



Baptist Churches
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Relationship Agreement

*On being a Member Church of the
Baptist Churches Western Australia*

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PREAMBLE

1 WHY WE EXIST

The Baptist Churches Western Australia is a movement of over 110 churches who, while maintaining their autonomy, have voluntarily united together in interdependence for mutual support and encouragement to do what most churches would find difficult to do alone. We are churches who want to effectively reach Western Australia and beyond with the gospel of Jesus Christ. In uniting together, we realise that each church is called to reach their own community in their own unique way, but there are ways that we can and have in the past assisted one another to be more effective. This Relationship Agreement outlines a number of resources that we share and officially puts on paper the mutual benefits and responsibilities we have as we commit to one another in fellowship and mission.

This Relationship Agreement is intended to outline the process of becoming a member church of the Baptist Churches Western Australia. At the heart of this document is the recognition that through faith we are *positioned* as members of the body of Christ and committed to being participating members in the work of the Kingdom. Furthermore, we are all united under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and are committed to key biblical beliefs, values and Baptist distinctives listed in the pages that follow.

2 THE BAPTIST CHURCHES WESTERN AUSTRALIA BEGAN WITH MISSION

In 1896, four Baptist churches united in order to engage more effectively in overseas mission. The Baptist Union of Western Australia Inc. was formed. These churches consisted mainly of Baptists who had migrated to Western Australia from the eastern state colonies as a result of the newfound prosperity from the Kalgoorlie gold rushes. Since then, the denomination has seen steady growth with many people coming to a saving faith in God through Jesus Christ within Baptist Churches over the past 125 years.

The West Australian population has grown dramatically in that time and has become a mission field of over 2.6 million people, most of who are not in a relationship with God. More than ever Baptist Churches recognise that they need each other to maximise their effectiveness in fulfilling their mission.

3 STATEMENT OF FAITH

Baptists of Western Australia hold that:

- 3.1 Jesus Christ alone is head of the Church.
- 3.2 The Church is the community called into being by God. In both its universal and local expressions, it consists of persons who have personally and knowingly accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and have pledged themselves to worship, follow and serve Him as a priestly community.
- 3.3 By His high-priestly ministry, Jesus Christ has opened the way for every believer to approach God the Father directly through Him.
- 3.4 Jesus Christ is the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct in the life of both churches and individuals.
- 3.5 He has given to all churches and to every individual the right and responsibility to understand and to do God's will. Therefore, being accountable to God, Christians are not to despise their fellow believers but to accept one another as Christ's servants, allowing each other freedom of conscience.

God has given to human governments the right and responsibility to promote what is just and good but not to coerce belief or practice contrary to conscience.

In common with many other Christians, Baptists of Western Australia also hold that:

- 3.6 There is only one God. He is infinitely good and great, and has revealed Himself to be personal and triune in essential being, eternally existing as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- 3.7 God speaks to us through the Bible, the sixty-six Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Being God-breathed they are fully trustworthy and supremely authoritative in all matters of faith and conduct.
- 3.8 God created the heavens and the earth and all that exists in them. He continues to care for and govern His creation, working out His purposes for all He has made.
- 3.9 God created humans in His image, male and female, intending that we live in fellowship with Him. However, tempted by Satan, God's adversary, the first man and woman disobeyed God. As a result we all sin, falling short in our responsibilities to love God and neighbour and to care for the world.
- 3.10 Despite our sin, which alienates us from God and rightly deserves His judgment, God, because of His grace and great love for all people, sent His Son into the world to save us.

The incarnate Son, Jesus of Nazareth, was conceived by the Virgin Mary through the Holy Spirit. Fully human and fully divine, He lived on earth a sinless life of perfect obedience. He died on the cross as a sacrifice on our behalf and in our place, redeeming us from the penalty and power of sin and triumphing over Satan. He was raised bodily from the dead and ascended to his Father's presence where He lives forever as our great High Priest and reigns as Lord of all.
- 3.11 The Gospel, the good news concerning Jesus Christ and His reconciling work, is God's powerful way of bringing salvation. All who respond in repentance and faith God sets right with Himself, forgiving and cleansing them from sin, giving them his Holy Spirit and eternal life, and incorporating them into his church.
- 3.12 The Holy Spirit gives new life to all believers and resides in them permanently. He makes them holy, and enables them to grow into the likeness of Christ. Through his Spirit God empowers all his people for life and witness, granting them various gifts for the well-being, functioning and mission of the church.
- 3.13 While all believers belong to the universal church, God gathers them into local churches which exist to worship and serve Him. Jesus Christ, the head of the church, has established both baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Baptism is the immersion of believers on their profession of faith, an act of identification with the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It involves commitment to a life of discipleship in fellowship with His people.

