

Church Offices Covenantal Agreements

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Office Bearers

Office bearers are those elected by the church membership to a specific role in the church body. The offices are of Deacon (including the Church Treasurer and Church Secretary), Elder, Pastor and Director of Children's Ministries.

The church Diaconate consists of all deacons, elders and pastors.

The church Eldership consists of all elders and pastors.

Deacon

Overview of the Office

A deacon is literally a servant of the church. As a godly man or woman, a deacon's primary responsibility is to ensure that the practical affairs of the church are undertaken. The reason for having deacons is to free the church body to better share the gospel. This does not mean, however, that elected deacons are the only ones to serve within the church.

As well as supervising the practical and administrative affairs of the church, a deacon also – as a man or woman filled with God's Holy Spirit – shares in the spiritual leadership of the church.

Election to Office:

- The number of deacons for the ensuing year shall be decided by a resolution of the members at a church members' meeting in May prior to the annual church members' meeting in August.
- Nominations for the office of deacon shall be made in writing and shall be signed by the proposer and countersigned by the nominee. Such nominations shall be provided to the church eldership (consisting of the pastor and the elders), who will meet with the nominee. Nominations, together with a recommendation from the church eldership, will be advised to members not later than two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting at which elections shall take place.
- Anyone meeting the Biblical requirements for serving as a deacon will be eligible for nomination. The existing diaconate (consisting of the elders, deacons and pastors) is responsible for ensuring that such eligibility is met, as per 1 Timothy 3:10.
- Voting shall be by secret ballot at the annual church members' meeting, or at any other church members' meeting as required. To be elected, a nominee must receive at least seventy-five percent of the votes of members present and eligible to vote.
- In the event of the deacon vacating the office during the year, such vacancy may be filled in the manner aforesaid at the next church meeting or at a special church meeting called for that purpose. The person so elected shall hold office until the Annual General Meeting at which the vacating deacon would have retired.

Removal from Office:

- At any time, a special church members' meeting may be called with the sole purpose of reviewing the appointment to the office of deacon. Such meeting shall have the power to remove a deacon from office by passing a resolution to that effect by secret ballot by at least a seventy-five percent majority of members present and eligible to vote.
- Prior to such a meeting being called, it is expected that the irreconcilable grievance between the officer and the complainant(s) be brought to the church eldership, who will undertake to provide mediation according to Biblical principles of peace-making.

The Church undertakes to:

- Support the deacon in prayer.
- Support the deacon in practical ways as appropriate.
- Seek to develop deacons in their office by sending them on professional development courses as/where appropriate.

The Deacon undertakes to:

- Model faithful Christian service to the church and the world at large.
- Provide oversight and leadership to the practical and administrative affairs of the church.
- Ensure that the practical affairs of the church are undertaken.
- Encourage church members in their walk with Christ.
- Encourage church members to get involved in church ministries and outreaches.
- Pray for the church body.
- Attend monthly diaconate meetings.
- Attend church services and activities.

I, _____, hereby commit myself to serve
God's church in Comet Bay Baptist as a deacon as described above.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Church Treasurer

Overview of the Office

The church treasurer is the deacon entrusted with primary responsibility for the finances of the church.

Election to Office:

- The treasurer is an elected member of the diaconate. The diaconate will then internally confirm one of its members as the church treasurer.

Removal from Office:

- As per any deacon

The Church undertakes to:

- Support the treasurer in prayer.
- Support the treasurer in practical ways as appropriate.
- Seek to equip the treasurer in their office by sending them on Professional Development courses as/where appropriate.

The Treasurer undertakes to:

- Model faithful Christian service to the church and the world at large.
- Provide oversight and leadership to the practical and administrative affairs of the church.
- Encourage church members in their walk with Christ.
- Encourage church members to get involved in church ministries and outreaches.
- Pray for the church body.
- Attend monthly diaconate meetings.
- Keep the church members and the diaconate informed on financial matters.
- Prepare an annual budget in co-operation with the pastor and the rest of the diaconate.
- Ensure that the church fulfils all of its legal financial obligations

I, _____, hereby commit myself to serve
God's church in Comet Bay Baptist as described above.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Church Secretary

Overview of the Office

The church secretary is the deacon entrusted with the administrative affairs of the church.

Election to Office:

- The secretary is an elected member of the diaconate. The diaconate will then internally confirm one of its members as the church secretary.

Removal from Office:

- As per any deacon

The Church undertakes to:

- Support the secretary in prayer.
- Support the secretary in practical ways as appropriate.
- Seek to equip the secretary in their office by sending them on Professional Development courses as/where appropriate.

