

## QB Board Discussion Paper on a Member Commitment

*The QB Board has committed to assist our QB members (churches and pastors) review what it means to be a member of Queensland Baptists. As a first step, during 2021, the QB Board would like QB members and services to consider the possibility of developing a commitment statement that reflects the benefits and responsibilities of being part of the QB Movement. THIS PAPER MARKS THE BEGINNING OF THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS.*

### A. Preamble on Association and Commitment

From their origins in the seventeenth century, Baptists have chosen to practice the autonomy of the local church within the framework of association with other Baptist churches. While the form of such association has varied, Baptists have seen this as a positive expression of the unity of Christ's body (John 17:11). Baptist churches associate together to support one another in proclaiming the gospel, to discuss challenging issues of faith and practice, and to pool their resources in areas which require their cooperation.

As Queensland Baptists, through association our churches and pastors have been supported better, our cross-cultural mission impact has been multiplied, our training and education has been enhanced, our local evangelism and witness has been increased, our administration and financial capacity to ensure good stewardship of facilities and services to enable ministry has been multiplied, and our capacity to care for those in need, the vulnerable, poor and at risk has been developed. Our story exemplifies the benefits of Baptist association; working together to see God's kingdom come.

Associations of Baptist churches are not themselves churches, and do not possess authority to govern the affairs of their member churches, and yet, to cooperate, they agree upon certain boundaries and guidelines for their operation. The framework for this cooperation, like that which operates among members within churches, may be thought of in terms of a covenant or commitment. Such commitments seek to establish a form of relationality which is grounded in the gracious faithfulness of God, and to express the parties' commitment to mutual care and responsibility.

### B. Why Consider a Commitment Statement?

There are a number of reasons why the QB Board is raising this issue:

1. We are gathering momentum as a diverse Movement of autonomous churches and feel that some sort of clear joint commitment that we all understand would strengthen our collaboration.
2. While some commitments are spelled out in different places in the Constitution (see below), we presently have no succinct statement that outlines to churches (especially those exploring joining QB) what commitments and benefits are involved.
3. Presently, because of the lack of such a statement, churches may understand commitment to the QB Movement differently. For example, some churches feel that commitment to the QB Movement involves contributing to the Bapshare budget and others don't.
4. As we move ahead with new QB Movement vision and goals, it would be helpful for churches to know what this means for them.

The QB Board thinks that a commitment statement might be helpful and has even developed a possible example (see below) but wants to check with the pastors and churches before formulating a recommended statement for a future Assembly to discuss.

### C. The Process of Reviewing our Member Commitments

After discussion and prayer (with dedicated time at the 2020 Board Retreat), the QB Board decided on the following process to explore the possibility of a clearer commitment/covenant for member churches.

1. The Board establish a Taskforce to pursue the possibility of developing a clearer QB Covenant/Commitment. Members of the Taskforce include Stewart Pieper, Anne Klose, Stephen Hendrick, Peter Francis, Andrew McCafferty and John Sweetman.
2. The Terms of Reference are:
  - a. To consult widely among the QB Movement on the desirability and content of a commitment.
  - b. To explore the use of commitments in other Christian Movements.
  - c. If appropriate, to develop draft commitments that will cover members and groups within the QB Movement.
  - d. To report to the Board on its findings by the end of July 2021.
3. The consultation within the QB Movement will include:
  - a. Introducing the issue at the 2020 Annual Assembly.
  - b. Producing a discussion paper.
  - c. Discussing the issue at the 2021 Regional Gatherings.
  - d. Reporting on the results of the discussions and further feedback at the 2021 Annual Assembly.
  - e. Calling for further responses and submissions regarding the discussion paper.
  - f. The Board discussing and deciding on a draft commitment (if desired) – July or August.
  - g. Inviting pastors and churches to further critique the Board-recommended draft commitment.
  - h. Modifying the draft commitment in light of this feedback.
4. The Board will bring a recommendation (if there is enough support from members) to the 2022 Annual Assembly.