In the Lord's Supper, believers remember Christ's sacrificial death, share in fellowship with their risen Lord and with one another, and look forward to His return.

3.14 All Christians are commanded to love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, and their neighbours as themselves. We discover what love means in practice through searching the Scriptures, which reveal God's character and will. Such love includes the responsibility of every Christian to participate in the proclamation of the Good News throughout the world.

3.15 Jesus Christ will return visibly and victoriously from his Father's presence to gather his people to himself and to complete his conquest of sin and evil.

All people, both believers and unbelievers, will be raised bodily and be judged by God. Believers will enjoy eternal blessedness in God's presence, while unbelievers will suffer the eternal punishment of exclusion from his presence. The whole creation will be so transformed that righteousness will characterise the new heavens and the new earth for ever.

Concerning congregational life, Baptists of Western Australia hold that:

3.16 The will of Christ for each church is to be found as the Holy Spirit brings direction and conviction to that congregation gathered to seek his will in the light of the Scriptures. On this basis the members' meeting is the final authority under Christ for a congregation. Finding Christ's will through the members' meeting involves mutual counsel through the exercise of the members' gifts and learning from the experience of other congregations.

3.17 Christ gives leaders to his Church. It is the duty of the local church through the members' meeting to recognise and affirm Christ's call to such leaders, and to set them aside to serve, thereby charging them with the responsibility to lead and delegating prescribed authority to lead. Mutual accountability is to operate between leaders and church

3.18 While not in any way diminishing the autonomy of the local church, it is appropriate for Baptist churches to cooperate in a Union of Churches in which it is essential for all member churches to practise mutual care, support, and accountability.

4 STRATEGIC PLAN

4.1 Values

We Value living lives that are **fully dependent on God** in obedience to Christ and the Bible.
John 15:8; Acts 17:28; 2 Timothy 3:16

We Value **building Trust** within Baptist Churches of Western Australia.
John 13:35; Romans 15:5-7; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Ephesians 4:2; 1 Peter 3:8

We Value **generous hearts** that are committed to building the Kingdom of God.
Genesis 12:1-3; Matthew 5:3-16; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

We Value **all People** inside and outside the family of God – every generation, every culture.
Genesis 1:27; Proverbs 14:31; 22:2; Matthew 5:43-47; Luke 4:16-30; Matthew 28:19-20; Galatians 3:26-29

We Value **doing our best** because it honours God and inspires people.
Deuteronomy 4:5-6; Matthew 5:14-16; Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 3:23; 1 Peter 4:10-11

We Value **Integrity**: committed to being honest, transparent and above reproach.
Psalms 1; Proverbs 8:1-21; 11:3; Matthew 22:16; Ephesians 4:15, 25; 1 Timothy 3

We Value **Community** because we are stronger when we work together.
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 1 Corinthians 12-27; Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 10:23-25

4.2 Vision

An empowering movement helping pastors, ministries, churches and their communities say Yes to Jesus

