

THE MISSION CHURCH, MORRISTON  
CHURCH RULES

We hereby certify this to be the Church Rules adopted by the members of The Mission Church, Morriston at a meeting of the members held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2013 at 5 Penllwynmarch Road, Swansea.

Chairman: Lynne Parry

Secretary: Anné Bates

As amended at a meeting of the members on:

Date of Revision	Chair	Secretary

# THE MISSION CHURCH, MORRISTON CHURCH RULES

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### Appendix I Basis of Faith

# THE MISSION CHURCH, MORRISTON CHURCH RULES

## **Part 1- Principles for Trust Purposes**

- 1.1 The Church is established under a Constitution dated 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013, which contains the main legal provisions governing the Church, its purpose and Basis of Faith, its powers and the use of any property owned by the Church. For ease of reference the Basis of Faith is set out in Appendix 1. Under the Constitution, the people with the responsibility for the general control and management of the administration of the church are known as the Managing Trustees. The identity of the Managing Trustees is set out in these Rules at clause 2.4. The Constitution also refers to a holding trustee or holding trustees whose responsibility is to hold property for the Church.
- 1.2 The Constitution contains provision for the meetings of the Managing Trustees. These provisions are the minimum requirements for their meetings. They stipulate the following:
  - 1.2.1 There shall be not less than 3 Managing Trustees.
  - 1.2.2 The Chairman of their meetings shall be appointed by the Managing Trustees and shall have a casting vote.
  - 1.2.3 They shall meet not less than twice a year.
  - 1.2.4 A quorum shall consist of at least one half of the Managing Trustees or 3 Managing Trustees, whichever is greater.
  - 1.2.5 Written minutes of their meetings shall be maintained.
  - 1.2.6 Any Managing Trustee may be remunerated from Church funds provided those paid (either directly or indirectly via a connected person) are not more than a minority of the number of Managing Trustees, but they must not be present in the Managing Trustees' meetings whenever their salary or financial benefits are discussed.
  - 1.2.7 Special provisions relating to payments to be made to persons defined by law as "connected persons" to any one of the Managing Trustees.
  - 1.2.8 Subject to 1.2.6 above no Managing Trustee shall receive any financial benefit from the Church funds, other than the re-imbursment of expenses incurred in carrying out his duties as an employee or paid office holder or re-imbursment of costs of the purchase of goods or services supplied to or for the Church.
  - 1.2.9 Legal rules calling for the disqualification of Managing Trustees.
- 1.3 The Constitution also contains provisions for its amendment.
- 1.4 These Rules set 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 referred to in 1.1 above.

## **1.5 Practices**

- 1.5.1 Baptism - the Members of the Church agreed, in adopting these Rules, that the mode of baptism to be practised by this Church is that of believer's baptism by full immersion, but the Elders may agree to an alternative mode where this is felt appropriate. It is recognised that baptism is not an issue that should divide the church of Christ and those parents wishing to have their children baptised are free to seek out a church that will do so.
- 1.5.2 The Lord's Supper - the Members of the Church agreed in adopting these Rules that,

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.

- 1.5.3 Marriage - the Members of the Church agreed in adopting these Rules that in the understanding and application of the statement in the Basis of Faith on the Bible, 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 homosexual practices.
- 1.5.4 Amendment to this Rule 1.5 shall only be permitted where the provisions of Rule 2.10 have been satisfied.
- 1.6 These Rules were initially adopted by the Members on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013. Any amendments since that date will have been approved as provided for under Rule 2.10. Any new Member, including the Pastor and his wife, to be appointed under Rule 2.1 must confirm in writing their wholehearted agreement to the Basis of Faith and acceptance of the provisions of these Rules in their entirety before their admission to membership.

## **Part 2- Rules for the Internal Governance of the Church**

### **2.1 Members and Membership**

- 2.1.1 Members of the Church shall be the persons who first adopted the Constitution and these Rules and whose membership has not been suspended or terminated, together with those persons who have subsequently confirmed in writing their unreserved agreement to the Basis of Faith and their acceptance of these Rules in their entirety and whose Membership has been approved and has not been suspended or terminated, all in accordance with the provisions of this Rule 2.1.
- 2.1.2 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 participate in the work of the Church and its activities, to regularly attend meetings, 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. Regular attendance, when possible, at the main weekday meeting of the church 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)
- i. Submission to the authority and leadership of the Elders in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Church Rules.

