

INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH

**THE
CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

(Revised April 2005)

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH
(Constituted as a church on 15th January 1978)

This Constitution was adopted on 27rd August 2003

INTRODUCTION

This church body shall be known as “International Baptist Church”.

The Constitution of this body shall comprise this Introduction, the Articles of Faith, the Church Covenant and the Byelaws.

Articles of Faith: This church receives the Scriptures, being the Books of the Old and New Testament, as its sole authority in matters of faith and practice. This church’s understanding of the main teaching of the Scriptures is set out in the Articles of Faith.

Church Covenant: Each member covenants with the other members that he or she will strive to do certain things in the strength that God provides. The Church Covenant is categorised under the headings of the Scriptures, Holiness, Fellowship and Service.

Byelaws: The Byelaws contain provisions relating to the organisation and administration of this church.

This church is Congregational in its polity, i.e. it recognises Jesus Christ as its supreme Head, believing in His presence, and undertakes to manage its own affairs according to the Scriptures. The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognises and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and co-operation that are common among Baptist churches. This church shall not resign nor withdraw from the Baptist Union of Scotland except by a two-thirds majority vote of its full members.

THE ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. The Scriptures.

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is the Word of God. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

2. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing, and his perfect knowledge extends to all things past, present and future including the decisions of his free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

- (a) God the Father. God the Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purpose of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.
- (b) God the Son. Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ he was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honoured the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.
- (c) God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgement. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of

Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

3. Man

Man is the special creation of God, in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence, whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, they are by nature transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfil the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

4. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. Salvation is found in Jesus Christ alone.

- (a) Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

- (b) Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favour with God because they are treated as if they had the righteousness of Christ.
- (c) Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purpose, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
- (d) Glorification is the culmination of salvation in heaven and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

5. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and

comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgements on themselves, yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

6. The Church

The New Testament model of a church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptised believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ (being Baptism and the Lord's Supper), governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Jesus Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its Scriptural officers are pastors/elders and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor/elder is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ, which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people and nation.

7. Baptism and The Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit after coming to faith in Jesus Christ. It is an act of obedience symbolising the believer's faith in a crucified, buried and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialise the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

8. The Lord's Day

The first Day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

9. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who wilfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labour that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

10. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

11. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavour to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It is the constant duty of every child of God to seek the opportunities the Lord provides to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle and by other methods in harmony with the Gospel of Christ.

12. Stewardship

The Earth is the Lord's and everything in it. God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual. All that we have and are we owe to Him. Each Christian must serve God with his or her time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognise all these as entrusted to him or her to use for the glory of God and for helping others.

Every Christian should give financially to support the work of God, and should do so cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately and liberally. The amount of financial giving is a matter for the conscience of each Christian, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said "It is more blessed to give than to receive" and having regard to the Old Testament passages concerning the giving of a tenth.

13. Co-operation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organise such associations and conventions as may best secure co-operation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organisations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should co-operate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational and benevolent

ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary co-operation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Co-operation is desirable between the various denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified and when such co-operation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

14. The Christian and The Social Order

Each Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in his or her own life and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus. In the spirit of Christ, the Christian should oppose every form of greed, selfishness and vice and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

15. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men that are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favoured by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

16. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards and the means of procreation of the human race.

The husband and the wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. However, a husband has the God-given responsibility to lead his family. The essence of leadership is love, service and example.

A husband is to love His wife as Christ loved the church. In doing so, the husband should remember that Christ died for the church and continues to seek the holiness and purity of the church.

A wife is to respect her husband. As the church submits to Christ, so also a wife should submit to her husband in everything. However, such submission does not require her to act contrary to Scripture or be subject to abuse. A wife is to help her husband to discharge his responsibilities.

From the moment of conception, children are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honour and obey their parents.

It is the special duty of each family member to pray for the rest of his or her family and to encourage them to remain faithful to the Lord.

THE CHURCH COVENANT

Having been brought by the grace of God to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, having been baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and believing that he has led us to be part of this fellowship, we now covenant with one another that we will strive to do the following in the strength that God provides:

The Scriptures

We acknowledge the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and therefore to be without error and the only standard for the way we think and live. Accordingly, we will engage regularly in private, family and corporate study of the Word of God. We will bring up our children in the training and instruction of the Lord, desiring their salvation and growth. We will uphold and defend the Word of God against all who would come against its doctrines.