4.3 Mission

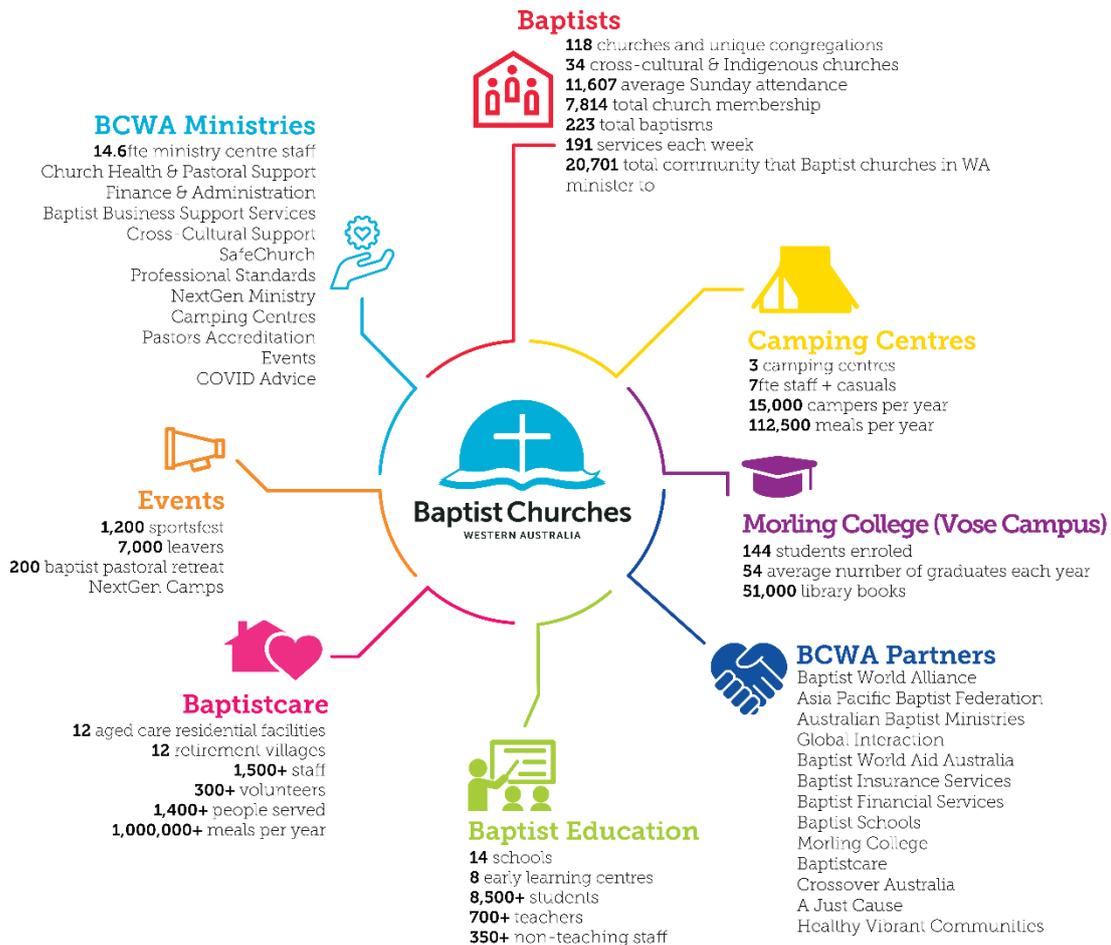
Building a Healthy Church.

5 GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE OF BAPTIST CHURCHES WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Baptist Churches Western Australia (BCWA) is the registered business name of The Baptist Union of Western Australia Incorporated (BUWA). The membership of BUWA is made up of Member Churches. Like the local church, the membership is the final authority in all matters related to the BUWA.

Delegates from Member Churches meet together annually as the Assembly. Assembly appoints the members of Council, who are accountable to the Assembly to fulfil the responsibilities delegated to them for the effective governance and management of the BUWA. Assembly also considers specific appointments, such as the Director of Ministries; receiving new member churches; and recognising Accredited Persons in Ministry.

BUWA operates ministries, establishes agencies and affiliates with societies and other Baptist ministries – all to further the overall vision and mission of BUWA.



Baptists A Snapshot

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BCWA Ministries include:

- Baptist Ministry Centre (Rivervale)
- Baptist Campsites (Serpentine & Busselton)
- Events (SportsFest, Leavers, Pastoral Retreat, Training Days etc.)
- Ministry Support and Standards
- Finance & Administration Support

Agencies:

- Baptistcare

Societies:

- The Baptist Historical Society of Western Australia Inc.

You can refer to the [Constitution](#) if you need further information on how The Baptist Union of Western Australia Incorporated is governed.

