



**hope**

Community church **Baldivis**

## Ministry and Membership

8 July 2014

Hope Community church Baldivis is  
“A member of the Christian Reformed churches of Australia”.

**HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH’S VISION AND MISSION.**

**Vision Statement** – *“A church transformed by the gospel,  
serving one another  
and our community with Christ’s love”*

**Mission Statement** – *Equip the church to Reach seekers and Grow  
people to maturity in Christ.*

Hope CCB is a new church community that has been planted by Gateway Community church in Cockburn. We believe God has called us to serve the growing community of Baldivis.

There are three elements to our vision.

**a) We desire to be a church that is transformed by the gospel.**

Our vision is to be continually transformed by the gospel. The gospel is the “good news” about Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection. It is the story of God’s unconditional love and grace to us. He loved us when we were His enemies. As He loved us, so we are called to love one another. We commit to be continually transformed in our thinking so we can imitate God’s gracious love to our church family and the wider community.

**b) We desire to be a church that is serving one another with Christ’s love.**

Our vision is to be a serving church caring for God’s people. Just as Christ loved us by laying down his life for us, he calls us to love and serve one another. For that reason we will encourage our church to become a gospel community. Being a gospel community means we embody the values of Christ’s gospel; loving, forgiving, serving, showing kindness and offering warm hospitality to one another.

**c) We desire to be a church that is serving our wider community with Christ's love.**

Our vision is to be a church serving the wider community of Baldivis. We believe that God's calls us to share his love with others. Jesus said, freely you have received so freely give. We want every person at Hope to engage in serving the wider community. We want everyone to find a way to serve his or her neighbours and friends who don't know Christ.

To be a missional gospel community means sacrificing our time, our wants and sometimes even our needs in order to serve the wider community. For this reason Hope Community Church Baldivis is open to welcoming believers who share this outward focused mission and vision.

As a church plant we will need to make sacrifices and willingly resist a consumerist mentality that wants a church that serves 'my needs'. Rather we believe God is calling us to reach out to bless our church and our wider community. With this united vision we pray that Christ will build His church.

**OUR CHURCH'S PURPOSE:**

We believe that the Christian church is called by God to respond to His love and grace in five key ways. By understanding our God given purpose we believe we can better honour God in all we do. Below is what, we believe at Hope, God is calling us to do.

The five responses are: Worship, Teaching, Discipleship, Mission and Service.

**1. Worship and Prayer**

We believe that God calls us to live our whole lives as an act of worship (Romans 12:1). We desire to bring Him glory and enjoy living in relationship with God in all we do (Psalm 86:9,12). We also acknowledge that God calls us to meet together to strengthen each other and worship Him (1 Corinthians 14:26; Hebrews 10:25). By offering ourselves to God in worship we begin to experience true

fulfillment (John 4:23). Prayer is an important part of our worship of God (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). We desire to make prayer to God a priority in our personal lives and in the life of our Christian community (1 Thessalonians 1:2; Isaiah 56:6-7).

## **2. Teaching and Education:**

The Bible tells us that all Scripture is inspired by God and useful in guiding and directing our lives (2 Tim 3:16-17). We commit therefore to teach the Bible accurately, carefully relating God's message to contemporary living. We value the education of children as well as adults and commit to make the Bible's teaching accessible to everyone (Ps 78:4; Mk 10:14). In all our teaching and education we desire to keep God's word central so that we all might understand the gospel and how to live in response to it (Col 2:6-8).

## **3. Fellowship and Discipleship**

God intends the church to connect as a community (Hebrews 10:25). We are to be devoted to meeting together regularly to hear God's word and build one another up in our faith, love and service (Acts 2:42-47). By opening our lives and showing hospitality, we desire to build a supportive, safe and compassionate community that truly cares for one another (Romans 12:9-13). We commit to meet regularly and encourage and urge each other to live our lives for God's glory (Hebrews 13:21).

## **4. Mission and Evangelism**

We desire to share the good news about Jesus and faithfully follow His command to make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20). We commit to serving the community of Baldvis with Christ's love and sharing how his truth sets us free. (John 8:31-32)

## **5. Service and Mercy**

Jesus Christ came into this world to sacrificially serve (Mark 10:45). We commit ourselves to follow his command to sacrificially serve others too (Mark 10:43-44). We seek to serve those who join our church community as well as serving the wider community in ways that meet real need (1 Peter 2:17; Galatians 6:10; Romans 12:13). In

order to do that effectively we commit to discover and employ our gifts in God's service (Ephesians 4:7, 16; 1 Peter 4:10).