#### Admission to Membership

2.1.3 A person may apply to the Elders to become a Member of the Church.

2.1.3.a Two church officers will interview the applicant to ascertain if they meet the requirements stipulated in 2.1.3.b. As part of the interview the proposed applicant may be asked to give their testimony and state when and where they were baptised. After interviewing the applicant, the church officers will then discuss the proposed application with the Pastor.

2.1.3.b An applicant is expected to be able to publicly profess that he/she has repented of their sins, profess faith in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, whose death in their place constitutes the only ground of their salvation, and who now seek to live a life of holiness by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is also a requirement that applicants have been baptised in accordance with rule 1.5.1.

2.1.3.c If after discussion with the applicant the church officers believe the applicant does not meet the requirements for membership, they will discuss their reasons with the Pastor. If the Pastor is in agreement with their findings then membership will be declined and the reasons explained to the applicant in person. It will also be explained to the applicant what they need to do in order to meet the requirements of membership should they wish to re-apply in the future.

2.1.3.d If the church officers and the Pastor believe the applicant meets all the necessary requirements, the applicant will be asked to sign a statement confirming the applicant's acceptance of the Basis of Faith, the obligations of membership (see 2.1.2) and their agreement to adhere to the provisions of the Church Rules and Constitution, after which the applicant's name will be added to the Church Members register maintained by the Church Secretary. Members will be welcomed into membership at the following Sunday Morning Service, and are then able to vote at the next church members' meeting.

2.1.4 The Pastor and his wife shall be received into Membership on the taking up of his appointment as Pastor subject to their compliance with Rule 2.1.1.

2.1.5 The Church Secretary shall maintain a written register of all Church Members.

#### Suspension from Membership

2.1.6 A Member may be suspended from Membership where the disciplinary procedure set out in Rule 2.7 has been followed and the Members approve such a course of action at a General Church Meeting.

2.1.7 While a Member is suspended he or she will have no right to receive notices of any Church Meeting or to attend and vote at any such meeting, nor will they be entitled to attend the Lord's Supper without the approval of the Elders, unless and until their

suspension is rescinded and they are restored to full Membership.

#### Termination of Membership

- 2.1.8 A Member may voluntarily resign by submitting in writing a letter to that effect to the Church Secretary.
- 2.1.9 A Member may be removed from Membership by the application of the disciplinary procedure set out in Rule 2.6.
- 2.1.10 A Member shall be removed from Membership where they are unable to confirm in writing their unreserved agreement to the Basis of Faith and acceptance of these Rules in their entirety when asked to do so.
- 2.1.11 The Pastor and his wife shall automatically cease to be Members upon his termination of office as Pastor unless they wish to remain in the Church and the Church agrees to that effect at a General Church Meeting.
- 2.1.12 A person whose Membership has been terminated pursuant to Rules 2.1.9 or 2.1.10 will not be entitled to attend the Lord's Supper unless otherwise approved by the Elders and may also be prohibited from attending any of the public meetings of the Church if such a prohibition is agreed approved by a resolution of the Elders.

## 2.2 Baptism

- 2.2.1 Rule 1.5 sets 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 Elders who will arrange for two Church Officers to interview the applicant. The Church Officers will then report back to the Elders, who will decide on whether the baptism should proceed and whether there is any reason why the mode of Baptism is not to be by immersion.
- 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 holding the offices set out in this rule 2.4

### 2.4.1 Pastor

## Definition of the Pastor

- 2.4.1.a Any Elder or Elders may be identified by reason of their gifting and availability to bear a primary responsibility for the preaching and teaching of God's word in the church, the pastoral care of the members of the church and the day to day management of the affairs of the church.
- 2.4.1.b Any Elder identified to bear such primary responsibility shall be designated with the title of 'Pastor', 'Associate Pastor' or 'Assistant Pastor' depending upon their seniority and experience.
- 2.4.1.c If no such person can be identified among the Elders, the Church Officers may consider a suitable candidate from outside the church, providing that they fulfil all the requirements of an Elder as stated in rule 2.4.2.

