

Street Baptist Church

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STREET BAPTIST CHURCH Church Handbook

We certify this to be the Church Handbook adopted by the members of STREET BAPTIST CHURCH
at a meeting of the members held on the 25th of January, 2017

Chairman: Alwyn Barry

Church Administrator: Richard Houlden

As amended in accordance with the provisions of this handbook on:

Date of Revision	Amendment	Signature of Chair	Signature of Church Administrator
25th January 2017	Initial Version		

STREET BAPTIST CHURCH - CHURCH HANDBOOK

Principles for Charity Purposes

The Church Constitution

The Church is established as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation under a constitution first adopted on January 25, 2017, (and last amended on January 25, 2017) (“the Constitution”) which contains the main legal provisions governing the Church, its purposes and Basis of Faith, and its powers. Under the Constitution, the people with the responsibility for the general control and management of the administration of the Church are known as the charity trustees and they are identified in the Constitution by reference to the office they hold in accordance with this handbook.

The Church Handbook

This Church Handbook sets out the practices of the Church and its method of internal governance, none of which are contrary to any of the provisions of the Constitution.

The First Church Officers

The date of the legal establishment of the Church is the date that the Constitution is registered by the Charity Commission (rather than the date on which the Constitution was adopted by the members).

Clause 2.4 contains the provisions for the appointment of Church Officers. The first Church Officers are not appointed but are the people who are listed below. The first Church Officers will hold office for a period of one year commencing on the date of the legal establishment of the Church (“the First Year”) (but they may be removed during the First Year in accordance with the provisions of this handbook and they may be reappointed during the First Year for a term that goes beyond the First Year).

Alwyn Barry (Pastor)
Matt Neal (Pastor)
Peter Bryer (Treasurer)
Richard Houlden (Church Administrator)
Ingvar Carter (Elder)
Sean Dickinson (Elder)
Adrian Thomas (Deacon)
Michael Dukes (Deacon)
Reg Keates (Deacon)
Robin Mitchell (Deacon)
Sam Oram (Deacon)
Scott Blandford (Deacon)

Before the end of the First Year, the charity trustees shall make arrangements for the appointment of Church Officers in accordance with the provisions of clause 2.4 for terms that go beyond the end of the First Year to ensure that there will be Church Officers in office following the

expiry of the First Year.

Following the expiry of the First Year, the charity trustees shall produce a new version of this handbook that does not contain this wording covering the first Church Officers, notwithstanding the clause in this handbook which says that this part of the handbook can only be amended following a change to the Constitution.

Part 1 – Basis of Faith, Doctrinal Distinctives and Ethical Statements

1.1 Basis of Faith

The Basis of Faith (see Appendix 1) sets out matters that we believe all Christian believers should be able to accept wholeheartedly and a person can only become a member of the Church if they have indicated that they do accept those beliefs.

1.2 Doctrinal Distinctives

We recognise that there are a number of doctrines, not referred to in the Basis of Faith over which genuine Christian believers may take different views. Our Doctrinal Distinctives set out the position and teaching of the Church on these matters. Church members are not required to agree with the matters in the Doctrinal Distinctives and may hold and discuss views to the contrary, but members are required to respect the positions set out in the Doctrinal Distinctives as the teaching of the Church and should not be insistent on their own views or divisive over these matters.

- 1.2.1 Baptism - the mode of baptism to be practised is that of believer's baptism by immersion as a confession of faith, but not as conveying regenerating grace. It is recognised that baptism is not an issue that should divide the church of Christ but that those parents wishing to have their children baptised should be free to seek out a church that will do so.
- 1.2.2 The Lord's Supper - whilst it is desirable that all who partake of the Lord's Supper should have been baptised as believers in obedience to the teaching of the Scriptures, all those who profess to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour will be welcome to partake of the Lord's Supper.

1.3 Ethical Statements

The Church may adopt Ethical Statements setting out how the doctrines contained in the Basis of Faith work out in day-to-day life. These statements are written by the Elders acting unanimously but need to be approved by a minimum of 60% of the members of the Church before they come into effect. Church members are required to lead their lives in a manner that is consistent with these Ethical Statements recognising the reminder and encouragement given to all Christians in 1 John 1:8-9.

