

## Our Faith Foundations

### Our Christian foundations

Baptist social services have a shared foundation in the Christian faith tradition which follows the teachings of Jesus Christ. The God of the Christian tradition loves all people and wants all people to be treated with dignity. For this reason, tackling injustice and responding to poverty is a central aspect of the Christian faith tradition. You can read more about how our beliefs shape our work in our [Statement of Faith](#).

### Our relationship to the Baptist church movement

All of our member agencies were founded by Baptists seeking to live out God's love by responding to suffering and injustice in their communities. So was Baptist Care Australia. This shared foundation is what keeps us connected.

#### **The Baptist movement in Australia**

Australian Baptists are a multi-cultural and multi-generational movement of people serving communities in metropolitan, regional, coastal, rural and remote Australia through a network of over 1,000 churches. Each Baptist congregation is autonomous and responsible for its own vision, programs, activities, and decision-making processes. Local churches choose to be affiliated with each other, and invest in shared resourcing, through one of our Unions. The decentralised approach means each person, congregation, and Union are independent but supportive of each other. This results in a diversity of beliefs and organisational structures while retaining cooperative arrangements.

#### **Australian Baptist Ministries – A partnership approach**

Baptist Unions partner together on national and international ministries via Australian Baptist Ministries. Day-to-day operations are managed by a National Director of Ministries and governed by a National Council comprised of representatives from each Baptist Union and 'Affiliated Ministry'.

#### **How we fit with the Baptist church**

Baptist Care Australia is an independent organisation which maintains strong relationship with the Baptist church in Australia. As an Affiliated Ministry, we hold a seat on the National Council of Australian Baptist Ministries. We also collaborate with other Baptist organisations as a member of the Baptist Advocacy Roundtable.

#### **Our members' current relationships with the Baptist church**

The diversity of the Baptist movement is also reflected in the diversity of relationships between Baptist social service agencies and the Baptist church in Australia. What we share is a history of relationship, rather than a set structure or hierarchy. Some of our members are independent organisations with separate legal entities and governance structures. Others remain closely related to, or embedded within, one of the unions or local congregations.

Importantly, Baptist social service agencies continue to provide an important avenue by which members of the Baptist church can contribute to collective efforts to respond to wider social issues as an expression of their faith.