### **OUR CHURCH'S STYLE:**

We recognise that God has set important guidelines for worship in the Bible that primarily focus on worshipping him as God the Father, Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit. However the Bible does not prescribe ministry or musical styles but celebrates a diverse range of expression in worship.

To most effectively serve the people God is calling us to reach we are committed to a ministry and musical style that is summed up by the following words.

**Contemporary** – We desire to communicate our love for God through a musical style that is contemporary and familiar to people in our wider community. We look forward to building teams of singers and musicians who will lead us in our praise of God. Our goal is to have a band including stringed instruments, guitars, piano, and drums that reflect the rich variety of instrumentation we see in Scripture.

While praising God with older hymns we will focus on singing new songs that engage the heart and mind of today's younger generation calling them to live the gospel and be the church of the future. (Ps 33:3; Ps 40:3; Ps 96:1; Ps 98:1; Ps 144:9; Ps 150; Is 42:10)

**Relevant** – To effectively communicate God's word, it is important that people see how it connects to life. We want to apply God's timeless gospel message to our changing world. (Acts 17:22-23)

**Accessible** – In our services we commit to keeping our language clear and understandable. Where important Biblical language needs to be communicated we will endeavor to teach and explain the concepts in ways that make God's truth accessible to the listeners. (1 Cor 9:22-23)

**Engaging** – We see preaching and teaching God’s word as the primary means of bringing repentance and faith. However Biblical truth can also be communicated using modern media. Where appropriate we may engage in using this means to deliver God’s truth to his people. (Acts 8:4; Acts 10:42; 20:20; Romans 10:15; 15:20; 2 Tim 4:2; 1 Cor 9:19-23)

## **OUR CHURCH’S STRUCTURE:**

### **Leadership**

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of Hope Community Church Baldvis. As a church we seek to reflect His priorities in all that we do. By the power of the Holy Spirit we submit to Jesus Christ and seek to fulfill His mandate for us in Baldvis and beyond.

### **Elders**

Under this headship of Christ, the church is led by a church council comprising of elders (elected from our membership) and pastor (the teaching elder appointed by the membership). The elders are referred to as office bearers and serve a 3 year term. The qualities and character requirements for elders are found in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

The Church Council’s role is to oversee the church to ensure it remains a truly Biblical church, that the Word of God is faithfully taught, that the church is a praying community, that members are being appropriately cared for both spiritually and physically, and that the church is protected from harmful influences. The Elders are called to lovingly confront those who are contradicting Biblical truth or who are continuing in patterns of sinful behaviour. Christ commands them to do this in order that the integrity and unity of the church is maintained (Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 20:28-31; Titus 1:9; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4). The Bible teaches that in response to the biblical pattern of leadership, the members of the church are to lovingly support their leaders and submit to their leadership (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17).

## **Deacons**

In addition to the work of Elders, the Bible teaches that in the church there should be deacons. Just as Christ Himself has compassion on the hungry and the thirsty, the stranger and the poor, the sick and the prisoner. Those who come to their aid are seen as doing this work for Christ (Matt 25:31). Scripture speaks of the work of deacons providing relief to the needy (Acts 6:1, 1 Tim 3:8-11). Diaconate ministry is governed by a spirit of compassion and kindness, love and cheerfulness and stimulates relief for victims of poverty and distress, injustice and oppression. Scripture demonstrates that this role can be performed by men and women (Phoebe was a deaconess of the church in Chenchria Romans 16:1). For this reason both men and women can be commissioned into this diaconal role at Hope Community church Baldivis.

## **OUR CHURCH'S HISTORY:**

Hope Community Church Baldivis is a member of the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia.

The Christian Reformed Churches of Australia was founded in Australia in the nineteen fifties and has a long family tree stretching back to the churches of the Protestant Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. This historic renewal movement adopted five core beliefs that are upheld by most protestant churches.

- Scripture alone
- Faith alone
- Grace alone
- Christ alone
- Glory to God alone

We believe these are core principles of authentic Biblical Christianity. In saying this we acknowledge that God's Word, the Bible, alone is sufficient to show us the way of salvation. We maintain that the way of receiving this salvation is by faith, not good works; that God's grace alone can save us, and that grace comes to us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and finally that our whole lives are to be lived for God's glory.

A full explanation of our beliefs, vision and mission can be found at [www.crca.org.au](http://www.crca.org.au) and clicking on "About the CRCA".

