



Constitution of Eastgate Christian Centre

Adopted 4.12.2024

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1. EASTGATE AND OUR BELIEFS

- 1.1. The name of the church is **Eastgate Christian Centre (“Eastgate”)**.
- 1.2. **Eastgate** is a Baptist Church: a community of people who believe in God’s saving and loving self-revelation as expressed in our **Statement of Faith**, shaped by our vision and mission and lived out in accordance with our values.
- 1.3. As a Baptist Church, we are defined and controlled by our core convictions as set out below; this is known as our **Statement of Faith**. There are other important truths in the Christian faith but these are those that we particularly commit to for unity:
 - 1.3.1. We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, given to us through God’s work in the lives of its writers (2 Timothy 3:16). It is authoritative, relevant, and powerful for all people at all times (Hebrews 4:12). It is fully trustworthy and serves as the first and final authority in every matter of what we believe and how we live. God’s Word is alive and active as it faithfully instructs, corrects, rebukes, and equips us so we can live fruitful lives that glorify Him (Psalm 119:105; Isaiah 40:8).
 - 1.3.2. We believe in one eternal God, who has revealed Himself to exist in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—without any compromise to His unity (Matthew 28:19). The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are co-equal and co-eternal, each fully sharing the same divine nature. God is holy, just, and full of love and mercy (1 John 4:8). He is the creator and sustainer of all things, the source of all light and life (Genesis 1:1; John 1:3). He has spoken through the prophets and ultimately revealed Himself in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2).
 - 1.3.3. We believe God created humanity, male and female, in His image, uniquely reflecting His nature and glory (Genesis 1:27). God made us for an intimate relationship with Him and for meaningful relationships with one another. Every person bears the inherent dignity and value of being made in God’s image (Psalm 8:4-5). As stewards of creation, human beings were entrusted with the responsibility of caring for the world, populating it, and managing its resources (Genesis 2:15). Through disobedience, humanity rejected God’s good rule, and as a result, we are justly judged by God, experiencing the devastating consequences of sin in our humanity, including death, and the disastrous brokenness of creation (Romans 5:12; 8:20-22).
 - 1.3.4. We believe God The Father, in His great love and mercy, enacted a plan of salvation through the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as revealed in the Scriptures and fulfilled in Jesus Christ—God the Son in human flesh: fully God and fully human (John 1:14). Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus took the penalty for our sins, offering Himself as the perfect substitutionary, atoning sacrifice (1 Peter 2:24). By His death on the cross, He fulfilled the Old Testament Law and reconciled all things to God (Colossians 1:20). Through His physical resurrection from the grave, He defeated death and secured eternal life for all who will trust in Him for salvation (Romans 6:9). Jesus ascended bodily to the Father and now reigns at the right hand of the Father and will return to judge the living and the dead, renewing all things in the New Creation (Acts 1:9-11).

- 1.3.5. We believe that God's gracious gift of salvation is received only through faith in Jesus Christ: trusting in His life, death, resurrection, and ascension as the means by which we are forgiven of our sins and reconciled to God (Ephesians 2:8-9). There is no other way to be saved or restored to a right relationship with God apart from faith in Jesus (John 14:6). Salvation is not earned by our works but is given by God, justly and eternally, according to Scripture, to all who believe in Jesus, thus forever securing, justifying, and redeeming His children (Romans 3:24-25).
- 1.3.6. We believe the Holy Spirit is God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son (2 Corinthians 3:17). The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin and brings eternal life to all who place their faith in Jesus Christ (John 16:8). He indwells believers, sanctifying and empowering them for service. In accordance with His Word, the Spirit imparts spiritual gifts, develops godly character, guides in truth, and leads us away from error (John 16:13). By His power, we are equipped to live holy lives, participate in God's mission, witness His supernatural works, including healing, miracles, and speaking in tongues, as well as attest to the other signs of His presence (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). He brings individuals to new life, joining each one to The Body of Christ, the universal church, and He unites the local and the global church in the Spirit's power to God's glory (Ephesians 4:4-6).
- 1.3.7. We believe that the church is the Body of Christ and the Family of God, a local expression of the global and eternal community of all who trust in Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27). Belonging to a local church, as an expression of the universal church, is essential for every believer (Hebrews 10:24-25). Each Church community is called to worship God, grow in faith, and make Jesus Christ known. Every believer is a vital part of this body, united to Him and one another by the Holy Spirit, and equipped to love, serve, and grow toward maturity in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4:15-16). As we gather regularly for worship, faithful teaching of Scripture, fellowship, and prayer, we are sent out to demonstrate God's love and power through acts of service, justice, and compassion (Matthew 28:18-20).
- 1.3.8. We believe in the personal, visible, and bodily return of Jesus Christ, who will come again to complete God's redemptive plan. At His return, He will judge the living and the dead, and all people will be resurrected and to face judgement (John 5:28-29, Heb 9:27). Those who have trusted in Jesus Christ will enter eternal life with Him in the New Creation, free from sin, suffering, and death (Revelation 21:1-5). Those who reject Him will face eternal separation from God (Matthew 25:46). At His return the New Creation will be established, the faithful will be comforted and vindicated, and He will be the ultimate victor over evil, His judgment over sin and righteousness will be final, just, and eternal (Revelation 20:10-15) when death, sin and the devil will be no more.
- 1.3.9. As a Baptist Church, we observe the following ordinances:
 - 1.3.9.(a) Baptism: The New Testament demonstrates that baptism by full immersion is for all who trust in Jesus Christ for salvation (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38). Baptism is undertaken after conversion as an act of loving obedience to Jesus Christ, publicly declaring the believer's union with Jesus Christ in His death, resurrection, and eternal life

(Romans 6:3-4). For those converted in childhood, baptism is undertaken once they personally understand its significance (Romans 10:9-10, Acts 8:36-37).

