

CONSTITUTION OF BETHEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Name

The name of the church is “Bethel Presbyterian Church”, hereinafter referred to as “BPC”.

1.2 Address

The address of BPC is “12 Jalan Lateh, Singapore 359110” or such other address as may subsequently be decided upon by BPC and approved by the Registrar of Societies. BPC shall carry out its activities only in places and premises which have the prior written approval from the relevant authorities, where necessary.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of BPC is to preach the Christian doctrine, provide an environment for its members to practice the Christian life and extend God’s Kingdom on earth.

2. STATEMENT OF FAITH

2.1 BPC believes in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, One God in Three Persons, to be the only true God.

2.2 BPC believes in Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world and only Mediator between God and man. All powers and functions in the Church are subject to Christ’s authority. The Church throughout the world and of all ages is His Body, of which BPC is a member.

2.3 BPC accepts the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments as the true Word of God, inspired and holy, and as the supreme standard of faith and duty. It acknowledges the Apostles Creed and the Westminster Confession of Faith as worthily expressing the fundamental and traditional faith commonly held by the Church.

3. PRESBYTERIAN DISTINCTIVE

The Presbyterian Church in Singapore (“**PCS**”) inherited the polity of the Reformed church from John Calvin. It preserves the biblical understanding that the offices of ministers, elders and deacons manage the affairs of a congregation. The Church is a body of believers. As children of God united in

Him, the Church is not hierarchical; instead, it promotes democracy, representation and orderliness in its practices.

4. MEMBERSHIP OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

- 4.1 BPC shall be a member of PCS and shall affirm its fellowship and unity with PCS and other members of PCS.
- 4.2 In the event that BPC establishes a separate congregation to serve a different language group and elects a Minister and at least two (2) Elders specifically to serve that congregation, BPC may on behalf of that congregation apply to the Presbytery with the same language as that used by that congregation to become a member of that Presbytery. The Executive Committee (“**Exco**”) of that Presbytery shall consider the application and submit its recommendation to the Synod Exco who may approve or reject the application. The approval may be subject to such conditions as the Synod Exco may impose. The decision of the Synod Exco shall be final. If the Synod Exco approves the application, BPC may appoint Representatives from that congregation to attend the general meetings of that Presbytery and the general meetings of the Synod. For clarity, if Synod Exco does not approve the application, such a decision shall not affect BPC’s membership in the relevant Presbytery and in PCS.
- 4.3 BPC shall appoint Representatives, who shall comprise the Senior Minister, Associate Ministers, Preachers, Co-Workers and such number of serving Elders and/or Deacons which BPC is entitled to appoint as set out in the Constitution and by-laws of PCS, to represent it at the general meetings of the relevant Presbytery and the Synod.
- 4.4 BPC shall pay its prescribed annual contribution to PCS.
- 4.5 BPC’s membership in PCS may be terminated when:
 - (i) BPC fails or ceases to subscribe to the Statement of Faith or the Presbyterian Distinctive set out in the Constitution of PCS;
 - (ii) BPC’s membership in PCS is terminated pursuant to the Constitution of PCS;
 - (iii) BPC is dissolved; or
 - (iv) BPC and PCS both agree to part ways after best efforts to resolve their differences pursuant to the Constitution of PCS.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF BPC

5.1 Communicant Members

5.1.1 Members of BPC (hereafter referred to as "**Communicant Members**") are those:

- (i) who are 16 years of age and above and have taken part in a service of baptism;
- (ii) who were baptized when they were infants or young children and are 16 years of age and above and have taken part in a service of confirmation; or
- (iii) who are registered members of another church, are 16 years of age and above and have requested a transfer of membership to BPC and have taken part in a service of transfer of membership.

5.2 Application and Qualifications for Communicant Membership

5.2.1 Anyone who intends to become a Communicant Member of BPC must submit a written application to BPC in the prescribed form and, for those who are 18 years of age and below, shall include the consent of their parents or guardians in the written application.

5.2.2 Applicants must openly confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and demonstrate a clear understanding of the Gospel.

5.2.3 They must be willing to observe the regulations of BPC and to carry out the responsibilities of Communicant Membership.

5.2.4 They must have attended membership class and had their qualifications examined and approved by the Elders and Deacons Court ("**EDC**") and taken part in a service of baptism, confirmation or transfer of membership (as the case may be).