Holiness

We will strive for holiness in every aspect of our lives, denying ungodliness and worldly desires. Having taken the name of Christ, we will do nothing that will bring reproach or disgrace upon Him.

By a pure and loving example, we will seek the salvation of our family and friends.

We will submit ourselves to the discipline of this Church because we wish to resist sin in our own lives and not to be a bad example to others. On an individual basis, we will also hold each other accountable to live faithfully.

Fellowship

We will love each other as we love ourselves. We will seek fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ at the Sunday services and elsewhere. We will submit to one another, seek unity and show forgiveness. If our brother or sister has something against us, we will take the initiative to seek reconciliation. We will not have a critical spirit.

We will pray for each other.

We will exercise affectionate care for one another, encouraging and exhorting one another. We will rejoice at one another's happiness and, with tenderness and sympathy, bear one another's burdens.

Service

Just as Christ came to serve, we too will serve one another. In doing so, we will use the gifts that God has granted us in his sovereignty and seek his glory.

If the Spirit leads us to move from this place, we will unite with some other church as soon as possible.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.

THE BYELAWS

1. Membership

Eligibility for Membership

Membership of this church is open to all Christians, being those who have faith in God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and who, as a result of that faith, seek to live in obedience to God by His grace as he has revealed His will in the Scriptures. However, membership may be withheld if the prospective member is still subject to discipline from a church with which he or she was associated or if there is a matter that would, in the opinion of the elders, give rise to discipline on joining this church.

Full and Associate Members

Full Membership is open to all Christians who have been baptised as believers. In addition, full membership is also open to those believers who have undergone a water sprinkling baptismal ceremony as long as the ceremony occurred after believing and they maintain a conviction that baptism is only appropriate for a believer after having come to faith in Jesus Christ. Associate Membership is open to all other Christians. Associate Members may vote on all matters other than those relating to:

- (a) the Constitution;
- (b) the reception or discipline of a member; or
- (c) the election of an elder or deacon.

Becoming a Member

A person who wishes to become a member should make this known to one of the elders. If the elders are satisfied that such person is eligible for membership, the name of the person wishing to become a member shall be announced from the pulpit on a Sunday morning. A member must inform the elders of any matter of which he is aware that reflects or may reflect on the eligibility of such person for membership. Such person will be welcomed into membership on the following, or next convenient, Sunday morning unless the elders cease to be satisfied that such person is eligible for membership.

Records

The elders shall maintain a record of the names of the members, showing whether they are full or associate members. The elders may remove a member's name from the record if that person moves away from the area without requesting that his or her membership is retained, if that person dies or if the church so votes as part of the discipline process. On being removed from the record, that person shall cease to be a member.

2. Members' Meetings

Role

It is the duty of all the members, both individually and collectively, to seek to understand the will of God.

Since the fall in the Garden of Eden, mankind has not been able to perfectly understand the will of God. However, we believe that we are most likely to understand His will for this church when we, the members, are living holy lives, when we have come together to seek each others counsel, when we have prayed individually and as a church, when we

have sought direction from the Scriptures and when we have considered any recommendation or guidance from the elders.

Accordingly, the ultimate decision making body of this church is the members' meeting. Examples of matters requiring membership approval includes but is not limited to:

- a) church discipline.
- b) any recommendation requiring church funding which exceeds budget line authority for that particular spending category or would require movement of funds between budget categories (excluding contingency funds).
- c) policies which regulate church ministries.
- d) revisions to the constitution or bye-laws.

Notice, Agenda and Minutes

Members' meetings shall be called by the elders and shall be held at least quarterly. A meeting will be called if twenty percent of the membership aged 14 years and over so require in writing. Except in special circumstances, two Sunday's notice shall be given of a members' meeting by announcing it from the pulpit and/or in the Sunday bulletin.

If a member wishes to raise a matter at a members' meeting, he or she must inform an elder in writing no later than the Thursday of the week prior to the members' meeting.