### D. Present Situation - Required Commitments to be a Member of the QB Movement

The present commitments that a church has to make to be part of Queensland Baptists are spelled out in our Constitution. (There is a brief summary at the end if you don't want to read through these excerpts from the Constitution.) The relevant parts of the QB Constitution are:

[A copy of the whole Constitution and By-Laws can be found [here](#)]

4	<b>DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES</b>
4.01	<p><b>Minimum Doctrinal Statement</b></p> <p>It is recognised that each Member of QB has the liberty to interpret and administer the Laws of Christ however, the following must be adhered to as a minimum doctrinal requirement for admission as a member and for continuation of membership of QB:</p>
4.01 (a)	The Divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testaments.
4.01 (b)	The existence of one God in three persons - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
4.01 (c)	The Deity, Incarnation and virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, the Second Person in the Holy Trinity
4.01 (d)	The fallen sinful and lost condition of all people
4.01 (e)	The salvation of people from the penalty and power of sin, through the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, His atoning death, His resurrection from the

	dead, His ascension to the right hand of the Father and His unchanging Priesthood
4.01 (f)	The immediate work of the Holy Spirit in the regeneration of people, in their sanctification and in their preservation to the Heavenly Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ
4.01 (g)	The necessity, in order to obtain salvation, of repentance towards God and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ
4.01 (h)	The resurrection of the dead and the final judgement of all people by the Lord Jesus Christ.
4.01 (i)	The two ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ - namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper which are of perpetual obligation. Baptism being the immersion of Believers upon the profession of their Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a symbol of the fellowship of the regenerate in His death, burial and resurrection; the Lord's Supper being a memorial, until He comes, of the sacrifice of the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ

4.03	<b>Governance of Churches</b> It is recognised that each Church has the liberty to govern its own affairs in whatever way it chooses but the following must be adhered to by a Church as a minimum standard for admission as a Member of QB and for continuation of that membership: -
4.03 (a)	A meeting of the Church Members must be held at least once each year.
4.03 (b)	The Minister or Senior Minister where there is more than one (1) minister appointed must be registered by QB.
4.03 (c)	The Minister or Senior Minister where there is more than one (1) minister appointed is appointed or removed by a duly constituted meeting of Church Members
4.03 (d)	The Executive Leaders (e.g. Board, Elders or Diaconate) are appointed or removed by a duly constituted meeting of Church Members
4.03 (e)	Church Members must have the right to vote in relation to the sale or purchase of any real property and in respect of any significant transactions affecting any real property used by the Church; and
4.03 (f)	At least once each year financial reports and a budget for the following year must be presented to a meeting of the Church.
4.03 (g)	Any changes to the Church constitution are communicated to QB.

5.02	<b>Churches</b> The Board may admit a Church as a member of QB. The Assembly may make By-Laws regarding the matters to be taken into account by the Board when considering an application by a Church for Membership of QB. A list of Churches who are members shall be maintained and shall be appended to this Constitution.
5.03	The Board may terminate the Membership of a Church if: -
5.03 (a)	the Members of the Church at a duly constituted meeting of the Members passes a motion requesting that the Church be closed and its Membership of QB be terminated;
5.03 (b)	the Church has fewer than six (6) Church Members;
5.03 (c)	the Constitution of the Church has been suspended or revoked or has been changed so that it no longer meets the minimum doctrinal standards set out in this Constitution;
5.03 (d)	the Church becomes an affiliated member of another denomination or body;

5.03 (e)	the Church no longer accepts the minimum doctrinal statement in this Constitution; or
5.03 (f)	in the opinion of the Board, the Church is engaged in practices inconsistent with this Constitution and By-Laws.
5.04	Before the Board terminates the Membership of a Church due to its membership being less than six (6) Church Members, the Board must: [etc.]