5.3 Responsibilities of Communicant Members

5.3.1 Communicant Members must live a life worthy of their calling as Christians.

5.3.2 They are responsible for supporting BPC's normal expenses and any special needs through free-will offerings.

5.3.3 They must abide by the Constitution of BPC and accept the decisions of BPC.

5.3.4 Where BPC finds that any Communicant Member has acted in a manner unbecoming of a Communicant Member or is by any act or omission likely to hinder the witness of BPC or render it of ill repute, the Communicant Member shall be requested to appear before the EDC. The EDC shall have the power to discipline, by admonition, rebuke, suspension and/or revocation of



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membership, a Communicant Member in accordance with the prescribed procedure set out in the by-laws. The EDC should notify the Presbytery in writing of any disciplinary action taken against a Communicant Member.

5.4 Rights of Communicant Members

5.4.1 Communicant Members shall have the right to partake in the Lord's Supper.

5.4.2 Communicant Members shall have the right to attend and speak at congregational meetings. However, only Communicant Members who are 21 years of age and above shall have the right to nominate, vote and be elected to office in BPC. Each Communicant Member shall have one vote.

5.4.3 Communicant Members who have attended an infant or child baptism class may present their children for infant or child baptism. It is sufficient that only one of the parents is a Communicant Member.

5.5 Termination of Membership

5.5.1 A Communicant Member's membership in BPC shall be terminated when:

- (i) he transfers his membership to another church;
- (ii) he fails or ceases to subscribe to the Statement of Faith of BPC or the Presbyterian Distinctive set out in Articles 2 and 3, respectively;
- (iii) his membership is revoked pursuant to Article 5.3.4; or
- (iv) he dies.


5.6 Transfer of Membership

5.6.1 In the event that a Communicant Member intends to transfer membership to another church, provided the Communicant Member is not under discipline or the subject of a disciplinary inquiry, BPC shall upon the written request of the Communicant Member or the transferee church issue a Letter of Transfer addressed to the Minister or Pastor of the transferee church and duly signed by the Senior Minister of BPC.

5.6.2 A registered member of another church may by Letter of Transfer issued by the Minister or Pastor of that church to BPC request a transfer of membership to BPC. The transferee shall have his qualifications examined and approved by the EDC and, if approved, shall thereafter take part in a service of transfer of membership in order to effect a transfer of membership to BPC.

5.7 Inactive Members

5.7.1 If a Communicant Member has not been regularly worshipping in BPC over a period of twelve (12) months and despite efforts of BPC leaders to contact the Communicant Member or despite encouragement from BPC leaders, the



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Communicant Member continues not to regularly worship in BPC, that Communicant Member shall be classified as an Inactive Member and BPC shall send written notice of such action to him at his last known address.


- 5.7.2 Inactive Members shall not be counted in determining the quorum of a congregational meeting and shall not have the right to speak at congregational meetings, to nominate, vote or stand for election provided always that the EDC shall have the discretion to reinstate such Inactive Members when they shall have resumed regular worship in BPC.

5.8 Restoration

Any Communicant Member whose membership has been suspended or revoked pursuant to Article 5.3.4 may be restored upon evidence of the Communicant Member's repentance and reformation by EDC.

6. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

- 6.1 The highest authority of BPC is vested in a general meeting of the Communicant Members.
- 6.2 An Annual Congregational Meeting of BPC ("**ACM**") shall be held by May. The time and place of the ACM shall be decided by the EDC.
- 6.3 At least fourteen (14) days' written notice by email or printed announcement in weekly service bulletin or verbal announcement during weekly worship service shall be given of an ACM by BPC to all Communicant Members. Notice of meeting shall state the date, time and place of meeting and the agenda of the meeting.
- 6.4 At other times, an Extraordinary Congregational Meeting ("**ECM**") may, when necessary, be called by the EDC. The Senior Minister and the EDC Clerk shall, at least ten (10) days before the ECM, notify the Communicant Members in writing by email or printed announcement in weekly service bulletin or verbal announcement during weekly worship service of the date, time and place of the ECM and the agenda of the ECM.
- 6.5 An ECM may be called at any time at the request in writing of not less than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total Communicant Members. The EDC shall convene the ECM in accordance with Article 6.4 within two (2) months of the date of receipt of such request. If the EDC does not within two (2) months of the date of receipt of the written request proceed to convene the ECM, the Communicant Members who requested for the ECM shall convene the ECM by giving ten (10) days' written notice to the Communicant Members setting forth the date, time and place of the ECM and the agenda of the ECM. A member of the EDC shall chair the ECM, but if none of the members of the EDC are present at the ECM, then the ECM shall be chaired by one of the Communicant Members who requested for the ECM.