- 1.3.9.(b) Communion: The celebration of the Lord's Supper is a regular and essential part of our worship, observed at least once a month unless circumstances prevent it. This remembrance of the Lord's death, resurrection, and promised return is open to all who know Jesus Christ through faith (1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:42).

2. PURPOSE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1. The purpose of Eastgate is expressed in Eastgate's Vision/Whakakitenga Statement—in English(a) and in te reo Māori(b):

- 2.1.1.(a) **"Eastgate** is called to glorify God as a lighthouse Church—every person, and all of us together—being transformed in relationship with Jesus, impacting our local neighbourhoods and beyond."
- 2.1.1.(b) "Kei te karangatia a Eastgate ki te whakakororia i te Atua hei Hāhi Wharemarama: ko tātou katoa, ā, ko tēnā, ko tēnā o mātou, e whakahoungia ana e tō mātou whanaungatanga ki a Īhu, e whai pānga ana ki ō mātou hapori kāinga, me tua atu."

2.2. The Aims of Eastgate are expressed in our Mission/Te Ara Karanga Statement—in English(a) and in te reo Māori(b):

- 2.2.1.(a) **"Eastgate** is Reaching, Winning, Building, Sending fully devoted followers of Jesus. Living out our vision: we are REACHING people beyond our established connections, WINNING people to Christ through relevant evangelism and mission initiatives. Our teaching and life together are BUILDING people and communities centred on the transforming hope that Jesus brings. Demonstrating the power of God's Spirit as we partner with others, we are SENDING people to serve and lead in mission contexts locally and globally."
- 2.2.1.(b) "E whakatuturu ana i tō mātou Kitenga: kei te TORO atu mātou ki ngā tāngata i tua atu i ā mātou hononga kua whakaritea, e RIRO ana i ngā tāngata ki a te Karaiti mā ngā kaupapa rongopai me te mīhana e hāngai ana ki te ao hurihuri nei. Ko tā mātou whakaakoranga me tō mātou noho tahi, he WHAKAŪ i ngā tāngata me ngā hapori e aro ana ki te tūmanako whakaora a Īhu e mauria mai nei. Mā te whakaatu i te mana o te Wairua Tapu i a mātou e mahi tahi ana me ērā atu, kei te TUKU mātou i ngā tāngata ki te mahi, ki te ārahi i ngā kaupapa mīhana, i konei, i ngā rohe whānui hoki."

2.3. The objectives of Eastgate are to:

- 2.3.1. Meet regularly for worship, prayer, teaching, encouragement, and fellowship, in honouring God and bringing glory to Him.
- 2.3.2. Engage in the tasks of Christian mission, ministry and outreach, principally within New Zealand but also overseas.
- 2.3.3. Express God's love to the community through ministries of the Word, practical care and engaging in intentional evangelism.

- 2.3.4. Seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ by every means available, in accordance with Scripture, and to bring all into His church.

3. STRUCTURE

- 3.1. With Jesus Christ as the head of this church, **Eastgate** is governed by its members (“**Partners**”) in accordance with this Constitution and is affiliated with the Baptist Union of New Zealand (“**Baptist Union**”).
- 3.2. The governance of **Eastgate** Christian Centre follows a collaborative model, with the Elders, Senior Pastor, and Management Team working together to uphold **Eastgate’s** mission and values. The Elders provide spiritual oversight and guide **Eastgate’s** direction; the Senior Pastor leads day-to-day ministry and pastoral care; and the Management Team manages operational and financial responsibilities. Together, **Eastgate’s** leadership is accountable to the gathered **Partners**, ensuring compliance with New Zealand charitable law and fulfilling both spiritual and legal obligations in alignment with **Eastgate’s** mission and vision. **Eastgate’s** leadership consists of:
- 3.2.1. The Elders (5.1).
- 3.2.2. The Senior Pastor (Clause 5.2) with the pastoral staff.
- 3.2.3. The Management Team (Clause 5.6).
- 3.2.4. Ministry Leaders (Clause 5.7).
- 3.3. **Eastgate** may establish charitable trusts or companies to support its vision, mission, and values. Elders, elected by the **Partners**, along with the Senior Pastor, will serve as trustees or directors during their term, provided they meet all legal and fiduciary responsibilities and requirements independently of their Church roles. To ensure continuity, transitional trustees or directors who meet the same legal and fiduciary requirements may be appointed from **Eastgate Partners** for up to 6 months or until newly elected Elders assume these positions. All activities will comply with New Zealand charitable purposes and any relevant trust deeds or company constitutions.
- 3.4. All serving as Trustees of **Eastgate**, or any other trust or companies established by **Eastgate**, must disclose any conflicts of interest related to their roles as trustees or directors. Such conflicts will be managed according to **Eastgate’s** policies to ensure integrity and alignment with New Zealand charitable law.

4. PARTNERS (MEMBERS)

- 4.1. Any person who confesses faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, has been baptised as a believer, demonstrates evidence of following Christ in the newness of life, and is in full agreement with **Eastgate’s Statement of Faith** (Clause 1.3), affirming the vision and values (Appendix), and is willing to uphold the commitments outlined in the **Partners’ Commitment** (see appendix), may apply to become a **Partner**.
- 4.1.1. Any believer who qualifies in all aspects except for baptism by immersion (due to infirmity) may also apply for Partnership.
- 4.2. The Elders may accept an application from an individual baptised in a different tradition if they are persuaded that the individual’s baptism and any subsequent confirmation of faith are genuine expressions of personal belief in Jesus Christ and that the individual meets all other requirements of Clause 4.1.
- 4.3. Applicants may be required to participate in a Partnership course or process, as

determined by **Eastgate** Elders. The Elders will decide the admission mechanism and may admit or decline an applicant based on the criteria in Clauses 4.1 and/or 4.2. The Elders' decision will be final concerning these matters.

- 4.4. A roll of Partnership, detailing **Partners** accepted as above, shall be maintained in the **Eastgate** database and reviewed no less than annually by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Elders (Clause 4.6).