The Baptist Ministry Centre, located in Rivervale provides support services to member churches and ministries, including the following; Consultancies; Insurance Scheme (Property, Public Liability, Workers Compensation, etc.); Group Copyright Licence; Obtaining legal advice; Constitutional and Governance advice; Safe Church Program (child protection, Working with Children Card and National Volunteer Police Checks); Employment advice for pastors and churches regarding conditions and stipends; Campsites; Long Service Leave Fund for pastors and Union Employees; Assistance with property issues and Administrative and Financial Support.

6 THE BENEFITS OF DOING MISSION TOGETHER

We believe that by being a Member Church of the Baptist Churches Western Australia, we can do mission more effectively because we are better resourced together.

6.1 Churches are Better Resourced for Mission by:

- 6.1.1 **Insurance.** A Group Buying Insurance Scheme, Baptist Insurance Services (BIS) is a national insurance scheme organising insurance on property and other assets in excess of \$5 billion and on behalf of over 1,400 Baptist constituents. BIS reduces insurance costs, including Property, Public liability and many others for all Baptist churches.
- 6.1.2 **Administrative Support** and advice through the Baptist Ministry Centre Staff that have a range of expertise and experience. Staff are available to assist churches.
- 6.1.3 **Constitutional Support.** The BCWA Constitution and Model Constitution are provided along with constitutional advice for local churches.
- 6.1.4 **Sharing of Regulatory and Compliance Advice** on particular issues such as COVID-19 , Work Health & Safety or referral to a Legal Practitioner who understands churches and their particular legal needs.
- 6.1.5 **Safe Church.** Training, advice, policy documentation and procedures are provided for all churches to enable them to fulfil government regulations for all those working with children and youth; responding to allegations or persons of concern. This includes Professional Standards support and reporting mechanisms.
- 6.1.6 **Financial & Compliance Support.** Support is provided on a range of issues such as ACNC, taxation, GST, Business Activity Statements (BAS), Superannuation, LSL, Exempt Benefits for pastors or referral externally for financial advice as needed.

- 6.1.7 **Pastor's Remuneration.** Advice for churches, and pastors regarding recommended remuneration, conditions and Pastor/Church Agreements from a third party who understands the special relationship between Pastor and church.
- 6.1.8 **Employment Advice and Human Resources.** Advice for churches and pastors regarding issues around employment and volunteer management.
- 6.1.9 **Property and Grants.** Support for churches on property and grants related matters including standing as the incorporated entity for our unincorporated churches for all property transactions, grant applications etc. and holding property titles for churches (both unincorporated and incorporated as required) under the Declaration of Trust arrangements.
- 6.1.10 **Financial Services.** Baptist Churches have access to the professional services of Baptist Financial Services Australia Ltd (BFS). BFS provide financial services to support and resource Churches and Christian ministries. Surpluses from BFS are proportionally distributed to each state, meaning their ministry benefits BCWA.
- 6.1.11 **Mediation and Dispute Resolution** services are provided to churches as required. This may be between leaders, members of the congregation, staff, any other group or as required by the Incorporated Associations Act and the local church constitution.
- 6.1.12 **Pastors Review and Documentation.** If churches wish to undertake a review of their pastor, an independent reviewer is provided along with documentation and a fair process.
- 6.1.13 **Specialist Ministry Networks** to provide support for specific church ministries pastors and leaders. E.g. Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, and other.
- 6.1.14 **Events** that enable us to do together what we cannot do alone e.g. Youth Camps, SportsFest, Leavers.
- 6.1.15 **Preaching** support for churches on request, especially when they are without a pastor or when in need of specialist teaching on a subject.
- 6.1.16 **Copyright Licences.** Provides a discount to individual church's CCLI and other copyright licence fees through national group buying.
- 6.1.17 **Church Accounts, Bookkeeping and Financial Compliance.** We are able to provide bookkeeping, accounting and financial compliance services for churches and ministries through Baptist Business Support Services. *This is a fee for service arrangement at competitive rates.*
- 6.1.18 **Volunteer Police Checks.** We process Volunteer Police Checks for local churches and ministry volunteers through the office. *This is a fee for service arrangement.*