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- 6.6 Voting by proxy shall not be allowed at all congregational meetings.
- 6.7 The following matters will be considered at the ACM:
- (i) The previous financial year's accounts and annual report of BPC;
 - (ii) Where applicable, the election of office-bearers and auditors for the following term.
- 6.8 Any matter which has not been notified to the Communicant Members prior to the meeting may not be added to the agenda during the meeting.
- 6.9 Any Communicant Member who intends to place an item on the agenda of a congregational meeting shall submit his request in writing to the EDC at least seven (7) days before the meeting is held and if the EDC agrees that it is appropriate to include the item in the agenda, the EDC Clerk shall notify the Communicant Members in writing by email or printed announcement in weekly service bulletin or verbal announcement during weekly worship service of the change in agenda at least two (2) days before the meeting.
- 6.10 The quorum of a congregational meeting is 25% of the Communicant Members or 150 Communicant Members, whichever is the lesser, except where expressly provided otherwise in this Constitution.
- 6.11 In the event that there is no quorum at the commencement of a congregational meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned for seven (7) days or to such other day and at such other time and place as the EDC may decide. If within half an hour from the time appointed for the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present, those Communicant Members present shall be deemed a quorum and may transact the business for which the meeting was called except that such meeting shall not have the power to decide on matters concerning the purchase, sale or mortgage of property; or the amendment of the Constitution; or the dissolution of BPC.

7. THE ELDERS AND DEACONS COURT ("EDC")

- 7.1 The EDC is the highest governing body of BPC and is responsible for the spiritual and organizational affairs of BPC. The EDC shall have not less than five (5) members and not more than 50 members.
- 7.2 **The Office Bearers of BPC**
- 7.2.1 The office bearers of BPC are the members of the EDC composed of the Senior Minister, the Associate Ministers (if any) and a minimum of two (2) Serving Elders and two (2) Deacons. Except where expressly provided otherwise in this Constitution, the term of office of each office bearer is three (3) years.
- 7.2.2 Unless with the prior approval in writing of the Registrar or an Assistant Registrar of Societies, the majority of the members of the EDC shall be

Singapore citizens. In addition, the Senior Minister, the EDC Clerk, the Treasurer and their deputies shall be Singapore Citizens or Singapore Permanent Residents. Foreign diplomats shall not serve as members of the EDC.

7.2.3 Any changes to the EDC shall be notified to the Registry of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities within two (2) weeks of the change.

7.3 **Senior Minister and Associate Ministers**

7.3.1 The Senior Minister shall represent BPC in its dealings with outside persons.

7.3.2 The Associate Ministers shall assist the Senior Minister and one of them may deputise for the Senior Minister in his absence.

7.4 **EDC Clerk**

7.4.1 The EDC shall appoint one of their number to serve as the EDC Clerk.

7.4.2 The EDC Clerk is responsible for all records, except financial records, of BPC. He shall ensure that the minutes of all congregational meetings of BPC, the minutes of all EDC meetings and other historical records are properly maintained. He shall maintain an up-to-date Register of Communicant Members at all times.

7.5 **Treasurer**

7.5.1 The EDC shall appoint one of their number who has the appropriate financial skills and experience to serve as Treasurer. The Treasurer shall hold office for a term of two (2) years. If the Treasurer has served two (2) consecutive terms, he must retire thereafter for a minimum period of one (1) term.

7.5.2 The Treasurer is responsible for the finances of BPC and shall maintain proper records of all financial transactions of BPC. He shall prepare an annual budget for presentation and approval at the ACM.

7.5.3 The Treasurer shall present financial statements of BPC at the EDC meetings. In addition, he shall prepare the financial report at the end of the Financial Year for audit and shall present the audited accounts of BPC at the ACM.

7.5.4 All cheques and other withdrawals from the accounts of BPC must be signed by the Treasurer or the Assistant Treasurer and counter-signed by another member of the EDC appointed by the EDC in a written resolution.