<b>B2</b>	<b>ADMISSION OF CHURCHES TO MEMBERSHIP</b>
B2.01	In this clause “Church” means a group of people who meet regularly in worship and witness as a fellowship of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.
B2.02	The Board may admit a Church as a Member of QB at any time upon receipt of a written application from the Church. The application shall incorporate at least; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- history of the Church,</li> <li>- statement of belief,</li> <li>- summary of meeting practice,</li> <li>- details of leadership,</li> <li>- details of ministries,</li> <li>- details of membership,</li> <li>- a copy of the Church’s constitution, and</li> <li>- evidence of meeting of key adherents supporting the application.</li> </ul>
B2.03	The Board is to take the following matters into account when it is considering an application from a Church for admission as a member of QB:
B2.03 (a)	Whether the Church adheres to the Minimum Doctrinal Statement set out in this Constitution;
B2.03 (b)	Whether the constitution or other document governing the activities of the Church provides for the governance requirements set out in this Constitution;
B2.03 (c)	Whether the Church is a stable group which meets at least once a month;
B2.03 (d)	Where the Church is being sponsored or fostered by another Church which is a Member of QB, the recommendation from the sponsoring Church

**Summary of Commitments to be a QB Member Church**

1. Beliefs: Basic evangelical theology with practice of believers’ baptism by immersion (acceptance of minimum doctrinal statement)
2. Governance: Senior pastor must be registered, must have a members’ meeting that makes significant decisions e.g. church leadership, call of pastor, budget, property
3. Not affiliated with another denomination or body
4. Practices in keeping with the QB Constitution
5. A stable group with at least 6 members

**E. The Present Benefits of being a Member Church of the QB Movement**

So what benefits do QB member churches receive by being associated with the QB Movement? One way to answer this question is to consider the QB Movement’s 2020/21 budget and to list the resources that this provides to the member churches of our Movement.

Budget Item	\$ Amount	Services for Churches and Pastors
QB Movement	395,940	1. Assisting churches and pastors to become more biblical, healthy, effective, intentional and visionary.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Director of the QB Movement (DoM) providing vision, inspiration, ideas, input and resources.</li> <li>3. 14 Regional Ministers providing support, resources, networking, mentoring, advice and encouragement for pastors and churches.</li> <li>4. Resources include articles, sermons, studies, ReM Resources.</li> </ol>
QB Services	533,245	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Supporting churches and pastors through and with the numerous demands and challenges of their ministry.</li> <li>6. Director of QB Services (DoS) providing leadership to Board Committees, Service and Charter Groups and ensuring that the resources of these ministries support the priorities of QB and its churches. Also leading the Church Support Group that ensures that pastors and churches are well supported, and representing our QB churches in wider contexts.</li> <li>7. Director of Pastoral Services (DoPS) who oversees registration and formation of pastors including ongoing professional development, training, compliance and licencing (e.g. marriage celebrants).</li> <li>8. Team of Area Pastors working to build support networks among pastors and their spouses and assisting with pastoral care of pastors.</li> <li>9. Professional Standards Officer helping and advising pastors and churches with difficult compliance and ethical issues.</li> <li>10. Director of Church Health Services (DoCHS) providing resources, consultations, church reviews, support and training.</li> <li>11. Director of Multicultural Services supporting, resourcing and assisting ethnic and multicultural churches.</li> </ol>
Administrative Services	697,628	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Providing churches and pastors with advice and resources to effectively and responsibly manage and govern churches.</li> <li>13. Enabling churches to purchase property, motor vehicles, enter into leases and contracts, and apply for grants although they are unincorporated.</li> <li>14. Providing guidance on matters such as Human Resources and property transactions, including access to Christian lawyers where required.</li> <li>15. Providing discounted copywrite licensing for the use of music and film.</li> <li>16. Managing church involvement with the National Redress Scheme</li> <li>17. Giving guidance in relation to legislative requirements placed on churches in relation to ACNC, External Conduct Standards, privacy and many other matters.</li> <li>18. Providing recommendations in relation to ministerial remuneration and spiritual appointment agreements and detailed guidance about eligibility and implementation of Exempt Benefits for ministers.</li> <li>19. Accountants providing assistance to churches with accounting packages and financial reporting issues.</li> <li>20. Providing discounted insurance for churches that is customised umbrella coverage for church requirements.</li> <li>21. Archivists ensuring that information about the present functioning of churches will be available to future generations.</li> </ol>
Total Departmental Operations:	1,626,812	
Communications	95,425	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22. Assisting clear communication throughout the QB Movement and ensuring that a wide range of resources and information is accessible for pastors and churches.</li> </ol>
Other QB activities	62,880	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>23. Providing conferences (like Convention) and supporting our partnership with the Solomon Islands churches.</li> </ol>

