

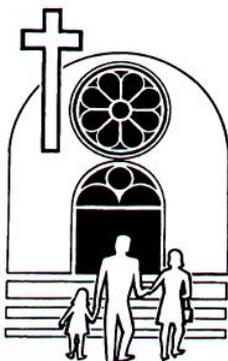
**CITY TABERNACLE**

**BAPTIST CHURCH**



**CHURCH**

**PROFILE**



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City Tabernacle Baptist Church is Committed to Growth...

- Growing in Love for God
- Growing in Love for God's Word
- Growing in Love for One Another
- Growing in Love for the Lost

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## A: History of the City Tabernacle

The following is a précis of the history of the church since its inception, endeavouring to be relevant to our current requirement for this exercise.

Among Queensland Baptists the Tabernacle has always been known as *the mother church*. Since the institution of the first congregation in Wharf Street and the subsequent transition to the Tabernacle in 1890, the church has faithfully maintained the teaching and preaching of the *Word of God*.

The City Tabernacle reached a pinnacle in its history during the period 1948 to 1979 under the leadership of two excellent and gifted pastors, first Rev FT Smith and then Rev Dr Neville Abrahams. Both pastors were strongly supported by the congregation. These men not only faithfully preached the word, but literally wore themselves out in the ministry in which they totally involved themselves. This included visiting members of the large congregation which numbered around 500 members.

During this period a good number of members felt the call to the mission field. They were supported in both long and short term missionary service. The church has had a consistent commitment to mission, and whilst the number currently serving is not as great, this is still the case to this day.

Membership has not been maintained at earlier levels. This has been brought about by the population spread of the city and also by the development of large suburban churches. However, there is an increase in the number of apartments in the city and a noticeable change in the ethnic mix of city residents and subsequently of the church.

The Tabernacle has been a strong supporting church of the work of Queensland Baptists (previously referred to as the Baptist Union of Queensland). The theological college of Queensland commenced its life in the Tabernacle and the church has continued to be a strong supporter of the college, today known as Malyon College.

For the past twenty years or so the church has had a ministry titled *Towards 4000*. (The City postcode is 4000.) From time to time the church has called a Pastor dedicated to this ministry. Under this banner the church currently runs a program of teaching English to newcomers to our country, a play group which attracts a good number of mothers and children from the surrounding suburbs, as well as religious instruction at the local state school. The church also supports the ministries of *City Bible Forum* and the *Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students*.

For a number of years the church produced *Carols in the City* on behalf of the Lord Mayor. This was a major undertaking which concluded in 2013 when the Council put the production out to tender. The church is well known for its special choral presentations at Easter and during Advent, including performing excerpts from *Messiah*.



## B: Characteristics of the Congregation

### Average Attendance:

YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2010 am	206	225	221	230	206	225	224	219	214	217	234	216
2010 pm	73	81	81	81	73	81	81	91	68	74	75	100
2011 am	217	225	230	236	206	225	224	219	214	217	234	255
2011 pm	68	93	84	85	72	81	81	91	68	74	75	100
2012 am	211	221	240	261	212	197	210	207	194	231	244	250
2012 pm	77	75	77	65	45	58	64	59	57	65	63	100
2013 am	165	242	254	229	232	210	180	252	194	231	261	211
2013 pm	73	80	65	65	58	51	57	58	57	63	56	67
2014 am	231	230	202	217	212	207	212	209	186	189	204	198
2014 pm	54	52	51	38	55	47	41	50	41	46	45	72
2015 am	197	196	179	164	160	173	219	181	138	134	150	169
2015 pm	58	51	42	50	43	41	73	68	52	50	45	69
2016 am	167	145	172	145	176	151	140	149	142	152	159	155
2016 pm	50	56	59	56	53	46	45	53	53	54	50	103
2017 am	147	143	155	159	143	148	148	170	141	147	173	147
2017 pm	51	51	52	41	47	49	38	57	50	49	52	69
2018 am	157	166	158	180	181	167	136	168	183	147	238	163
2018 pm	58	52	53	50	55	41	43	59	44	52	46	189

### Age Profile by Percentage:

AGE	%
0-9	12.7
10-19	2.7
20-29	5.4
30-39	16.2
40-49	9.3
50-59	10.4
60-69	16.6
70-79	14.3
80+	12.4
Total	100

#### Notes:

The 80+ group includes 17 special care members.  
 15% of the congregation is Asian plus some Asian visitors.  
 There are also other Ethnic groups represented.  
 9 June 2016



## C: Ministries and Program

Sunday Worship Services      10.30 am & 6.30 pm

### Prayer

Before the Evening Service      Sunday 6.00 pm  
Early Morning      Tuesday 7.00 am  
Prayer Breakfast      Last Saturday 7.30 am  
Prayer Chain      Points e-mailed to recipients.

