SAMPLE CONSTITUTION FOR CRC Churches International National Movement

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE**

**CRC CHURCHES**

**X**

Approved on

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**CONSTITUTION**

**CRC CHURCHES X**

1. **PREAMBLE**

The CRC Churches X has been raised up by God as a fellowship of affiliated local Churches and Ministers who work together in co-operative fellowship which is based on mutual love and respect and who are coordinated and represented by a National Executive.

Recognition is given to the founding chairman Ps Y..

1. **NAME**

The name of the organisation is: "CRC Churches X" hereinafter referred to as the "CRC X".

Any Church or ministry in affiliation with the CRC X shall be required to incorporate the following name "CRC Churches X" in any documentation they produce. They may also use other local names as well if desired.

The National Executive shall register the names "CRC Churches X -" and "CRC X".

1. **PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTS**

The National Executive of CRC X accepts the principles and objects set down in the "Charter of the CRC Churches International", (hereinafter referred to as the 'Charter') See Appendix 4

* 1. **Our Vision**

Our vision is to help expand the kingdom of Jesus Christ on earth by creating Bible-based, contemporary local churches and ministries (Acts 1:8)

* 1. **Our Mission**

Our Mission is to exalt Jesus Christ in all that we think, say and do, and to extend his influence throughout the world by:

* Proclaiming Christ’s Gospel with the expectation that supernatural signs will follow as the normal New Testament pattern (Mark 16:15-20);
* Planting Christ-centered churches that are autonomous, interdependent and self- propagating (Acts 14:21-28);
* Promoting Christ-glorifying Christian communities which outwork the miraculous and character transforming ministry of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:42-47) and who also contribute to caring for people in genuine need, and in community development.
* Producing Christ-following disciples who seek to obey the Great commission (Matthew 22:36-40;28;18-20)
	1. **Sphere of Operation**

CRC X initially commenced operating in Z, but intends in time to operate in all provinces of X

As outlined in the Vision and Mission above it is nonpolitical, and honoring of all civil governing authorities. (Charter 5:7)

# Declaration of Faith

The CRC believes in and present the following basic truths:

* In the Bible as the inspired Word of God.
* In the true and living God creator of heaven and earth, who has revealed Himself in the persons of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit;
* In the Divinity and sinless Humanity of Jesus Christ, and in His miraculous ministry, His suffering and death on the cross as the only savior for the sins of the world, and His resurrection from the dead;
* That Jesus will return to the earth as its final judge of the living and the dead;
* That all people fall short of God’s perfect standard and can only find forgiveness through faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ;
* That all people who have put their faith in Jesus Christ will witness transformation in their lives, exemplified by repentance and holiness of conduct;
* In Christian Baptism, by full immersion in water, of those who have personally placed their faith in Jesus Christ;
* In regularly celebrating the Lord’s Supper, remembering Jesus Christ’s saving work;
* In the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, with the normal initial evidence of speaking in unknown languages;
* In the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit;
* That God heals the sick today through active faith in His grace;
* In the power of prayer;
* In God’s community of believers, the church and its responsibility to spread the message of the gospel to all the people and nations.
1. **LOCAL CHURCH AFFILIATION**
	1. **Affiliation of Local Churches**
		1. Churches in X may apply to the National Executive of the Association for affiliation with the CRC X where its membership comprises a minimum number of 50 adults being persons 18 years and over; is properly governed as described in these rules; accepts the Charter, and the National Constitution of the CRC Churches X.
		2. All applications for affiliation shall be submitted in writing in a form approved from time to time by the National Executive (see appendix 2).
		3. The National Executive may accept such application on being satisfied with the suitability of the Local Church Constitution and other documentation; the good faith and integrity of the applicants; the spiritual maturity of the constituted Oversight and Finance Committee; and that the applicant Church will have no affiliation with any other denomination upon acceptance into the CRC X.
		4. The National Executive shall reserve the right to approve any changes to a Local Church Constitution in that those changes do not violate the spirit or requirements of an affiliated church.
		5. Upon acceptance, by the National Executive, of a Church as an affiliate, the National Executive shall issue to the Local Church Oversight a *"Certificate of Affiliation"* showing the acceptance of the Local Church as an affiliate of the Association (see Appendix 3).
		6. If any Church falls below the required number of 20 members, 18 years of age and over, it shall revert to an Outreach Status (Clause 4:2) and the National Executive, in discussion with the existing local leadership, may appoint an appropriate 'mother church' to assist and guide the Church into growth and development.
	2. **Outreach Affiliation**
		1. The conditions of clause 4.1 in this Constitution also apply to any outreach Church established through a recognized local CRC X Church. In this case the recognised Local Church concerned would submit an application for affiliation on behalf of the outreach work. This would be done after consultation with the outreach leadership team. For the purpose of this clause it is deemed necessary that an Outreach Church would function for at least twenty-four (24) months before lodging any such application.
		2. Leaders of outreach works may attend Members Meetings of CRC X but do not have voting rights.
		3. Two or more members of CRC X may be appointed by the National Executive to oversee an Outreach Church that is not adequately covered by a 'mother church'.
		4. These Members should have contact with the Oversight and the Finance Committee of the Outreach Church as required.
		5. A minimum of twenty (50) active adult members are required before it can qualify for recognition as a Local Church.
		6. Upon the agreement of the Church concerned and the National Executive, the National Secretary will confirm the affiliation of the Outreach Church in writing.
		7. The name CRC X cannot be used by an outreach work until such time as the National Executive has granted it official recognition as an Outreach Church, unless it is operating as an outreach of an existing CRC Church, or is led by a minister with a National Minister's Credential.
		8. Any group may apply for affiliation with CRC X as an Outreach Church. As an Outreach Church the group would be required to come under the covering of an established CRC X Local Church, or two members of CRC X appointed by the National Executive,