- 1.3.1 Marriage – our Basis of Faith sets out that the Bible is the final authority for all matters of belief and practice and the Members of the Church agree that the teaching of the Bible is that marriage is between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6, Ephesians 5:31-33) and that all sexual practices outside of marriage between a man and a woman are sinful and wrong. This includes homosexual practices (Romans 1:24-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11) regardless of whether or not homosexual marriage is permitted by the laws of England and Wales. The Bible also teaches that we must not be actively or passively complicit in sin (1 Corinthians 6:18-20; Ephesians 5:8-16; 1 Timothy 5:22) and that faith without works is dead (James 2:17). It is therefore part of our doctrine that in relation to any activities of this Church we must in no way condone, promote, assist or encourage adulterous or extra-marital sexual practices, whether heterosexual or homosexual.
- 1.4 Amendments to this Part 1 of this Church Handbook shall only be permitted where the provisions of Clause 2.11. have been satisfied.

Part 2 - Provisions for the Internal Governance of the Church

2.1 Members and Membership

- 2.1.1 Clause 2.1 comprises the membership requirements of the Church Handbook referred to in the Constitution.
- 2.1.2 Members of the Church shall be those persons who have confirmed in writing or other means permitted by the Church Officers their unreserved agreement to the Basis of Faith and their acceptance of the Constitution and this Church Handbook in its entirety (including the duty of members referred to in the Constitution) and whose Membership has been approved and has not been suspended or terminated, all in accordance with the provisions of this Clause 2.1.
- 2.1.3 Membership brings with it certain privileges and responsibilities. The privileges are identified as membership of the local Body of Christ in all its work and worship, to be able to partake in discussing and agreeing the way in which the local church should move forward and fulfil its Biblical role in the local community and the benefit of Pastoral care. The obligations of membership are to submit to the authority and leadership of the Elders in accordance with the provisions of this Church Handbook and the Constitution, to participate in the work of the Church and its activities, to attend meetings regularly, to bear each other up before the Lord in prayer, and to share in the financial needs of the Church. In particular this will involve:
- a. Regular attendance at Sunday worship. (Acts 20:7, Heb. 10:25)
 - b. Regular personal prayer and Bible study. (2 Tim 3:15-17, Phil. 4:6)
 - c. Belonging to and participating in a Home Group for prayer, Bible study and fellowship. (Acts 1:14, 2:42)
 - d. Sharing in the life, work and witness of the local church. (Rom. 1:16, 1 Cor. 15:58)
 - e. Regular giving to the local church and the Lord's work in general. (1 Cor. 16:2, 2 Cor. 9:6-7)
 - f. The showing of Christian love and concern, both for the members of the church family and for the community at large. (John 13:35, 1 Thess. 3:12)
 - g. An endeavour to live a life consistent with the faith we profess. (Rom. 6:1-2, Eph. 4:1)
 - h. Regular attendance at the Lord's Supper – the pattern of frequency being a matter for the individual member to decide. (Acts 2:42, 20:7)

Admission to Membership

- 2.1.4 The first Members of the Church are the people who agreed to approve the original version of the Constitution together with the original version of this Church Handbook. A person may apply to Church Officers to become a Member of the Church and that application, if thought fit, will be put to the Members at a Church Business Meeting for their approval.
- 2.1.5 A Pastor and his wife shall be received into Membership on the taking up of his appointment as Pastor subject to their compliance with Clause 2.1.2.
- 2.1.6 The Church Administrator shall maintain a written register of all Church Members.

Termination of Membership

- 2.1.7 A Member may voluntarily resign by submitting in writing a letter to that effect to the charity trustees through the Church Administrator.
- 2.1.8 A Member may be removed from Membership by the application of the disciplinary procedure set out in Clause 2.7.

2.2 Baptism

- 2.2.1 The Doctrinal Distinctives set out the view of the Church with regard to Baptism.
- 2.2.2 Any person wishing to be baptised shall submit their request to the Church Officers who will arrange for two of their number to interview the applicant. The representatives shall report back to a meeting of the Church Officers.
- 2.2.3 An applicant who is to be baptised will be required to give testimony to their faith before the baptism.

2.3 The Lord's Supper

- 2.3.1 The Lord's Supper is to be celebrated in thanksgiving for the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us. It is a service of remembrance of, and communion with, the risen Lord by those who have been saved.
- 2.3.2 The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at least twice a month. The table shall be open to all who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and know Him as their own personal Saviour.

2.4 Church Officers

The Church Officers are the people who hold the roles set out in this Clause 2.4.

