CHURCH OF GOD
Parkburn Road, Kilsyth

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CHURCH HANDBOOK

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Scottish Charity No. SC054615

1. Introduction

1.1. The Eldership provide this Church Handbook as a framework for the practical administration of the life of the Church and the relationship between the Pastors, Elders, Trustees, Deacons, Ministry Leaders and the Members. It largely reflects how the Church operates in practice. Our legal status and charitable purposes are set out in Appendix 1.

2. Statement of Faith

2.1. The Basis of Faith of the Church is that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the supreme authority and rule in matters of faith and life.

2.2. As a Pentecostal Church, the following Doctrines and Foundational Truths are our theology and are a statement of faith:

THE BIBLE
We believe the Bible is the inspired word of God and that none may add thereto or take away therefrom except at their peril.

THE TRINITY
We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons Father, Son and Holy Spirit and that these three are one God.

THE CHURCH
We believe that the Church consists of all persons who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

THE SAVIOUR
We believe that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and that through the death and risen power of Christ all who believe can be saved from the penalty and power of sin.

THE HEALER
We believe that Jesus Christ is the Healer of the body and that all who will walk in obedience to His will can claim Divine Healing.

THE BAPTISER
We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Baptiser in the Holy Spirit and that this baptism with signs following is promised to every believer.

THE COMING KING
We believe in the personal and pre-millennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ to receive unto Himself the church and afterwards to set up His throne as king.

THE FRUIT
We believe that every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour should produce the nine-fold fruit of His Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

THE GIFTS
We believe that the Church should claim and manifest the nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues.

THE MINISTRY
We believe that God has given Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers for the perfecting of the church, for the work of the ministry and the building up of the Body of Christ.

THE FUTURE STATE
We believe in the eternal conscious bliss of all believers in Christ and also in the eternal conscious punishment of all Christ rejectors.

THE ORDINANCES
We believe in the following ordinances: Partaking of bread and wine in memory of our Lord's death, Baptism by immersion for believers, the Laying on of hands and the anointing of the sick with oil.

2.3. As an autonomous Pentecostal Church we are part of the Elim Network, which is a relational network who share in the Elim Pentecostal Churches vision, values and mission. While the Church is affiliated to the Elim Pentecostal Church, we maintain agreement with Elim's Foundation Truths, as set out in Appendix 2.

3. Vision and Mission of the Church

3.1 As we seek to accomplish the vision that Christ gave His Church, we seek to align our purpose, vision and values on the following, as well as forming the basis for the planning and outworking of our weekly Sunday Worship and regular ministry activities.

VISION

We are Christ-centred believers, seeking to serve each other and our community in love.

MISSION

We are a Pentecostal church, and our purpose is to glorify God, serve each other and our wider community. We are blessed to have a history of over 100 years serving the community and will continue that by ministering to the needs of today.

We are a Bible-based church, which we believe gives the pattern for ministry and conduct. We seek to nurture Christlikeness, recognising that discipleship is a journey, and we are all at different stages.

We welcome the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Our leaders are Spirit-filled and seek to minister under Christ's anointing. We encourage the wider church to exercise the spiritual gifts that Christ gave them through His Holy Spirit.

We direct our efforts to accomplish the vision that Christ gave us for our community while being open to the prophetic voice of the Holy Spirit for what God is doing today.

We are a family and community church. Our church is a place that we call home, and we want others to call it home too.

We value all generations as equally precious in the sight of God and we commit to directing our time, prayer, and efforts to the needs of children, youth, young adults, adults, and seniors.

We recognise that children and young people, both in our church and community, face unprecedented challenges in the current time. We are committed to being with them in those challenges, seeking their physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing and valuing their talents and giftings.

We recognise the effects of deprivation in our community and will direct our efforts to show the love of Christ in practical acts of service.

We seek positive connections with other churches and believers in our town and nation, recognising that we have a role to strengthen the wider Body of Christ and be strengthened ourselves.

We will give ourselves to pray continually for spiritual revival in our town and nation.

4. Leadership of the Church

4.1. The Church is led and governed by the Eldership, according to the New Testament pattern of Church leadership. Pastors and Elders are appointed and removed as specified in the Constitution.

4.1.1. Eldership (Biblically): Christ is the One who is 'the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls' (1 Peter 2:25) and the great Shepherd of the sheep (Hebrews 10:20). He is 'the good Shepherd' who has given His life for the sheep (John 10:11). Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, is the Chief Shepherd, under whom the Eldership exercise their ministry of oversight of the flock (1 Peter 5: 1-4). Elder (or presbyter), overseer, and pastor (or shepherd) are used interchangeably in the New Testament with the nature of the 'office' being the same.