6.2 Pastors are Better Resourced for Mission and Serving Churches by:

- 6.2.1 **Pastoral care and support** is offered through the Pastors Clusters network and staff of the Ministry Centre.
- 6.2.2 **Annual Pastoral Retreat** for refreshment and renewal of the Pastor and their spouse.
- 6.2.3 **Accreditation of Pastors** in various roles, including chaplains, specialist (e.g. youth, associate), sole, senior pastors; and pastors in training.
- 6.2.4 **Pastor's Long Service Leave Fund** for churches to contribute to on behalf of their pastor provides portability, enabling a pastor to accrue long service leave when moving between Baptist churches and states.

- 6.2.5 **Marriage License applications** are made on behalf of pastors and churches and sound advice is provided through Ministry Centre staff.
- 6.2.6 **Safe Church Clearance Certificates** - checks on pastors are undertaken independently of the BCWA on behalf of churches.

6.3 Baptist Churches Together on Mission

- 6.3.1 **Consultations** – Assist the church to review their past and present ministry, focusing particularly on church health. They bring recommendations to the church for their future ministry. Assistance in implementing the recommendations is provided to the church, including assistance to develop, mission, vision, values, strategy, annual ministry plans, structures, evangelism, discipleship, governance and incorporation strategies.
- 6.3.2 **Celebration Events** - Where all churches are encouraged to combine for mutual inspiration and encouragement about what God is doing in and through our movement.
- 6.3.3 **Baptistcare** – residential aged care, home care services and retirement living, supporting individuals and communities in metro and regional areas.
- 6.3.4 **Camping** – facilities at discounted rates for Baptist churches at Serpentine and Busselton.
- 6.3.5 **Global Mission Opportunities** and support for churches overseas mission programs through Baptist Mission Australia and Baptist World Aid Australia.
- 6.3.6 **Support for churches in remote areas of Western Australia.**
- 6.3.7 **Australian Baptist Ministries** – links local church to the national Baptist movement, including ministries such as Crossover, BFS, BIS, A Just Cause, Healthy Vibrant Communities (church planting & hybrid ministries).
- 6.3.8 **Asia Pacific Baptist Federation** links churches and ministries to our regional Baptist family.
- 6.3.9 **Baptist World Alliance** – links churches to the worldwide Baptist family.
- 6.3.10 **Supporting the development of other Baptist Churches across Western Australia.** Opportunity through financial and practical giving – including isolated and remote churches and new church plants – as well as the development of pastors throughout Western Australia.
- 6.3.11 **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse** ministry support, including Indigenous ministries, both CALD churches and to churches wishing to enter this area of mission.
- 6.3.12 **Networking** with Baptist Schools in Western Australia.

6.4 Training for Churches and Individuals on Mission

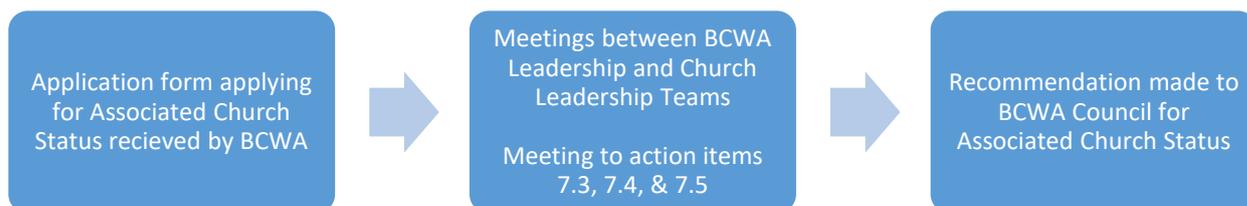
- 6.4.1 **Morling College (Perth Vose Campus)** is a ministry of Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT and Baptist Churches Western Australia's preferred theological provider. Morling College provides excellent theological education, training and personal growth opportunities for mission and ministry, as well as networking amongst Baptist pastors, leaders and churches.
- 6.4.2 **Professional Development** for pastors and Christian leaders, including church leaders, chaplains and teachers through Morling College, Peer Support networks, Supervision arrangements and other training opportunities.
- 6.4.3 **Cross Cultural Ministry Training** at Morling College.
- 6.4.4 **Access** to one of the largest evangelical Christian library in Western Australia at Morling College.

