

Director - Pastoral Development

- Oversight of Pastoral Settlements
- Oversight of Student allocations / supervision
- Facilitate Pastoral Development
- Facilitate Pastoral Care
- Encourage Church health and growth

BEING A BAPTIST CHURCH TODAY

What do you want to look at?

**What makes a Baptist
Church Baptist?**

The Christianity of the New Testament is for today



**Personal
Faith**

**A Believers'
Church**

```
graph TD; A[ ] --> B[Personal Faith]; B --> C[Believer's Baptism]; B --> D[Freedom of conscience];
```

**Personal
Faith**

**Believer's
Baptism**

**Freedom of
conscience**

```
graph TD; A["A Believers' Church"] --> B["Priesthood of all Believers"]; A --> C["Autonomy of the Local Church"]; A --> D["Congregational Participation"];
```

**A Believers'
Church**

**Priesthood of
all Believers**

**Autonomy of the
Local Church**

**Congregational
Participation**

Issues With Which Baptist Churches Commonly Struggle

1. Church Meetings
2. Baptism and Membership
3. Leadership Structures
4. Unity in Diversity
5. Autonomy vs Interdependance
6. Expressing Biblical Purpose

1. Church Meetings

Purpose:

- to discuss it's life and ministry
- to discern God's will in the context of Christian community
- to ensure the purpose of the Church is being carried out

1. Church Meetings

Current Issues:

- “Business Meeting” vs “Church Meeting”
- Robert’s Rules of debate based on adversarial debating
- Vocal people have the main say
- Leadership vs Church
- Small attendance especially in large churches

1. Church Meetings (continued)

Some ideas:

- Meetings to include worship, fellowship and discernment
- Small groups, everyone has a say, firm yet relaxed chairing
- Give out information early
- Important matters dealt with early
- Mapping of issues

1. Church Meetings (continued)

Stages in Decision Making includes:

1. Plan the process
2. Generate list of options
3. Evaluate strengths and limits of each
4. Negotiate a proposal for best way forward
5. Decide on which one the group will go with

2. Baptism and Membership

- 20% plus of people joining come from non Baptist Churches
- NSW and ACT traditionally closed membership
- 1995 Assembly agreed the link between Baptism and Membership was a local Church matter

2. Baptism and Membership (cont'd)

Some options:

- Closed – believers, baptised by immersion
- Baptised believer not by immersion
- Baptised, public declaration, adhere to principle of believers' baptism, conscience objection
- Respect the principle, conscience objection, public declaration
- Open membership

2. Baptism and Membership (cont'd)

- Legal restrictions:
 - pastor of church
 - delegate to Assembly
 - vote on property matters
- The above supports the Act of Incorporation and Property Trust Act in reference to “the baptism of believers only by immersion.”

3. Leadership Structures

- As Baptists we are pragmatic in what structure we use eg pastor/deacons; pastor, elders/deacons; pastor, servant leaders, ministry team leaders, etc.

3. Leadership Structures

- As Baptists we are pragmatic in what structure we use eg pastor/deacons; pastor, elders/deacons; pastor, servant leaders, ministry team leaders, etc.
- Clarity of responsibility, authority and accountability.

3. Leadership Structures (cont'd)

Leadership is:

“A relationship of influence – a transforming relationship in which the leader invests in the growth and development of the followers, empowering them to become what God has gifted them to be.”

Relational Leadership – Walter Wright pg 44

4. Unity in Diversity

Sources of unity:

- NSW/ACT Baptists
- Statement of Beliefs
- shared ministries

4. Unity in Diversity (cont'd)

Sources of diversity:

- size
- geography
- ethnicity
- programmes
- structures
- generations
- theology

4. Unity in Diversity (cont'd)

Sources of *theological* diversity:

- election
- sovereignty vs human free will
- creation
- role of women
- eschatology
- social justice/evangelism

5. Autonomy vs Interdependence

- To be Baptist is to live under the authority of Jesus. This calls for fellowship and mutual encouragement.

5. Autonomy vs Interdependence

- To be Baptist is to live under the authority of Jesus. This calls for fellowship and mutual encouragement.
- Mission Statement: The Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT join together to assist each other in the ministries of evangelism, compassion, fellowship, worship and teaching.

6. Expressing Biblical Purpose

- Worship
vital and nurturing
- Fellowship
inclusive of all
- Teaching
the Bible related to life
- Mission
focus beyond ourselves both local
and global

7. Other.....