4.5. Transfer of Membership to Partnership at Eastgate

A person who has been a member of another **Baptist Union** Church may apply to become a **Partner** at **Eastgate**. This may occur upon receipt of a letter of commendation and transfer from the previous Church, provided that all other conditions of becoming a **Partner** are met.

4.6. Ending Partnership

- 4.6.1. **Partners** may resign from Partnership by giving written notice to the Elders, a Pastor, or **Eastgate** Office. The Senior Pastor will enact this and notify the Elders in each instance.
- 4.6.2. If a **Partner** has not attended a worship service or otherwise participated in the life of **Eastgate** for 8 months or more, the Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Elders, may remove them from the Partnership roll after making reasonable attempts to contact the person concerned.
- 4.6.3. A **Partner** may be removed from Partnership by unanimous agreement of the Elders, after due process (guided by Matthew 18:15-17), for serious moral misconduct, a deliberate departure from **Eastgate's Statement of Faith**, or intentional undermining of **Eastgate's** mission, vision, aims, or unity.

4.7. Resolution of differences, dealing with allegations of misconduct and Church discipline

- 4.7.1. In cases of division or tension between **Partners** and/or attendees, where sin disrupts the unity, integrity or relational harmony of **Eastgate**, Jesus Christ's teaching in Matthew 18:15-17 will be followed in seeking resolution and restoration of the unity of the Christian community.
- 4.7.2. If the Elders receive an allegation of conduct inconsistent with Scripture, they may arrange to investigate the allegation in proportion to the significance of the concerns raised.
- 4.7.2.(a) If the allegation is found to have no substance, the Elders will dismiss the matter, with no further action taken. The individuals involved will be informed, and any necessary steps will be taken to support their good standing within the **Eastgate** community.
- 4.7.2.(b) If the allegation is substantiated, the Elders will take appropriate action to seek repentance, restoration, and reconciliation.
- 4.7.2.(c) If an allegation is found to be knowingly false or malicious, the Elders will address this misconduct with the individual who raised it, seeking to correct error and restore integrity in line with the scope and focus of Clauses under 4.7. of this constitution.
- 4.7.2.(d) Where repentance and reconciliation do not occur, the Elders may

take further action, either privately or publicly, as the situation requires.

- 4.7.3. The Senior Pastor and Elders are empowered in leadership and service to take the steps above in advising, admonishing, suspending, or expelling any **Partner** or congregant for dangerous, grievous, or unrepentant behaviour or negative and damaging attitudes toward others. Wherever possible, the Elders will adhere to principles of care and confidentiality consistent with biblical leadership during and after their term in Eldership.
- 4.7.4. In the event that an individual is removed as a **Partner** under Clause 4.6.2 or 4.7.3, the person concerned has the right to request a review of the decision no later than 30 days after receiving written notice of their removal. The following process shall then apply:
 - 4.7.4.(a) The person must submit in writing to the Elders stating the reasons for the Elders' reconsideration of the decision and detailing any relevant supporting information not already considered.
 - 4.7.4.(b) The Elders will review the new information with a senior member of the pastoral staff who is able to act as an independent representative ensuring a full and fair process has been conducted.
 - 4.7.4.(c) The Elders will then meet with the person to discuss the review. This meeting should occur no later than 30 days after receiving the written request for review.
 - 4.7.4.(d) After due consideration the Elders will write to the person, either upholding the decision to remove them or reinstating them as a **Partner**. The Elders' decision is final and executory.

5. LEADERSHIP

5.1. Elders

5.1.1. The Eldership Team

- 5.1.1.(a) The Eldership team provides governance to **Eastgate** by ensuring that it stays true to the gospel of Jesus Christ according to the beliefs, vision, mission, values and other terms set out in this Constitution.
- 5.1.1.(b) The Eldership Team shall normally consist of 6-8 Elders. It is desirable that at any one time, there be a minimum of four elected Elders.
- 5.1.1.(c) The Senior Pastor shall serve as an Elder, in addition to those elected to serve in Eldership as above, for the duration of their call to serve **Eastgate**.
- 5.1.1.(d) The Senior Pastor and the elected Elders will serve as **Eastgate's** legal officers and will be enrolled as such soon after the **Partners'** meeting at which they are appointed.

5.1.2. Eldership Qualification and Appointment

- 5.1.2.(a) Elders must be established **Partners**, who have been baptised as believers, men or women of good character who are in good standing with God, the **Eastgate** community, and the wider community. They

should have leadership experience and demonstrate the biblical qualifications of character outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

- 5.1.2.(b) Elders must be in full agreement with **Eastgate's Statement of Faith** and vision, mission and values.
- 5.1.2.(c) **Partners** may make suggestions of eligible candidates for consideration by the Elders.
- 5.1.2.(d) The Elders bring nominations for Eldership by presenting the names of eligible candidates to **Eastgate Partners** no less than 14 days before a **Partners'** meeting where Eldership appointment is on the agenda.
- 5.1.2.(e) All Eldership appointments will be conducted by secret ballot.
- 5.1.2.(f) A nominated candidate is appointed when an **Overwhelming Majority** of **Eastgate Partners** present at that meeting affirm their appointment.
- 5.1.2.(g) Elders are appointed to serve two-year terms and are eligible for re-election for up to three consecutive terms. After that limit is reached, a one-year break is required before they are eligible to stand again.

5.1.3. Eldership Appointments by Cooption

- 5.1.3.(a) Between AGMs, vacancies in the Eldership may be filled by co-option, with a unanimous agreement of the Elders appointing individuals who otherwise would meet the requirements for Eldership.
- 5.1.3.(b) In any one year, no more than 3 Elders, or no more than 40% of the current Elders, whichever is greater, may be co-opted to serve.
- 5.1.3.(c) Any co-opted Elder shall be appointed for a term up to and including the date of the next Annual General Meeting, at which time the co-opted Elder may be nominated for election as per Clauses under 5.1.2. No co-opted Elder may remain in their position beyond the AGM unless formally elected by the **Partners** at that meeting.
- 5.1.3.(d) Coopted Elders shall not carry a vote during a binding decision made by the Elders.

