



WORKING TOGETHER TO

REACH AUSTRALIA FOR CHRIST

A GUIDE TO JOINING FIEC

**FELLOWSHIP OF
INDEPENDENT
EVANGELICAL
CHURCHES**



WHAT IS

FIEC?

WWW.FIEC.ORG.AU

FIEC is a fellowship of likeminded churches drawn together by our common commitment to the reformed evangelical faith, which we believe most clearly expresses the heart of biblical Christianity: that Jesus Christ is Lord and the one who saves sinners.

We are also united in our fervent desire to see this powerful gospel grow throughout our nation and beyond, so that 'the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God' (2 Corinthians 4:15).

We come together, therefore, not simply to provide resources or support or a formal tie (important as these are), but especially to stir each member church and its leadership to remain faithful to the biblical gospel, and to pursue the spiritual and numerical growth that is the gospel's fruit, so that we might see this nation won for Christ.



A group of people, mostly men, are gathered in a large, open warehouse space. Some are standing and talking, while others are sitting on the floor or on chairs. In the background, there are shelves with various items, a red workbench, and a man in a yellow shirt standing near a white pillar. The overall atmosphere is casual and community-oriented.

REACHING AUSTRALIA FOR CHRIST **THROUGH LOCAL CHURCHES**

Our goal is to plant new churches and grow existing ones that reach ordinary people with the extraordinary message of Jesus Christ.

We believe that God continues to speak to us today through his expired word in the Bible. We believe that Jesus is central to all God's plans and purposes for this world. We believe that our greatest hope is not to be found in economic security, advances in science, political stability, or access to good education. We are persuaded that real hope for our world, humanity, and each of us as individuals, is only to be found in a real relationship with the Creator and Redeemer, our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

You can find FIEC churches scattered across this land and our prayer is that God will raise up many more.



WHAT FIEC DOES

FIEC exists to:

- Plant and grow independent evangelical churches
- Encourage faithful and fruitful evangelical ministry
- Facilitate regular fellowship and mutual support between independent evangelical churches
- Share resources for planting and growing churches
- Recruit, train, employ, and support leaders of independent evangelical churches
- Promote the ministries of independent evangelical churches

"It's great to be part of something that's bigger than yourself. I love the way that with FIEC there is a vision to have a gospel impact on the whole of Australia."

FIEC Pastor





WHY WOULD AN INDEPENDENT CHURCH **JOIN FIEC?**

We are convinced that the best way to reach Australia is through local churches that make Jesus known in their local community. We are also convinced that independent churches are stronger together.

Being part of FIEC links you to a growing number of independent evangelical churches across Australia that share a vision for reaching Australia with the gospel of Jesus through planting and growing healthy evangelical churches.

We pool resources, encourage one another in our shared vision, share our joys, carry one another's burdens and commit to regular prayer for our each other.

We encourage fellowship between the churches on a local and regional level as well as nationally. Our churches to look for ways to serve each other - by sending teams to help with mission weeks or financially supporting church plants, for example.

The FIEC National Conference (September) and Senior Pastors Forum (May) are the times that members of each of our churches come together face to face to be encouraged from God's word, spurred on in their ministry, workshop on relevant topics, plan and discuss, pray for our nation and just enjoy spending time with each other.

Our chaplain is a key element of our fellowship, calling and visiting our pastors on a regular basis. This means that there is always someone outside of the pastor's immediate context who is aware of how things are going for them.

FIEC can be of assistance in finding new pastoral staff and can offer an experienced external voice to speak into difficult moments in the life of a church.





THE PRINCIPLES THAT GOVERN FIEC

1

Each member church is independent. Under the headship of Jesus Christ, each church has the ability and responsibility to govern itself and shape its own patterns of congregational life. Each church is governed by its own recognised and appointed leaders, and not by any external authority, either civil or ecclesiastical. The only formal power FIEC has is the power to include or exclude a church from the membership of FIEC.

2

Given this first principle, FIEC will ordinarily function by gathering together the leadership of member churches. It is this fellowship of leaders that will enable us to encourage and influence one another to remain faithful to the theology and purposes of FIEC. This is why attendance at our annual FIEC conference is regarded as obligatory for senior pastors. We would urge and encourage regular and consistent attendance at FIEC conferences, not only by senior pastors but also as many of a church's leadership team as is possible. This will also ensure that FIEC remains a genuine fellowship and not merely a service provider.

3

Given the first and second principles, the role of the General Committee* of FIEC, and particularly the Executive* and the National Director, is to protect and shape the culture and future direction of FIEC. Care needs to be taken in appointments to the Executive. We expect the Executive to be comprised of men of godly character and proven leadership ability, who have demonstrated over a significant period of time their thorough alignment with the purposes of FIEC.

