

Waikato City Assembly of God CONSTITUTION

INTRODUCTION

- A** This constitution is set up as a guideline to the Waikato City Assembly of God and its partners, (commonly called Church Members). It is not meant to be a water tight legal document, neither is it intended to be unreasonably restrictive. It is meant to give guidelines where the Bible and accepted meeting procedures do not throw light on specific situations. It's spirit is much more important than the letter of it's statements.
- B** For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honoured according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility, and the privilege of propagating the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands: we, whose names appear on the Assembly partnership role under date adopted do hereby recognise ourselves as a local Assembly in fellowship with and part of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, New Zealand (inc), and adopt the following Articles of the Church order and submit to them.

1. NAME

The name of the Assembly shall be FREEDOM CHRISTIAN CHURCH, (hereafter called "The Assembly").

2. OBJECTIVES

The general objectives of the Assembly shall be:

- a) To further the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the advancement of the Christian faith consistent with the Tenets of Faith here in after contained within New Zealand and overseas and to work for the building up and renewal of the Christian Church.
- b) To meet for the worship of God, the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, and to administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper according to the commandments of the Lord.
- c) To engage in the propagation of the Christian Faith by the establishing of Missionary work or assisting existing Missionary work in New Zealand and overseas, by the production and distribution of Christian literature, audio visuals, music and the like, and by what means the Assembly may deem necessary.
- d) To render the Spiritual Oversight, care and assistance, and such other help as may be deemed practical and advisable, to people in need, especially those in partnership or close association with the Assembly.
- e) To make donations to assist, undertake the oversight of, or in any way co-operate with any other individuals, societies, Assemblies or churches, or any other organisations having objects similar to those of this Assembly, as may be deemed proper.
- f) To establish daughter churches helping them to grow and become independent under the umbrella of the Assemblies of God.
- g) To work in co-operative fellowship with other Assemblies associated in the Assemblies of God, New Zealand Inc.

3. PREROGATIVE

This Assembly shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testaments scriptures, "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace ... till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" **Ephesians 4:3-23**.

To enable the Assembly to fulfill it's objectives the Assembly may from time to time:

- a) Acquire, purchase, borrow, hold, manage, own, lease, rent, sell, convey, mortgage, holdings or properties situated in New Zealand or in any other country, and to do all or any such things upon such terms and conditions, and any further with respect to any investments to hold or vary the same, as at any time may be deemed advisable.
- b) Accept by transfer, conveyance, gift, demise, bequest, or other wise from any person or persons, trustee or trustees, board, company, council, corporation or any other society, any real or personal property whether subject to any existing trusts or encumbrances or not but so that the Assembly may decline to accept any such transfer, gift or otherwise.
- c) Do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of all or any of the above objectives.

4. AFFILIATION

While maintaining it's adherent right to sovereignty in the conduct of it's own affairs, this Assembly shall voluntarily enter into full co-operative fellowship with the Assemblies of like precious faith associated with the Assemblies of God, New Zealand (Inc.), and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

These responsibilities shall include support for the National Bible College and payment of a levy comprising 3% of this Assembly's general offering to the National Office.

5. STATEMENT OF FAITH

These shall be the same as set forward in the current Constitution of the Assemblies of God In New Zealand.

6. PARTNERSHIP

Partnership is basically acknowledging this Assembly as ones Spiritual home. It should be a two way relationship.

- a) A living commitment by the Leadership to the people.
- b) By the people to the Lord, to the Leadership.
Hebrews 13:7,17 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, to this Assembly and to each other.

6.1 Eligibility for partnership

- 1) Membership of the Assembly is available to all those who, being over the age of eighteen (18) years of age :
- 2) Give evidence of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,
- 3) Voluntarily subscribe to the Tenets of Faith of the Assembly,
- 4) Agree to be governed by the Constitution of the Assembly,
- 5) Have attended the services regularly for at least three consecutive months, (except in exceptional circumstances or in the case of one called to the office of Pastor/Assistant Pastor)
- 6) If deemed necessary by the Eldership shall attend discipleship classes which shall explain the basics of the Christian faith.
- 7) If deemed necessary by the Eldership shall attend Membership Classes which shall outline the responsibilities of the Church Oversight to the Members and the requirements of the Members to the Assembly and Oversight.
- 8) Upon satisfactorily completing the Membership classes, the applicant shall be on a 3 month probational period, in which time the applicant shall manifest the requirements of Membership.
- 9) Be accepted into full Membership with voting rights provided the above Clauses have been fulfilled.