2.4.1 Pastor(s)

- 2.4.1.1 In the event of the Pastorate becoming vacant, the Elders shall be responsible for the supply of the pulpit, and shall recommend suitable candidates to the Church for call to the Pastorate.
 - 2.4.1.2 To be called, a candidate must obtain a vote of at least 75% of the Members present and entitled to vote, at a Special Church Meeting convened for the purpose of considering the Pastorate. A quorum of 66% of the Membership shall be required, and the power to vote shall be restricted to those who have heard (live or recorded) the candidate preach.
 - 2.4.1.3 Memorandum of Understandings shall be entered into between the Elders and the Deacons and Pastor-elect, and be recorded in the Diaconate Minute Book.
 - 2.4.1.4 The Pastor's appointment shall be terminable by 3 months' notice from the Pastor to the Church, or 6 months' notice from the Church to the Pastor. Approval of a Resolution at a Special Church Meeting shall be required before giving the Pastor 6 months' notice.
 - 2.4.1.5 If during his Pastorate the Pastor shall substantially cease to hold the doctrines of the Church as set forth in the Basis of Faith, or shall be charged with or suspected of dishonesty or immoral conduct, or otherwise be deemed unfit to officiate as Pastor, the Elders shall investigate such matters, and if of the opinion that further action is necessary, shall refer the matter to the Members of the Church at a Special Church Meeting. Approval of a Resolution at a Special Church Meeting shall be required before terminating the Pastor's Terms of Employment.
- 2.4.2 In the event of the Pastorate being vacant a Moderator may be asked to preside at all Church and Church Officer Meetings. The Moderator (who must agree to the Basis of Faith) can be accepted from outside the Church Membership or may be proposed from among the existing Church Officers. During that period of time all reference to Pastor,

Elders and Deacons should read – Moderator, Elders and Deacons. The Moderator should be recommended by the Church Officers for approval at a Special Church Meeting.
Provisions

2.4.3 Elders

2.4.3.1 The Eldership shall consist of the Pastor(s) plus a number of additional Elders. Normally, as the work of the church requires and suitably qualified and willing men are available, the additional Elders shall be in the majority in the Eldership. These additional Elders may serve for a period of four years prior to requiring re-election. It is recommended, but not mandated, that an Elder serve no more than two consecutive terms. The Pastor(s) are Elders but are not subject to the re-election requirements that apply to the additional Elders.

2.4.3.2 Prospective Elders will be recommended for appointment or re-appointment by the Elders to the Church Officers.

2.4.3.3 Election procedure:

2.4.3.3.1 The voting will take place on the Sunday before the January Members Meeting.

2.4.3.3.2 The Church Administrator shall send a ballot paper to every Member giving names of the recommended Elder(s).

2.4.3.3.3 Members including the Pastor may cast votes in favour of any or all the recommended Elders.

2.4.3.3.4 For appointment, the recommended Elder(s) must obtain at least 75% of the votes of Members voting and at least 66% of the Members must have voted.

2.4.3.3.5 Two Deacons shall be appointed by the Church Officers to count the votes.

2.4.3.3.6 The names of the appointed Elder(s) will be declared at the January Members Meeting. One of the Elders will notify the prospective Elder(s) of the voting results prior to the January Members Meeting.

2.4.3.4 Vacancies:

2.4.3.4.1 Should a vacancy occur in the Eldership it may be filled at the time of any Members Meeting subject to the procedure laid down.

2.4.3.4.2 The period of office of an Elder elected under this rule shall expire three years from the March following his election.

2.4.3.5 Dismissal:

2.4.3.5.1 If during his term of office any Elder shall substantially cease to hold the doctrines of the Church as set forth in the Basis of Faith, or shall be charged with or suspected of dishonest or immoral conduct, or otherwise be deemed unfit to officiate in his office, the Elders shall investigate such matters, and if in opinion that further action is necessary, shall refer the matter to the Members of the Church at a Special Church Meeting, before calling the Elder to resign.

2.4.3.5.2 If the Elder fails to resign in the time prescribed by the Special Resolution, his office shall be deemed, at the end of the period, to have been vacated.

2.4.4 Deacons.

2.4.4.1 Normally, as the work of the church requires, the Diaconate shall consist of a minimum of

seven who may serve for a period of three years prior to requiring re-election.