Total QB Activities:	158,305	
Church Planting	98,714	24. Assisting, equipping and resourcing church planters. 25. Supporting, guiding and encouraging churches working towards church plants. 26. Assisting and supporting young churches.
Youth & Young Adults Ministry	109,706	27. Providing support, resources, networking, training, and advocacy for Youth and Young Adults Ministry Leaders.
Women's Ministry	42,121	28. Providing conferences, resources, networks, and support to women and women's ministries.
Kids and Families Ministry	51,757	29. Providing support, resources, networking, training, and advocacy for families' and children's workers in churches.
Indigenous Ministry	17,873	30. Providing support for indigenous churches and ministries.
Multicultural Churches	10,000	31. Providing support for special multicultural initiatives.
Ministry Team Support	24,659	32. Assisting all of the field ministries above.
Total Field Ministries:	354,830	
Malyon TC Contribution	150,000	33. Equipping a new generation of church and community leaders in theology and ministry at a degree+ level (with QB priorities).
Malyon Vet Contribution	100,000	34. Equipping a new generation of church and community leaders in theology and ministry at a vocational level (with QB priorities).
Global Interaction Support	21,291	35. Supporting and developing effective cross-cultural mission in our world.
BWAA Support	2,558	36. Advocating for and supporting the disadvantaged throughout the world and advising churches in these areas.
BUA and BWA Membership	61,000	37. Networking with and supporting Baptist ministry across Australia and the world.
Other External Support	5,000	38. Support for Christian Religious Instruction Alliance Qld providing advocacy, support and resourcing for Christian RI in Qld State Schools.
Total External Expenditure:	339,849	
Total Expenditure	2,476,726	

### Notes

1. QB churches presently contribute about \$800,000 annually which is about a third of the cost of providing these resources to our member churches.
2. The rest of the finance needed to provide support for churches presently comes largely from Carinity, Baplink, QCCC, property rentals, and investments.
3. Our Charter Groups also contribute directly to churches. Baplink offers grants and financial admin support. Malyon provides a range of training. QCCC supports camping programs. From this year, Carinity will allocate another \$500,000 annually to facilitate church involvement in PBI work in their communities.
4. Through Carinity, Global Interaction, Baptist World Aid, QCCC and our schools, the QB Movement also provides ministry and mission on behalf of QB churches.

## F. Example Commitments

So how could these present benefits and responsibilities along with our recently adopted vision and goals be reflected in a commitment statement?

Below are three examples of what a commitment statement might look like. The first is the South Australian Baptist Membership Covenant. The second is the Western Australia Church Relationship Agreement. The third is an example that we have written to assist discussion. This example does not reflect the final recommendation of the Board but has been developed to offer another option.

## 1. South Australian Baptist Membership Covenant

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.” (Philippians 2)

*“...that there would be a unity of faith in the great doctrines of the gospel, of holy affection towards each other, and steady exertion in duty.”* (John Hinton, British Baptist leader, 1812)

### Whereas:

1. We are a movement of autonomous local churches united in Jesus Christ and committed to the work of the gospel.
2. We are committed to discipleship: believers growing to be authentic followers of Jesus Christ.
3. We recognise the central importance of local churches in God’s redemptive plan and the missional purposes of church planting and working for justice in our world.
4. We are an evangelical movement who hold to an understanding of the Scriptures as the supreme authority in matters of faith and practice.
5. Together, and with the support of the Baptist Centre team, we accept joint responsibility for the outworking of a vision to be a movement of local churches thriving in Jesus and transforming the world.