The Secretary undertakes to:

- Model faithful Christian service to the church and the world at large.
- Provide oversight and leadership to the practical and administrative affairs of the church.
- Encourage church members in their walk with Christ.
- Encourage church members to get involved in church ministries and outreaches.
- Pray for the church body.
- Attend monthly diaconate meetings.
- Keep copies of significant correspondence to and from the church.
- Take minutes of diaconate meetings, and provide such minutes to the diaconate in a timely fashion.
- Take minutes of church members' meetings, and provide such minutes to the church membership in a timely fashion.
- Maintain a roll of past and current church office bearers, including the periods for which they were elected. Such roster should be freely available upon request to any church member.
- Maintain a copy of ChurchSafe register including, but not limited to, a working with children register.
- Maintain rolls of current and past members.

I, _____, hereby commit myself to serve
God's church in Comet Bay Baptist as described above.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Elder

Overview of the Office

An elder is a Christian man or woman, mature in the faith, entrusted with the spiritual nurture and pastoral care of the church and her members. Together, elected elders and pastors form the church eldership, providing spiritual leadership. Elders are members of the church diaconate.

Election to Office:

- An elder will be elected from the members of the church for a period of two years. There are no limits on continuous terms of service.
- Anyone meeting the Biblical requirements for serving as an elder will be eligible for nomination. The existing diaconate (consisting of the elders, deacons and pastors) is responsible for ensuring that such eligibility is met, as per 1 Timothy 3:10.
- Nominations for the office of elder shall be made in writing and shall be signed by the proposer and countersigned by the nominee. Such nominations shall be provided to the church eldership (consisting of the pastor and the elders), who will meet with the nominee. Nominations, together with a recommendation from the church eldership, will be advised to members not later than two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting at which elections shall take place.
- Voting shall be by secret ballot at a church members' meeting. To be elected, a nominee must receive at least seventy-five percent of the votes of members present and eligible to vote.

Removal from Office:

- At any time, a special church members' meeting may be called with the sole purpose of reviewing the appointment to the office of elder. Such meeting shall have the power to remove an elder from office by passing a resolution to that effect by secret ballot by at least a seventy-five percent majority of members present and eligible to vote.
- Prior to such a meeting being called, it is expected that the irreconcilable grievance between the elder and the complainant(s) be brought to the diaconate, who will undertake to provide mediation according to Biblical principles of peace-making.

The Church undertakes to:

- Support the elder in prayer.
- Support the elder in practical ways as appropriate.
- Allow the elder to teach, correct, rebuke, and train in righteousness, with a view to being equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

The Elder undertakes to:

- Model faithful Christian living to the church and the world at large.
- “Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage – with great patience and careful instruction.” (2 Timothy 4:2)
- Provide spiritual leadership to the congregation.
- Support the pastor in providing pastoral care to the congregation.
- Encourage church members in their walk with Christ.
- Encourage church members to get involved in church ministries and outreaches.
- Pray for the church body.
- Attend (where possible) monthly diaconate meetings.
- Attend monthly eldership meetings.

I, _____, hereby commit myself to serve God's church in Comet Bay Baptist as an elder as described above.
Date: _____
Signed: _____

Director of Children's Ministries

Overview of the Office

The director of children's ministries serves the church by providing oversight and leadership for any ministries run by the church to those under 16 years of age. The director of children's ministries is endorsed by the church body to make decisions with respect to children's ministry. The director of children's ministries is directly responsible to the eldership.

Election to Office:

- Will be elected from the members of the church on the Resident Members role for a period of 3 years. There are no limits on continuous terms of service.
- Nominations for the role of director of children's ministries shall be made in writing and shall be signed by the proposer and countersigned by the nominee. Such nominations shall be provided to the church eldership, who will meet with the nominee. Nominations, together with a recommendation from the church eldership, will be advised to members not later than two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting at which elections shall take place.
- Voting shall be by secret ballot at the annual church members' meeting, or at any other church members' meeting as required. To be elected, a nominee must receive at least seventy-five percent of the votes of members present and eligible to vote.
- In the event of the director vacating the office during the year, such vacancy may be filled in the manner aforesaid at the next church meeting or at a special church meeting called for that purpose. The person so elected shall hold office until the annual general meeting at which the vacating director would have retired.

Removal from Office:

- At any time, a special church members' meeting may be called for the sole purpose of reviewing the appointment to the office of director of children's ministries. Such meeting shall have the power to remove the director of children's ministries from office by passing a resolution to that effect by secret ballot by at least a seventy-five percent majority of members present and eligible to vote.
- Prior to such a meeting being called, it is expected that the irreconcilable grievance between the director of children's ministries and the complainant(s) be brought to the church eldership, who will undertake to provide mediation according to Biblical principles of peace-making.
- In the circumstance that allegations of severe moral impropriety are made against the director of children's ministries or any other children's ministry servant, the diaconate shall immediately suspend the director from their office. Any such suspension must be conveyed to the church membership at the earliest convenience. All such allegations shall be investigated by an impartial body (the Baptist Union of WA). Should the allegations prove unfounded, the director must be immediately and publicly re-instated to office. Should the allegations prove founded, a special church members' must be

called to remove the director from office permanently.