Whilst we recognise that there are other colleges and seminaries that provide sound biblical and theological training, we strongly encourage churches and pastors to support Morling College. Candidates for Accreditation, and those maintaining Accreditation, can expect some training to be completed through Morling.

6.5 Communication to Assist our Mission in the Wider Community

- 6.5.1 A collective voice on social issues to the community.
- 6.5.2 Central Resource helping churches, personnel and groups connect.
- 6.5.3 Pastor's Emails and Enews.
- 6.5.4 Advise churches and pastors of decisions and proposals that affect them.

7 PATHWAY TO BECOMING AN ASSOCIATED CHURCH



- 7.1 We believe the most effective way to grow our denomination is by having our existing churches plant new churches, congregations and campuses. However, we also recognise that independent churches will also seek affiliation as we endeavour to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ throughout Western Australia.
- 7.2 The Associated Church Application Form is part of this document and the completion and returning of it to the Baptist Ministry Centre will commence the process.
- 7.3 An initial meeting with a representative from the Baptist Ministry Centre will follow in which BCWA policies and ethos will be outlined to the applicant church's leadership and members as required. The initiating group will put forward their vision, plan and purpose regarding their desire to become part of the Baptist Churches Western Australia (BCWA).

- 7.4 Where an application is received from a group that has resulted from a church split, a church consultancy will be required as part of the application process.
- 7.5 If both parties agree to proceed, follow-up meetings will be planned.
- 7.6 Letters of reference from nominated referees will be provided to the Director of Ministries of the BCWA as to the suitability of the requesting church and their Senior/Sole Pastor.
- A formal recommendation will be received by the Director of Ministries of the BCWA prior to proceeding.
 - BCWA will provide an orientation session on core Baptist Church issues and a chance for discussion and feedback. This may include a visit to the church.
 - The local church leadership seeking to become an Associated Church will meet with the BCWA Council, or their delegated representatives.
 - A recommendation will be made to the Council to recognise the applicant as an associated church. If accepted by Council, the applicant will meet the constitutional definition of 'Other Groups': *means bodies in the process of becoming churches, associated congregations and other groups who do not meet the full requirements for Member Churches but whose ministry is recognized by the Union as valid.*
 - An initial preparation period of at least nine (9) months will occur between Acceptance by Council as an 'Other Group' and being able to sign The Relationship Agreement, completing the Application process to becoming a full member church.
 - Progress reports are to be provided to the Church Health and Pastoral Support Department of the BCWA.
 - The applicant church agrees to liaise with BCWA, workings towards fulfilling all of the commitments listed in The Relationship Agreement Church Responsibilities and Expectations, including:
 - Submitting a Constitution, Statement of Faith, Mission, Vision and Values Statements that are consistent with the Relationship Agreement for approval by the BCWA.
 - Give an Annual Partnership Ministry contribution of a target of 5% of the church's annual general income.
 - Supply details of attendance, membership, baptisms etc. on request.
 - Regular attendance at Assembly meetings – we recognise that for some remote churches this will not be possible every time.
 - Appropriate Safe Church, Insurance and any other relevant initiatives presented by BCWA. *These policies are to be kept active.*
 - Ensuring that Pastoral Staff are suitably qualified and are in the process of applying for Accreditation with the BCWA.

If the church is unable to complete the Membership process within twelve (12) months, the preparation period may be extended with the agreement of the BCWA. Any Associated Church will be reviewed at intervals agreed to between the BCWA and the church.

The applicant church will not be entitled to claim affiliation with or use the BCWA name or logo until the Membership Process has been completed and has been accepted as a Member Church by the Assembly.