### Towards 4000: Reaching the residents of our Community

English Connection      Free English classes Thursday 4.30 pm  
Tab Tots Playgroup      Wednesday 9.30 am  
Boys' & Girls' Brigade      Friday 6.30 pm  
Religious Instruction      Brisbane Central State School Monday 2.30 pm  
"City Life" magazine      Hand-delivered within Postcode 4000  
TV Screen – front of building      Promotes the church & the gospel  
KidsGames      June/July Vacation  
Christianity Explained      Teachers trained in 2016

### Small Groups

Adult Bible Study      Sunday 9.00 am - weekly  
Discipleship Group      Tuesday 7.00 pm - weekly  
Suburban Home Groups x 3      2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays 7.30 pm

### Children's Ministries

Christian Endeavour      Sunday 9.15 am  
Nursery & Kindergarten      During the Morning Worship Service  
Kids' Church      From 10.45 am during the Morning Worship Service

### Other Ministries

Choir – SATB      Thursday 7.30 pm  
Ladies Fellowship      4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday 7.30 pm  
Over Fifties Fellowship Group      1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday 10.00 am  
Ministry of Special Care      Regular contact with members of the congregation who are no longer able to attend services.  
Willara House – adjacent      Formerly Hostel for Young Ladies.  
Future use to be decided.



## D: Present Plant and Resources

### FINANCES

The Church's financial structure is in two significant parts:

- A. Our Ministry Plan: This portion of the accounts which is supported by the sacrificial giving of the congregation to the Ministry of the Church – both in maintenance of the ministry and outreach and other ministries supported by the Church whether through the regular giving of members or through specially marked gifts.
- B. Other areas:
  - a. Greenlees-McIver Estate: Arising from a bequest given to the Church in 1980, this fund has now grown to a point where more than \$180,000 each year is available to the Church for ministry.
  - b. Property Fund: This is taken to include all church property apart from the Church building at 163 Wickham Terrace. The Fund manages the properties; is responsible for the debt on those properties; and contributes to the Church as per the guidelines.
  - c. Ford Trust: The bequest which is the Ford Trust has only recently been given to the Church and is designated by the legacy for the purpose of maintenance of the Church building and its furniture and equipment.
  - d. Foulkes Estate: The purpose of this estate is Baptist homes for the aged in Brisbane.

### PROPERTY

The Church owns the following properties:

- A. The Church Premises at 163 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane. The building consists essentially of two main levels:
  - a. The hall level: The largest area is the Lecture Hall with seating for approximately 200 people and a stage. Also on this level are much smaller rooms used for the Church Kitchen, Nursery, Kindergarten, and small-size meetings.
  - b. The sanctuary level: The sanctuary has seating for approximately 400 people. A further 40 choristers can be accommodated in the Choir Gallery, while another gallery can accommodate around 150 people. Other rooms are the Pastor's Vestry, the Choir Vestry, the Prayer Parlour, and the Church Office. (Four small rooms are located on a higher level; one of these is the Media Room.)
- B. Willara House – 424 Upper Edward St.: The Hostel has 21 single rooms and two ensuited areas for a supervisor and an assistant supervisor. The building, originally the church's manse, operated as a hostel/rooming house for around 100 years. The building includes a small shop which is leased.
- C. 428 Upper Edwards St. – an office building on four levels: The Church owns approximately 60% of the building which is strata titled.
- D. 39 Isaac St., Spring Hill – a house on two allotments.
- E. 28 Astor Terrace – a car parking station: The church owns seven strata titled car parks.
- F. 51 Astor Terrace – a car parking station: The church owns 42 car parks vested through the ownership of specific shares. (The building is in a company structure.)