**We covenant together to participate in the mutually beneficial relationship that exists between our churches to the glory of God, and agree to:**

### **A. Value the benefits to the work of the Kingdom of God, and to Member churches, from being in association together, including:**

- Mutual encouragement and support
- Mutual accountability to the gospel
- A collective voice, and opportunity for vision and ministry beyond our local contexts
- Increased effectiveness in mission and church planting
- Leadership support (e.g. pastoral care, professional development, marriage licensing, accreditation, code of ethics, professional standards)
- Ministry support (e.g. church consultancies, conferences and training, youth ministry, leadership development)
- Administrative support (e.g. insurance, pastoral stipends, long-service leave, policies, copyright licensing, finance, legal)

### **B. Accept the responsibilities that come with joining together in association:**

- Committing to uphold the Foundational Values of the Association
- Contributing to and upholding the unity of the Association by speaking well of one another, desiring the best for each other, and actively promoting healthy relationships
- Implementing Child Protection and Code of Ethics policies and procedures adopted by the Association
- Both the church and the pastoral leadership participating in the shared life and decision making of the Association (e.g. Assemblies, conferences, resources, regional networks)
- Contributing to the financial needs of the Association to enable it to fulfil its vision

**C. Affirm the ministries that are an expression of our association, which may include:**

- Church consultancies (e.g. moderating, reviews, conflict resolution, church development, youth ministries)
- Consultancy services on professional standards and child safe environment matters
- Baptist Care (SA)
- Baptist World Aid Australia
- Company of Grace (Vietnam)
- Crossover
- Baptist Financial Services
- Australian Baptist Insurance Scheme
- Global Interaction

**D. Encourage co-operative relationships between Member churches and between those churches and the Association, wherever it is mutually agreed that it will enrich the ministry life and fruitfulness of all involved.**

We further agree that this Membership Covenant may be amended at any time by decision of not less than 75% of the Assembly of the Baptist Churches of SA and that affirmation of this Membership Covenant be formally reviewed by each Member church every five (5) years.

## 2. Western Australian Baptist Church Relationship Agreement

Because of our mutual relationship with one another, Member Churches play an active role in supporting one another within the Baptist Churches Western Australia (BCWA) – by practically, prayerfully and financially supporting one another as we share the Good News of Jesus Christ locally, throughout our nation, and across the world.

**Member Churches of The Baptist Union of Western Australia Incorporated (BUWA) agree to:**

1. The Baptist Churches Western Australia Statement of Faith, Purpose, Vision, Mission and Value Statements.
2. Protecting the unity of our churches.
3. Co-operating with other Baptist churches in Western Australia.
4. Participate in decision-making forums including Assembly and being involved in denominational ministries.
5. Recognise Vose Seminary as a ministry of Baptist Churches Western Australia and as the preferred training provider for pastors to be accredited for ministry within and on behalf of Baptist churches.
6. Adopt, implement and maintain appropriate Safe Church policies and procedures consistent with the BCWA recommended Safe Church program. This includes the ten Child Safe Standards, and other recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.
7. Appoint Pastoral Staff who are Accredited, or apply for Accreditation with Baptist Churches Western Australia within one year of their appointment.
8. Fulfil Safe Church obligations by reporting any serious allegations of misconduct against Pastors to the Professional Standards Team of Baptist Churches Western Australia.
9. Support Church Planting initiatives.
10. Supplying the Baptist Churches Western Australia with a copy of your Church Constitution, mission, vision and values statements.
11. Annually supplying a church statistical return.

12. Financially supporting our shared ministries through giving your Annual Partnership Ministry Contribution which is recommended as a target of 5% of annual general church income.
13. Where possible using the services that the Baptist Churches Western Australia provide for our mutual benefit, e.g. Baptist Financial Services, Baptist Insurance Services, Long Service Leave Fund and other services provided for the benefit of all churches.
14. Contributing resources and skills to assist the fellow members of Baptist Churches Western Australia.
15. Keep the Baptist Ministry Centre up to date with all contact details for your church, pastors, staff and office bearers.
16. Promote Global Interaction as the Australian Baptist Missionary movement working worldwide.
17. Promote Baptist World Aid Australia as the overseas aid and development arm of Baptist World Aid/Transform Aid International.
18. Promote Crossover Australia to advance the gospel in our nation.
19. Open communication with the Baptist Churches Western Australia in regards to meeting these agreed responsibilities and expectations.