8 PATHWAY TO BECOMING A MEMBER CHURCH



- 8.1 After completion of a preparation period of at least nine (9) months from Acceptance by Council as an 'Other Group', the joining church may be able to complete the application process by signing The Relationship Agreement to become a Member church.
- 8.2 All Churches will be admitted to membership as per the Constitution, Bylaws and Policies of the BCWA.
- 8.3 A BCWA Baptist Ministry Centre representative will meet with the pastor and church members to draw up the formal recommendation of affiliation, including completion of The Relationship Agreement fulfilling the Responsibilities and Expectations.
- 8.4 The Council is satisfied that the applicant church is fulfilling all of the commitments listed in The Relationship Agreement Church Responsibilities and Expectations.
- 8.5 Once Council is satisfied that all of these requirements are met, the BCWA will write to the joining church advising them of their decision to recommend the church for membership to the Assembly.
- 8.6 Council may recommend that the church remains an 'Other Group' with the BCWA, under the oversight of the assigned BCWA representative. If the church remains an 'Other Group' with the BCWA, regular reviews will be undertaken at agreed intervals.

ASSOCIATED CHURCH APPLICATION FORM

Following is the Application Form for consideration of becoming an Associated Church of Baptist Churches Western Australia. Please **digitally complete** and email to: admin@baptistwa.asn.au

If you need assistance in completing the form, please contact the office either via email admin@baptistwa.asn.au or call 08 6313 6300.

Contact Details

Name of Church:

Service Meeting Address:

Church Postal Address:

Service Time/s:

Website:

Church Email:

Senior Pastor

Name:

Postal Address:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

Qualifications:

Previous Experience:

Secretary/Administrator

Name:

Postal Address:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

Treasurer

Name:

Postal Address:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

Other Pastoral Staff

Name:

Role:

Postal Address:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

Other Pastoral Staff

Name:

Role:

Postal Address:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

**Elders/Council/Board
Chairperson**

Name:

Postal Address:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

Details

- 1. Briefly share a description of your church:
- 2. Was your church the result of a church split? Yes No

If Yes, please describe the reasons for the split and the current status of the relationship with the church you have split from:

- 3. Please provide the following:
 - Church Membership Number:
 - Average Service Attendance:
- 4. Briefly outline how the congregation came to be established: (Attach further notes if required)
- 5. Briefly describe what you consider to be the church’s ministry catchment area, including population details
- 6. What is the nearest existing Baptist Church to you?
- 7. Have you had any discussion/consultation with this Church? If so, what was the outcome?
- 8. Share the ministry activities are you presently conducting?
- 9. Share the church’s specific goals for the next 12 months?
- 10. Share some longer-term goals of the church?
- 11. Share some of the key challenges you face in the next 12 months?
- 12. Share some of the key opportunities?

13. Please describe your current leadership structure?
14. Does your Church accept the [Statement of Faith, Vision, Mission and Values](#) of the BCWA? Yes
 No
15. Share your reasons for the churches wish to seek membership with Baptist Churches Western Australia?
16. Does the church have any other affiliation or links with other Christian Denominations or Church bodies? Yes
 No

If Yes, please list:

17. Has the church considered the responsibilities and privileges of becoming part of our family of churches - including "fair share" commitments? Yes
 No
18. Has the church agreed to give an Annual Partnership Ministry contribution of a target of 5% of the churches annual general income? Yes
 No
19. Has your church implemented or are you in the process of implementing [Safe Church](#) policies/protocols? Yes
 No
20. Has the church's membership met to discuss this affiliation proposal? (Please attach copy of formal meeting resolutions) Yes
 No
21. Is your church an Incorporated Entity? Yes
 No
22. Australian Business Number (ABN)
23. Is the church registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC) and up to date with required reporting? Yes
 No
24. What financial controls and practices do you have in place? What accounting bookkeeping/software do you use?
25. Any other comments

Signatures

On behalf of the Church: (Two Church Leaders to sign)

Name

Role

Signature _____

Date:

Name

Role

Signature _____

Date:

Documents Required with Submission

1. Church Constitution Yes
 No

If No, please list:

2. Signed Minutes from the Church discussing and approving this membership application with the Baptist Churches Western Australia. Yes
3. Applicant church's Mission, Vision and Values and Statement of Faith. Yes
4. Letters of reference (Clause 7.6) Yes
 No
5. Church Leadership Team has met with member of Safe Church Team Yes
 No
6. Church Leadership Team has met with member/s of the BCWA Accreditation Team Yes
 No
7. Submission of Applicant church's most recent Financial Year documents including Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet. Yes
 No