5.1.4. Elders Responsibilities

- 5.1.4.(a) The Elders are entrusted with the spiritual oversight of **Eastgate**. Their primary responsibilities before God include providing direction for **Eastgate's** mission and vision, overseeing doctrinal faithfulness, and maintaining pastoral support and accountability for the Senior Pastor. In fulfilling these roles, the Elders ensure alignment with both spiritual and legal obligations as overseers and trustees under New Zealand charitable law.
- 5.1.4.(b) An Elder will be required to step down from Eldership by the unanimous agreement of the other Elders if that Elder is no longer able to meet the qualifications or obligations of Eldership in character, faith and/or responsibility and/or is subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in Clauses 4.7.

5.1.5. Meetings

- 5.1.5.(a) The Elders will appoint a chairperson from among the elected Elders. The chairperson will chair the Elders' meetings and liaise with the Senior Pastor.
- 5.1.5.(b) The Elders will meet at least monthly, except where explicitly agreed to provide a recess over the summer period.
- 5.1.5.(c) The quorum for an Elders meeting shall be 60% of the elected Elders.

5.2. Senior Pastor

5.2.1. The Role of the Senior Pastor

- 5.2.1.(a) The Senior Pastor is called to serve as the primary pastor, servant leader, and shepherd of **Eastgate** Christian Centre, leading with a vision rooted in Scripture, prayer, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- 5.2.1.(b) In partnership with the Elders, the Senior Pastor provides spiritual leadership and direction for **Eastgate**, ensuring **Eastgate's Partners** and regular attendees receive a strong biblical foundation through faithful preaching and teaching.
- 5.2.1.(c) The Senior Pastor is to serve in a way that fosters a culture of faithfulness, sacrifice, compassion, and mission by encouraging and empowering the congregation to grow in faith, discipleship, and discernment of God's will through active service. They are required to be a registered pastoral leader with the **Baptist Union**.
- 5.2.1.(d) The Senior Pastor oversees all aspects of Church life—spiritual, pastoral, operational, and strategic—to fulfil **Eastgate's** mission, values, and vision, alongside the Elders, in such a way as is in keeping with NZ charitable law:
 - 5.2.1.(d)(i) By providing spiritual leadership.
 - 5.2.1.(d)(ii) Through caring for and shepherding **Eastgate** pastors and staff team collaboratively pursuing **Eastgate's** mission and vision: overseeing their well-being, professional development, and ministry effectiveness.
 - 5.2.1.(d)(iii) By serving as the ex-officio Chair of all **Eastgate** organisations or committees, with the exception of Eldership, with the authority to delegate chairing responsibilities as needed to support **Eastgate's** mission and organisational effectiveness.
- 5.2.1.(e) The details of the Senior Pastor's role and responsibilities are outlined in an annually reviewed Role Description and Terms of Call or Individual Employment Agreement, ensuring alignment with **Eastgate's** evolving needs and the Senior Pastor's ongoing pastoral calling.

5.2.2. Senior Pastor Vacancy

- 5.2.2.(a) When a Senior Pastor vacancy occurs, the Elders may appoint an Interim Senior Pastor or Transitional Pastor who will temporarily

serve **Eastgate** under the direction and support of the Elders.

- 5.2.2.(a)(i) The Pastor appointed to serve in this Interim or Transitional role must agree wholeheartedly with the **Statement of Faith** and **Eastgate's** vision, mission, and values and not be named on the **Baptist Union** Censure List.
- 5.2.2.(b) After no more than 30 days of receiving notice of the end of a Senior Pastor's call, the Elders will appoint a Pastoral Search Committee of around 6-8 **Partners** to act in the best interests of **Eastgate** and lead the process of recruiting and discerning a candidate to serve as the next Senior Pastor.
- 5.2.2.(c) The Pastoral Search Committee, in consultation with the Elders, shall present one nominee for the position of Senior Pastor at a meeting of **Eastgate Partners** convened for that purpose. The nominee must wholeheartedly agree with **Eastgate's Statement of Faith**, vision, mission, and values, and must not be listed on the **Baptist Union** Censure List (which would exclude them from consideration).
- 5.2.2.(d) A meeting of **Partners** to appoint a Senior Pastor requires at least 21 days' formal notice in writing, sent electronically or by post, to all **Partners** and includes spoken notices at all worship gatherings for the three Sundays before the meeting. If the meeting is held on a Sunday, the day of the meeting itself does not count towards these three Sundays.
 - 5.2.2.(d)(i) The written notice of the meeting must include the candidate's name and details of their life, faith and qualification for the role, outlining the reasons for presenting them as a suitable candidate, and all other relevant information to assist the **Partners** in discerning God's will in this matter.
- 5.2.2.(e) A call to serve as Senior Pastor shall be issued only when a **Super Majority** of **Partners** at the meeting called for that purpose affirm the call.
- 5.2.2.(f) The process of discerning and affirming the call must be sealed by a secret ballot of those **Partners** gathering to discern the call.
- 5.2.2.(g) The Senior Pastor shall be appointed on an agreed Terms of Call, which is a spiritual relationship of service and does not imply, intend or require a legal employment relationship between **Eastgate** and the individual unless this is otherwise explicitly agreed in writing, by signing an Individual Employment Agreement, at the appointee's request, prior to the appointment commencing.
- 5.2.2.(h) The Senior Pastor shall be provided with a stipend, housing allowance, and other allowances set in reference to the **Baptist Union's** recommendations and as agreed within **Eastgate's** budget.