For the purpose of building the group up to the point where a successful application can be made for affiliation as a Local Church.

# Termination of Affiliation

* + 1. The National Executive shall have the right to terminate the affiliation of any Church if such Church is considered to have violated the Charter or this Constitution.
		2. When the National Executive proposes to consider terminating the affiliation of any Local Church the following procedure shall be followed:
			1. The National Executive shall give the local church 30 days’ notice in writing of the proposal to consider terminating its affiliation and such written notice shall provide general particulars of allegations against the Local Church.
			2. The Local Church shall have the right to make written submissions responding to the allegations, which written submissions must be forwarded to the National Executive within thirty (30) days prior to the proposed meeting.
			3. The decision of the National Executive shall be recorded in writing and a copy thereof provided to the local church concerned. The National Executive may call on CRC Churches International Australia for assistance with making a determination.
		3. On such termination, all rights and privileges of affiliation shall immediately cease including the right to use the names CRC Churches X or CRC X.
	1. **Rules and Regulations**

Each affiliated Local Church has authority and power to make Rules and Regulations to administer its local affairs, provided they are not contrary to this Constitution or the Charter of CRC Churches International.

* 1. **Disputes between Churches**
		1. Disputes between Affiliated Churches shall be settled, if possible, between the Churches concerned. If this fails then an impartial mediator acceptable to both parties may be called upon to help resolve the dispute. In the absence of agreement to choose a mediator the National Executive shall appoint a mediator.
		2. If the Churches involved fail to resolve the dispute by mediation, then the matter shall be discussed with the National Executive or its representatives.
	2. **Disputes between a Church and the National Executive**
		1. Disputes between an affiliated church and the National Executive shall be settled, if possible, between the parties concerned. If this fails then an impartial mediator acceptable to both parties may be called upon to help resolve the dispute. In the absence of agreement to choose a mediator the National Executive shall request the assistance of the CRC Churches International Field supporters for X.
	3. **Withdrawal from Affiliation**
		1. Any Local Church affiliated with the CRC Churches X may withdraw from the Association provided that the following requirements are met:
1. the Oversight of the Local Church has voted with a three fourths majority for such withdrawal
2. a properly convened Special General Meeting of the Members of the Church has been called to discuss the proposed withdrawal
3. formal notice has been given to the Members of the Church stating the nature, date, time and place of such meeting at least four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting
4. notification of the nature, date, time and place of such meeting has been given in writing by the Oversight to the Chairperson of the National Executive at least four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting, so that representatives of the National Executive may attend and address the Oversight prior to such meeting.
5. at such meeting a three-fourths majority of the currently registered members of the Church must be in agreement with any motion to withdraw.

# Membership in the Association

* 1. **Membership in the CRC X**

5.1.1 Members

Membership in CRC X comes through holding a Local Ministers Credential or a National Ministers Credential (Se Clause 6.3)

# Annual General Meeting

* + 1. Convening

The National Chairman (refer clause 8.1) shall be instructed by the National Executive (Refer clause 7) to call a properly convened Annual Meeting of members, where formal notice shall be given in writing at least eight (8) weeks prior to the said Meeting.