Through the 1990s the CRCA experienced steady growth and saw churches established throughout Australia. Since 2000 the CRCA has renewed its commitment to be a church that is reforming to reach the lost for Christ. It adopted a fourfold task (Pray, Train, Grow, Align)<sup>1</sup> as the framework to expand the CRCA's gospel impact throughout Australia. In every state there are renewed efforts to plant new churches and also welcome migrants who are making their home in Australia. The CRCA is committed to see "the gospel bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world." (Colossians 1:6)

## **OUR CHURCH'S CORE BELIEFS.**

### **Essentials We Believe**

#### **God**

God is the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God. (Genesis 1:26, 27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2)

#### **Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22, 23; Luke 1:34-35; John 1:1-18; 14:10-30; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 1:3, 4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 Timothy 6:14, 15; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 4:14-15)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ministryformation.com.au/the-four-fold-task/our-fourfold-task.html>



## **Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer spiritual gifts when they are saved. As Christians we seek to live under His control daily. (John 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 3:16; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 1:13)

## **Bible**

The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living; because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error. (Ps.12:6; 119:105, 160; Pro. 30:5; 2 Tim. 1:13; 3:16; 2 Pet.1 :20-21)

## **Human Beings**

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called 'sin'. This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life. (Gen.1:27; Ps. 8:3-6; Is.53:6a; 59:1-2; Rom.3:23)

## **Salvation**

Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith. (Jn.1:12; 14:6; Rom. 5:1; 6:23; Gal.3:26, Eph.2:8-9, Titus 3:4-6)

## **Eternal Security**

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been

genuinely saved, you cannot 'lose' it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security. (Jn. 10:29, 2 Tim.1:12, Heb.7:25, 10:10-14, 1 Pet.1:3-5).

### **Eternity**

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in unison with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence. (Matt. 5:22; 18:9; Jn 3:16; 2 Peter 3:7; Rev.20:11-15; Rev 7:13-17; Rev 22:5)

### **Sacraments**

Sacraments are symbols used by God to connect with us in a unique way to reassure us of His forgiveness and love. These symbols/sacraments are known as 'signs' and 'seals'.

*Signs* in that they are physical symbols of a spiritual reality, and *Seals* in that they guarantee that what is symbolized is real. Sacraments inspire us to remember what Jesus has done for us on the cross, and remind us that Jesus promised to always be present with us.

Christ instituted two sacraments, (1) Baptism and (2) the Lord's Supper.

### **Baptism**

In Baptism the *sign* is water - which points to the blood of Christ. The *seal* is the guarantee that as surely as water washes away dirt, so surely Christ's blood cleanses us from all our sins. We believe that all those who believe in Jesus, and their children, ought to be baptised because they have entered into God's covenant of Grace (Mt.28:19-20; Acts 2:39; 1 Pet.2:9). Just as whole households received the covenant sign of baptism over their families so we believe God's purposes are the same today and he extends the promise of his forgiveness to the children of believers. (For a more

detailed explanation of the Bible's teaching on household baptism please speak to the pastor).

### **Lords Supper**

In the Lord's Supper the *sign* of bread and wine point to the body and blood of Christ. The *seal* in the Lord's Supper is the guarantee that as we share in the bread and wine we are reminded that his sacrifice paid the price for us to be in renewed relationship with our Creator God. (Is.53:5; Mt.26:26-29; Jn.10:11, 26-30; 1 Cor.11:24-26) To be able to take part in the sacraments, we need to examine ourselves to see if:

1. We do deplore our sin.
2. That we trust in Jesus alone for our salvation.
3. Are willing to live life committed to God out of thankfulness and love for what He has done through Jesus Christ.

### **OUR CHURCH'S CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS.**

Christian Reformed Churches are also Confessional Churches. Confessions are historical documents and creeds that summarize the core doctrines outlined in the Bible. They express the core beliefs of our Christian faith and remind us of the unity we share with God's church throughout history. As a denomination we believe the following confessional and creedal statements provide a faithful summary of the Scriptures. Pastors and Elders in the church are required to uphold the teaching outlined in them. To become a member at Hope it is important that you can also agree with these statements.

The confessional documents our churches subscribe to include the Apostle's Creed, Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed, Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, Canons of Dort and the Westminster Confession. To view these in detail visit this web address: <http://www.crca.org.au/about-the-crca/beliefs.html>

## **BECOMING A MEMBER AT HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH BALDIVIS.**

### ***Entering membership***

Every one who has repented of sin and believes in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord is a true child of God and hence a member of the one true universal church of Jesus Christ (John 1:12). In reality there is only one church and one Lord (John 10:16). But it is not enough to simply belong to the universal church, we are also called to belong to a local branch of the church (Romans 12:4-5); somewhere where we can be partners with other Christians in the work of the gospel, sharing in corporate worship, fellowship and witness.