*FIEC is led by the National Director and an elected Executive made up of members General Committee (elected for 2 year terms). The General Committee consists of the Representatives of each member church.



FIEC

CONFERENCES

FIEC
Fellowship of
Independent
Churches

grace
TRANSFORMING
FIEC 2019 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Every year FIEC runs two conferences:

The Senior Pastors Forum - May

This is a time for our senior leaders to meet to talk, plan, pray together about FIEC and its vision of reaching Australia for Christ. We also hold our AGM at the Forum.

FIEC National Conference - September

A time when all leaders and staff of FIEC churches, church planters and leaders from churches that are considering FIEC membership meet for three days at Stanwell Tops, NSW.

Our time together is made up of:

- Bible teaching
- Update on vision of FIEC
- Topical talks
- Interviews
- Workshops
- Prayer groups
- Singing praises to our great God
- Time to talk and get to know each other
- Meals with focus groups (e.g. Youth Workers)
- General Meeting for Church Representatives

Talks from previous conferences can be found on our website: www.fiec.org.au/events or on our [YouTube channel](#).



MARRIAGE CELEBRANTS

FIEC is recognised by the Australian government as a denomination under the Marriage Act 1961 for the purposes of authorising marriage celebrants to solemnise marriages.

Once a church becomes a member of FIEC, we are able to either nominate a pastor as a celebrant or request that they be transferred to FIEC if they are already registered with another denomination.

FIEC currently has three forms of service for marriage ceremonies that our celebrants are able to use.

Application forms, copies of our three forms of service and other celebrant resources can be found on our website at:
www.fiec.org.au/celebrants.





FIEC

STAFF & EXECUTIVE

Al Stewart,
FIEC National Director

FIEC is led by the National Director and an elected Executive made up of members General Committee (elected for 2 year terms).

The General Committee consists of the Representatives of each member church.

National Director: Al Stewart

Executive: Andrew Heard (Chairman / EV Church)
David Sheath (Secretary / The Lakes Church)
Peter Blanch (Treasurer / Wagga Wagga Evangelical Church)
Roger Burgess (Maitland Evangelical Church)

FIEC Chaplain: Jim Ramsay

Operations Manager: Dean Ingham

FIEC has no physical national office, Al Stewart works out of his house in Sydney, Jim Ramsay from the Central Coast and Dean Ingham from Canberra.



JOINING THE FELLOWSHIP

The process of application for an existing church is as follows:

1. Get to know you - making sure we are on the same page before we proceed with any formal application.
2. Fill in the two application forms:
 1. Church - the church is the formal member of FIEC, so we want to make sure that the church is in agreement with our statement of beliefs and our statement of purpose, as well as helping us get to know the history, the activities and the key personnel. We also ask you to provide us copies of your constitution and policies.
 2. Senior/Lead Pastor - the Senior/Lead Pastor is (usually) the church's representative on the FIEC General Committee and so has a vote in the decisions of FIEC. It is important that we assess their suitability to take on that role. We also want to hear their story, how they came to follow Jesus, what training they have had and how they became a pastor. This will help the fellowship between us in the long term.

continued...



MEMBERSHIP ASSESSMENT

3. Assessment interview - After we have received the applications, a panel from FIEC (staff and/or Senior Pastors of FIEC churches) will interview the Senior/Lead Pastor (and his wife if married). This is an opportunity for questions to be asked from both sides.
4. Conversation with the church's Board/Elders/Council - this helps us to get to know them as well as make sure they are on board with joining FIEC.
5. Recommendation made to the FIEC Executive by the interview panel.
6. Recommendation of the Executive is then sent to all FIEC Lead Pastors for comment/question/concerns (21 day period).
7. Final approval by FIEC Executive.
8. Onboarding to the fellowship... this will depend upon the church/Lead Pastor how and what we do and when (this maybe done regionally with a group of churches, or at the National Conference in September).





CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP

FIEC has agreed upon the following criteria that churches must meet before they can be admitted to membership of the fellowship:

1. The church is an independent (not belonging to another denomination) evangelical church; and
2. Is an incorporated body, where the form of incorporation is determined by the governing body of the church; and
3. Assents to the statement of purposes of FIEC; and
4. Assents to the statement of beliefs of FIEC; and
5. Assents to being represented in all matters relating to FIEC by the senior pastor of the church (unless a Proxy is appointed); and
6. Meets requirements that shall be determined from time to time by a special resolution at a general meeting.