4.1.2. The Eldership has responsibility for the spiritual oversight and pastoral care of the Church and for maintaining its doctrine in accordance with the Basis of Faith.

4.1.3. The Eldership is comprised of the Pastor/s (Senior Pastor or Co-Pastors) and Elders. The Elders assist the Pastor/s to lead the Church.

4.2. The role of the appointed Pastor/s, assisted by the Elders, is to oversee the life and direction of the Church and to provide pastoral leadership to the congregation. They are to be the primary teacher and preacher in Sunday worship and provide leadership for all ministry activities and programmes. They are responsible for the leadership and day to day operations of the Church and, in conjunction with the Elders, the Pastor/s will define strategic goals and vision as the point leader/s amongst elders, staff, deacons and ministry leaders.

4.2.1 They will operate according to the 'Pastors Job Description'.

4.2.2 This calling generally requires a full-time commitment and according to the Constitution receives renumeration under a bona fide contract in a form approved by the Eldership and Trustees.

4.3. Charity Trustees (simply called "Trustees") are appointed and removed and operate as specified in the Constitution and are responsible for the governance of the Church as a charity, compliance with the law and financial oversight. They seek to serve the vision and culture of the Church by stewarding the affairs of the Church, releasing the spiritual leaders (the Eldership) to lead, and partnering with them to see the Church flourish.

4.4. Deacons and Ministry Leaders, appointed and overseen by the Eldership, are responsible for organising and leading the specific ministry areas within the life of the Church.

4.5. Assisted by the Elders, the Pastor/s will implement a structure of regular meetings and flow of communication to allow for an integrated leadership and to ensure all areas of Church leadership are aligned to serve the vision and mission of the Church.

5. Membership of the Church

5.1. Members of the Church will be admitted and removed as specified in the Constitution. The operation of Members Meetings, including the arrangements for our Annual General Meeting, is also specified within the Constitution.

5.2. Church Membership: We believe in the spiritual unity and the priesthood of all believers in Christ and that these comprise the universal Church, the Body of Christ. As the Church of God, Kilsyth (a local expression of the Body of Christ) we offer the opportunity for regular attendees to become formal members:

5.2.1. Church membership is a commitment – To God, to each member of the local church and to the Church leadership, united together under Jesus Christ for the cause of the Gospel.

5.2.2. His Church is established to bring relationship, encouragement, accountability, teaching and edification and pastoral care to the body of believers. His Church is the place where all believers can grow in their faith and flourish in using their Spiritual gifts to serve and edify, and together to share and embody the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ to our wider community and beyond. In the book of Acts we see how the early Church devoted themselves to one another – to fellowship, to the apostles' teaching, to the breaking of bread and to prayer (Acts 2:42-47). As a local church this what we desire to do also.

A Church member is someone who sees themselves as part of the Church family, expresses general agreement with the doctrines of the Church, is committed (a) to its vision and mission, accepts the spiritual leadership of the Church and is part of contributing by serving in the ministries of the Church; and (b) to share in the financial responsibility of regularly supporting the Church and wider Christian ministry in relation to which the practice of considered giving through tithing and offerings is encouraged; and (c) to have a Scriptural regard for those who have the spiritual leadership of the Church and respect their decisions in matters of biblical loving Church discipline, seeking to maintain the unity of the Spirit.

5.3. Charity Membership: As specified in the Constitution Members have a key role in the Church governance structure, with the responsibility to provide accountability for church leadership, as well as important matters being decided by members vote, as laid out in the Constitution.

6. Scriptural Accountability and Discipline

6.1 As a body of believers there is a biblical mandate for mutual accountability and the exercise of loving church discipline as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 and other relevant Scriptures*, with the desire to honour God in all that we do as His Church. When this applies to Members and leaders who have significantly fallen below the Scriptural standard in their conduct or foundational doctrinal convictions, this should always be done with loving care to one another, aimed at the restoration of Members and leaders and protecting the wider church body and the testimony of His Church. When it becomes necessary for this to be applied by the Eldership, they should be above reproach, and it will be done prayerfully, sensitively, with humility and with the upmost transparency, while honouring confidentiality as much as possible.