## Appointment of Pastor

- 2.4.1.d A person may only be identified and designated as a 'Pastor', 'Associate Pastor' or 'Assistant Pastor' by a recommendation of the Church Officers that is approved at a general church meeting by a 75% majority vote of the members present at the meeting. The exception to this rule is that from the date of the adoption of these Church Rules the first Pastor of the Church is Mark Skinner who shall continue in office until he is removed or resigned in accordance with rules 2.4.1h and 2.4.1i.
- 2.4.1.e There shall continue to be equality of position and authority between Elders who are designated as 'Pastor', 'Associate Pastor' or 'Assistant Pastor' and those who are not so designated.
- 2.4.1.f The Pastor may be remunerated financially to allow him to devote his time and attention to the affairs of the Church but may waive the right at his request.
- 2.4.1.g The term of appointment for the Pastor shall be considered on-going.

## Termination of Appointment

- 2.4.1.h A Pastor may be removed from office in the same manner as that of an Elder, as detailed in rule 2.4.2.p.
- 2.4.1.i A Pastor may retire from his post by giving three months written notice to the Elders of the church.

## 2.4.2 Elders

### Definition of an Elder:

- 2.4.2.a The Elders are men called by God to lead and direct the Church in accordance with the Word of God. The Elders shall have spiritual oversight of the church and are responsible for preaching, teaching, pastoring, and church discipline. The members of the church are required to submit to their leadership, provided that such leadership is exercised in accordance with the provisions of Scripture and of these church rules.
- 2.4.2.b The Church recognises that the general New Testament pattern is for a church to be led by a plurality of Elders. It is therefore the aim of the Church to be led at all times

by two or more elders, one of whom is the Pastor.

#### Qualifications for Elders:

2.4.2.c In accordance with Scripture (1 Timothy 2:12-14), the Elders of the church are required to be male. The Elders are those men whom the church recognise to be called by God and whose character and conduct are in accordance with 1 Timothy 3: 1-7 and Titus 1: 5-9. In addition to which, they must meet the following criteria:

- (a) Be over 21 years of age
- (b) Have been a member of the church for at least a year
- (c) Be regular in their attendance at the services of the church.

#### Functions of the Elders:

2.4.2.d The Elders shall collectively perform the following functions to maintain the ministry of the church:

- (a) Pray and study Scripture
- (b) Ensure that true doctrine (in accordance with the Basis of Faith) is maintained by the members of the church.
- (c) Organise the regular preaching and teaching of the Bible at public services of the church
- (d) Preach regularly within the church
- (e) Ensure the orderly administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper within the church
- (f) Exercise pastoral oversight of other ministry activities conducted by the church
- (g) Provide pastoral care for the members of the church
- (h) Exercise correction and discipline of the members of the church where necessary
- (i) Call and co-ordinate church meetings as required by these church rules
- (j) Govern the church according to the terms of these church rules

#### Appointment of Elders:

2.4.2.e The Pastor will make his recommendations to the church members at least four weeks before a general church meeting. This is to allow time for prayer and consultation. During this time, any member of the church should bring to the attention of the Pastor any matters which they feel would render the proposed Elder unsuitable for office. If any member of the church raises such a matter of concern the Pastor must make such investigations as he thinks necessary to determine whether the proposed Elder would be suitable for office. If the Pastor intends to proceed to propose the appointment of an Elder in respect of whom a member of the church has raised a matter of concern which has not been withdrawn, the Pastor must bring that matter of concern to the attention of the members of the church.

2.4.2.f Future appointment of Elders other than the Pastor shall be appointed by the existing Elders from among the male members of the Church. Prior to making an appointment, the existing Elders shall notify the church members of the men they are proposing to appoint at least four weeks before a general church meeting. This is to allow time for prayer and consultation. During this time any member of the church should bring to the attention of the Elders any matters which they feel would render the proposed Elder unsuitable for office. If any member of the church raises such a matter of concern the Elders must make such investigations as they think necessary to determine whether the proposed Elder would be suitable for office. If the Elders intend to proceed to propose the appointment of an Elder in respect of whom a member of the church has raised a matter of concern which has not been withdrawn, the Elders must bring that matter of concern to the attention of the



members of the church.

2.4.2.g Elders are ordained to office with the laying on of hands and prayer at the proposed church meeting. The newly appointed Elder(s) shall be required to declare publicly his full agreement with the Church Constitution and Basis of Faith, and that he will faithfully discharge the duties of his office in accordance with Scripture and within the provisions of these church rules.