2.4.4.2 Election procedure:

2.4.4.3 Nomination:

- 2.4.4.3.1 Candidates for election to the Diaconate must be 21 years of age or older, and have been in Membership for at least six months on the date of the election.
- 2.4.4.3.2 The Church Administrator shall, 42 days (six weeks) prior to the election, provide every Church Member a letter notifying of vacancies, Deacons standing for re-election and requesting nominations.
- 2.4.4.3.3 Nominations shall be placed in the box provided on or before the third Sunday prior to the Members Meeting.
- 2.4.4.3.4 To be an effective candidate for election, a person must be nominated by three Members, and upon any person receiving three nominations, the Elders shall ascertain if that Member is willing to stand for election.
- 2.4.4.3.5 Nomination shall be regarded as the private and individual responsibility of each Member, and it is earnestly requested that no canvassing of any kind be done.

2.4.4.4 Voting:

- 2.4.4.4.1 The election shall be held on the Sunday before the Members Meeting in March, save for the special provision of 2.4.4.5.1 below.
- 2.4.4.4.2 The Church Administrator shall send a ballot form to every Member giving the names of the candidates who have been properly nominated and agreed to stand for election.
- 2.4.4.4.3 Members, may cast votes in favour of any or all of the candidates to ascertain the confidence of the Church.
- 2.4.4.4.4 On the previous Sunday to the Church Meeting two non-retiring Deacons shall be appointed by the Church Officers to count the votes. Vacancies will be filled by the candidates who receive the highest number of votes, provided that the candidate has obtained at least 66% of the votes of Members voting. In the event of a tie the Church Officers will select from the tied candidates, or if deemed appropriate appoint all tied candidates.
- 2.4.4.4.5 The number of votes obtained individually at the election shall not be made public but names of elected candidates shall be declared at the next Members Meeting. A Church Officer will notify candidates of the result of the voting prior to the Members meeting.

2.4.4.5 Vacancies:

- 2.4.4.5.1 Should a vacancy occur in the Diaconate it may be filled at the time of any Members Meeting subject to the procedure laid down.
- 2.4.4.5.2 The period of office of a Deacon elected under this rule shall expire two years from the March following his election.

2.4.4.6 Dismissal:

- 2.4.4.6.1 If during his term of office any Deacon shall substantially cease to hold the doctrines of the Church as set forth in the Basis of Faith, or shall be charged with or suspected of dishonest or immoral conduct, or otherwise be deemed

unfit to officiate in his office, the Elders shall investigate such matters, and if in opinion that further action is necessary, shall refer the matter to the Members of the Church at a Special Church Meeting, before calling the Deacon to resign.

2.4.4.6.2 If the Deacon fails to resign in the time prescribed by the Special Resolution, his office shall be deemed, at the end of that period, to have been vacated.

2.5 Church Administrator and Church Treasurer

2.5.1 The Church Officers shall appoint from among their number a Church Administrator and a Church Treasurer.

2.5.2 The Church Administrator shall be responsible for the preparation of notices of any Church Business Meetings and the issuing of all papers and reports to be presented to such meetings. Members shall deliver to the Church Administrator any notice of items of business to be discussed at a Church Business Meeting in sufficient time to enable them to be circulated to all Members before the meeting.

2.5.3 The Church Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining the accounts of the Church. Any Member holding any church funds shall account for those funds to the Church Treasurer together with such explanations and documentary evidence as will enable him to incorporate the figures into the church accounts.

2.6 Office holder status

2.6.1 The relationship between the Church and the Elders (including the Pastor) is not an employment relationship. An employment relationship is a master-servant relationship – the employer being the master and the employee being the servant. We believe that such a relationship is incompatible with the role of Elders within the Church. The Elders are appointed by the Church to provide direction, leadership, teaching and pastoral oversight. The Church may remove the Elders in accordance with the provisions set out in these Rules and the Constitution but, during the time that the Elders hold office within the Church, their master is not the Church nor any representative of the Church, but the Lord Jesus Christ. The Elders are not controlled by the Church, as we believe that this would be incompatible with them being ultimately answerable to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Elders hold office within the Church but there is no intention for the Church to enter into any contract with the Elders and they are not intended to become employees of the Church.