6.2 Responsibilities of the Church oversight to the Members

- 1) A consistent sharing of the **truth** and feeding from the Word of God. **1 Peter 5:2**.
- 2) Correction for those drifting into error, according to the Word of God. **2 Timothy 4:2**.
- 3) To commit itself to the Members by their prayers, time etc. and a seeking to help partners rise into the ministry that Jesus has for them.

6.3 Requirements of Partners

- 1) To be Born Again by the Spirit of God. **John 3:3-16**.
- 2) To agree with the Tenets of Faith
- 3) To support the Assembly with their Tithes, Offerings and Prayers.
Malachi 3:8-10.
- 4) To seek the Lord as to their part in the ministry of the Assembly.
- 5) To desire to submit to the oversight of the Assembly. **Hebrews 13:17**.

6.4 Voting Rights

All partners who conform to the requirement of partnership and:

- a) All partners may vote at all special meeting of the Assembly.
- b) Attend regularly the Church services and living consistently Christian lives.
- c) Are in good standing with the Assembly and contributing to its financial support.
- d) Have been admitted to the fellowship as a member.

6.5 Disqualification

a) Partners who, without good cause, absent themselves from the regular services of the Assembly for a period of three consecutive months or more, or who, while attending other church services freely, only occasionally attend the regular services of the Assembly over such periods, and who cease to contribute of their means to its support.

b) Who may be out of harmony with its teachings or its ministries. i.e. continued disregard of the conditions for partnership or unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the Tenets of Faith held by this Church shall be considered sufficient grounds upon which any person may be disqualified as a member. Such discipline shall be PRAYERFULLY administered according to the scriptures. **Romans 16:17-18, Romans 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 2 Thessalonians 3:11-15, Ephesians 4:3,13.**

c) Who shall be under proven charges for misconduct or who may have fallen under condemnation through sinful or worldly practices, (**Matthew 18:15-17,35**), shall lose their partnership and voting privileges until they are restored to the fellowship, their standing to be settled by the definite action of the Assemblies Board of Officers. **Galatians 6:1-5.**

6.6 Determination Of Partnership

Authority to make decisions with respect for partnership, disqualification from partnership and restoration to partnership of any member disqualified, and transference of partnership to or from other churches or Assemblies, shall be vested in the Board as herein after defined. The Board shall revise the Assembly roll at least once a year. The Board shall consult with the Eldership in difficult situations. A person or persons can resign voluntarily from partnership.

6.7 Youth Partnership.

An additional register of partnership shall be kept for children and youth. Such partnership shall not incur voting rights, but will receive all the benefits and responsibilities of partnership as may be appropriate to children and to young people.

7. ASSEMBLY STRUCTURE

Leadership and Management of the Assembly, in general or as hereinafter in detail set forth, shall be in the hands of the Pastors, Elders and other members of the Board.

The Board shall have, and at its discretion, exercise such as the above mentioned functions, powers and authorities, as may reasonably be necessary or expedient for the fulfillment of the objectives, functions and business of the Assembly. For the maintenance and development of the fellowship and the effective functioning of the Assembly, such as groups or departments may be organised, or their form of organisation amended as the Board may from time to time determine. It shall not be responsible for the services or for the spiritual oversight of the Assembly

The Eldership shall have the exclusive responsibility for the Spiritual Government and Oversight of the Assembly.

At their discretion the board and eldership shall have the right to combine for the establishment of church policy and the execution of day to day business.

8. THE BOARD

The Board shall consist of the following officers:

- Senior Pastor
- Assistant Pastor
- A representative of the Elders
- Board Members

The Board shall not be less than four in total, but can be enlarged by a two thirds majority of the Board.

The Board shall meet as required (usually monthly) for the transaction of the routine business for the Assembly. At this meeting an itemised monthly financial report shall be presented. The quorum at meetings of the Board shall consist of not less than half its members of the Board.

The Pastor of the Assembly, if present and willing to act, shall be chairperson of all meetings of the board, but should he be absent or unwilling to act, the members present may elect a chairperson. No chairperson shall have a casting vote

The Board shall also act in the examination of applicants for partnership and in the administration of discipline.

The Board shall conduct its affairs in complete confidentiality and in accordance with the provisions of the privacy act. Failure to do so shall be considered improper conduct.