Term of appointment of Elders:

2.4.2.h Subject to the rules above relating to the term of the pastor, a person appointed an Elder of the church shall serve a term of office of 4 years.

Reappointment of Elders

2.4.2.i The reappointment of the existing Elders shall be confirmed at a general church meeting prior to the expiry of their term in office. Where an Elder wishes to be considered for reappointment he should make this known to his fellow Elders. They shall then decide whether they wish to propose that he be reappointed.

2.4.2.j Where the Elders intend to propose the reappointment of an Elder they must inform the members four weeks prior to the proposed church meeting. This is to allow time for prayer and consultation. During this time, any member of the church may bring to the attention of the Elders any matters which they feel would render the proposed Elder unsuitable for reappointment. If any member of the church raises such a matter of concern the Elders must make such investigations as they think necessary to determine whether the proposed Elder would be suitable for reappointment.

2.4.2.k If the Elders intend to proceed to propose the reappointment of an Elder in respect of whom a member of the church has raised a matter of concern which has not been withdrawn, the Elders must bring that matter of concern to the attention of the members of the church.

2.4.2.l At the church meeting the reappointed Elder(s) are required to declare publicly that he is still in full agreement with the Church Constitution and Basis of Faith, and will continue to faithfully discharge the duties of his office in accordance with Scripture and within the provisions of these church rules.

Meetings of Elders

2.4.2.m The Elders shall meet at least 3 times a year to ensure they are fulfilling their duties to the church, to encourage one another and to hold each other accountable.

2.4.2.n The Elders will also have joint meetings with the Deacons to discuss and review the work of the church at least once every six months. Joint meetings of the Deacons and Elders may be requested by the Elders, or by the Deacons of the church, at any time.

Retirement of Elders:

2.4.2.o An Elder may retire from the Eldership by giving the Pastor three months written notice of his intention to retire.

Dismissal of Elders:

2.4.2.p Should an Elder be guilty of gross misconduct, breaching the Church Rules, not fulfilling his duties satisfactorily, or preaching doctrines contrary to the Basis of Faith, the matter shall first be investigated by the other members of the Eldership. If there are good grounds for believing that the Elder is guilty, the matter will be brought before a Church Meeting with the proposal that the said Elder be dismissed from office, and the grounds

made clear. The Elder will be removed from office if the proposal receives a 75% vote of church members present at the meeting.

### 2.4.3 Deacons

#### The Role of Deacons

2.4.3.a Deacons are individuals recognised as having appropriate gifts, who are appointed to serve specific needs of the church.

2.4.3.b Unless undertaken by an Elder, the following duties are to be undertaken by deacons:

- Church Secretary
- Church Treasurer
- Co-ordinator for Children's and Youth work
- Co-ordinator for Child Safeguarding
- Co-ordinator for Hospitality
- Co-ordinator for Health and Safety within the church
- Co-ordinator for Administration

2.4.3.c A Deacon of the church may be appointed to perform more than one such responsibility within the church.

2.4.3.d From time to time the Elders of the church may determine other areas of service within the church which should be undertaken by a Deacon.

#### Qualifications for Deacons

2.4.3.e All members of the church (male or female) who are over 21 years of age, and have been members of the church for at least one year shall be eligible for the office of Deacon, provided they are regular in their attendance at the services of the church, and are in full agreement with the Church Constitution, Basis of Faith and Church Rules, and meet the requirements for a Deacon found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

#### Appointment of Deacons

2.4.3.f The Elders of the church may at any time propose that a member of the church be appointed a Deacon of the church if he or she satisfies the qualifications of a Deacon.

2.4.3.g Where the Elders intend to nominate a candidate for appointment as a Deacon they must inform the members of the church to this effect four weeks prior to a general church meeting, specifying the nature of the service that the candidate for appointment as a Deacon will be asked to perform in the church.

2.4.3.h Prior to the church meeting, any member of the church may bring to the attention of the Elders any matters which they feel would render the proposed Deacon unsuitable for office. If any member of the church raises such a matter of concern the Elders must make such investigations as they think necessary to determine whether the proposed Deacon would be suitable for office. If the Elders intend to proceed to propose the appointment of a Deacon in respect of whom a member of the church has raised a matter of concern which has not been withdrawn, the Elders must bring that matter of concern to the attention of the members of the church.