2.6.2 All Elders are “full-time” in the same way that all parents are parents all of the time regardless of what they are doing. Some parents may have full-time paid jobs outside the home and serve their family outside normal working hours, others may have part-time jobs outside the home and are able to serve their family during working hours on some days as well as outside working hours on other days, others are able to devote their whole time and attention to serving the family. In the same way, within our Church family, some Elders will be able to devote their whole time and attention to fulfilling the responsibilities of their office, some Elders will have part-time jobs outside the Church and others will have full-time jobs outside the Church.

2.6.3 To reduce the need for Elders to have to take up paid employment to support themselves and their families, the Church may compensate Elders for carrying out the responsibilities of their office. Such compensation must be in accordance with the procedures for payment set out in these Rules and the Constitution.

2.6.4 In order to clarify how much time an Elder is able to devote to fulfilling the responsibilities

of his office, the Elder and the Church may draw up a memorandum recording the understanding between the Elder and the Church outlining the normal hours that the Elder expects to be able devote to the office, the level of stipend, rest and holidays or any other similar matter.

2.7 Charity Trustees

2.7.1 The Constitution sets out which of the Church Officers are the charity trustees of the Church.

2.7.2 The Pastor(s), Church Administrator and Church Treasurer should all serve as charity trustees. The number of charity trustees should be set to ensure that there is a minimum of 3 charity trustees and that unpaid Church Officers comprise the majority of the quorum of charity trustees. If required, additional charity trustee(s) are to be selected from among the Church Officers to serve as charity trustees for a maximum term of 12 months, after which, if nominated, they may be re-elected. The selection of such additional Trustees is to be by nomination and vote at a meeting of the Church Officers, the nominated Church Officer must obtain 66% of the votes of all Church Officers (excluding the nominated Church Officer). Should a Church Officer who is a charity trustee cease to be a Church Officer they must step down from being a charity trustee.

2.8 Church Discipline

Removal from membership

2.8.1 Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 5 teach that local churches should remove from among them members who refuse to repent of sin. We believe that local churches should always take this action with the aim that it will prompt the person who has been removed from membership to repent so that he or she can be welcomed back into the church and with the aim that it will help to prevent other members from being tempted to follow their example.

2.8.2 A Member of the church may be removed from membership for any of the following reasons:

- a. He or she errs in doctrine so that he or she no longer affirms the Basis of Faith of the Church
- b. He or she is no longer willing to respect the practices and doctrinal positions adopted by the Church set out in Part 1 of this Church Handbook
- c. He or she errs in conduct by committing open sin which brings the church into disrepute
- d. He or she has consistently failed to fulfil the obligations of a member of the church
- e. He or she refuses to repent of sin committed against another Member which has been drawn to his or her attention
- f. He or she has made false and malicious allegations against an Elder, Deacon or other member of the church
- g. He or she is no longer living in submission to the leadership and authority of the Elders of the church

2.8.3 A Member may only be removed from membership by a resolution of the members at Church Business Meeting which has been proposed by the charity trustees of the Church.

2.8.4 The charity trustees shall not propose a resolution to remove a Church Member unless the following steps have been taken:

- 2.8.4.1 The charity trustees have held a charity trustee disciplinary meeting (“the CTD Meeting”) at which they considered whether or not to propose a resolution to remove the Member (“M”) from membership;
- 2.8.4.2 The charity trustees have given to M 21 clear days’ notice of the CTD Meeting, informing M why his or her removal from membership is being considered, and inviting the M to make representations to the charity trustees as to why he or she should not be removed from membership;
- 2.8.4.3 The charity trustees allowed the Member to make those representations at the CTD Meeting himself or herself or through his or her representative; and
- 2.8.4.4 The charity trustees took those representations into account when deciding whether to propose a resolution that M be removed from membership.
- 2.8.5 The Member whose removal from Membership is proposed shall be entitled to a reasonable amount time during the meeting at which the Church Members vote on the resolution to remove him or her from membership to address the Members and make such representations as he or she wishes prior to the vote on the resolution.
- 2.8.6 The Member shall be informed of the decision of the Members by the Elders and the register of Members amended accordingly where termination of membership is to be applied.
- 2.8.7 A person who has been removed from membership shall be welcomed back into membership if they apply for membership in the normal way and their application is approved.
- 2.8.8 The steps set out at Clauses 2.8.9 to 2.8.11 should also be followed prior to the CTD Meeting taking place, but failure to follow those steps will not invalidate a resolution of the Members to remove a person from Membership.
- 2.8.9 The Elders must be informed where it is believed that any of the reasons set out in Clause 2.8.2 apply to a Member of the Church. Where a person’s behaviour is being reported by a Member who has been sinned against by the person he or she is reporting, that Member should normally raise the issue first with the person concerned and only report it to Elders if the two persons concerned are unable to resolve the matter between themselves.
- 2.8.10 Where the Elders are informed or they themselves believe that any of the reasons at Clause 2.8.2 apply to a Member, they shall appoint two persons of spiritual maturity to meet with the Member to enquire into the matter and to investigate the matter thoroughly, and where appropriate to encourage the Member against whom the allegations have been made to repent.
- 2.8.11 After the persons appointed under Clause 2.8.10 have investigated the matter and have met with the Member against whom the allegations have been made (or the Member has been given reasonable opportunity to meet and has refused), they shall report back to the Elders who shall decide whether it is necessary for a CTD Meeting to be held and what additional steps they should take (if any).
- 2.8.12 Even in cases where there has been genuine repentance, the Elders may still be required to report the facts arising from the investigation to the relevant secular authorities. In such cases the Elders shall give to the Member concerned all the support that is appropriate for a Member who is genuinely repentant.