If a church that wishes to join FIEC doesn't meet all these criteria, they may be admitted as a 'Provisional Member'. Representatives of provisional members do not have a vote at the General Committee. We will work with churches that are admitted as provisional members to enable them to attain full membership.

CRITERIA TO BE A

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE

As the the rights of an FIEC Church are exercised by the representative of the church, we have a set of criteria that the representative must meet:

1. The senior pastor of the FIEC Church; and
2. Theologically trained for a minimum of three years full time (or equivalent) formal theological training (this may be waived by the Executive in certain circumstances such as for the first Representative of a newly established church; and
3. Their assent to the statement of purposes of FIEC; and
4. Their assent to the statement of beliefs of FIEC; and
5. Their satisfactory completion of FIEC's assessment process.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

FIEC is funded by contributions of member churches. Contributions are worked out as 2% of all staffing costs and can be paid monthly, quarterly or annually.

We also encourage each of our churches to commit a further 2% to supporting church planting. This is not centrally administered and churches are free to decide where that support will be best used.

The FIEC Treasurer is always available to discuss these matters.

TO FIEC





CURRENT

FIEC CHURCHES

NEW SOUTH WALES

Albury: Albury Bible Church - alburybiblechurch.com.au

Bathurst: Bathurst Evangelical Church - bathurstevangelical.org.au

Broken Hill: Saltbush Evangelical Church - saltbushchurch.org.au

Erina: EV Church - evchurch.info

Forster: Coast Evangelical Church - coastec.net.au

Gorokan: Lighthouse Church - lighthouse.net.au

Maclean: Maclean Evangelical Church - macleanevangelicalchurch.com

Maitland: Maitland Evangelical Church - maitlandchurch.org

Morisset: Lake Mac Church - lakemacchurch.com.au

Newcastle: Hunter Bible Church - hunterbiblechurch.org

Orange: Orange Evangelical Church - oechourch.org.au

Port Macquarie: The Point Community Church - tpcc.org.au

Singleton: Singleton Evangelical Church - singletonchurch.org

Sydney, Kingsgrove: South-West Evangelical Church - swec.org.au

Taree: Manning Bible Church - manningbiblechurch.com.au

Tuggerah: The Lakes Church - thelakes.net.au

Wagga Wagga: Wagga Wagga Evangelical Church - waggaevangelical.org.au

Wollongong: Saltchurch - saltchurch.info

Woy Woy: Grace Church Peninsula - gracechurchpeninsula.com.au

TASMANIA

Launceston: The Branch - thebranch.org.au

Snug: Snug Christian Church - snugchristianchurch.org



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Central Canberra: Lakeside Christian Church - lakesidechristianchurch.com.au

Molonglo: Stromlo Christian Church - stromlo.org

North Canberra: Crossroads Christian Church - crossroads.org.au

South Canberra: Bible Church Fellowship - southsidebiblechurch.com.au

VICTORIA

Baranduda: Baranduda Community Church - barandudacommunitychurch.org

Melbourne, Box Hill: Grace Christian Community - gracechristiancommunity.org.au

Melbourne, Footscray: Laneway Church - lanewaychurch.org.au

Melbourne, Glen Waverley: Cross & Crown - crossandcrown.org.au

Sale: Flooding Creek Community Church - floodingcreek.com

Swan Hill: Seed Community Church - seedcc.com.au

QUEENSLAND

Brisbane, Dutton Park: Sojourn Bible Church - sojourn.org.au

Brisbane, Salisbury: Risen Church - risenchurch.org.au

Brisbane, St Lucia: St Lucia Bible Church - stluciabiblechurch.org

Brisbane, Toowong: Christ Community Church - christcommunity.org.au

Gold Coast: Cross & Crown - crossandcrown.info

Mackay: Mackay Evangelical Church - mackayevangelicalchurch.com

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Perth, Balcatta: North Coast Church - northcoastchurch.org.au

Perth, Bentley: UniChurch - unichurchbentley.org





FIEC ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Facebook

- [Public page](#)

- [Group \(for general FIEC news & discussion - staff & church members\)](#)



You Tube (Conference talks, interviews, church updates & more)

- [FIEC Channel - click here or look up FIEC Australia](#)



Instagram

- <http://instagram.com/fiecaustralia>



Apple Podcasts (2019 Conference talks)

- [Click here or look up FIEC Australia](#)



Spotify (2019 Conference talks)

- [Click here or look up FIEC Australia](#)



NEXT STEPS

If your church would like to talk more about joining FIEC, fill in the form linked below and we will get in touch for a chat - to hear your story, to get to know your church and get a feel for how you might fit in FIEC.