2.4.3.i A member of the church shall be appointed a Deacon if his/her appointment is supported by the Elders and receives a 75% majority vote of those members who are present at the church meeting.

2.4.3.j Deacons are ordained into office with the laying on of hands and prayer at the same church meeting in which voting has taken place. The newly appointed Deacon(s) shall be required to declare publicly his/her full agreement with the Church Constitution and Basis of Faith, and that he/she will seek to faithfully serve the church in the specific area for which he/she has been appointed a Deacon.

Term of appointment of Deacons:

2.4.3.k A person appointed a Deacon of the church shall serve a term of office of 4 years.

Reappointment of Deacons:

2.4.3.l The reappointment of the existing Deacons shall be voted on at a general church meeting prior to the expiry of their term in office. Where a Deacon wishes to be considered for reappointment he/she should make this known to the Elders of the church. They shall then decide whether they wish to propose that he/she be reappointed.

2.4.3.m Where the Elders intend to propose the reappointment of a Deacon they must inform the members four weeks prior to the proposed church meeting. This is to allow time for prayer and consultation. During this time, any member of the church may bring to the attention of the Elders any matters which they feel would render the proposed Deacon unsuitable for reappointment. If any member of the church raises such a matter of concern the Elders must make such investigations as they think necessary to determine whether the proposed Deacon would be suitable for reappointment.

2.4.3.n If the Elders intend to proceed to propose the reappointment of a Deacon in respect of whom a member of the church has raised a matter of concern which has not been withdrawn, the Elders must bring that matter of concern to the attention of the members of the church.

2.4.3.o A member of the church shall be re-appointed a Deacon if his/her appointment is supported by the Elders and receives a 75% majority vote of those members who are present at the church meeting.

2.4.3.p At the church meeting the reappointed Deacon(s) are required to declare publicly that he/she is still in full agreement with the church constitution and Basis of Faith and that he/she will seek to faithfully continue to serve the church in the specific area for which he/she has been appointed a Deacon.

Meetings of Deacons and Elders

2.4.3.q The Deacons will meet with the Elders of the church to discuss and review the work of the church at least once every twelve months. Joint meetings of the Deacons and Elders may be requested by the Elders, or by the Deacons of the church, at any time.

Retirement of Deacons

2.4.3.r A Deacon may retire from office at any time by giving at least one month's written notice to the Church Elders. A Deacon must retire from office when he or she no longer wishes to undertake the responsibility within the church for which he or she was appointed a Deacon.

Removal of Deacons

2.4.3.s A Deacon may be removed from office at any time if 75% of the members of the church vote in favour of a proposal for his or her removal conducted at a general church meeting.

2.4.3.t A Deacon may be removed from office in the church on any of the following grounds:

- He or she errs in doctrine so that he or she no longer affirms the Church Basis of Faith
- He or she errs in conduct by the commission of open sin which brings the church into disrepute
- He or she has failed to fulfil the responsibilities of his or her appointment as a Deacon
- He or she is no longer able to fulfil his or her responsibilities as a Deacon due to illness or incapacity but is unwilling to resign.

2.4.3.u Where any such allegation is made against a Deacon it shall be thoroughly investigated by the Elders of the church who will advise the church members whether they believe there are sufficient grounds for the Deacon to be removed from office.

2.4.3.v A Deacon against whom such an allegation has been made shall be given every opportunity to answer the allegation at a joint Elders and Deacons meeting.

2.4.3.w A Deacon against whom an allegation has been made will be removed from office if at a general church meeting the proposal for his/her removal receives 75% majority of the votes of the members present at the meeting.

## 2.5 **Managing Trustees**

2.5.1 The following Church Officers are the Managing Trustees referred to in the Constitution:

- Pastor
- Elders
- Deacons

2.5.2 Under English law certain persons are not allowed to be a Managing Trustee. The Constitution sets out the exclusions and these must always apply unless the Charity Commission has agreed otherwise in writing.

2.5.3 The Managing Trustees are charged with having the general control and management of the administration of the Church. However, the Managing Trustees have to fulfil this role in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution and these Rules. These Rules and policies made under these Rules may provide that certain decisions can only be taken by the Managing Trustees if they have obtained the consent of the members of the Church. Further, the Managing Trustees may delegate day-to-day matters to individuals or committees without those individuals or committee members becoming Managing Trustees provided that the Managing Trustees exercise general oversight over those individuals and committees.