7.6 **Assistant Treasurer**

7.6.1 The EDC may appoint one of their number who has the appropriate financial skills and experience to serve as the Assistant Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer shall hold office for a term of two (2) years. If the Assistant Treasurer

has served two (2) consecutive terms, he must retire thereafter for a minimum period of one (1) term.

7.6.2 The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer and deputise for the Treasurer during his absence.

7.7 Powers and Responsibilities of the EDC

7.7.1 The EDC shall be responsible for the following:

- (i) Carrying out the decisions of BPC made in congregational meeting;
- (ii) Establishing, supervising and administering the ministries of BPC; and
- (iii) Administering and managing the property, the funds and the general affairs of BPC.

7.7.2 The EDC shall have the power to appoint committees to carry out the functions of the EDC as it deems necessary.

7.7.3 Subject to the approval of the Communicant Members at a congregational meeting, the EDC shall have the powers to borrow or raise funds on behalf of BPC for the purposes of BPC and to mortgage or charge its undertakings and property, or any part thereof, whether outright or as security for any debt, liability or obligation of BPC.

7.7.4 The Senior Minister, the Associate Ministers and the Serving Elders, collectively, shall be responsible for the spiritual affairs of BPC, which shall include the following:

- (i) preaching and teaching the Word of God;
- (ii) administering the Sacraments; and
- (iii) pastoral care and spiritual discipline of Communicant Members.

7.8 Meetings of the EDC

7.8.1 The EDC shall, by a simple majority, appoint the Senior Minister or an Associate Minister or one of the Serving Elders to preside over the meetings of the EDC.

7.8.2 The EDC must meet at least four (4) times a year to transact business. Seven (7) days' written notice of such meeting must be given to the EDC members. When necessary a special EDC meeting may be called by the Senior Minister and the EDC Clerk on two (2) days' written notice.

7.8.3 The quorum of a meeting of the EDC shall be half of the total number of EDC members.

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7.8.4 If a member of the EDC has a direct or indirect interest in a transaction or project or other matter to be discussed at a EDC meeting, that member shall disclose the nature of his interest before the discussion of the matter begins. That member shall not participate in the discussion nor vote on the matter, and shall also offer to withdraw from the meeting and the EDC shall decide if this offer should be accepted.

8. SENIOR MINISTER, ASSOCIATE MINISTERS, CO-WORKERS AND PREACHERS

8.1 Senior Minister, Interim Senior Minister and Associate Ministers

8.1.1 A Minister of PCS who has been invited by BPC to serve as the Senior Minister or an Associate Minister of BPC must be ordained or licensed by the relevant Presbytery of PCS or if he was ordained in another denomination or in a country outside of Singapore, has been examined and accepted by PCS to serve as a Minister in accordance with the criteria for appointment and licensing set out in the PCS Constitution and by-laws before he can be called to serve with BPC.

8.1.2 The EDC may nominate candidates from among Ministers ordained, licensed or examined and accepted by PCS for election as Senior Minister or Associate Minister of BPC, in which case the names of the nominee(s) must be notified in writing to the Communicant Members twenty-one (21) days prior to the congregational meeting and included in the notice of congregational meeting.

8.1.3 Where BPC intends to elect or re-elect a Minister of PCS to the office of Senior Minister of BPC, the EDC shall make a written request to the Presbytery Exco to appoint one other Minister and one Elder (not being from BPC) to attend and supervise the election or re-election.

8.1.4 Where BPC intends to elect or re-elect a Minister of PCS to the office of Associate Minister, the EDC shall make a written request to the Presbytery Exco and, in the case of election, the Presbytery Exco shall appoint one other Minister and one Elder (not being from BPC) to attend and supervise the election and, in the case of re-election, the Presbytery Exco shall commission the Senior Minister of BPC to conduct and supervise the re-election.

8.1.5 Election of the Senior Minister and Associate Ministers shall be held at a general meeting and decided by ballot.

8.1.6 A candidate for the office of Senior Minister or Associate Minister must attain not less than two-thirds of the total votes cast in order to be elected to office.

8.1.7 If the candidate is not a Communicant Member of BPC, he shall, upon being elected to the office of Senior Minister or Associate Minister, be deemed a member of BPC for the duration of his appointment. For clarity, the candidate need not transfer or terminate his membership with his home church while he serves as the Senior Minister or Associate Minister of BPC.