## CHURCH PROPERTY STRATEGIES

### A. CAR PARKING FUND (Now Part of the Property Fund)

For more than 50 years the City Tabernacle has enjoyed the privilege of free use of the lower car park of the adjacent United Service Club on Sunday mornings. In the mid-1980s an investigation clearly showed that the Willara site (even if the existing small Church car park were included) could not possibly support the construction of a multi-level car park.

During the Ministry of Rev Neville Kellam, a strategy was developed which provided for the purchase of individual strata titled car parks which would be used by the Church on Sundays but rented commercially at all other times. The plan was to start with a relatively small number of car parks with the expectation that the income would pay off the debt and enable the purchase of additional car parks. The ultimate objective discussed in 2001 was the purchase of up to 100 car parks. There was no specific timeline.

The 49 car parks now owned by the Church were purchased for a total outlay of \$1,744,204. The Church has never made a contribution to the Car Park Fund (apart from providing some interest free funds for the first two years). The Car Parks have been funded with borrowed funds and the Fund has paid all interest as well as all ownership costs. Notwithstanding, the debt of the Car Park Fund has now reduced to \$1,400,000. Current indications are that the further 51 car parks required to complete the strategy will cost in the order of \$2.5 m.

### B. PROPERTY FUND

The Property Fund includes three “elements”:

- a. Willara House: While Willara is a ministry of the Church, all matters relating to the property and any funds required for the maintenance of the ministry are covered by the Property Fund.
- b. Manses: Some years ago the Church established a policy whereby it would not own a manse unless it was strategically located (eg 39 Isaac St, Spring Hill) and would sell the manses which were then owned at Chermside and Aspley. The adopted policy included a provision that the proceeds of the sale of these two manses would be invested in growth assets and the income used to pay a “rent allowance” component of Pastoral Stipends in our Ministry Plan. In our 2015-2016 Ministry Plan it was planned that the Property Fund would contribute \$54,600 as a “rent allowance” contribution to Pastoral Stipends.
- c. 428 Upper Edward St.: Although redeveloped in 1989, it was felt that the life of the Willara House building is certainly finite. Similarly the Church has known that the United Service Club has regularly been considering options to redevelop its site. The Diaconate has also believed that a time will come when an office outside of the Church building will be needed. It seemed to the Church that the concern re the future value of the Willara property made the investment in 428 Upper Edward St. an act of good stewardship.

The Church first purchased the ground floor of 428 Upper Edward St. with a view to ensuring that it would have a say in any redevelopment of the property. The hope is that a redevelopment would also enable the Church to redevelop Willara. Although Willara was also used as security for the loan, the purchase is entirely funded from the rent paid by the tenant. Subsequently the Church was able to increase its ownership to about 62% of the building. Again, the total cost is entirely funded from the rent paid by tenants.

While the Property Fund (including Car Parking) owes \$3.8 m to CBA and around \$400 k to the Church, the small surpluses are required to enable the Property Fund to eliminate this debt eventually. On present arrangements it will take more than 30 years to pay off the Property Fund’s debt. It is noted that the Church may, subject to prudent debt levels and appropriate commercial arrangements, increase its ownership of car parks to 100 car parks and increase its ownership in the 428 Upper Edward St office. But none of the funds required to facilitate these purchases are expected to come from Offerings.

## E: Vision for the Future

The City Tabernacle Baptist Church is the oldest Baptist Church in Queensland – but the Church is still vigorously seeking to be the Church on the Hill in the City of Brisbane.

The Church has four published objectives:

- Growing in Love for God
- Growing in Love for One Another
- Growing in Love for God's Word
- Growing in Love for the Lost

The Church acknowledges that it has a ministry to three primary groups:

- As a regional church – many members come from far flung parts of the City of Brisbane (and beyond)
- As a church for the central city
- As a church to those who are passing through – visitors from near and far frequent the City Tabernacle.

We seek first to be the Church our Lord speaks about when he gave a new commandment, *Love each other as I have loved you*. This, it seems, was to be the public mark of the Church.

The City Tabernacle is a conservative Baptist Fellowship – conservative in our theological positions; conservative in our practice in worship services; and conservative in our governance.

But although the City Tabernacle is conservative, it has a commitment to mission. The Church has a policy of committing at least 30% of offerings to outreach, but in recent years that commitment has exceeded 40% of offerings.