The elders shall make an agenda available to the members on the Sunday immediately prior to the members' meeting. Only those matters that are on the agenda may be raised at a members' meeting, unless the chairman of the meeting otherwise agrees

The elders shall make minutes of the meeting available to the members within three weeks of the members' meeting.

Chairman

The members' meeting will be chaired by the chairman of elders or by some other man nominated by the elders.

Procedure

A motion proposed by an individual shall require to be seconded before it may be discussed or voted upon. A motion proposed by the elders, the deacons or a committee does not require to be seconded.

If an amendment to a motion is proposed and seconded, the amendment will be discussed and, unless the proposer withdraws the amendment, shall be voted upon prior to any vote on the motion itself.

Subject as aforesaid, the chairman of the meeting will determine the procedure of the meeting.

Quorum

Those present shall constitute a quorum; provided that the chairman of the meeting may determine that there is not a quorum in relation to a particular matter if less than 30% of those entitled to vote on that matter are present (in person or represented by an absentee ballot or proxy) and he is of the opinion that there are insufficient members in attendance given the nature of a matter to be decided. If the chairman does determine

that there is not a quorum, a further members' meeting will be held within two weeks so that that matter can be considered.

Voting

Voting shall be by show of hands unless the members present decide that a secret ballot would be more appropriate given the nature of the matter to be decided.

Those who cannot be present at a members' meeting at which a matter of considerable importance is being discussed may request an absentee ballot or a proxy. An absentee ballot or proxy must be returned prior to the start of the meeting.

Members aged 14 years and over shall be entitled to vote.

Secret ballots may be held at a members' meeting or may be held over a period of time.

3. Elders

Role

The elders shall provide spiritual leadership and in particular shall preach and teach, keep watch over and care for the congregation, direct the meetings and spiritual affairs of the church and set an example. Each elder should have some involvement in discipling groups and individuals within the church. An elder should be able to lead the congregation in prayer and teach others to pray by their humble example.

The elders must appoint or approve the appointment of an IBC church member to a teaching ministry. Only a church member shall be appointed to a regular teaching ministry, except in unusual circumstances.

The elders shall ensure that there is good communication between the elders and the deacons, and shall provide the deacons with guidance and assistance.

The elders are accountable to each other and ultimately to the members.

Eligibility

The terms elder, pastor and overseer are used interchangeably in the New Testament to describe the same men. Men who are full members and who meet the qualifications for an elder, as set down in 1Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, and who give full assent to the Articles of Faith shall be eligible for nomination as an elder. In these Byelaws, a boy shall be treated as having become a man at the age of 16 years.

Election of Elders

The elders shall organise an election for elders in the Autumn and at such other times as the members may decide. When an election for elders is called, all full members shall be able to nominate one or more men who are eligible for election.

Those nominated shall be interviewed by the then serving elders. If the elders are satisfied that a man who has been nominated is eligible for election and that he is willing to become an elder, his name shall be placed on a ballot paper. If there are no serving elders at the time, the names of all those nominated shall be placed on the ballot paper.

The election of elders shall be conducted by secret ballot with each full member aged 14 years and over being entitled to vote. In voting for a man, a member is affirming his conviction that the Lord has called that man to be an elder of this church. A man shall be elected as an elder if more than 75% of those voting vote in his favour.

Removal of Elders

An elder shall cease to be an elder if a motion of no confidence in him is passed at a members' meeting or by a secret ballot of the members.

Term of Service

There shall be an election for elders at least once a year. Each elder shall serve until the election closest to the third anniversary of his election (unless he resigns or is removed earlier). An elder may be re-elected if he is nominated and the continuing elders are satisfied that he remains eligible for election.

Chairman of Elders

The elders shall elect a chairman. A new election for chairman shall be held at such times as the elders may decide and in any event after each election of elders.

Elders Meetings

The elders shall meet together regularly to pray and discuss spiritual matters. Meetings will be led by the chairman of elders and should include but not be limited to the following discussion items:

- praying for individuals and the congregation.
- praying for the various ministries of the church.
- planning services and worship.
- discussing the progress of individual ministries.
- identifying new ministry opportunities.
- proposing policies to support individual ministries.

The elders meeting will have as one of its central purposes the knowing and doing of God's will on every matter discussed. Decisions made at the elders meetings requiring membership approval will be recommended to the membership at the next scheduled members meeting.