8.1 Secretary and Treasurer

The Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed within or by the Board, by a two thirds majority of the Board Members. A Board member or members appointed from within the Board, shall retain all the rights and privileges as a Board Member. In the case where the Secretary and Treasurer is appointed by the Board, he/she shall be an advisory to the Board, and shall not be ex-officio member of the Board. Unless the Board co-opted their appointment onto the Board.

8.2 Duties of Secretary

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the Church Board and of the Annual and Special Business Meetings of the Assembly. The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining an up to date record of the partnership of the Assembly, and shall perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his/her duties. The Secretary shall be responsible for the safe custody of all legal documents and of the Assembly Seal.

8.3 Duties of the Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the administration of all the finances of the Assembly and shall ensure that all funds are administered in accordance with the directions of the Board. The Treasurer shall keep an itemised account of all the receipts and disbursements and shall make an itemised report at the regular meetings of the Board and a summarised report to the Assembly when required.

8.4 Specialised Personnel

Specialised Personnel (such as Missions secretary, Business Administrator) may be appointed to the Board as required by a two thirds majority of the Board Members and then ratified by the partners of the Assembly at the Annual General Business Meeting or Special Business Meetings of the Assembly.

9. OFFICERS

9.1 Senior Pastor

Qualifications The Senior Pastor shall be one who is in good standing with the General Council of Assemblies of God in New Zealand and/or the General Council of Assemblies of God in the Pastors home country. He must be sound in Faith and Loyal to those fundamentals that form the doctrinal basis of the fellowship. He shall be one whose life and conduct conform to the scriptural and Assemblies of God standards for the **1 Timothy , 3:2-7, Titus 1:6-9, 1 Peter 5:2-3.**

Duties. The Pastor should be honoured in his office as the Spiritual Overseer of the Church and as General Supervisor of all it's activities.

He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and departments. He shall provide for all the services of the Church and shall arrange for all special meetings - but if circumstances make it necessary, there shall be collaboration between the Pastor and the Eldership on these matters.

In the absence of the Pastor, the Assistant Pastor shall deputise for the Pastor in all respects, and in the absence of both Pastors services shall be arranged by the Eldership.

No person shall be invited to preach or speak in the Church, and no recording, video, film or play shall be shown in connection with any department of the Church without the Pastors approval. A preview of any film being arranged at the Pastors request if he so desires. In addition no literature or printed matter shall be distributed on the premises by any person without the Pastors authority.

Appointment. The Senior Pastor is to be appointed by a unanimous decision of the Pastors (including the outgoing Senior Pastor) and Elders, and ratified by at least a two thirds majority of the Board.

The Tenure of the Senior Pastor and the terms and conditions of his appointment shall be determined by the mutual consent between him and the Board at the time the call to him is extended and accepted. Such terms can be reviewed from time to time by the Board. His Tenure will cease if he resigns or is removed due to proven immoral conduct, radical departure from the Tenets of Faith or equally proven serious charge.

The Pastor can be asked to preach on occasion before a call is finally given so the Board can prayerfully inquire and allow full consideration to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

9.2 Vacancy (For all Pastors, not just Senior Pastor)

Resignation of a Pastor. In the event of the Senior Pastor resigning he shall give a minimum of sixty days notice to the Board. This period can be shortened or increased by the mutual consent of the Pastor and the Church Board.

Removal of a Pastor. Removal of a Pastor due to proven immoral conduct, radical departure from the Tenet of Faith or any other equally serious proven charges. The Church Board shall be empowered to suspend or remove the Pastor where three quarters of the Board is satisfied that the charge is proved and justifies a removal or suspension from office, the said Pastor having been given the opportunity to be heard by the Church Board. A full report with evidence, shall be submitted to the Executive Council through the General Secretary and the Executive Council shall be invited to meet with the Church Board for a full discussion of the matter, with the Pastors knowledge. The Church shall be briefly informed of the action taken and the reason therefore at a meeting especially convened for that purpose.

9.3 Assistant Pastor

Qualifications The qualifications required of the Assistant Pastor shall be the same as those pertaining to the Senior Pastor in(A) 1, of the above.

Duties and Appointments. The Assistant Pastor will be under the direction of and be responsible to the Senior Pastor in all Spiritual work and oversight of

the Assembly and perform such other duties as delegated to him by the Senior Pastor. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Assistant Pastor, shall deputise for the Pastor in all respects.

