



It is said: *a lot changes in politics in a week.* The same could be said of NationsHeart this year!

Within our core membership we have received focused teaching and worship through our Sunday morning service; additional worship opportunities through our Sunday night and Wednesday worship times; focused prayer through the prayer team, prayer corner and prayer and fasting day; growth and development in our men's, women's and children's ministries; the commencement of the Marriage Enrichment course. We have given sacrificially through personal involvement, service, prayer and an increase in our tithes and offerings.

In our mission to our local community we have made quantum leaps forward. Our food bank now has over 70 registered families; we have made lasting relationships with people through the Work for the Dole program; Rough Diamonds continues to expand the areas in which they grow, disciple and then release to serve those that are involved; our children's ministry has expanded, now offering 2 sessions of Zero-Up Playgroup a week and 1 session of our playgroup for children with disabilities – Playworks... and Christmas is just around the corner with Christmas Hampers, Christmas Gift and a Christmas Day lunch!

With so many changes occurring so quickly, it has prompted the Eldership Council to evaluate how we are shaped to cope with the increased ministry breadth of NationsHeart. This evaluation has begun with examining our governance structure.

As you have already been informed, in June this year the Eldership Council came to the decision that NationsHeart should pursue the establishment of a Public Benevolence Institution as an appropriate structure in which to develop our growing community ministries.

In the past 3 months we have focused our attention on rewriting the NationsHeart constitution to:

1. Better describe the character of NationsHeart – to make our foundational legal document consistent with the ways in which we 'do ministry'.
2. Lay the groundwork for us to be able to establish a Public Benevolent Institution.

In embarking on this process, we have drawn on the skills of people experienced in this area to rewrite our constitution. We have researched the constitutions of a number of other churches (both Church of Christ and other denominations). We have sought comment and feedback from a number of people both within our church and outside. As an Eldership Council we have dedicated 2 meetings to working through drafts of this constitution.

As an Eldership Council we now come to you, NationsHeart Christian Community, with a constitution that we believe meets our goals and is written in such a way that will serve us well into the future.

The constitution, at this stage, is still a draft. We now seek your prayerful consideration and feedback.

Over the next two weeks we will be having a time of open feedback and response to the constitution. This will culminate on October 28th with a community forum after the morning service. **Please do not wait until this meeting to bring your feedback which must be received before this forum in order for us to respond.** This can be done by emailing (ben.potter@bigpond.com).

At the community forum, feedback received to date and responses will be discussed.

It is the desire of the Eldership Council that a consensus on the constitution can be reached at that meeting or as a result of that meeting. This would enable us to be able to post the constitution on November 2, so that it can be voted on for adoption at our AGM on November 23.

We are not trying to 'rush' the adoption of this constitution, though we recognize we are working to a tight timetable. We will adjust our timetable if needed.

Although I admit a constitution is not always considered exciting bedtime reading, I do thank you for taking the time to become involved in this process. It is an important step in the shaping of NationsHeart for the future.

I am looking forward to us taking the journey together.

Kara Potter
Eldership Council Chair

11 October 2007