

## What do we believe?

### DOCTRINAL BASIS OF OUR BAPTIST UNION OF VICTORIA

#### We believe in:

1. The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.
2. The existence of one God in three persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
3. The deity and incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, the second person of the Holy Trinity.
4. The fallen, sinful and lost estate of all people.
5. The salvation of men and women from the consequences 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.
6. The immediate work of the Holy Spirit in the regeneration of men and women, in their sanctification, and in their preservation to the heavenly Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. The necessity, in order to know salvation, of repentance towards God and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
8. The resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment of all people by the Lord Jesus Christ.
9. The two ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ, namely baptism and the Lord's Supper: 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 blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## What's important?

### BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES

#### 1. The Lordship of Christ and the authority of the scriptures

We believe that to be a Christian one must confess Jesus Christ as Lord. Jesus reveals himself through the Bible, which is the authority for us on matters of faith and practice. For this reason Baptists have not normally been required to accept formal creeds or statements of faith. The Lordship of Christ and the authority of the scriptures are sufficient guides for faith and action.

#### 2. The church is a fellowship of believers, or a company of committed disciples

Baptists have always stressed that the church consists of believers who have been born again by God's Spirit. Baptism is an expression of the believer's repentance and faith and so is generally a requirement of membership in a Baptist church. Ultimate authority in a Baptist church resides, under God, in the church meeting, when members meet together to discern the mind of Christ on all matters related to the work of the church.

#### 3. The priesthood of all believers

Because the church is a fellowship of believers, each member has a living relationship with Christ, therefore each member, regardless of gender or office, is equal and has a share in the ministry of the church.

#### 4. The ministry

While everyone is equal and shares in the ministry of the church, different gifts and functions are recognized by the church. Pastors are appointed to lead the church in worship and in mission. They are seen as the equippers of the local body of believers. Ordination is the recognition by the church and the wider BUV family of these leadership gifts and responsibilities.

#### 5. Baptism and church membership

We believe the New Testament teaches that belief is confessed through baptism. Accordingly, Baptists insist that only believers may be baptised and believe that it should also be the basis of membership in a local church. Baptists practice full immersion baptism because we believe it represents the New Testament mode and best signifies death, burial and resurrection.