- 8.1.8 The term of office of the Senior Minister and an Associate Minister is four (4) years. The terms of engagement shall be agreed between the Senior Minister or the Associate Minister and BPC and shall be set out in a contract of employment. Subject to Article 8.1.9, the Senior Minister or an Associate Minister may be called to continue as the Senior Minister or Associate Minister, respectively, for subsequent terms of four (4) years each or such other duration as may be agreed with BPC.
- 8.1.9 Upon reaching the statutory minimum retirement age as prescribed by the Retirement Age Act (Cap. 274A), the Senior Minister or Associate Minister must retire from office. Notwithstanding the foregoing, BPC may invite the Senior Minister or Associate Minister who has reached the statutory minimum retirement age to continue in that office for such duration as may be agreed.
- 8.1.10 In the event that the office of Senior Minister is vacant and there is no Associate Minister in BPC, the EDC may invite a Senior Minister or Associate Minister of another Presbyterian Church, with the consent of the other Presbyterian Church and the relevant Presbytery of PCS, to serve as an interim-Senior Minister while the EDC seeks to invite a Minister to serve as its Senior Minister.

8.2 Preachers

- 8.2.1 BPC may invite a Preacher to be inducted to that office in BPC. The terms of engagement shall be agreed between the Preacher and BPC and shall be set out in a contract of employment. Upon reaching the statutory minimum retirement age as prescribed by the Retirement Age Act (Cap. 274A), the Preacher must retire from office. Notwithstanding the foregoing, BPC may invite the Preacher who has reached the statutory minimum retirement age to continue in that office for such duration as may be agreed.
- 8.2.2 A Preacher who has been invited by BPC to serve as a Preacher must be licensed by the relevant Presbytery of PCS in accordance with the criteria for appointment and licensing set out in the PCS Constitution and by-laws before he can be invited to serve with BPC. The Preacher is not a member of the EDC but may be invited by the EDC to attend its meetings as an observer.

8.3 Co-Workers

Retired Ministers of PCS and Ministers and Preachers of PCS who are serving in seminaries or para-church organizations, and who are Communicant Members of BPC, are collectively referred to as "**Co-Workers**".

9. ELDERS AND DEACONS

9.1 Functions of Elders and Deacons

- 9.1.1 The Elders, together with the Senior Minister and the Associate Ministers, are responsible for carrying out the ministry work of BPC, nurturing the spiritual life

of the Communicant Members, correcting their errors and such other matters concerning the edification and improvement of BPC.

9.1.2 The Deacons shall work with the Senior Minister, the Associate Ministers and the Serving Elders in administering the ministries, the financial affairs and the activities of BPC, in planning BPC budget, in preparing ministry and financial reports and in managing all matters concerning ministries, finance and administration of BPC.

9.2 Election of Elders and Deacons

9.2.1 Elders and Deacons shall be elected at congregational meetings of BPC.

9.2.2 Subject to Article 9.2.3, Communicant Members may nominate Communicant Members who have been faithfully serving in BPC and have demonstrated leadership qualities, for election as Elders and Deacons. All nominations must be proposed and seconded by Communicant Members. The list of nominees must be announced to BPC by email or printed announcement during weekly worship service twenty-one (21) days prior to the ACM and included in the notice of congregational meeting.

9.2.3 Candidates for the office of Elder and Deacon must have been Communicant Members of BPC for more than three (3) years, must be 21 years of age and above, must be well versed in Christian teaching, and must fulfil all other criteria prescribed by BPC. In the case of candidates for the office of Elder, the candidate must have served at least one (1) term as a Deacon.

9.2.4 Election of Elders and Deacons shall be held at a general meeting and decided by ballot.

9.2.5 A candidate for the office of Elder must attain not less than two-thirds of the total votes cast in order to be elected to office. A candidate for the office of Deacon may be elected to office by a simple majority of the total votes cast.

9.2.6 The term of office of Elders and Deacons is three (3) years. A Serving Elder or Deacon shall be eligible for re-election for a second consecutive term. If the Serving Elder or Deacon has served two (2) consecutive terms, he must retire thereafter for a minimum period of one (1) term. The EDC may waive this rule in special circumstances. Notwithstanding the foregoing restriction, the outgoing Deacons may be nominated for election to the office of Elders.