The Church undertakes to:

- Support the director of children's ministries in prayer.
- Actively support the church's ministry to children.
- Provide pastoral oversight to any church ministries to children.
- Have the eldership (consisting of the elders and the pastor) meet with the director of children's ministries at least twice a year.
- Seek to develop the director of children's ministries in their office by sending them on professional development courses.

The Director of Children's Ministries will undertake to:

- Provide oversight and leadership to the overall running of any ministry to children within the church. Children are defined as those 15 years old and younger.
- Ensure that all those serving in children's ministry are adequately screened with respect to legislative requirements and Comet Bay Baptist Church SafeChurch policies.
- Maintain a register of "Working with Children" permits, as well as any other registers relating to children's ministry as required by SafeChurch Policies.
- Select, in co-operation with children's church co-ordinators and the church eldership, any curricula to be used for various children's church groups.
- Implement and maintain staffing rosters for children's church and creche.
- Regularly meet with children's church co-ordinators.
- Regularly meet with each children's ministry group.
- Regularly meet with the eldership (at least twice a year).
- Seek to better equip those involved in children's ministry.
- Seek to resolve problems as per the Biblical guidelines of Matthew 18:15-20, including the involvement of the eldership and pastor where necessary.

I, _____, hereby commit myself to serve God's church in Comet Bay Baptist as the director of children's ministries as described above.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Pastor

Overview of the Office

A pastor is entrusted with the oversight, spiritual care and spiritual leadership of the church.

Election to Office:

- The choice and appointment of a pastor is vested in the membership of the church.
- When it becomes necessary to consider the appointment of a pastor for the church, the elders and deacons (or a subset thereof containing at least two elders) shall normally act as a Call Committee, and shall make the necessary enquiries and bring forward a recommendation to the church as soon as is reasonably possible.
- Any member shall be entitled to submit in writing a proposal for the consideration of the Call Committee but the Call Committee shall not be bound in any way to act upon such proposal.
- The Call Committee shall keep the church involved in the call process.
- The recommendation of the Call Committee shall be considered at a special church members' meeting called for the purpose, with two weeks' notice of the meeting being given.
- The Call Committee shall put forward for consideration only one name at a time. For an invitation to the pastorate to be sent at least seventy-five percent of the members present and eligible to vote shall vote by secret ballot in favour of doing so.
- A copy of the Constitution, this covenant and the BUWA Guidelines shall be given to any one invited to the pastorate.
- Baptist Union of Western Australia guidelines should be used to inform the church and any proposed candidate of expectations engendered by the invitation to pastoral office.
- The pastor shall become a member of the church at the time of his induction.

Removal from Office:

- The term of service between church and pastor shall be established in the letter/contract of appointment. However, either party may terminate this contract by giving three months' notice, unless otherwise mutually agreed.
- At any time, a special church members' meeting may be called for the sole purpose of reviewing the appointment to the office of pastor. Such meeting shall have the power to remove the pastor from office by passing a resolution to that effect by secret ballot by at least a seventy-five percent majority of members present and eligible to vote.
- Prior to such a meeting being called, it is expected that the irreconcilable grievance between the pastor and the complainant(s) be brought to the full diaconate, who will undertake to provide mediation according to Biblical principles of peace-making. Should this (internal) mediation fail to resolve the issue, the Baptist Union will be called upon to provide mediation. All complaints against the pastor must be made in writing.

- In the circumstance that allegations of severe moral impropriety are made against the pastor, the diaconate must immediately seek advice from the Baptist Union of Western Australia on how to proceed. The diaconate may choose to immediately suspend the pastor from their office or else limit the pastor's activities within the area of concern. Any such suspension must be conveyed to the church membership at the earliest convenience. Such allegations shall be investigated by an impartial body (the Baptist Union of WA). Should the allegations prove unfounded, the pastor must be immediately and publicly re-instated to office. Should the allegations prove founded, a special church members' meeting must be called to remove the pastor from office permanently.

The Church undertakes to:

- Support the pastor in prayer.
- Support the pastor in practical ways as appropriate, including financially, with fellowship, friendship, and in love.
- Allow the pastor to teach, correct, rebuke, and train in righteousness, with a view to being equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- Conduct regular reviews of the pastor's ministry in a spirit of mutual love, care and respect.

