.
- (m) The order in which members speak will be determined by the chairperson, who will ensure that as far as possible, a proportionate number of speakers are heard for and against the motion. If there is any general disagreement as to the order determined by the chairperson, the chairperson will test the preference by a show of hands.
- (n) Members may speak only once to a motion, except as provided by point j, k or p of the standing orders.
- (o) A member speaking to a motion will be reminded by the sounding of a warning or other appropriate method one (1) minute prior to the expiration of time to which he/she is entitled under these standing orders. A warning will be sounded a second time when the speaker will immediately cease to address the meeting.
- (p) Any member may rise to a point of order. They must state concisely the alleged point of order without further speech.
- (q) The method of voting will normally be by a show of hands or should the chairperson decide, by secret ballot.
- (r) Absentee votes on publicised written motions can be accepted prior to a members meeting. The board may appoint a minimum of two (2) returning officers who will receive absentee votes. A list of names will be kept of all persons who have cast absentee votes to ensure votes are not duplicated. Voting forms will be sealed in an envelope and signed by the returning officer. These votes will be held by the returning officer in safe keeping prior to being presented to the meeting chairperson at the appropriate members meeting.
- (s) In the event of a secret ballot being used, the chairperson must call for nominations for the positions of two (2) scrutineers who will count the votes and report the result to the chairperson.
- (t) At the completion of counting the votes, the chairperson will call for a motion for the destruction of the ballot papers.