* + 1. Business

The following items shall be considered at such a meeting:

* + - * An audited statement of income and expenditure and balance sheet of that year shall be presented.
			* Reports from the National Chairman and other office bearers shall be presented.
			* Appointments shall be made to the National Executive as applicable (Refer Clause 17).
			* Office Bearers shall be appointed in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution. (Refer Clause 17.2)
			* Various recommendations may be made to the National Executive, and action may be taken regarding other items.
		1. Voting Rights

All Members may vote on matters of General Business. Only persons holding a National Ministers Credential may vote on matters relating to credentials or constitutional changes.

* 1. **Extraordinary Members Meetings**

Extraordinary Meetings may be called by the National Executive to meet an urgent need that cannot wait for the AGM. The Secretary will give notice to the members by, electronics means (email, Facebook etc.) or by post to the last recorded address of the member. The only matter to be discussed is the urgent need. The National Executive may invite others to give advice on the specific matter but such persons shall have no voting powers.

* 1. **Authority**

The National Executive, in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, has authority and power to raise finance, to form departments, to purchase, lease or rent properties, to establish trusts or other such entities to achieve its objectives, to manage and dispose of all monies and to make rules and regulations to administer its affairs.

1. **MINISTERS**
	1. **Ministry Gifts**

The National Executive recognises that various Ministry Gifts are given to the Body of Christ to enable it to function successfully.

These gifts may have various levels of maturity and expression and are duly recognised according to the nature of their function.

* 1. **Applications for Credentials, Fees etc.**

The recommended procedures to be followed in applying for Ministry recognition, granting of credentials, setting of fees, etc are defined in the "Ministry Guidelines" Appendix 4

* 1. **Classification of Ministry**

The following Credentials may be issued by the National Executive:

* + 1. Local Minister's Credential

This Credential is issued by the National Executive and may be given to a person who is functioning as:

* + - * The Senior Minister or Assistant/ Associate Minister of a local church while still gaining experience, or
			* The Senior Minister or Assistant/ Associate Minister of a local church who continues to perform an effective ministry solely related to a particular locality.
		1. National Minister's Credential

The National Minister's Credential is recognition of a ministry which extends beyond the particular area of service concerned and is recognition of the ministry gift by the CRC X.

# Requirements for a Credential

Credentials may be issued to such persons who:

* + - Are members of a recognised CRC X Church or a ministry acceptable to the National Executive.
		- Have the requisite proven natural and spiritual qualifications of an Elder as described in:

1 Timothy 3:1-13

Titus 1:5-16

1 Peter 5:1-10

* + - Have shown competence in the relevant Ministry Competencies. (See Appendix 4)
		- Demonstrate stability, wisdom and spiritual maturity in their Christian walk.
		- Express a Ministry Gift in accordance with Ephesians 4:11 etc.
		- Show integrity, loyalty and commitment to the fellowship and concepts of the CRC Churches X.
		- Agree to abide by the requirements of:

The Charter of the CRC Churches International, and

The Constitution of the CRC Churches X.

# Marriage, divorce and remarriage in relation to Credentials

* + 1. Biblical Model

The CRC Churches X understands that the Biblical model of marriage is a life-long, monogamous legally-performed marriage between a man and a woman, in which there is constant love, continual care, mutual respect, Godly order, submission and sexual intimacy. In such a context children may be born and raised in an atmosphere of loving care, godly training and discipline.

Fornication, adultery, defacto relationships, homosexuality or any other forms of sexual deviation condemned by Scripture are deemed unacceptable and consequently no recognition for any area of CRC Churches X ministry and local Church leadership or ministry can be given to such persons who continue in, or condone as acceptable, such practices.

* + 1. Divorce

Where an applicant has been divorced the National Executive needs to carefully consider the principles outlined in the current "Guidelines on Divorce and Remarriage" document of the CRC Churches X.

* + 1. Remarriage

Recognition is also given to the validity of remarriage for a person whose spouse has died or a divorced person who:

* Satisfies the requirements of the relevant Issuing Authority who have given due consideration to the current "Guidelines on Divorce and Remarriage" document of the CRC Churches X.
* Satisfies the requirements of the Issuing Authority who have given due consideration to the current "Ministry Guidelines" document of the CRC Churches X.

# Disputes between Credential Holders.

Ideally all disputes should be resolved on the basis of the following Scriptures: o Matthew 18:15-20; 5:23-26

o Galatians 6:1-5

If this fails then the matter shall be referred to the National Executive whose decision shall be final.