4. Full-time Pastor

Vacancy Committee

The purpose of the Vacancy Committee is to seek out a suitable Pastor, and its recommendation to the church shall constitute a nomination. At a members' meeting, full members shall be nominated from the floor to form a Vacancy Committee. Election shall be by secret ballot. A person shall be elected to the Vacancy Committee if more than 50% of those voting vote in his or her favour.

Appointment of Pastor

The Vacancy Committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. When a man is nominated, a vote shall be taken by secret ballot of full members. A minimum of 75% of the returned vote in the affirmative shall constitute a call. The man thus answering and accepting the church's call shall serve as a Pastor until such time

as the church shall give him a written notice of the termination of its need for his services as a Pastor.

Role

A man accepting a call by this church to be the Senior Pastor is automatically an elder and need not be re-elected every three years. His role is not different in essence to that of the other elders, but he will take on the special responsibilities for spiritual leadership and will be known as the Pastor. The Pastor is accountable to the other elders and ultimately to the members.

5. Deacons

Role

The deacons are responsible for ensuring that the practical needs of the members and the church corporate are met. This shall include

- (a) visiting the sick;
- (b) purchasing, leasing and selling church equipment;
- (c) repairing and maintaining the church building, equipment and grounds;
- (d) ensuring that the church building is cleaned and that it is opened and closed on a Sunday;
- (e) ensuring that the Lord's Table is prepared for Communion;
- (f) overseeing the financial affairs of the church; and
- (h) dealing with those administrative matters not dealt with by the elders.
- (i) ensuring that the church property is left in secure condition while unoccupied.
- (j) ensuring that the church property can be used safely by the church body or other groups.

Specific roles and responsibilities of male and female deacons should be made with regard to gifting and gender. The deacons are accountable to the elders and ultimately to the members.

Eligibility

Full members, either male or female, who meet the qualifications for a deacon, as set down in 1Tim 3:8-12, and who give full assent to the Articles of Faith shall be eligible for election as a deacon.

Election of Deacons

The elders shall organise an election for deacons in the Autumn (after the elder election) and at such other times as the members may decide. When an election for deacons is called, all full members shall be able to nominate one or more members who are eligible for election.

Those nominated shall be interviewed by the then serving elders. If the elders are satisfied that a person who has been nominated is eligible for election and that they are willing to become a deacon, their name shall be placed on a ballot paper.

The election of deacons shall be conducted by secret ballot with each full member aged 14 years and over being entitled to vote. In voting for a nominee, a member is affirming his conviction that the Lord has called that person to be a deacon of this church. A person shall be elected as a deacon if more than 75% of those voting vote in their favour.

Removal of Deacons

A deacon shall cease to be a deacon if a motion of no confidence in them is passed at a members' meeting or by a secret ballot of the members.

Term of Service

There shall be an election for deacons at least once a year. Each deacon shall serve until the election closest to the third anniversary of their election (unless they resign or are removed earlier). A deacon may be re-elected if they are nominated and the continuing elders are satisfied that they remain eligible for election.

Chairman of Deacons

The deacons shall elect a chairman. A new election for chairman shall be held at such times as the deacons may decide and in any event after each election of deacons.

Deacons Meetings

The deacons shall meet together regularly to pray and discuss practical matters of the church. Meetings will be led by the chairman of deacons and discussions should deal primarily with issues surrounding the role of deacons as defined earlier.

The deacons meeting will have as one of its central purposes the knowing and doing of God's will on every matter discussed. Decisions made at the deacons meetings requiring membership approval will be recommended to the membership at the next scheduled members meeting.

6. Treasurer and Co-Signers

The Treasurer shall receive, deposit and disperse all money paid or given to the church and shall keep an itemised account of all receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer shall present, at each quarterly members' meeting, an itemised report of the receipts and disbursements recorded since the last quarterly members' meeting. Auditors approved by the elders shall audit the financial records annually. All financial records shall be preserved for six years.

7. Budgets and Financial Authority

The church financial year shall be 1st June to 31st May. Before the start of each financial year, the Treasurer shall, following consultation with the elders and deacons, present a budget to the members' meeting for approval.