An Assistant Pastor shall be appointed by the unanimous decision of the Senior Pastor, Elders and ratified by at least two thirds majority of the Board. The Tenure of the Assistant Pastor and the terms and conditions of his appointment shall be determined by mutual consent between him and the Board at the time the call to him is extended and accepted. Such terms can be reviewed from time to time by the Board. Vacancy can occur as mentioned in above, at which time Tenure ceases.

Vacancy. If the Senior Pastors position is vacant, the Assistant Pastor MAY BE required to deputise as Senior Pastor but will not automatically be appointed Senior Pastor.

9.4 Associate Pastor

An Associate pastor or pastors shall co-operate with the senior pastor in the running of the church.

9.5 Other Pastors

Other Pastors of the Assembly may be appointed by the unanimous decision of the Senior Pastor, the Assistant Pastor and Elders, and ratified by at least two thirds majority of the Church Board.

Such Pastors shall assist the Senior Pastor and perform such duties as he may delegate to them. Such Pastors will not automatically be on the Board but may be co-opted on by a two thirds majority of the Board.

9.6 Elders

Elders shall assist and be under the direction of the Senior Pastor in the Spiritual work and oversight of the Church. Elders shall be persons whose lives and conduct conform to the **scriptures 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:1&17, Titus 1:5-9.** and who have been filled with the Holy Spirit as taught by the Church in accordance with **Acts 2:4.**

Elders shall be appointed by the Senior Pastor in agreement with the Church Board or at least a two thirds majority. The recognition as an Elder would be because they are already functioning in this office. Elders shall hold this office for period of two years or such period as specified at their appointment. Eldership shall be terminated by resignation from office, or absence from the services of the church for more than two months without just cause. All such appointments shall be subject to review by the Pastor and the Board. An Elder can also be removed for proven immoral conduct, radical departure from the Tenets of Faith or any other equally serious proven charges.

9.7 Board Members

These persons shall assist the Spiritual Oversight (Pastors and Elders) of the Assembly with the practical management of Church affairs.

Qualifications . A Board Members life and character shall conform to the scriptural pattern set out in **1 Timothy 3:8-13**, and they shall show evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit according to **Acts 2:4**. A Board Member must be an actively involved member of the Assembly fulfilling the requirement of partnership.

Appointments. Board Members shall be nominated by partners of the Assembly in writing at least 14 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Nominations should have a Proposer and the nominee must sign the written application all nominations shall be reviewed by the Senior Pastor and Elder as to their suitability to hold office. (i.e. Qualifications).

Nominations accepted by the Eldership should be willing to present themselves to the partnership as to their abilities to serve on the Board. Nominations will go forward to the Annual General Meeting for vote by secret ballot. In the case of the number of nominations being less than the number of vacancies, the board at its discretion can co op on to the Board a member to fill the vacancy. Board members shall be elected for a period of two years. At the end of this period each member may offer himself for re election. Half the board members will be elected each year.

The Board shall advise the partners of the Assembly the number of Board Members required for the next year at least 28 days before the Annual General Meeting.

The appointment of a Board Member shall be reviewed annually by the Spiritual Oversight unless the Board Member resigns office, or absents himself from services for more than 2 months without just cause where upon he automatically loses his office. Board Members must be willing to accept portfolios and execute the same under the direction of the Board. A Board Member can also be removed for proven immoral conduct, radical departure from the Tenets of Faith or any other equally serious proven charges.

9.8 Staff and Specialised Personnel. The Board after prayerful inquiry and judicious counsel, giving full consideration to the leading of the Holy Spirit, can select by unanimous decision, scripturally and where necessary professionally qualified personnel for areas of service in the Church. These areas could be in full-time employment (e.g. Clerical) and in some cases the persons may be co-opted on to the Board by the procedure outlined above.