# 6.7 Termination of Membership

Any Member may, by notice in writing to the National Chairman, terminate their Membership with the CRC X, by surrendering their Credential, and forfeiting all rights and privileges of persons holding a ministry credential in CRC X. Such termination shall take immediate effect.

# Movement of Ministers

When a recognised Minister proposes to re-establish himself in a new location, then such a move shall be made in conjunction with:

* + - The National Chairman and the National Vice Chairman, and.
		- The Oversight of each local Church which may be affected.

# Forfeiture of Credential

Should the Issuing Authority of a credential (as defined in Item 6.3) determine that a holder of a credential has violated the basic requirements of Scripture or this Constitution or the Charter in the areas of:

* + - Use of finance, or
		- Ministerial ethics, or
		- Personal morality, or
		- Doctrine then they shall
			* Be required to surrender their credential immediately.
			* Be required to resign from leadership of their church immediately.
			* Be required to resign from any leadership position held within the CRC X.
			* Be required to accept a reasonable period of restoration and rehabilitation as prescribed by the National Executive.

# Suspension of Credential

The National Chairman together with the National Vice Chairman shall have the power to suspend ministerial credentials and require immediate relinquishment of the person's leadership duties in the CRC Churches in X, pending an investigation and judgement thereon by the National Executive.

The National Chairman and National Vice Chairman may together take such action when they determine that a suspension is appropriate given the circumstances of the case, and notwithstanding that the person concerned may not at that time have had sufficient opportunity to respond to the allegations.

In the event of a Minister of the CRC Churches X having their Credential suspended, they shall be required to:

* Relinquish all positions they hold within the CRC Churches:
* Cease any active role in their local CRC Church.

In this extraordinary eventuality the National Executive is to fully consult and work in loving unity with the local Church Oversight. It is also expected that the National Executive will make provision for ministry and counselling support to be given to the Local Church, its Oversight and any other aggrieved parties. Furthermore, that the National Executive shall quickly expediate any investigations to finalise such a matter quickly.

# National Executive

* 1. **Membership**

The CRC X shall have expression through a National Executive which shall comprise:

* The National Chairman elected according to clause 17.2
* The National Vice-Chairman elected to office according to clause 17.2
* The National Secretary/ Treasurer elected to office according to clause 17.2
* A number of Executive Members determined and elected according to clause 17.2

The National Executive shall comprise a minimum of four (4) members and a maximum of nine (9) members including the National Chairman and the National Vice-Chairman.

# Attendance

**All** ministers appointed to this Executive are expected to be in attendance at

**all** properly convened meetings.

# Quorum

A quorum for this Executive shall comprise three-fourths of the total number of Ministers elected to the Executive.

# Responsibilities

The National Executive shall:

o Set the spiritual direction, vision and goals for the Movement.

* Develop spiritual guidelines and strategies to achieve the Movement's objectives.
* Act as the Issuing Authority for Ministry Credentials.
* Implement decisions made by the members Meetings.
* Have authority to accept applications for affiliation with the CRC X by Churches wanting to join the movement.
* Organise National Conferences and other authorised National functions.
* Meet at least once each a year.
* Ensure that a copy of the minutes of each Annual General Meeting of the CRC X is forwarded to all CRC X credentialed pastors.
* Have power to appoint such committees as considered desirable to carry out such functions as shall be delegated by the National Executive.

# Election of Office Bearers

At the Annual General Meeting of Members, the following positions shall be elected:

* A National Chairman for a term of four (4) years (see clause 17.2.1).
* Other Executive Members for a term of two (2) years (see clause 17.2.1). The National Executive shall have power to appoint interim office bearers and other personnel as required.

# Removal from Office

Further to the procedures of clause 6.9, the National Executive shall have the power, by a three-fourths majority decision, to remove from office and suspend or remove the credential of any National Executive Member who has contravened the normal requirements of any CRC Churches Minister as specified in clause 6.9.

# Duties of National Executive Members

* 1. **National Chairman**
* To preside at National Conferences and the Annual General Meeting.
* To call and chair meetings of the National Executive.
* To coordinate the duties of Executive members and their leadership contribution.
* To implement decisions that may be given by the National Executive.
* To exercise on a larger scale whatever his ministry and calling enable him to do.

o To represent the National Executive to society in general.

# National Vice-Chairman

* To represent or deputise for the National Chairman where necessary.
* To assist the National Chairman.
* To exercise on a larger scale whatever his ministry and calling enable him to do.