Additional Disciplinary Measures

2.8.13 Whenever the Members vote to remove a person from membership, they may also resolve to impose any of the following the measures:

- a. a restriction from attending or taking part in any or all of the meetings of the Church, including meetings or activities that are normally open to the public;
- b. the remaining Members may be required not to have any association with the person who has been dismissed from membership in accordance with clear and specific guidance from the Elders as to what is required in this regard.

2.8.14 Any of the measures at Clause 2.8.13 may be removed by a resolution of the Church Officers.

2.9 Church Business Meetings

The provisions for Church business meetings are set out in the Constitution under the Clauses headed “Members’ decisions” and “General meetings of members”. A “general meeting of members” under the Constitution is referred to as a “Church Business Meeting” in this Church Handbook.

2.9 Church Safeguarding Policy

2.9.1 The charity trustees shall operate a church safeguarding policy and shall ensure that activities involving children and vulnerable adults are carried out in accordance with that policy.

2.9.2 Each person overseeing church activities involving children or vulnerable adults and every charity trustee shall provide to the Church Administrator a current Disclosure and Barring Service certificate.

2.10 Exclusion of Non-Members from Public Meetings of the Church

2.10.1 The Elders may propose that the open invitation to attend public meetings of the Church customarily extended to non-members may be withdrawn from any individual who seeks to obstruct the carrying out of the work and ministry of the Church, or to undermine the leadership of the Church.

2.10.2 Subject to Clauses 2.8.13 and 2.8.14 the Elders may only withdraw such open invitation to an individual if this is supported by a resolution of the Church Officers.

2.10.3 An invitation that has been withdrawn may be reinstated by a resolution of the Church Officers.

2.11 Amendment of the Church Handbook

2.11.1 Other than the section headed “Principles for Charity Purposes”, any provisions of this Church Handbook can be amended by the charity trustees under the authority of a resolution of the Members of the Church approving such a change at a Church Business Meeting, provided that the proposed amendment shall not be such as would cause the

Church to lose its charitable status or such as would cause this Church Handbook to be inconsistent with the Constitution. The section headed “Principles for Charity Purposes” can only be amended where this is required because the provisions of the Constitution have changed.

- 2.11.2 A majority of 60% of those Members present and voting at the Church Business Meeting is required to approve a proposed amendment to any clause excepting (i) any provision of this Church Handbook requiring the approval of a matter by percentage of the Members which is greater than a simple majority of the Members present and voting a Church Business Meeting, in which case the majority required to amend that provisions shall be the greater of (a) 75% of Members present and voting a Church Business Meeting and (b) the majority required by the provision itself as currently drafted, (ii) the provisions contained in Part 1 of this Church Handbook where a majority of 75% is required, and (iii) the provisions in the section headed “Principles for Charity Purposes” where the charity trustees shall make the amendment without the need for a vote following any change to the Constitution.
- 2.11.3 Notice of any proposed amendment together with the specific wording of the proposed change must be given in writing to all Church Members at least [3] weeks before the meeting at which the proposal will be put to the vote.
- 2.11.4 No amendment may be made under this Clause to any provision of the Constitution, including the Basis of Faith.