5.2.3. Ending the Service of a Senior Pastor

- 5.2.3.(a) The conclusion or termination of the Senior Pastor shall be conducted in accordance with the Terms of the Call or the Individual Employment Agreement.
 - 5.2.3.(a)(i) In extraordinary circumstances, the Elders may call a **Partners'** meeting to end the term of service of a Senior Pastor by a properly constituted **Partners'** meeting called for this purpose.
 - 5.2.3.(a)(ii) Meetings called for this purpose require at least 14 days and no less than two Sundays' notice as specified in clause 5.2.2(d).
 - 5.2.3.(a)(iii) Any resolution to terminate the pastorate requires an **Enhanced Majority** of votes cast by secret ballot at a meeting of **Partners** called for that purpose.
- 5.2.3.(b) Any dispute arising as the Senior Pastor approaches the conclusion of their service may be referred to an independent party for resolution by mediation, arbitration or such alternative dispute resolution process that is mutually agreed upon as appropriate.
 - 5.2.3.(b)(i) If agreement is not possible on the appointment of a mediator or arbitrator, either party can request that the Assembly Council of the **Baptist Union** appoint an independent party to act in this role.
 - 5.2.3.(b)(ii) Any mediator or arbitrator appointed by the above processes will determine, as part of their work, the distribution of costs for their services and their decisions and recommendations will be binding on all parties.

5.3. Other Pastoral Staff

- 5.3.1. The Senior Pastor, after due process, including checking the names of candidates against the **Baptist Union** Censure List, shall bring nominations for Pastoral Staff positions to the Elders for approval in accordance with the approved budget.
 - 5.3.1.(a) Pastoral Staff may be appointed on a Terms of Call or Individual Employment Agreements as is deemed most appropriate.
 - 5.3.1.(b) The outline of the role of each of the Pastoral Staff will include the terms and conditions offered and arrangements for terminating the ministry in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and New Zealand employment law as it applies.
 - 5.3.1.(c) Pastoral Staff operate under the direction of the Senior Pastor and must be registered as pastoral leaders with the **Baptist Union**.
 - 5.3.1.(d) The Senior Pastor is responsible to the Elders, Management Team, and ultimately to **Eastgate Partners**, for ensuring that all Church staff are treated with fairness and dignity at all times, particularly upon the conclusion of their service.

5.4. Dealing with Pastoral Serious Misconduct

- 5.4.1. **Eastgate** acknowledges its relational obligations to the **Baptist Union** of New Zealand concerning any Serious Misconduct Process or subsequent procedures established for registered pastoral leaders. Anyone serving as a Pastor at **Eastgate** must be listed on the Official Register maintained by the **Baptist Union**. **Eastgate** will report any allegations or instances of Serious Misconduct involving Pastors and fully comply with all processes and procedures implemented by the Union, including any updates to these procedures over time. This ensures alignment with the Union's requirements and upholds the integrity and accountability of **Eastgate's** Leadership.

5.5. Church Staff Team (non-pastoral)

- 5.5.1. The Senior Pastor will, in consultation with the Elders and Church senior staff, make appointments to the staff team to serve **Eastgate's** vision and mission as needed, in accordance with strategic priorities and budgetary approval.
- 5.5.2. Church staff may be appointed as employees or contractors, as is deemed best for each role.
- 5.5.3. All employees will be treated with the utmost respect and care as is fitting for **Eastgate's** conduct and within the boundaries of the law. This will be set out in the terms of each employment agreement, including, but not limited to, detailing the procedures for ending employment and dealing with disputes.

5.6. Eastgate's Treasurer and Management Team

- 5.6.1. The Elders will appoint a Treasurer: a person who is a **Partner**, godly and above reproach in belief and character, who is willing to serve in this role and skilled in matters of finance.
- 5.6.1.(a) The Treasurer will provide support to the **Eastgate** Senior Pastor, staff and Management Team, advising on **Eastgate's** overall financial health, aiming to provide information, guidance and empowerment in making wise decisions.
- 5.6.1.(b) **Partners** will affirm the Treasurer each year at the AGM through a secret ballot, requiring a **Simple Majority** of votes cast, excluding abstentions from the total count. The Treasurer will be appointed to serve a five-year term and may serve up to three consecutive terms before taking a one-year break, after which they are eligible to serve again.
- 5.6.1.(c) If the Treasurer is not affirmed in this ballot, the Elders will facilitate an orderly handover and appoint a new Treasurer within six weeks following the AGM.
- 5.6.1.(d) The Treasurer will provide no less than monthly financial reports, analysis and advice to the Management Team, and assist with annual budgets regulatory or annual reports and ensure reports to Elders and **Partners** are timely and accurate.
- 5.6.2. The Management Team is responsible to the Elders for **Eastgate's** operational, financial, and legal functions. This team supports the Senior Pastor and Elders by managing property, budgets, business operations, regulatory compliance

and other areas as determined by the Elders from time to time. While the Senior Pastor and Elders oversee **Eastgate's** spiritual direction and mission, the Management Team, under the Elder's authority, ensures that **Eastgate's** operations align with its mission, values, and New Zealand charitable law. The Management Team operates within the budgetary and policy framework set by the Elders and **Partners**.

- 5.6.2.(a) The Management Team shall consist of the Senior Pastor, the Treasurer, and senior Church staff responsible for administering **Eastgate's** finances and properties as well as an appointed minute taker to record meetings and outcomes.
- 5.6.2.(b) The Elders will also appoint additional **Partners** who are of good character, spiritually mature, and gifted in finance, business, and strategic oversight to serve on the Management Team.
- 5.6.2.(c) The composition of the Management Team will be communicated in preparation for the **Eastgate** AGM. The **Partners** will be invited to affirm the individuals on the Management Team by **Simple Majority** through a secret ballot. If any individual is not affirmed in this ballot their term on Management Team comes to an immediate end.
- 5.6.2.(d) The Management Team will meet at least monthly, except where explicitly agreed to provide a recess over the summer period.
- 5.6.2.(e) Other than the Treasurer, those serving on the Management Team serve for a three-year term. A maximum of three terms may be served on the Management Team before individuals must rest from this role for a year before being eligible to serve again.
- 5.6.3. The role of individuals who serve as Treasurer or on the Management Team may be suspended or concluded as a result of a process detailed in clauses 4.6 or 4.7, which leads to the Elders making a decision to end their period in service.