## **Our Commitment**

Trusting Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour of His Church and being in agreement with the Church Responsibilities and Expectations, we, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, unite with the Baptist Churches Western Australia. In doing so we will commit ourselves to God and to the other member churches to fulfil our responsibilities and do the following:

### **1. We Will Protect the Unity of Our BUWA**

- By acting in love toward other member churches
- By refusing to gossip
- By supporting the leaders as they follow Christ
- By reconciling conflict

### **2. We Will Share in the Responsibilities of our BUWA**

- By praying for and building healthy churches
- By supporting other churches within our movement
- By warmly welcoming those churches who are new

### **3. We Will Serve the Ministry of our BUWA**

- By using our God given unique gifts and talents
- By being equipped to serve by our seminary and leaders
- By developing a servant heart

### **4. We Will Support the Testimony of our BUWA**

- By faithfully attending Assemblies
- By encouraging a Godly lifestyle and behaviour among our members
- By regularly giving of our finances to support the movement

### **5. Your Denominational Leaders Will Serve Each Church with Love and Integrity**

- By praying for you regularly
- By serving each Baptist Church
- By equipping you according to God's calling for your church
- By willingly and cheerfully providing support services to your church

### 3. Example of a Possible QB Movement Member Commitment

*This Commitment is for churches, pastors, governance groups and service groups that are committed to the theology and practices of Queensland Baptists and are also committed to collaborating with autonomous Baptist churches to pursue the mutual, God-given callings of the QB Movement.*

As a member of the QB Movement we join with other churches, pastors, governance groups and service groups in working together to honour these commitments.

#### All Members

1. To affirm and practise the theology and values of the QB Movement and to reflect this in all Constitutions and governance documents.
2. To value autonomy and support every church in making its own decisions within the theology and values of the Movement.
3. To value unity and collaboration within the QB Movement, affirming that we are stronger as churches and ministry groups choose to serve and mission together.
4. To consult on all major decisions impacting the whole QB Movement and to discern God's direction together in assembly.
5. To participate in the decision-making of the QB Movement where possible.
6. To contribute to the unity of the QB Movement by collaborating together with and actively supporting other churches and groups in the QB Movement.
7. To value and pursue the priorities of the QB Movement – biblical authority, faith-filled prayer, servant leadership, intentional discipleship, effective mission and collaborative autonomy.
8. To ensure that the Strategic Goals adopted by the QB Movement (by Assembly) are resourced and pursued with intentionality, and to support these Goals.
9. To develop good leadership and governance practices that will contribute to the health of the QB Movement.
10. To formalise and implement ethical and legal requirements and policies for churches, pastors and service groups (e.g. child safe, redress scheme, registration of ministers, marriage licensing, code of ethics, professional standards).

#### QB Services and Ministries

11. To provide ministry support for churches (e.g. Regional Ministers, QB Service Groups, ministry resources, training, leadership development, consultancies, specialist ministry areas).
12. To provide pastoral support for ministers (e.g. Areas Pastors, pastoral care, professional development, resources).
13. To provide administrative support (e.g. church insurance, policies, long-service leave for pastors, financial direction, financial programs, access to loans, direction on legal issues, recommended pastoral stipends).
14. To guide and support in the implementation of ethical and legal requirements and policies for churches, pastors and service groups (e.g. child safe, redress scheme, registration of ministers, marriage licensing, code of ethics, professional standards).
15. To provide excellent and relevant biblical and practical ministry training for future and present pastors.
16. To offer the gospel, care and support to the community through service groups on behalf of and with the QB Movement's churches.