9.2.7 The title of an Elder is for life. An Elder who is serving a term of office is referred in this Constitution as a "**Serving Elder**".

9A. BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD – SEXUALITY, SINGLEHOOD AND MARRIAGE

9A.1 There has been increasing confusion and distortion of human sexuality in our society. As such, alternative lifestyles and sexual conduct that are contrary to

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Biblical teaching have been gradually gaining acceptance in our society and BPC must watch against the tolerance and acceptance of such practices within BPC. BPC, as instructed by Scriptures, uphold the following truths and practices:

- (i) That humanity has been created in the image of God, as male and female, to the exclusion of all others (Genesis 1:26-28);
- (ii) A substantive expression of the image of God is the marriage institution, defined clearly and uniquely as a lifelong monogamous and exclusive union between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:15-24; Matthew 19:3-9);
- (iii) That any form of sexual expression before and outside of marriage is forbidden and is reckoned as sin (1 Corinthians 6:9-20);
- (iv) That the Senior Minister, Associate Ministers and Preachers, and any candidate whom BPC intends to invite, call or appoint to serve as Senior Minister or Associate Minister or Preacher, as the case may be, must adhere to, practise and promote these Biblical teachings on sexuality, sexual conduct and marriage;
- (v) That the Senior Minister, Associate Ministers and Preachers, together with the Elders and Deacons Court (EDC), shall ensure that all ministry leaders and church staff must adhere to, practise and promote these Biblical teachings on sexuality, sexual conduct and marriage;
- (vi) That the Senior Minister, Associate Ministers and Preachers, together with the Elders and Deacons Court (EDC), shall exhort their congregants to adhere to and practise these Biblical teachings on sexuality, sexual conduct and marriage as faithful witnesses of Christ; and
- (vii) That all forms of sexual misconduct dishonour God and should not be condoned. Any form of sexual misconduct by a Communicant Member shall be dealt with through church discipline in accordance with the Constitution and by-laws.

9A.2 BPC shall not allow any part of its premises to be used by any persons (including organisations) who do not agree with the Biblical teachings on sexuality, sexual conduct and marriage, as described in Article 9A.1, for any activity, event or program (including weddings and celebrations of union) that does not uphold and promote these Biblical teachings.

10. BRANCH CONGREGATIONS

10.1 Subject to the approval of the Registrar of Societies, BPC may establish branch congregations in accordance with the prescribed procedures.



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- 10.2 The EDC shall be responsible for the spiritual affairs and the administration of the branch congregations.
- 10.3 A branch congregation that has a Minister and at least two (2) Elders elected by BPC to serve that congregation may be registered or incorporated as an independent Presbyterian church and an independent member of the PCS. To achieve independent status, the approval of at least two-thirds of the Communicant Members present at a congregational meeting of BPC must be obtained. The EDC shall make a written request to the Presbytery Exco to appoint one other Minister and one Elder (not being from BPC) to attend the congregational meeting and supervise the proceedings.

11. BY-LAWS

BPC may enact by-laws not inconsistent with this Constitution for, but not limited to, the following matters:

- (i) to give effect to the provisions of this Constitution;
- (ii) to regulate meetings in BPC;
- (iii) to regulate the functions and procedures of BPC;
- (iv) to regulate the proper keeping of the books and the accounts of BPC;
- (v) to regulate the administration of the activities of BPC;
- (vi) to provide for the appointment of Church staff and other personnel;
- (vii) to provide for all matters for the proper functioning of BPC.

12. AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

- 12.1 As a member of PCS and to retain its membership with PCS, BPC shall notify PCS in writing of any proposed changes to the Constitution and take into consideration any comments that PCS may have regarding the proposed changes.
- 12.2 BPC shall not amend the Constitution without the prior approval in writing of the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities. No additions, alterations or deletions shall be made to the Constitution unless the same shall have been previously submitted to and approved by at least two-thirds of the votes of the Communicant Members present at a congregational meeting of BPC. The quorum of a congregational meeting where any proposed amendment of the Constitution is tabled shall be 50% of the total number of Communicant Members.