10. PROPERTY RIGHTS

1. All real property owned by the Assembly shall be held by the Board of the Assembly on behalf of the Assembly in accord with the Rules of the Trust Deed, shall be administered according to the decisions of the Board or Assembly, in accord with the terms of this constitution. All or any of the personal property held or administered on behalf of the Assembly shall be held and administered in the name of the Assembly by the Board in accord with the terms of the Constitution.
2. No real or chattel property of the Assembly exceeding in value 10% of the previous financial years total income shall be sold, mortgaged or otherwise alienated without the same having been authorised by at least two thirds majority vote of the partnership present at a Business Meeting of the Assembly.
3. The Pastor and the Secretary of the Assembly shall certify in such conveyance, lease or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorised by the vote of the partnership. Such certificates shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof
4. In the event that the Assembly herein mentioned ceases to function as a church body, then the said property, real or chattel, shall be transferred to the General Council of the Assemblies of God in New Zealand (Inc). The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall forthwith have full authority to use or dispose of the property at their discretion provided that the property or proceeds from the sale thereof are used in the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ.
5. In the event of a schism in the partnership of this Assembly the property shall belong to that group holding to the original Tenets of Faith and local form of Church Government. As adjudicate by the Executive Council of the Assemblies of God in New Zealand inc.

11. TRUSTEES

The Trustees shall be made up of the Church Board described above to act as Trustees for and on behalf of Waikato City Assembly of God in accordance with the Declaration of the Trust Deed and Rules of the Waikato City Assembly of God Trust Board, or due amendments thereof.

12. FINANCE

Funds for the maintenance of the Assembly shall be provided primarily by the voluntary contribution of the tithes and offerings of the partners and friends of the organisation. Offerings shall be accepted by the Assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the Senior Pastor and the Church Board. **Malachi 3:10, Luke 6:38, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, 2 Corinthians 9:6-8**

Powers of the Church Board

All gifts and offerings whether of money or otherwise taken or given for any stated purpose shall, except with the express permission and consent of the donor or donors of such gifts and offerings, be applied to the purpose or purposes for which they are requested or designated, though the method of application of such gifts and offerings to such purposes shall, so far as consistent with such stated purposes be at the discretion of the Board. All other gifts, whether stated to be tithes or otherwise, shall be given with no restrictions and applied for the furtherance of any or all of the objects of the Assembly, at the discretion of the Board.

The Church Board shall determine salaries and remuneration's. The Church Board shall have oversight of all financial matters in every department and itemised accounts of the receipts and disbursements of the various departments of the Church shall be submitted to the Senior Pastor and the Church Board at any time required.

All Church Board accounts and records shall be audited at the end of the Church's Financial year, by an independent auditor appointed by the Board. Departmental accounts will also be audited.

Obligation of Church Departments

As far as practical and reasonable, each department of the church shall contribute to the expenses and commitments of the Church as a whole, provided always that the legitimate expenses and commitments of the respective departments shall have first call on their receipts.

Remuneration's

All permanent staff shall be given regular and adequate financial support, the amount and manner of which shall be determined by the Board in consultation with the Senior Pastor and shall be reviewed at least annually and ratified by the Church Board.

Authority by Expenditure

The board shall fix an amount up to which the pastor has authority to approve expenditures without further consultation with the board.

All proposed expenditure exceeding 10% of the previous financial years total income (excluding salaries and motor vehicle expenses) on any single item shall first be referred to a meeting of the Church partners. Such a transaction can be authorised by a two thirds.

13. DEPARTMENTS AND COMMITTEES

All departments may be organised as the need arises to carry out fully the declared purpose of the Assembly, e.g. Children s Ministries, Youth Groups, Ladies Fellowships, Leaders of Groups and departments shall be appointed annually by the Pastor subject to the ratification by the Church Eldership.

All organised departments shall be subordinate to the Assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the Pastors and the Eldership and shall provide reports when asked by the Senior Pastor for the Board and Eldership.

Committees shall be appointed by the Pastor in agreement with the Church Board whenever they are needed and as long as they are needed in the Assembly to carry out its purposes. Reports from these committees shall be presented to the Board as and when requested.

14. MEETINGS

Annual Business Meeting

There shall be an annual Business Meeting of the Assembly. This meeting shall be held after the 30 June of each year when the accounts have been audited. The time and place shall be announced by the Pastor or Board Secretary, with due notice being given two consecutive Sundays prior to the date of the meeting.

Special Business Meetings

Special Business Meetings shall be called on the decision of a two thirds majority of the Board. The time and place to be announced by the Pastor or Board Secretary with due notice being given two consecutive Sundays prior to the date of the meeting.

15. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a two thirds majority vote of the voting partnership of the Assembly who are in attendance at any regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose, provided due notice of such proposed change shall have been made at all regular services at least two Sundays preceding the time of such a meeting. The quorum for such a meeting shall be 50% of the voting partnership.