#### QB Churches

17. To support the vision and ministry of the QB Movement financially by aiming to give at least 2.75% of church offerings.
18. To support and promote the service groups and ministries of the QB Movement.

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## G. Discussion Questions

*The QB Board recognises that this discussion paper has only just been introduced and so any reactions will be preliminary. The Board invites further reflections and ideas to be submitted to Rev Dr David Elvery ([david.elvery@qb.org.au](mailto:david.elvery@qb.org.au)) by the end of March if possible. A report on all the feedback will be given at the April Assembly after which further submissions will be invited by the Taskforce.*

1. What do you see as the main benefits in being a member of the QB Movement? Which of the resources listed (Section E) do you or your church find most helpful?
  2. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of a QB Movement Member Commitment? What questions do you have?
  3. Any thoughts about the Example Commitments (if you have had time to glance through them)? What are the differences? Which one do you think is the most appropriate? Why?
  4. If the QB Assembly decided to establish a Member Commitment, it could just be signed by new churches as they became part of the QB Movement or it could be signed by all QB churches. Which do you think would be best approach?
  5. What would you like to see included in a Commitment statement for QB members?
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## H. Addendum: Financial Support from Churches

Section E indicates the wide range of resources provided to QB member churches and pastors. These resources have increased considerably over the last 20 years. Partly this has been driven by the need for increasing compliance. The expectations on churches and their leaders have grown considerably and will continue to increase. This has required the QB Movement to play a greater role in interpreting, resourcing and assisting churches implement these compliance measures. While COVID-19 was an exceptional season, it did illustrate the essential role the QB Movement plays in assisting churches with compliance. Recently QB Operations has needed to add staff to further assist churches with child-safe and other compliance issues.

But there has also been a desire to support and resource churches and pastors more effectively as we together pursue the growth of God's kingdom in a challenging and changing environment. This has included administrative support as well as church health support and pastoral care. The QB Movement has worked hard to contain the costs of this increased resourcing, but inevitably budgets have increased.

Yet over the last 20 years, financial support from member churches for the QB Movement has remained around the same dollar value, which represents a decline in real terms of almost 70%.

QB presently recommends that churches give at least 2.75% of a church's budgeted income to the QB Movement (WA and Victoria ask for 5% from their churches).

In response to this recommendation:

- 12% of churches give the recommended 2.75% or above of their budget
- 50% give less than 2.75%
- 38% give nothing to the QB Movement

So how has the QB Movement managed to offer support and resources with a diminishing contribution from its member churches? Mainly it has been through wise financial decisions and extra support from well-managed Charter Groups like Baplink, QCCC and Carinity. But all our Charter Groups are feeling the pinch of COVID-19 with Baplink and QCCC especially under financial pressure, and so we need to look to our churches as we move forward with our QB vision.

QB Services has developed a Strategic Plan for resourcing churches over the next five years. But the vision will require more financial support than is presently available. This vision includes:

- Better assisting and supporting churches throughout Qld who want to have a greater kingdom impact.
- Creating and resourcing a Mission Support Group through which resources can be shared, best practice and innovative missional practices can be explored, and effective forms of evangelism and church planting can be promoted.
- Forming and resourcing a QB Leadership Group to facilitate and support the expansion of leadership development in QB churches and become a source of Christian leadership assistance for churches.
- Developing a Centre for Discipleship through which QB pastors and churches can explore and discuss intentional discipleship practices and spiritual formation strategies, and which can source, develop and promote courses, tools and resources to assist churches to engaging in effective discipleship.
- Providing more informal training programs for churches and pastors in Bible and ministry through our new Ministry and Theological Training Services Charter Group (if approved by Assembly).
- Further assisting churches who are struggling with compliance issues.

As we move ahead with our vision (particularly supporting our churches in the areas of leadership development, intentional discipleship and effective mission), we will need many of our churches to increase their financial support. Already some churches have done this. If every church gave 2.75% of their budget, our income from churches would increase by up to \$600,000. We could then pour this into our vision to support and strengthen churches.