THE RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT

APPLICATION FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP WITH BAPTIST CHURCHES WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Following is the Application Form for consideration of becoming a Full Member church of Baptist Churches Western Australia. Please **digitally complete** and email to: admin@baptistwa.asn.au

Church Responsibilities and Expectations

Because of our mutual relationship with one another, Member Churches play an active role in supporting one another within the Baptist Churches Western Australia (BCWA) – by practically, prayerfully and financially supporting one another as we share the Good News of Jesus Christ locally, throughout our nation, and across the world.

Member Churches of The Baptist Union of Western Australia Incorporated (BUWA) agree to:

1. The Baptist Churches Western Australia Statement of Faith, Purpose, Vision, Mission and Value Statements.
2. Protecting the unity of our churches.
3. Co-operating with other Baptist churches in Western Australia.
4. Participate in decision-making forums including Assembly and being involved in denominational ministries.
5. Recognise Morling College as a partner ministry and as the preferred training provider for pastors to be accredited for ministry within and on behalf of Baptist churches.
6. Adopt, implement and maintain appropriate Safe Church policies and procedures consistent with the BCWA recommended Safe Church program. This includes the ten Child Safe Standards, and other recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.
7. Appoint Pastoral Staff who are Accredited, or apply for Accreditation with Baptist Churches Western Australia within one year of their appointment.
8. Fulfil Safe Church obligations by reporting any serious allegations of misconduct against Pastors to the Professional Standards Team of Baptist Churches Western Australia.
9. Support Church Planting initiatives.
10. Supplying the Baptist Churches Western Australia with a copy of your Church Constitution, mission, vision and values statements and the church's Statement of Faith.
11. Annually supplying a church statistical return.
12. Financially supporting our shared ministries through giving your Annual Partnership Ministry Contribution which is recommended as a target of 5% of annual general church income.
13. Where possible, using the services that the Baptist Churches Western Australia provide for our mutual benefit, e.g. *Baptist Financial Services, Baptist Insurance Services, Long Service Leave Fund* and other services provided for the benefit of all churches.
14. Contributing resources and skills to assist the fellow members of Baptist Churches Western Australia.
15. Keep the Baptist Ministry Centre up to date with all contact details for your church, pastors, staff and office bearers.
16. Promote Baptist Mission Australia as the Australian Baptist Missionary movement working worldwide.
17. Promote Baptist World Aid Australia as the overseas aid and development arm of Baptist World Aid/Transform Aid International.
18. Promote Crossover Australia to advance the gospel in our nation.
19. Open communication with the Baptist Churches Western Australia in regard to meeting these agreed responsibilities and expectations.

Our Commitment

Trusting Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour of His Church and being in agreement with the Church Responsibilities and Expectations, we, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, unite with the Baptist Churches Western Australia.

In doing so we will commit ourselves to God and to the other member churches to fulfil our responsibilities and do the following:

- 1. We Will Protect the Unity of Our BUWA**
 - By acting in love toward other member churches
 - By refusing to gossip
 - By supporting the leaders as they follow Christ
 - By reconciling conflict

- 2. We Will Share In the Responsibilities of our BUWA**
 - By praying for and building healthy churches
 - By supporting other churches within our movement
 - By warmly welcoming those churches who are new

- 3. We Will Serve the Ministry of our BUWA**
 - By using our God given unique gifts and talents
 - By being equipped to serve by our seminary and leaders
 - By developing a servant heart

- 4. We Will Support the Testimony of our BUWA**
 - By faithfully attending Assemblies
 - By encouraging a Godly lifestyle and behaviour among our members
 - By regularly giving of our finances to support the movement

- 5. Your Denominational Leaders Will Serve Each Church with Love and Integrity**
 - By praying for you regularly
 - By serving each Baptist Church
 - By equipping you according to God's calling for your church
 - By willingly and cheerfully providing support services to your church

Church Name

Director of Ministries – BUWA

Authorised Person Signature

BUWA Director of Ministries Signature

Authorised Person Position and Date

Date