The deacons shall be entitled to authorise expenditure not exceeding £500 (or such other sum as shall be fixed by the members' meeting) or expenditure within the budget approved by the members' meeting.

8. Trustees

The church shall elect three trustees. They shall be full members of the church. They shall hold the church property in trust. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorising such action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required.

9. Mutual Accountability and Discipline

Conduct resulting in discipline

A member, or regular church attendee, shall be subject to discipline if he or she (the “individual concerned”) sins against another Christian, consistently neglects his or her duties as a member (including those under the Church Covenant) or is guilty of conduct that brings dishonour to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Purpose

The purpose of mutual accountability and discipline is the repentance, reconciliation and spiritual growth of the individual concerned, the good of other Christians (who may otherwise be encouraged to sin), the purity of the Church, the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians and the glory of God (by demonstrating a commitment to uphold God’s requirements as set out in the Scriptures).

Procedure

Discipline shall take the form of the following procedure, which shall be carried out at all times gently and with humility:

- (a) A member will go to the individual concerned and show him his fault, just between the two of them. If the individual concerned does not recognise his fault and seek to change, the member will seek an opportunity to talk to the individual concerned again, this time in the company of one or two others. If the individual concerned still does not recognise his fault and seek to change, the member will inform the elders, who will seek to meet with the individual concerned.
- (b) If the individual concerned still does not recognise his fault and seek to change following the effort of the elders, the elders will inform the whole church, calling upon them to pray for the individual concerned and to encourage and exhort the individual concerned to return to a faithful walk before the Lord. This shall continue until the end of a period specified by the elders.
- (c) If at the end of that period, the individual concerned still does not recognise his fault and seek to change, the elders shall recommend to the members that the individual concerned be removed from membership. Following his or her removal from membership by a vote at a members’ meeting, the individual concerned will not be permitted to attend worship services or other church meetings, unless and until the elders agree otherwise following indications that the individual concerned is genuinely seeking restoration. The members will

continue to pray for the individual concerned, eagerly desiring his or her restoration.

10. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to this Constitution may be made at any members' meeting, provided such proposed amendments shall have been presented in writing at the immediately previous members' meeting. Announcement of proposed amendments shall be made from the pulpit on each of the two Sundays preceding the members' meeting at which the proposed amendment shall be presented for consideration. Copies of the proposed amendment shall be made available to the members on such Sundays or by letter sent to each member. Amendments to this Constitution shall be by a two-thirds majority vote of all full members present at the members' meeting; provided that the vote shall be by secret ballot if the elders believe that it would be more appropriate to do so.

11 Charter Members

A list of the first full members of this church shall be affixed to the Byelaws. These names shall be recorded for historical purposes and these members shall be known as "Charter Members" of this church.

CHARTER MEMBERS

15th January 1978

First Full Members

Basinger, Clark
Basinger, Joan
Basinger, John
Basinger, Kyle

Bond, Jennifer
Bond, JoAnn
Bond, Lori
Bond, Olin

Bradford, Ben
Bradford, Beverly
Bradford, Lorraine
Bradford, David
Bradford, Tammy

Bryant, Barbara
Bryant, Len

Burch, Amie
Burch, Lonnie

De Weese, Billy
DeWeese, Sally

Dobbs, Carol
Dobbs, Dean
Dobbs, Roy

Fogleman, Clarice
Fogleman, Devin
Fogleman, Duanne
Fogleman, Gordon

Spaulding, Barbara
Spaulding, Jim
Spaulding, Linda
Spaulding, Micah
Spaulding, Timothy

Taylor, B.J.
Taylor, Lula

Hearn, Debbie Jo
Hearn, Juanita (Jody)

Holcombe, Karen
Holcombe, Kevin
Holcombe, Olga
Holcombe, Wayne

King, Ed
King, Nell

Lee, Dianne
Lee, Jody
Lee, Randy
Lee, Wilford

Lester, Pat
Lester, George Ann
Lester, John

Moorman, Sylvia

Mumford, Kathleen

Owen, Debbie

Robineete, Bernard
Robineete, Linda

Smith, Kay
Smith, Lamar
Smith, Sue

Tennant, Bill
Tennant, Liliias

Wainwright, Debra

First Associate Members

Harmon, Gregg (Methodist)
Harmon, Ruth (Methodist)