5.7. Ministry Leaders

- 5.7.1. The Senior Pastor and Elders shall determine the ministry areas of **Eastgate** in line with the vision, mission, values and **Statement of Faith**.
- 5.7.2. The Senior Pastor, in collaboration with other pastors and senior staff, may appoint **Partners** to be Ministry Leaders. These leaders (Church staff or volunteers) will lead specific ministry areas. Appointments of leaders will be made in cooperation with the Elders.
- 5.7.3. A Ministry Leader, with the agreement of the pastoral staff, may recruit others who are committed to **Eastgate**, to form a ministry team to assist them in their ministry area. Where a ministry area cannot be achieved by a volunteer but requires the appointment of a paid staff worker, refer to Clauses 5.3 or 5.4.
- 5.7.4. The Senior Pastor, in agreement with the Elders, may end the term of service of a ministry leader, where it is deemed the most appropriate course of action.

6. PARTNERS' MEETINGS

6.1. Purpose of All Partners' Meetings

- 6.1.1. The purpose of any **Partners'** meetings shall be to discern together the mind of Christ, in the wisdom of the Spirit, to the Glory of God the Father, for matters affecting the life and work of **Eastgate** and its mission.
- 6.1.2. Ordinary notice of any **Partners'** meeting is given at least 14 days' notice sent in writing to **Partners** and announced in the weekly Church worship service for at least two Sundays prior to the **Partners'** meeting (If the meeting is to be held on a Sunday that day does not qualify as sufficient notice).
- 6.1.3. All discernment and binding decisions requiring a vote will typically be conducted by a show of hands and require a **Simple Majority** unless specified otherwise in this Constitution.
- 6.1.4. A request for a secret ballot at any **Partners'** meeting will be enacted if affirmed by at least 15% of the **Partners** present, determined by a show of hands.

6.2. Attendance and Participation

- 6.2.1. **Partners** and regular congregants can attend and speak at any **Partners'** meeting, but only **Partners** may vote in a discernment process.
 - 6.2.1.(i) Any **Partner** who is not at least 16 years old at the time of a **Partners'** meeting may not cast a vote during the meeting's discernment processes but has no other limitations on their participation in the meeting except that set out in Clause 6.2.2.
 - 6.2.1.(ii) There shall be no right to proxy or in-absentia voting, **Partners'** meetings are called to discern the mind of Christ by those gathering for that purpose.
 - 6.2.1.(iii) The Elders may, on a case-by-case basis, grant dispensation for individuals unable to physically attend a **Partners'** meeting due to infirmity or other compelling circumstances, allowing them to participate electronically in discussion and discernment processes.
- 6.2.2. For matters of particular moral or spiritual sensitivity, **Partners'** meetings (in part or whole) will be open only to **Partners** eligible to vote in the discernment process, as outlined in Clause 6.8.1(i). In these circumstances, the Chair may ask non-Partners and **Partners** under 16 years old to leave.

6.3. Quorum, Discernment and Decisions by Voting

- 6.3.1. Attendance of 30% of the current **Partners** shall be the quorum for any **Partners'** meeting where binding decisions are to be made.
- 6.3.2. For the avoidance of doubt, in discernment processes when formal votes are used or required, only the votes of **Partners** are binding:
 - 6.3.2.(a) A **Simple Majority** shall be established when more votes are cast for one option than another. Abstentions are noted but do not count in calculating **Simple Majority**.

- 6.3.2.(b) An **Enhanced Majority** shall be established when at least fifty-five percent (55%) of the votes cast are in favour of a decision. Abstentions are noted but do not count in calculating the **Enhanced Majority**.
- 6.3.2.(c) An **Overwhelming Majority** is achieved when at least seventy-five percent (75%) of **Partners** present vote to affirm a decision. Abstentions and non-voting **Partners** in attendance are recorded and included in the total count for determining the required percentage.
- 6.3.2.(d) A **Super Majority** is achieved when at least eighty percent (80%) of **Partners** present vote to affirm a decision. Abstentions and non-voting **Partners** in attendance are recorded and included in the total count for determining the required percentage.
- 6.3.2.(e) The use of the above-defined voting thresholds is specified in the respective clauses of this Constitution. For other decision-making processes not explicitly defined within this Constitution, the Elders may determine and apply appropriate voting thresholds based on the significance and impact of the decision.

6.4. Chairperson

- 6.4.1. The Senior Pastor, with the Elders, will appoint a Chair for each **Partners'** meeting, or under provisions of 5.2.1(d)(iii) the Senior Pastor will Chair the **Partners'** meeting.

6.5. The following matters can only be decided by a **Partners'** meeting:

- 6.5.1. Calling a Senior Pastor. (Clause 5.2.2.(c).)
- 6.5.2. Appointment of Elders. (Clause 5.1.2.(d).)
- 6.5.3. Affirmation of Management Team and Church Treasurer. (Clause 5.6.1.(b).)
- 6.5.4. Accepting the Annual Report and Annual Financial Reports of **Eastgate**, and the annual reports of any trusts or companies operated or owned by **Eastgate**.
- 6.5.5. Approval of **Eastgate's** operational and mission budgets.
- 6.5.6. Authorising the purchase or sale of **Eastgate**, or **Eastgate Trust**, properties.
- 6.5.7. Establishing a charitable trust or charitable company. (Clause 3.3).
- 6.5.8. Making changes to this Constitution. (Clauses 8.1. - 8.4., Appendices 01.).

