

ILLAWARRA CHURCH OF CHRIST CHARTER

1. Purpose

This document sets out the conditions applying to the conduct and governance of the Illawarra Church of Christ (the Church), formerly known as the Northern Beaches Church of Christ.

2. Ministry objectives

- We have established and are operating a Christian church in the Illawarra region of NSW.
- We offer regular church services and other opportunities for public worship at our church premises.
- We offer religious ceremonies such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals at the church premises.
- We provide religious education such as bible studies and a Sunday school program.
- We oversee a comprehensive program of pastoral care.

3. Principles of the Church

- In things essential, unity, in things non-essential, liberty, but in all things, love.
- All are encouraged to know Christ and to make Him known.
- All are encouraged to belong to a small group for fellowship and growth in Christian knowledge and understanding.
- All are encouraged to regularly attend worship at the church.
- All are encouraged to regularly give their tithes and offerings to the work of the Church.
- All are encouraged to know their gifts and to use them in Christian service.

Our Church is part of Christ's Church in the Illawarra and as such it bears witness through an active participation in the community.

4. Membership

Membership of the church shall be open to all who have openly confessed their faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and who support the church, and regularly attend. Upon affirmation of Membership the person will be added to the church Members Register. We recommend that all follow the Bible's teaching by following Christ in the waters of believer's baptism by immersion.

5. Church Leadership

All Church Members have the right to vote for Leaders. The Leadership of the church will consist of not less than four (4), and no more than eight (8) Church Members who have, upon confession of their faith in Jesus Christ, been baptised by immersion in the tradition of the New Testament. Each Leader must be eligible to be classified as a responsible person under the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act.

Leaders shall be elected for a term of two (2) years. Their duties, as well as in ministry, will be the governance of the Church through the Church Board. The Church Board will consist of the elected Leaders and the Lead Pastor. The Church Board may appoint up to two additional members, but the number of Church Board Members may not exceed nine (9). At each Annual Meeting, each appointed Board Member will step down.

6. Church Governance Meetings

An Annual Meeting of Church Members shall be held. A Special Meeting of Church Members may be called by the Board, or on request from at least 30 Church Members.

7. Ministry Team

The Lead Pastor will be called by a vote of at least two thirds at an Annual or Special Meeting of Church Members. The Lead Pastor will have authority, in consultation with and with the approval of the Board, to make appointments to other ministry positions.

8. Church Members in Ministry

Church Members are encouraged to serve in the ministry of the Church. The Church Ministry Team will approve Church Members for ministry roles after due consideration, consultation, and the seeking God's guidance. The Church Board may recognise some Church Members as Elders of the Church.

9. Auxiliaries

Auxiliaries, using the Church name, shall only be set up with the approval of the Church Board. All property and moneys of the auxiliaries shall remain the property of the Church.

10. Accountability and Due Process

The Board will, ensure that the affairs of the Church are managed well and responsibly. Adequate and responsible processes for the handling and accounting for the Church's affairs shall be established, regularly reviewed, and maintained.

Church Board members are to exercise their powers and discharge their duties with due care and diligence. They must ensure adequate and accurate records are kept of Church operations, including minutes of Board and Church Member's Meetings, and documents required by Church Procedures. These records are to be kept safe and be open to Church Members who request access, and to external review.

11. Safe Ministry

The Church is committed to being a safe and welcoming community for all, free from abuse or harm of any kind. This applies especially to children and vulnerable people. The Church Board is committed to developing, administering, and maintaining Safe Ministry policy and processes in accordance with Australian laws.

The church is committed to the Churches of Christ NSW&ACT Professional Conduct Protocols. which are embraced by both Board and Ministry Team.

Each Board Member, and each person who works with children on behalf of the Church shall hold a NSW Working with Children Check, verified by the Church Secretary.

12. Corporate Structure and Obligations

12.1 General.

This church is an autonomous body of followers of Christ. It is registered with the Australian Government as an unincorporated association (ANZSIC code: 9540-Religious Services) and hence carries the ABN 57131782949.

12.2 The Church as a Charity

The church is established as a charity whose purpose is to advance the Christian religion in fulfillment of the objectives listed above.

12.3 Not-for-Profit Organisation

The Church is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission as a Basic Religious Charity. As such, the Church shall operate at all times as a not-for-profit organisation as described by the Australian Taxation Office. The Church, itself, is not eligible for registration as a deductible gift recipient, but may create sub entities under the appropriate rules, for this purpose.

12.4 Application of income

The assets and income of the church shall be applied solely in furtherance of the objectives listed above. No portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the church except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the church.

12.5 Dissolution or Amalgamation

The Church may be dissolved by a vote of at least three quarters of Members present at an Annual or Special Meeting. Upon dissolution, assets remaining after settlement of debts and liabilities shall be transferred to an organisation holding principles similar to those of the Church, which is charitable at law, and which is not carried on for the profit or gain of its individual members.

13. Affiliation with Churches of Christ in NSW/ACT

Recognising the benefits of co-operation, involvement and mutual support flowing from association with a larger Christian body, the church voluntarily affiliates with the Churches of Christ in NSW/ACT, supporting the objectives of the Constitution of the Conference of Churches of Christ in New South Wales. Upon affiliation, all Church property shall be vested in the Churches of Christ Property Trust in accordance with the provisions of the Churches of Christ in New South Wales Incorporation Act 1947 and shall be governed by such Act.

14. Application

This Charter will be applied through Procedures that may be altered by the Board, provided one month's prior written notice is given to the congregation before they become effective. A Special Meeting may be called to discuss and vote on the proposed alterations. The Charter may be amended with a vote of two thirds of Church Members at an Annual Meeting, or Special Meeting, of the Church.

Authorised:

Brian Healy.
Church Board Chairperson

This Charter (Rev. 5) was approved by a meeting of the membership of the Church on February 4, 2024.