**For example:* Matthew 18:15-17, Luke 17:3-4, 1 Corinthians 5:1-11, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, 1 Timothy 5:20, 2 Timothy 2:25, Matthew 7:1-5, Romans 16:17-20.

6.2. Discipline may take the form of suspension of a Member or leader from privileges and responsibilities for a period of time to allow for serious reflection and repentance or, if all efforts at restoration fail, in termination of membership of the Church. Termination of membership will only be applied as a last resort when all loving efforts toward repentance and reconciliation have failed.

Appendix 1

As a legal entity the Church is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation which is registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator as a Scottish Charity. The Constitution sets out the legal basis on which the Church exists, the charitable purposes for which it was formed and the provisions which govern the appointment and removal of the Trustees, Pastors and Elders, and their respective powers and activities, and the admission of Members and Members meetings.

The charitable purpose of the Church for the purposes of the Act is the advancement of the Christian religion for the public benefit, founded on the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme authority and rule in matters of faith and life.

Appendix 2

Elim's Foundational Truths

The Bible: We believe the Bible, as originally given, to be without error, the fully inspired and infallible Word of God and the supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

The Trinity: We believe that the Godhead exists co-equally and co-eternally in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - and that these three are one God, sovereign in creation, providence and redemption.

The Saviour: We believe in the true and proper deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His real and complete humanity, in His sinless life, in His authoritative teaching, in His substitutionary and atoning sacrifice through His blood shed, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, in His heavenly intercession and His second advent to receive His Church.

The Holy Spirit: We believe in the deity of the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son and the necessity of His work in conviction of sin, repentance, regeneration and sanctification, and that the believer is also promised an enduement of power as the gift of Christ through the baptism in the Holy Spirit with signs following. Through this enduement, the believer is empowered for fuller participation in the ministry of the Church, its worship, evangelism and service.

Humanity: We believe in the inherent dignity and value of every person, as created in God's image and likeness, male and female, to be in fellowship with God and serve God's purposes in creation. Yet on account of the universal sinfulness of all people due to the Fall, humanity is subject to God's righteous wrath and condemnation.

Salvation: We believe in the necessity for salvation of repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ by which the sinner is pardoned and accepted as righteous in God's sight. This justification is imputed by the grace of God because of the atoning work of Christ, is received by faith alone and is evidenced by the Fruit of the Spirit and a holy life.

The Church: We believe in the spiritual unity and the priesthood of all believers in Christ and that these comprise the universal Church, the Body of Christ.

The Ministry: We believe in the ministries that Christ has set in His Church, namely, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and in the present operation of the manifold Gifts of the Holy Spirit according to the New Testament.

The Ordinances: We believe in the baptism of believers by immersion in water in obedience to the command of Christ and in the commemoration of Christ's death by the observance of the Lord's Supper until His return.

The Commission: We believe that the Gospel embraces the needs of the whole man and that the Church is therefore commissioned to preach the Gospel to the world and to fulfil a ministry of healing and deliverance to the spiritual and physical needs of mankind.

The Coming King: We believe in the personal, physical and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to reign in power and glory.

The Future State: We believe in the resurrection of the dead and in the final judgement of the world, the eternal conscious bliss of the righteous and the eternal conscious punishment of the wicked.

Other relevant policies

As well as our Governance documents, our Constitution and Church Handbook, we currently have the following polices which apply to how we operate as a Church: Safeguarding, Data Protection and Pastoral Care.

Terms used in this Handbook

Act	"the Act" means the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 as amended, consolidated and re-enacted from time to time.
Annual General Meeting	The Members' Meeting described in the Constitution.
Charity	"charity" means a body which is either a "Scottish charity" within the meaning of section 13 of the Act or a "charity" within the meaning of section 1 of the Charities Act 2006, providing (in either case) that its objects are limited to charitable purposes.
Charitable Purpose	"charitable purpose" means a charitable purpose under section 7 of the Act which is also regarded as a charitable purpose in relation to the application of the Taxes Acts.
Constitution	The Articles of Association of the Church.
Church	Church of God, Kilsyth, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Scottish Charity No. SC054615
Church Handbook	This manual which provides a framework for the practical administration of the life of the Church as amended from time to time by the Eldership.
Member	A person who is recognised as a member of the Church under Section 5.
Members' Meeting	A meeting convened under the provisions of the Constitution.
Eldership	Pastors and Elders as a group.
Statement of Faith	The statement of faith referred to in section 2.
Trustees	The charity trustees acting under the Constitution.