2.5.4 Where the number of people filling the offices specified in Rule 2.5.1 is less than 3 (the minimum number of Managing Trustees required under the Constitution) the Members shall elect as many Acting Managing Trustees as required to ensure that the number of Managing Trustees is greater than 3 and to ensure that the provisions of clause 10 of the Constitution (Remuneration of Managing Trustees) are followed. An Acting Managing Trustee has the same responsibilities as a Managing Trustee set out in Rule 2.5.3. However, an Acting Managing Trustee shall cease to hold office as a Managing Trustee as soon as the number of people filling the offices specified in Rule 2.5.1 reaches 3 unless his or her retirement would cause the provisions of clause 10

of the Constitution to be breached. Further, every person who is appointed as an Acting Managing Trustee shall cease to hold office as a Managing Trustee 6 months after he or she is appointed, but may be reappointed by the Members if required to ensure that there is always a minimum of three managing trustees.

## **2.6 Disciplinary Procedure**

2.6.1 The procedure set out in this Rule 2.6 shall be followed where any Member is accused of immorality, disunity, failure to accept the Basis of Faith or any other action or behaviour that brings dishonour to the name of the Lord.

2.6.2 The Elders should be informed where it is believed this procedure should be followed due to a Member's views or behaviour. Where such a report is received or where they themselves believe such a situation to exist the Elders shall appoint two Church Officers to meet with the Member to enquire into the matter and report the facts to a meeting of the Elders following which they may put a resolution to the Members at a General Church Meeting that the person be suspended or removed from Membership

2.6.3 Where a Member has been absent from the services of public worship on Sundays for more than 3 months the Elders shall appoint two Church Officers to interview that person and report back to a meeting of the Elders. If no valid reason, in their judgement, is given for the absence then the Elders may recommend that a resolution be put to the Members at a General Church Meeting that the person be suspended or removed from Membership.

2.6.4 Where a Member has been suspended the Elders shall ensure that they review the situation at least at 3 monthly intervals.

2.6.5 The Member concerned shall be entitled to make such representations as he or she wishes at any meeting of the Elders or Members where his or her possible suspension or removal from Membership is discussed.

2.6.6 The Member shall be informed of the decision of the Members by the Pastor and the register of Members amended accordingly where suspension or termination of Membership is to be applied.

2.6.7 The Elders may feel that there are reasons for seeking to terminate the Pastor's appointment other than immorality, disunity or no longer adhering to the Basis of Faith or behaviour that brings dishonour to the name of the Lord. If this is so then this is not to be considered a disciplinary termination and the Elders should follow the provisions set out in Rule 2.4.1.

## **2.7 Church Business Meetings**

2.7.1 General Church Meetings shall be held at least twice a year on dates determined by the Church Officers. The Church Officers shall appoint one of their number to be Chairperson of any General Church Meeting. If no Officer is prepared or is not available to act as Chairperson then the Members attending the Meeting may appoint a Chairperson from amongst their number by a simple majority of those voting.

2.7.2 One of the General Church Meetings shall be the Annual General Meeting and

there shall not be more than 15 months between any two such meetings. The Church Officers shall present their Annual Report and the Annual Accounts of the church funds at the Annual General Meeting. The Chairperson of the Church Officers, or failing him/her another Church Officer agreed by the Church Officers, shall be the Chairperson of the Annual General Meeting.

2.7.3 Meetings may be called by at least 25% or ten, whichever is the greater, of the Church Members and such meetings will be Special Church Meetings. The Chairman of a Special Church Meeting shall be such person as is elected by a simple majority of the Members present at the beginning of the meeting and voting. Only business set out in the notice calling the meeting can be discussed at a Special Church Meeting.

2.7.4 Subject to the provisions of Rule 2.10.3 at least two weeks' notice in writing shall be given to all Members of any General or Special Church Meeting. The Notice will set out the business to be discussed at that meeting. The Chairperson of a General Church Meeting shall determine whether or not to permit any other item of competent business to be discussed but not if it requires a vote of the Members. Failure to be able to give notice to individual Members because they are out of the country or away from the Church on holiday or for any other reason shall not constitute failure to give proper notice under this Rule.