13. INTERPRETATION

- 13.1 In the event of any question or matter arising out of a dispute or difference in meaning of any point in this Constitution or arising out of any point which is not expressly provided for in this Constitution, the EDC shall have power to use its own discretion. The decision of the EDC shall be final unless it is reversed at a congregational meeting of BPC.
- 13.2 In the event of any apparent conflict between the English version of this Constitution and any other translation of it, the meaning as conveyed by the English version shall prevail.

14. TRUSTEES

- 14.1 If BPC at any time acquires any immovable property, such property shall be vested in trustees subject to a declaration of trust.
- 14.2 BPC shall appoint either a trust corporation or at least three (3) Communicant Members to act as trustees of BPC. The trustees of BPC:
- (i) shall be elected by a simple majority vote of Communicant Members present and voting at a congregational meeting;
 - (ii) shall not effect any sale or mortgage of property unless it has been instructed by the EDC to do so and such instructions to be made after two-thirds of the Communicant Members present at a congregational meeting have voted in favour of the sale or mortgage of the property. The quorum of a congregational meeting where the sale or mortgage of property is tabled shall be 50% of the total number of Communicant Members.
- 14.3 BPC may terminate a trustee's appointment:
- (i) if the trustee, being a trust corporation, is wound up or threatened with winding up proceedings;
 - (ii) if the trustee is guilty of misconduct of such a kind as to render it undesirable for him to continue as a trustee;
 - (iii) if the trustee dies or becomes a lunatic or of unsound mind;
 - (iv) if the trustee is absent from the Republic of Singapore for a period of more than one (1) year;
 - (v) if the trustee becomes bankrupt;
 - (vi) if the trustee ceases to be a member of BPC; or
 - (vii) if the trustee is incapacitated for any reason.

14.4 Written notice of any proposal to remove a trustee from his trusteeship or to appoint a new trustee to fill a vacancy must be given to Communicant Members at least fourteen (14) days before the congregational meeting at which such proposal is tabled. The result of the proposal shall be notified to the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities.

14.5 The address of each immovable property, name of each trustee and any subsequent change to the foregoing must be notified to the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities.

15. AUDIT AND FINANCIAL YEAR

15.1 A firm of Certified Public Accountants shall be appointed as Auditors at each ACM for a term of one (1) year and shall be eligible for reappointment.

15.2 They:

- (i) will be required to audit each year's accounts and present a report upon them to the ACM; and
- (ii) may be required by the EDC to audit BPC's accounts for any period within their tenure of office at any date and make a report to the EDC.

15.3 The financial year shall be from 1st January to 31st December.

16. PROHIBITIONS

16.1 The introduction of gambling, idolatry, homosexual activities, drug taking, vice and such other illicit activities into BPC is prohibited. All such activities, excluding the promotion or conduct of a private lottery which has been permitted under the Private Lotteries Act (Cap. 250), is forbidden on BPC's premises.

16.2 The funds of BPC shall not be used to pay the fines of Communicant Members who have been convicted in a court of law.

16.3 The income and property of BPC whensoever derived shall be applied towards the promotion of the purposes of BPC as set forth in this Constitution and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend or bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the persons who at any time are or have been members of BPC or to any of them or to any person claiming through any of them. This restriction shall not apply to the payment of the salaries and benefits of the staff of BPC.

16.4 BPC shall not engage in any trade union activity as defined in any written law relating to trade unions for the time being in force in Singapore.

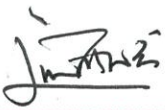
- 16.5 BPC shall not indulge in any political activity or allow its funds and/or premises to be used for political purposes.
- 16.6 BPC shall not hold any lottery, whether confined to its members or not, in the name of BPC or its office-bearers, Committee or Communicant Members unless with the prior approval of the relevant authorities.
- 16.7 BPC shall not raise funds from the public for whatever purposes without the prior approval in writing of the Assistant Director Operations Licensing Division, Singapore Police Force and other relevant authorities.

17. ADHERENTS, VISITORS AND GUESTS

- 17.1 “**Adherents**” refers to believers who have been regularly worshipping at BPC but have yet to become Communicant Members of BPC.
- 17.2 Adherents who are 16 years of age and above and have been baptized in another church may partake in the Lord’s Supper.
- 17.3 Adherents may attend congregational meetings as observers but shall not have the right to participate in congregational meetings nor have the right to nominate, vote or be elected to office in BPC.
- 17.4 Adherents, visitors and guests may be admitted into the premises of BPC. All adherents, visitors and guests shall abide by the rules and regulations of BPC.