The Pastor undertakes to:

- Model faithful Christian living to the church and the world at large.
- “Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage – with great patience and careful instruction.” (2 Timothy 4:2)
- Provide spiritual leadership to the congregation.
- Provide spiritual oversight to all church ministries.
- Provide pastoral care to the congregation.
- Encourage church members in their walk with Christ.
- Encourage church members to get involved in church ministries and outreaches.
- Pray for the church body.
- Co-ordinate and assist the congregation in areas of church ministry, outreach and Christian development.
- Attend monthly diaconate meetings.
- Attend monthly eldership meetings.
- Be open to being ministered to by the elders and others in the congregation as per the Biblical admonitions in 2 Timothy.
- Love the church.

I, _____, hereby commit myself to serve
God's church in Comet Bay Baptist as a pastor as described above.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Ministry Leaders

Ministry leaders are those responsible for specific ministries in the church, but who have not been elected by the membership into that position. These include small group leaders and worship co-ordinators.

Small Group Leaders

Overview:

Small group leaders undertake to lead a group into a deeper knowledge of who Jesus is, and what that means for us in practice. Although not elected to their task by the church membership, it is expected that such leaders are responsible to the church (by way of the eldership) for their leadership.

Removal from Role:

- Only under the most extreme instances, such as where a leader is deliberately giving doctrinally false teaching, might a small group leader be asked to vacate their role. Such decision shall be made by the church eldership – consisting of the elders and pastors.
- Prior to a small group leader being asked to step down from their role, it is expected that the eldership undertakes to provide mediation according to Biblical principles of peace-making.

The Church undertakes to:

- Officially commission small group leaders to their task of teaching the Word.
- Support small group leaders in prayer.
- Promote small groups.
- Support small group leaders by attending small groups!
- Seek to develop small group leaders by providing training and professional development in leading small groups.
- Provide spiritual oversight for small groups via the eldership.
- Provide any such resources as are needed for small groups.
- Have the eldership meet with small group leaders on a regular basis (at least twice a year).
- Train small group leaders with respect to SafeChurch protocols and policies.

Small Group leaders undertake to:

- Model faithful Christian living to the church, their small group members and the world at large.
- Pray for those in their small group.
- Provide oversight and leadership to their small group. Although a small group leader may delegate the actual running of a small group meeting to another member, the leader is ultimately responsible to ensure that what is being taught is in keeping with sound doctrine.
- Meet with the church eldership on a regular basis (at least twice a year).

- Familiarise themselves with SafeChurch protocols and policies.

Church Members

Overview:

Church Members are Christians who make a specific commitment to this “branch-office” of God's church in Comet Bay.

Admission to Membership:

- A person desirous of joining the church shall normally make application to the pastor or church secretary. Thereafter two members shall be appointed by the diaconate to interview the applicant and to report on their interview to the church members' meeting. A copy of the constitution and this covenant shall be given to each applicant. A simple majority vote shall be required for acceptance into membership of the church.
- In the case of an applicant from another Baptist church a letter of recommendation from that church may also be presented to the church members' meeting. If such an applicant is accepted for membership in this church the previous church shall be so advised in order that it may be able appropriately to adjust its rolls.
- Reception into membership shall normally be at the next suitable church service.

Removal from Membership:

- If any member is absent from the services of the church for a prolonged period without good reasons known to the pastor, elders, or deacons, inquiry shall be made into the matter. In the event of any such inquiry providing no satisfactory result the matter shall be referred to the diaconate for such action as may be decided upon. If deemed appropriate the diaconate may recommend to the church members' meeting that the member's name be removed from the church roll.
- In the event of any allegation of unworthy conduct or erroneous belief being brought against a member, the pastor, and/or elders, and/or deacons shall make inquiry into the matter including where possible discussion with the member concerned. If after inquiry they deem such course necessary they shall present a report to the church members' meeting which shall determine any further action. The objective of any discipline administered should be the restoration of the member, but should restoration not be possible the church may suspend, remove from membership or expel the member. Voting on such action shall be by secret ballot and to become effective shall require a seventy-five percent majority vote of members present and eligible to vote.
- Private offences shall be dealt with in accordance with the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ as given in Matthew 18:15-17

The Church Corporate undertakes to:

- Provide doctrinally sound and practical preaching and teaching from the Word.
- Encourage members in their faith.

- Encourage and equip members in sharing their faith.
- Provide pastoral care and support.
- Promote the Christian faith in our community.
- Provide a loving, caring environment where all are welcome.
- Build each other up in the Christian faith so that we can be trained as apprentices of Christ, having a solid grounding in the Word of God so that we may be equipped and enabled by His Holy Spirit to share the good news of Jesus until he returns.

Church members undertake to:

- Live in accordance with the principles of the New Testament.
- Model faithful Christian living to this church and the world at large.
- Support the ministries of this church.
- Pray for this church, her members and her ministry to the Comet Bay region.
- Regularly attend worship services.
- Engage in service for Christ through the church (both local and universal)
- Share in the government and life of this church by attending members' meetings.
- Conscientiously give to this church as God's provision enables.