APPENDIX 1 BASIS OF FAITH

1. GOD

There is one God, who exists eternally in three distinct but equal persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is unchangeable in his holiness, justice, wisdom and love. He is the almighty Creator; Saviour and Judge who sustains and governs all things according to his sovereign will for his own glory.

2. THE BIBLE

God has revealed himself in the Bible, which consists of the Old and New Testaments alone. Every word was inspired by God through human authors, so that the Bible as originally given is in its entirety the Word of God, without error and fully reliable in fact and doctrine. The Bible alone speaks with final authority and is always sufficient for all matters of belief and practice.

3. THE HUMAN RACE

All men and women, being created in the image of God, have inherent and equal dignity and worth. Their greatest purpose is to obey, worship and love God. As a result of the fall of our first parents, every aspect of human nature has been corrupted and all men and women are without spiritual life, guilty sinners and hostile to God. Every person is therefore under the just condemnation of God and needs to be born again, forgiven and reconciled to God in order to know and please him.

4. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life in obedience to the Father. He taught with authority and all his words are true. On the cross he died in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by his blood. He rose from the dead and in his resurrection body ascended into heaven where he is exalted as Lord of all. He intercedes for his people in the presence of the Father.

5. SALVATION

Salvation is entirely a work of God's grace and cannot be earned or deserved. It has been accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ and is offered to all in the gospel. God in his love forgives sinners whom he calls, granting them repentance and faith. All who believe in Christ are justified by faith alone, adopted into the family of God and receive eternal life.

6. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit has been sent from heaven to glorify Christ and to apply his work of salvation. He convicts sinners, imparts spiritual life and gives a true understanding of the Scriptures. He indwells all believers, brings assurance of salvation and produces increasing likeness to Christ. He builds up the Church and empowers its members for worship, service and mission.

7. THE CHURCH

The universal Church is the body of which Christ is the head and to which all who are saved belong. It is made visible in local churches, which are congregations of believers who are committed to each other for the worship of God, the preaching of the Word, the administering of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; for pastoral care and discipline, and for evangelism. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between churches by mutual love, care and encouragement. True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the gospel.

8. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been given to the churches by Christ as visible signs of the gospel. Baptism is a symbol of union with Christ and entry into his Church but does not impart spiritual life. The Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice offered once for all and involves no change in the bread and wine. All its blessings are received by faith.

9. THE FUTURE

The Lord Jesus Christ will return in glory. He will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. The wicked will be sent to eternal punishment and the righteous will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God. God will make all things new and will be glorified forever.

APPENDIX 2
MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL AT A CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING

The table below sets out the decisions that need to be approved by Church Members at a Church Business Meeting. Some items within the table simply reproduce requirements that are set out elsewhere in the Constitution or Church Rules (“Type A Items”). Other items cover decisions which are only required to be approved by Church Members by virtue of having been included in this table (“Type B Items”). Type A Items will be amended whenever the relevant provision of the Constitution or Church Rules is amended. Type B Items may be amended in accordance with clause 2.11.2.

	Decision	Majority required
1	To allow a Church Business Meeting to proceed on short notice (Constitution - 11.3.2)	90% of all Church Members
2	To amend the Constitution (Constitution - 27.1)	75% of Church Members voting at a Church Business Meeting
3	To amend the Basis of Faith (Constitution - 27.3)	80% of all Church Members
4	To wind up the Church (Constitution - 28)	75% of Church Members voting at a Church Business Meeting
5	Approval of an application for Membership (Handbook – 2.1.4)	66% of Church Members voting at a Church Business Meeting
6	Appointment of a Pastor (Handbook – 2.4.1.2)	75% of Church Members present at a Special Church Meeting convened for the purpose of considering the Pastorate. A quorum of 66% of the Church Membership shall be required, and the power to vote shall be restricted to those who have heard the candidate preach.
7	Removal of a Pastor from office (Handbook – 2.4.1.5)	66% of Church Members voting at a Church Business Meeting
8	Appointment of an Elder (Handbook – 2.4.3.3.4)	75% of Church Members voting (by ballot) and at least 66% of the Church Members must have voted.
9	Removal of an Elder from office (Handbook – 2.4.3.5.1)	66% of Church Members voting at a Church Business Meeting
10	Appointment of a Deacon (Handbook – 2.4.4.4.4)	66% of Church Members voting (by ballot)
11	Removal of a Deacon from office (Handbook – 2.4.4.6.1)	66% of Church Members voting at a Church Business Meeting