The Church's Mission to the City, known as Towards 4000, is a key expression of the Church's response to the great commission. Central to Towards 4000 is an understanding that we need to build bridges to the CBD and Spring Hill community – bridges which the Church can cross and thereby encounter members of the community, and vice versa. Towards 4000 includes a number of ministries which intentionally seek to reach such people with the Gospel. The Church has adopted the Christianity Explained program and seeks to introduce inquirers from all ministries to do the Christianity Explained course.

Currently the City Tabernacle is developing three new areas of ministry:

1. Ministry to members of the community with an Asian heritage. Consistent with the effectiveness of the outreach ministries of the Church has been an increase in the number of folk attending the Church whose ethnic heritage is not Anglo Saxon or European. Acknowledging this, the Tabernacle is seeking to establish a pastoral ministry to these folk.
2. Ministry to young people. Just as we have been effective in encouraging the ministry to families and young children, the Tabernacle now has a number of children who have just become teenagers or soon will be. The Church is working with parents at this time to commence a ministry to these young people.
3. A Visiting Preacher Ministry. For many decades the Tabernacle has had a significant ministry in inviting significant international speakers to the Church, not only to minister to the congregation of the Tabernacle, but also to minister more widely. In mid-2017 the Tabernacle decided to be more intentional in this endeavour and to seek to build co-operation with other theological and bible colleges to make this ministry effective.



## G: Organisation, Leadership, Decision-making

The City Tabernacle subscribes to a traditional Baptist model in which the pastor and deacons work together as a team in helping the congregation to seek the will of Christ as they meet together in doing the business of the Church at the Church Meeting. The Church rules provide that the officers of the Church are the Pastor and Deacons. We believe this is in keeping with what Christ intended for the governing of His Church and consistent with the two-fold biblical office of pastor and deacons.

The City Tabernacle practices a polity that does not endorse elder rule but instead places a premium on the priesthood of all believers which allows every member of the Church to prayerfully participate in the making of informed decisions through the members Meeting which affects our corporate lives. The task of the local Church gathered together in the Church Meeting is to find the mind of Christ on all matters relating to the work of the Church. The quarterly Members' Meeting is a spiritually significant aspect of Church life. We believe that it is Christ alone who rules and the task of the local Church gathered in covenant community together is to find the mind of Christ. It is the Church Meeting that appoints the pastor, deacons and others who exercise various forms of leadership within the Church, as we believe it is the Church Members gathered together who are responsible for testing and recognising whether such leaders have received various calls from God to serve among us. The Church Meeting also approves financial decisions, the work of mission, and other strategic issues concerning the governance and direction of the Church.

The Church calls a Pastor whose special responsibility is to act as a minister of the word and prayer (Acts 6). He guides, teaches, and leads primarily through his example and preaching. He is responsible for all preaching and teaching from the pulpit. The Pastor exercises a ministry which accords with the biblical model of shepherding. As the flock, the Church sees His example and thereby follows His lead. He leads, feeds, nurtures, comforts, equips, corrects and protects the flock through His ministries of preaching, teaching, and pastoral care. The Pastor may be assisted by an associate pastor in these areas. He also exercises leadership over the worship service, acts as chair of the Diaconate and members' Meeting, and is an ex-officio member of all Church committees.

The deacons are set apart by the congregation to take care of the practical and temporal needs of the Church and serve in other areas of Church life such as serving at the Lord's Table. The Church elects from among the deacons a secretary and treasurer, who are accountable to the Church to provide particular leadership in the areas of administration and finance. Administrative Church staff are accountable to the Diaconate through the secretary. The Church decides who should serve as deacons after prayerful consideration of the biblical qualifications.

The Pastor and deacons make up the Diaconate which provides leadership for the Church and equips the whole Church to engage in its mission of reconciliation to the world. The Diaconate serves the Church and brings recommendations for major decisions affecting the life of the Church to the members' Meeting. The Diaconate is entrusted by the Church to carry out day to day decisions (such as limited expenditure) and other routine activities without the need to bring every matter to the Church Meeting. The Diaconate does not rule the Church and, consistent with Mark 10:42-45, we believe that biblical authority lies in service rather than compulsion. The Church follows leadership, not blindly, but by mature thinking and in willing obedience through trust. That is, the Church Meeting, as the body of Christ, looks to those whom it can trust to guide the Church and the leaders create trust as they give themselves for the life of the Church and so have the authority of servants.