6.6. General Meetings ("Partners' Meeting")

- 6.6.1. The Elders may call a general meeting of **Eastgate Partners** to consider matters for discernment, discussion, and decision-making as needed.
- 6.6.2. A general meeting must be held to consider and approve **Eastgate** budgets for the financial year beginning 1 September no later than 14 October of that same year.

6.7. Eastgate Annual General Meeting ("AGM")

- 6.7.1. The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is to review **Eastgate's** past year (Clause 6.6.2.) of ministry, mission and service. The AGM gives space to consider the past financial year and prayerfully discern the mind of Christ

together, providing an annual review of the role of governance structures according to the vision, mission, values, and legal obligations of **Eastgate**.

- 6.7.2. **Eastgate's** financial year shall begin on 1st September in one year and end on 31st August the following year. The AGM shall be held on or before 9 Dec (100 days after the end of the financial year).
- 6.7.3. The AGM ensures that **Partners** remain engaged in the governance of **Eastgate** and that decisions are made with broad participation and discernment. The AGM will include:
 - 6.7.3.(a) Presenting and adoption of the Annual and Financial Reports, ensuring transparency and accountability in the stewardship of **Eastgate's** resources.
 - 6.7.3.(b) Appointing Elders and affirming the Treasurer and Management Team and so providing effective support and accountability for those given leadership and governance responsibilities.
 - 6.7.3.(c) Consider **Eastgate's** vision and strategic ministry plan for the coming year, toward affirming the commitments to our direction and priorities.
 - 6.7.3.(d) Address any other matters requiring a discernment, decision or discussion, including legal or compliance issues.
 - 6.7.3.(e) Special General Meetings ("SGM").
- 6.7.4. The Elders, on receipt of a request, signed by at least 15% of **Eastgate Partners** detailing the purpose and agenda of a **Partners'** meeting, shall call a Special General Meeting of **Eastgate Partners** within 21 days of the request being received. Ordinary notice of the meeting shall be given (see 6.1.1) except where otherwise required by the purpose of the meeting.

6.8. Congregational Division

- 6.8.1. Should a dispute in **Eastgate** arise causing a serious division and remain unresolved, the Elders, on receipt of a request signed by at least 25% of **Eastgate Partners**, shall apply to the Assembly Council of the **Baptist Union** for advice and assistance.

6.9. Baptist Union National Leader

- 6.9.1. Under exceptional circumstances and in the context of a breakdown of the relationship between the **Partners**, any of the Elders, Senior Pastor, other Pastoral Staff, Management Team, Treasurer and/or other leaders or staff, including but not limited to financial irresponsibility, moral lapse, or doctrinal desertion of **Eastgate's Statement of Faith**, the National Leader of the **Baptist Union** as a matter of last resort may call a meeting of **Partners** for the purpose of dispute resolution. Subject to the conditions above, the National Leader, or their appointed independent representative from within the **Baptist Union**, will chair such a meeting under the conditions of Clause 6 and its subclauses.

7. DECLARATION OF TRUST

- 7.1. Any land or property identified by **Eastgate** as a Church worship centre shall be vested in the **Baptist Union** as Trustee, which shall hold them for and on behalf of

Eastgate. **Eastgate** and the **Baptist Union** shall deal with such property in accordance with the trusts declared in the **Baptist Union** Incorporation Act 1923.

- 7.2. All other land or properties owned by **Eastgate** shall be vested in the **Eastgate** Christian Centre Charitable Trust in accordance with the Objects of the Trust Deed of Dec 2019.

8. ALTERATIONS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

- 8.1. Any recommended alteration to the Constitution shall be sent to **Eastgate Partners** no less than 28 days prior to the **Partners'** meeting, where the changes are to be considered.
- 8.2. Meetings for this purpose will be announced no less than three Sundays prior to the meeting being held.
- 8.3. Changes to the Constitution can only be enacted at a fully quorate **Partners'** meeting. Any additions or amendments to this Constitution require the affirmation of an **Overwhelming Majority** of the **Partners** voting at the meeting.
- 8.4. Unless **Eastgate** agrees to forgo its charitable status and income tax exemption, no alteration shall be made to this Constitution which would in any way detract from the exclusively charitable nature of **Eastgate** and, in particular, shall not alter the provisions of Clauses 9 and 10 of this Constitution.

9. NO PECUNIARY PROFIT FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL

- 9.1. No decision of **Eastgate** or its leadership shall be made which would allow **Partners** to receive any private pecuniary profit provided that:
- 9.1.1. A **Partner** may receive reimbursement for all expenses properly incurred in connection with the affairs of **Eastgate**;
- 9.1.2. **Eastgate** may pay reasonable and proper remuneration to any officer, pastor or employee of **Eastgate** in return for services actually rendered to **Eastgate**;
- 9.1.3. Any **Partner** of **Eastgate** may be paid for all usual professional business or trade charges for services rendered, time expended, and all acts done by that **Partner** or by any firm or entity of which **Eastgate Partner** is an employee, partner or associate, in connection with the affairs of **Eastgate**;
- 9.1.4. Any Church **Partner** may retain any remuneration properly payable to them by any company or undertaking with which they may in any way be concerned or involved for which they have acted in any capacity whatever notwithstanding their connection with that company or undertaking is in any way attributable to their connection with **Eastgate**;
- 9.1.5. Nothing shall prevent **Eastgate** from making payments to any individual (whether a **Partner** or not) in fulfilling any of the purposes expressed in clause 2 hereof.
- 9.2. **Partners** or leaders of **Eastgate**, in determining all reimbursements, remuneration and charges payable in this clause, shall ensure that the restrictions imposed by clause 9.3 are strictly observed.
- 9.3. Notwithstanding anything contained or implied in this Constitution, no **Partner**, or any person associated with a **Partner**, shall participate in or materially influence any

decision made by **Eastgate** in regarding payment of any income benefit of advantage whatsoever to (or on behalf of) that **Partner** or associated person.