## 2.8 Voting

2.8.1. Unless otherwise set out in these Rules all proposals at a General or Special Church Meeting shall be carried by a simple majority of those Members present and voting at the meeting.

2.8.2 No proxy votes shall be permitted.

2.8.3 A secret ballot may be held on any item where a vote is to be taken where the Chairperson agrees or where 25% of the Members present at the meeting so request. Only those Members present at the meeting shall be entitled to vote.

## 2.9 Church Property

2.9.1 The Constitution governing the Church lays down the uses to which property owned or leased by the Church may be used. These uses are widely drawn. The Managing Trustees are required to ensure that no use of the property is outside the provisions of the Constitution. Where a new meeting on a regular basis is proposed the Managing Trustees are expected to seek the approval of the Members at a General Church Meeting to the proposed meeting. If the property is to be used by third parties who are not Members then the Managing Trustees must seek the approval of the Members to that use prior to any agreement with the third party(ies). The approval of the Holding Trustee may be required to any proposed use of the property by third parties.

2.9.2 Where the Church wishes to buy new property or sell existing property the Holding Trustee, as the registered title holder of property for the Church, will require a resolution of the Members approving the Managing Trustees' recommendation for that transaction.

## 2.10 Amendment of the Rules

- 2.10.1 Other than Rules 1.1 and 1.2 of Part 1, any Rule can be amended by the Managing Trustees under the authority of a resolution of the Members of the Church approving such a change at a General Church Meeting, provided that the proposed amendment shall not be such as would cause the Church to lose its charitable status. Rules 1.1 and 1.2 can only be amended where the provisions of the Constitution referred to in those Rules have been amended.
- 2.10.2 A majority of 85% of those Members present and voting at the Church Meeting is required to approve a proposed amendment to any Rule excepting Rule 1.5 where a majority of 95% is required and Rules 1.1 and 1.2 where the amendment will automatically follow the amendment of the Constitution without the need for a vote.
- 2.10.3 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 4 weeks before the meeting at which the proposal will be put to the vote. Failure to be able to give notice to individual Members because they are out of the country or away from the Church on holiday or for any other reason shall not constitute failure to give proper notice under this Rule.
- 2.10.4 No amendment may be made under this Rule to any provision of the Constitution, including the Basis of Faith, to any other trust deeds in relation to the Church property, or be such as would be contrary to any provision in the Constitution.

## **2.11 Closure of the Church**

- 2.11.1 In the event of the Members of the Church resolving to close the Church the Managing Trustees shall apply the funds to meet all outstanding liabilities. Sufficient funds must be retained to meet the insurance and maintenance costs for any property until such time as it is sold, or otherwise disposed of. The remaining funds shall be distributed in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

The Mission Church  
Basis of Faith

**We believe:**

In the **one true God**, the **Holy Trinity** of persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each of whom is co-equal, co-eternal and sovereign;

That **Jesus Christ, the eternal, divine, Son of God** became a real man and therefore is truly God and truly man;

That salvation from sin and the hope of eternal life is gained only through **faith in Jesus Christ** and on the basis of his death on the cross and his physical resurrection from the dead. This salvation is **all of grace** -it cannot be earned or deserved - and human beings are dead in their sins until made alive by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit;

That on the cross **Jesus died in the place of sinners**, bearing their due punishment and the wrath of God, so that those who believe in him will be counted righteous in God's sight;  
That **God has revealed himself** supremely in his Son Jesus Christ, and has also revealed himself through his word, the **Bible**, which is completely **trustworthy, true and without error\*** and as such is the Christian's guide for faith and living;

That God **the Holy Spirit is active** in believers and in the church today, regenerating and sanctifying those who believe in Jesus;

That the same Holy Spirit continues to give all the **spiritual gifts** to the church, as he sees fit, for the benefit of believers and the church as a whole;

That all who have saving faith in Jesus are part of **the body of Christ**, the church, and as such should have fellowship with one another, pray for, support and minister to one another;

That **Jesus Christ will return** to earth to judge the living and the dead;

That those who believe in him look forward to the sure and certain hope of **eternal life** whereas those who do not will spend eternity **separated from Christ**, in hell;

That the church's **great commission is to make disciples** and that each local fellowship of believers has the duty and privilege of presenting the good news of Jesus Christ to unbelievers, that they might gain the hope of eternal life.

**\*i.e. it is infallible and inerrant**