# National Secretary/Treasurer

* To make and file true records and minutes of the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting of members.
* To act as Secretary for the National Executive and make, file and distribute where directed accurate records of the proceedings of all meetings of the said Executive.
* To issue the required annual Credentials as detailed under Clause 6.3.

hereof.

* To act in conjunction with the National Executive utilising approved methods of banking, drawing, recording and reporting of monies placed in his care.

# Members of the National Executive

* To be available to attend meetings and effectively serve on the National Executive as it undertakes its various activities.
* To exercise general spiritual leadership as the opportunity affords.

# National Conference

* 1. **Conference**

A Conference of all Credentialed Ministers (see clause 6.3) and other recognised leaders of Local Churches shall be held at least every 2 years and shall be for a minimum duration of two days when all CRC X pastors are expected to attend.

# Program

The Conference program shall be arranged by the National Executive and shall be primarily for spiritual fellowship and promotion of vision giving ample opportunity for discussion, sharing and mutual encouragement.

# Finance and Property Ownership

* 1. The National Executive shall have the powers to determine the level of financial contribution that Credentialed ministers shall contribute to CRC X.
	2. The National Executive shall have power to purchase, own, lease, and rent and manage properties on behalf of the CRC X for its Churches and ministries.
	3. In the event of the winding up or dissolution of the Association, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, there remain any property or funds whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to, or distributed among the members of the Association. They shall be transferred or donated to another organisation, which has similar objects and prohibits the distribution of its income and property among its members, and is exempt from income tax, after consultation with those persons who were members of the Association at the time of dissolution or winding-up.
	4. The liability of a member of the Association to contribute toward the payment of the debts and liabilities of the Association or the costs, charges and expenses, of the winding-up of the Assembly is limited. It is limited to the amount, if any, unpaid by the member in respect of any fees or charges owing to the Association by that member.
1. **Missions**

The National Executive shall have the power to establish a "Missions Executive" to effectively recognise, assist, support and co-ordinate personnel who are available to serve in both Home and Overseas Missions.

1. **Ministry College**

The National Executive shall have the power to establish a Ministry College and Training Schools to provide an advanced teaching faculty to develop and train prospective Ministers, Missionaries and other ministries.

1. **Magazine**

The National Executive shall have power to publish a national magazine to promote the vision and activities of the CRC X.

1. **Logo**

The National Executive shall use the "logo" as approved by the of the CRC Churches X.

1. **Publications**

The National Executive shall have power to publish such books, magazines and other material as are necessary for the spreading of the gospel and to appoint editors and to commission writers as needed.

1. **Other Departments**

The National Executive shall have power to establish such other departments, trusts, committees etc. as deemed necessary to achieve its objects.

1. **Voting**

While it is felt consistent with Scripture that there should be total unity in passing of resolutions and in appointments to office, for the purpose of this Constitution and unless otherwise stated the following procedures shall apply.

# General Business

It shall be deemed sufficient that two-thirds of the Members present at the meeting concerned shall be agreed.

A quorum for such meeting shall comprise one-third of the total number of members.

# Election to Office

* + 1. Nominations of candidates for election as officers of the Association or as ordinary members of the National Executive shall be made in writing, signed by two (2) members of the Association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the form of nomination). The nomination shall be delivered to the National Secretary not less than twenty-one (21) days before the date fixed for the holding of the annual general meeting.
		2. Any member of CRC X holding a National Ministers Credential is eligible for nomination to the National Executive. However after the first Chairman only those persons who have held a National Ministers Credential in CRC Churches X for at least 5 years are eligible to be elected as National Chairman.
		3. If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the National Executive, the candidates nominated shall be deemed to be elected and further nominations shall be received at the annual general meeting.
		4. If the number of nominations received is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, the persons nominated shall be deemed to be elected.
		5. If the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, a ballot shall be held.
		6. The ballot for the election of officers and ordinary members of the National Executive shall be conducted at the annual general meeting in such usual and proper manner as the National Executive may direct.
1. **Alterations to Constitution**

Alterations, additions to, or repeal of any provisions of this Constitution shall be by a three-fourths majority of all members of the CRC X holding a National Ministers Credential present at a properly convened meeting of the members.

A quorum for such a meeting shall comprise one half of the total number of members holding a National Ministers Credential.

Notification of all proposed changes to the Constitution is to be advised to all members at least 60 days before the Annual General Meeting. Notice is deemed to have been given if such notice has been sent by electronic means to the last known address of the Member.