10. WINDING UP PROVISIONS

- 10.1. Subject to clauses 17, 18 and 19 of the Sixth Schedule to the **Baptist Union** Incorporation Act, if **Eastgate Partners** resolve at a properly constituted meeting of **Eastgate** adopted by an **Overwhelming Majority** of **Eastgate Partners** present at such a Church meeting that **Eastgate** should be wound up then the net proceeds arising from such winding up shall be applied in accordance with the provisions of the **Baptist Union** Incorporation Act 1923, with the prior approval of the **Baptist Union** of New Zealand, to such religious charitable purposes within New Zealand as **Eastgate Partners** may determine or in default of such determination as may be determined by a Judge of the High Court of New Zealand on application by **Eastgate Partners**, and such proceeds shall not be paid or distributed amongst **Eastgate Partners** or attendees of **Eastgate**.

APPENDICES

The following appendices, while part of our constitution, are distinct from Clauses 1-10 and their subclauses. The content of the appendices may be amended provided:

- Any meeting called to change the Appendices meets the requirements of Ordinary notification (Clause 6.1.2).
- The Elders detail any proposed changes to the appendices to the Partners in writing no later than 7 days before any properly constituted Partners' meeting.
- Proposed changes to the appendices do not alter, control, or interpret the clauses of the main Constitution in a manner that would necessitate substantive changes requiring a higher threshold of agreement.
- Amendments to the appendices shall be adopted by a Simple Majority of those Partners gathered.

A. THE VALUES OF EASTGATE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

Our Values as a Church demonstrate that it is not simply what we believe but how we live out our beliefs that bear testimony to our hope in Jesus. This is demonstrated in:

- (A)1. Our commitment to honouring Jesus as Lord in everything we do and how we do it unites us as a community and affirms, with integrity, the dignity and value of each person.

A.1.1. Whakapono ki a Īhu (in English: Commitment to honouring Jesus).

- (A)2. Our love for God's Word shapes our corporate worship, guides our decision-making as we pursue opportunities, and grants us wisdom as we faithfully steward resources.

A.2.1. Aroha ki te Kupu Io (in English: love for God's Word).

- (A)3. Our desire to know God intimately moves us to express our dependence on His Holy Spirit through prayer and worship, serving in His strength with enthusiasm and joy as we seek His guidance.

A.3.1. Hiahia mō te Atua (in English: desire to know God).

- (A)4. Our hope in eternity is reflected in how we celebrate cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity, ensuring that every person receives a genuine welcome within a growing biblical pattern of unity.

A.4.1. Tūmanako i te ora tonutanga (in English: hope in eternity).

- (A)5. Our confidence in God's plan compels us to live as a family, sharing the joys and sorrows of life together. We value belonging across all ages and backgrounds, united in Christ, encouraging everyone to participate actively in Church life.

A.5.1. Māia ki te mahere a te Atua (in English: confidence in God's plan).

- (A)6. Our passion for making Christ known is evident as we prioritise reaching those who are far and near. The good news of Jesus is for all people, in every place and at all times, so we give, pray, act, partner with others, and go to make Him known.

A.6.1. Ngākau nui ki te whakaatu i a Karaiti (in English: passion for making Christ known).

B. THE COMMITMENTS OF PARTNERSHIP

PARTNER'S COMMITMENT TO THE CHURCH:

I will protect the unity of my Church

In prayer and in faithful attendance I will promote, preserve and protect the God-given unity of Eastgate as my Church family:

- I choose to act and speak in love toward other Partners.
- I refuse to gossip but will build people up with my words.
- I will honour those called and appointed to leadership by praying for them and taking up my part in discerning the way ahead.

I will do my bit in the building up of my Church

In faithfulness and with integrity I will care for the whole of my Church family:

- I will pray regularly for my Church to grow in love and good deeds, that God will add to our number of those who are being saved.
- I will seek opportunities to invite people to attend Church services and events.
- I will proactively extend a warm welcome to those around me at Church gatherings and open my home as a practice of hospitality.

I will serve in the ministry of my Church

I will seek to honour God in using the gifts, time, talents and resources He has given me:

- I will identify ways in which God has gifted me to serve Him within my Church family.
- I will commit to take seriously the teaching and encouragement of my pastors and leaders.
- I will encourage the good that I see and seek to build up those around me in their gifts and skills.

I will support the testimony of my Church

In belonging to Eastgate I will strengthen our life together with my presence, prayer, financial generosity and diligent attention to our common good.

- I will seek to attend Church as a matter of priority over personal convenience—God has called us together as His family and I will order my priorities accordingly.
- I will, with God's grace, live a life that will not compromise the witness of my Church—guarding my tongue, avoiding quarrels over needless controversies, loving God's word and being gentle and respectful as I speak with non-believers.
- I will give financially as God commands and enables me to do, according to faith and in sacrificial faithfulness.
- I will participate in Eastgate Partner meetings and other appropriate areas in submission to God to discern God's will for our Church.

CHURCH'S COMMITMENT TO THE PARTNERS:

The partnership is a two-way covenant. As a Church family, Eastgate Partners express the following commitments to each other.

- We are being transformed by Jesus together and so we commit to value you, honour you, serve you, and support you as part of our Church whānau.
- We value you: your presence, gifts, skills, and contributions are important to us. As a Church whānau your joys and sorrows become our own. We will stand with you, celebrate alongside you and mourn with you in the different seasons of life.
- Grounded in the teachings of Scripture, we commit to walking alongside you in your faith journey. We will encourage you to actively participate in the life of our Church toward a deepening sense of ownership and belonging.
- We will prioritise your growth in the Lord, providing opportunities through worship, study, fellowship, and service. We will also lovingly encourage you, hold you accountable, and support you in times of struggle.
- We will value, respect and celebrate the diverse cultural backgrounds within our Church whānau, enriching our community.
- We will love you in prayer and practical service, equipping you to share the good news of Jesus with others and extending our community beyond Eastgate walls in local initiatives and international partnerships.