Fill in this form: [Membership enquiry form](#)

[A copy of the FIEC Constitution can be found here if you would like to look at it.](#)

If you have any trouble with these links email membership@fiec.org.au.

FIEC STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

ABOUT GOD

There is one unique and eternal God, who exists in an everlasting loving relationship of Father, Son and Spirit – one God in three persons.

God is sovereign in all things: including creation, revelation, redemption, judgement and the establishing of his kingdom.

As sovereign loving creator and redeemer, he is worthy of all glory, honour and praise.

ABOUT HUMANITY

Men and women together are created in the image of God, and therefore enjoy a unique dignity in creation and a unique relationship with God. Men and women together have dominion over the created order.

Marriage is a gift of God and is modelled on the union of Christ and his church. It is the union of one man and one woman voluntarily entered into for life.

Tragically, human nature is universally sinful since the Fall and all are guilty before God. This leaves us under the wrath and condemnation of God.

We are unable, without the prior regenerative work of God's Spirit, to turn ourselves to God.

ABOUT THE BIBLE

There is no other way to know God except that he reveals himself to us. The Bible is God's revelation to us. The words of the Bible are divinely inspired and infallible, as originally given, and have supreme authority in all matters of faith, conduct and experience.

The Bible is sufficient for knowing God. It is not only central to the wellbeing of the church but is able to thoroughly equip the Christian community for life and godliness.

ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He is both fully God and truly human. He entered fully into human experience. He endured temptation and he suffered and died. He was perfectly obedient to God his Father.

Jesus took on himself the consequences of human sin. He died and was buried. On the third day he rose from the dead bodily. He ascended to the right hand of God the Father and is now exalted as ruler over all.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.

ABOUT SALVATION

There is only one name under heaven by which people can be brought into relationship with God: the name 'Jesus Christ'.

It is only through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, that the guilt, penalty and power of sin can be removed. In that death, God demonstrates his love to us most perfectly and establishes his victory over Satan and all his foes.

The work of the Holy Spirit is necessary to make the death of Jesus effective in an individual's life. This work is only applied to those 'appointed to eternal life' by the Father; an appointment that occurred before the creation of the world and not based on foreseen virtue, merit, or faith in those appointed.

The Spirit irresistibly enables the sinner to repent and put their faith in Jesus Christ, and persevere in that faith, so that salvation is entirely of God's grace and not of human merit or works.

We enjoy now the blessing of union with Christ and secure relationship with God, while we await the final consummation of our hope with the return of Christ, the resurrection of our bodies and life with him eternally. God has destined that there be only one people of God (Jew and Gentile) united by faith in Jesus for all time.

ABOUT THE SPIRIT IN THE BELIEVER'S LIFE

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son, and indwells all true believers.

His role is to bring glory to Jesus Christ, thus making Jesus Christ central in all things.

The Spirit works to illuminate believers' minds to grasp the truth of the Bible, producing in them his fruit, granting them his gifts and empowering them for service.

He grants his gifts for the purpose of service, not self-indulgence. Their use is determined - not by personal desire for fulfilment, or satisfaction - but by the principle of building the church. Not every gift of the Spirit is given to the church at every moment of its life, only those necessary for building Christ's body.

ABOUT CHURCH

The visible church is the gathering of believers around Christ in his word.

The people of God who gather are intended by God to bear witness to him and actively seek the extension of his rule.

Within the church community both men and women are to seek proper expression of their gifts as they work to build the church in love.

In church, as in marriage, the roles of men and women are not interchangeable. The differences between men and women are to be expressed within relationships of mutual dependence and service. Only biblically qualified men are to take on the role of elder or to preach in the regular public assembly.



FIEC STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

FIEC EXISTS:

- (a) to encourage and provide support for the continued planting of FIEC Churches for the evangelisation of Australia; and
- (b) to encourage FIEC Churches to ongoing growth in conversions and spiritual maturity, through faithful evangelical ministry; and
- (c) to encourage and facilitate regular fellowship, and mutual support between FIEC Churches; and
- (d) to facilitate access to and enable the sharing of resources employed in planting, managing and operating FIEC Churches; and
- (e) to facilitate the recruiting, training and employment of ministry leaders in FIEC Churches; and
- (f) to facilitate movement of ministry leaders between FIEC Churches and other evangelical churches; and
- (g) to promote the ministries of FIEC Churches.





CONTACT **FIEC**

If you have any questions about FIEC in general or about membership of the fellowship, please feel free to contact us:

Email: membership@fiec.org.au

FB Messenger: [fiecaustralia](#)

WhatsApp: +61 490 324 097



Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches

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