18. DISPUTES

- 18.1 All disputes between Communicant Members shall be referred to the EDC for counselling, mediation and resolution. The disputing Communicant Members agree to submit to the authority and abide by the decision of the EDC.
- 18.2 Where the dispute is between the EDC and a Communicant Member, the EDC and the Communicant Member shall attempt to amicably resolve the dispute between themselves. If the EDC and the Communicant Member are not able to amicably resolve the dispute between themselves, they may agree to refer the dispute to the Executive Committee of the relevant Presbytery of PCS to which BPC belongs for resolution.
- 18.3 If the Executive Committee of the Presbytery of PCS is of the view that the subject matter of the dispute warrants the dispute being dealt with by the Executive Committee of the Synod of PCS, the Executive Committee of the Presbytery may refer the dispute to the Executive Committee of the Synod of PCS for resolution. The EDC and the Communicant Member agree to abide by the decision of the Executive Committee of the Presbytery or, if the dispute is referred to the Executive Committee of the Synod of PCS, the decision of the Executive Committee of the Synod.



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- 18.4 While any such dispute is pending a resolution, the parties involved in the dispute shall not refer the matter or any part thereof to the secular courts and shall not disclose, publicize or publish reports on the matter to the public.
- 18.5 An individual involved in the dispute, if holding a position in the body charged with resolving the dispute, shall abstain from deciding the matter, and if it is considered necessary, must withdraw from the meetings.
- 18.6 Scriptural and constitutional laws shall be applied to resolve all disputes to be decided hereunder. The decision of the Synod shall be final.

19. DISSOLUTION

- 19.1 BPC may not be dissolved, except with the consent of not less than two-thirds of the total Communicant Members present at a congregational meeting convened for this purpose. The quorum of a congregational meeting where the dissolution of BPC is tabled shall be 50% of the total number of Communicant Members.
- 19.2 In the event of BPC being dissolved as provided above, all debts and liabilities legally incurred on behalf of BPC shall be fully discharged, and all its remaining properties, funds, bank deposits, and cash shall be donated to charitable organizations with similar objectives in Singapore which are registered under the Charities Act (Cap. 37) as the Communicant Members may determine at a congregational meeting.
- 19.3 A Certificate of Dissolution shall be given to the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities within seven (7) days of the dissolution.

20. DEFINITIONS

- 20.1 In this Constitution, unless the context otherwise requires, the following terms shall have the meaning ascribed against it:

“Adherents” means believers who regularly worship at BPC but have yet to become Communicant Members of BPC;

“Communicant Member” means a person who is 16 years and above and who has been accepted as a Communicant Member of BPC in accordance with Articles 5.1.1 and 5.2;

“Co-Workers” means Communicant Members who are retired Ministers and Ministers and Preachers serving in seminaries or para-church organizations;

“Elders and Deacons Court” or **“EDC”** means the highest governing body of BPC composed of the Senior Minister, the Associate Ministers and a minimum of two (2) Serving Elders and two (2) Deacons responsible for the

administration of the ministries of BPC and the administration and management of the property, the funds and the general affairs of BPC;

“**Executive Committee of the Presbytery of PCS**” has the meaning ascribed to it in Article 5.5.1 of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in Singapore;

“**Executive Committee of the Synod of PCS**” has the meaning ascribed to it in Article 6.5.1 of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in Singapore;

“**Financial Year**” means the period from 1st January to 31st December;

“**Minister**” means a Preacher who has been ordained or licensed as a Minister by the relevant Presbytery of PCS, or a Minister who was ordained in another country and has been examined and accepted by PCS to serve as a Minister;

“**PCS**” means The Presbyterian Church in Singapore;

“**Preacher**” means a graduate of a recognized theological college who has been licensed as a Preacher by the relevant Presbytery of PCS;

“**Presbytery**” means a court composed of the Representatives of a group of Presbyterian Churches;

“**Representatives**” means those persons described in Article 4.3 appointed by BPC to represent it at the general meetings of the Presbytery and the Synod;

“**Synod**” means the highest assembly of PCS attended by all the Representatives of the members of PCS.

- 20.2 Words importing the singular shall include the plural, words importing one gender shall include the other gender, and words importing a person shall include a firm and corporation and vice-versa.

Edited: 15 August 2019