We warmly welcome into our fellowship as members and partners with us in gospel work, all who profess Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and are willing to sign the membership covenant. Should you have a different position to that stated in our confessions we encourage you discuss this with the pastor and elders of the church.

### ***The privileges of membership***

The greatest privilege of being a member in any church is the Christian freedom and joy of fully belonging and serving together in the life of the church.

Members of the church also have the right to influence the key decisions of the church, through selecting and affirming the leadership of the church, and voting for proposals put by the leadership at congregational meetings.

### ***The responsibilities of membership***

Every member is encouraged to participate in the life of the church simply by following Christ. More specifically, we encourage every member to:

- *Join a Home Group for ongoing nurture and growth in Christ.*
- *Serve in some way in the church according to the gifts God has given you.*
- *Be a witness to the unsaved as and when God gives you the opportunity to do so.*

- *Give regularly to support the ministry of the church.*
- *Pray for the leadership of the church.*
- *Encourage and care for other members in the church as the opportunity arises.*

Every member is encouraged to resist the consumer mentality of our age that teaches us to ‘shop around’ for the things we like. This also affects attendance and attitudes towards the church. Christ set the pattern for the church when he said, *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve*, and we are to follow His example and serve one another (Mark 10:45; John 13). *“Serve one another”* (Galatians 5:13).

### **OUR CHURCH’S MEMBERSHIP COVENANT.**

The membership covenant summarizes the commitment members make when they join the Hope Community church Baldivis. It reflects Christ’s desire for members of His church. We invite you to read it carefully. Its purpose is to encourage you to follow and serve Christ in the life of this church community.

It is a document you keep as a reminder of your commitment.

### **HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH BALDIVIS MEMBERSHIP COVENANT**

I/We,

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having been baptised and publicly professed<sup>2</sup> my faith in Christ as my Saviour and trusting Him as Lord of my life, and being in agreement with Hope Community Church’s vision for ministry, its teachings, mission and values, I now commit to become a full member of Hope Community Church Baldivis. With the help of the Holy Spirit, I pledge myself to serve God and my church family by doing the following:

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<sup>2</sup> To become a member at Hope Community Church Baldivis it is important that you have made a public declaration to follow Christ as your own Lord and Saviour. This is the pattern demonstrated in the New Testament (See Romans 10:8-11 and 1 Timothy 6:12).

## **1. I will protect the unity of my church**

- By acting in love towards other members (Romans 14:19; 1 Peter 1:22)
- By speaking the truth in love at all times and refusing to gossip (Ephesians 4:15, 29)
- By following the leaders (Hebrews 13:17)

*Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. Romans 14:19 (NIV)*

*Love one another deeply, from the heart. 1 Peter 1:22 (NIV)*

*Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)*

*Obey your leaders and submit to their authority... Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. Hebrews 13:17 (NIV)*

## **2. I will share the responsibilities of my church**

- By praying for its growth (1 Thessalonians 1:1-2)
- By inviting the unchurched to attend (1 Corinthians 9:22; 10:33)
- By warmly welcoming those who visit (Romans 15:17)

*We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. 1 Thessalonians 1:1-2 (NIV)*

*The Master said to the servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes, and urge the people there to come so my house will be full.' Luke 14:23 (NCV)*

### **3. I will serve the ministry of my church**

- By discovering the gifts and talents God has given me (1 Peter 4:10)
- By being equipped to serve (Ephesians 4:11-12)
- By developing a servant's heart (Philippians 2:3-4,7)

*Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others 1 Peter 4:10. (NIV)*

*God gave .... Some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up... Eph.4:11-12 (NIV)*

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Philippians 2:3 (NIV)*

### **4. I will support the gospel witness of my church**

- By attending faithfully (Hebrews 10:25)
- By living a godly life (Philippians 1:27)
- By giving regularly (1 Corinthians 16:2)
- By regularly meeting with other believers for fellowship (Home Group) (Hebrews 10:25)

*Let us not give up meeting together. Hebrews 10:25 (NIV)*

*Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Philippians 1:27 (NIV)*

*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Micah 3:10 (NIV)*

I sign to express my desire to be part of the church and to live my life accordingly....

**A separate copy of the membership covenant is available for signing. Your signed copy can then be returned to the Pastor. If you are new to Hope CCB it will be beneficial to meet with the Pastor or an elder to discuss becoming a member in more detail.**

Our prayer for you is found in the words of the letter of Hebrews.

<sup>20</sup> May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, <sup>21</sup> equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.  
Hebrews 13:20-21 (NIV)

In Christ  
Pastor Peter Smit.  
Hope Community Church Baldivis.