

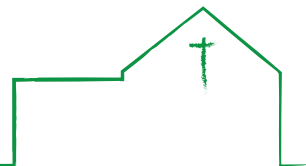
Belhus Park Chapel  
**Members Handbook**



Deveron Gardens, South Ockendon, Essex

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## Introduction

The Church of Belhus Park Chapel consists of those who in repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in obedience to His commands and instructions contained in the Bible, agree together to worship and serve Him, to seek to build one another up in our faith, to care for one another as members of God's family as well as to seek the salvation of souls through the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ and a ministry of love to all who may seek help and fellowship. The aim of the Church must be that of being the local representation of the one universal church which is the Body of Christ. Therefore in all things it must be subject to the rule of Christ and in accordance with the Bible as the divinely inspired teaching authority for faith and practice. To reach this aim every member of the Church must earnestly, faithfully and humbly seek in personal conduct by the Holy Spirit's aid, to contribute to the life, activity and prosperity of the Church.

To this end we freely agree the following family covenant.

## Constitution Continued....

### **The Church Meeting**

The Pastor and Deacons shall call meetings of the Church membership as necessary to promote mutual discussion and understanding.

A formal Church Business Meeting shall be held regularly on an annual basis. This meeting shall be presented with Audited Accounts, Secretary's Report and reports from Auxiliaries. No motion shall be accepted for the Church meeting unless presented in writing to the Diaconate at least one month before the meeting. Members under the age of 18 years shall not be eligible to vote.

### **Auxiliary Departments**

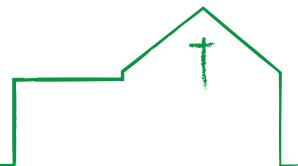
The leaders, officers and teachers of any auxiliary department of the Church shall be Church Members who are recognised by the Pastor and Deacons.

### **Church Discipline**

The Lord Jesus Christ is King and Head of His Church, and there can be no law other than that which He commands.

In Matthew Chapter 18 v 12-20 we have His commandment and plan for Church Discipline.

There can be no other higher reason for the exercise of the Church Discipline than this - Christ commands it. Church Discipline is loving concern in action; an act of love and concern whereby a good shepherd seeks out a wandering sheep. Such a motive as love exercised in discipline will be blessed of the Lord with a "Thou hast gained thy brother".



### The Pastor

The term Pastor signifies a shepherd and well indicates the relation he bears to the Church; that of leading, feeding, guiding and guarding the flock given to his care.

The Bible gives clear instruction concerning the qualities and qualifications necessary in a Pastor.

These instructions to name but a few, are found in I Timothy Chapter 3 v 1-7 and Titus Chapter 1 v 5-9.

The Pastor shall be responsible for the spiritual oversight of the Church and its activities, and shall preside at all meetings of the Diaconate and the Church.

The Deacons in fellowship with the Church membership shall be responsible for the appointment of the Pastor. The Pastor shall consent to and preach the truths contained in the Declaration of Faith.

### The Deacons

The term Deacon signifies a servant, one who ministers to or serves others. The Bible's instruction regarding the Deacons is found in I Timothy Chapter 3 v 8-13 and Acts Chapter 6 v 1-6.

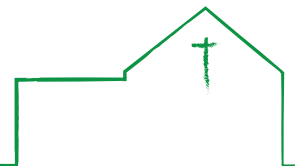
Deacons shall be responsible for all the temporal matters in the Church. The Diaconate shall consist of not less than four and not more than six elected members. Two Deacons shall retire by rotation each year and shall be eligible for re-election. No Deacon shall be deemed elected who receives less than two thirds of the vote cast.

Voting shall be by secret ballot. Deacons shall be at least 25 years old and held membership for more than one year.

### The Ordinances

By the term 'ordinances' we mean those observances given to the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ as a visible sign of the truths of the Gospel until His Second Coming. These ordinances are two in number, namely Believers Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

1. We promise to live in holiness, godliness, humility and brotherly / sisterly love as much as in us lies, to make our worship a joy to God, a blessing to ourselves and lovely to the rest of the Lord's people.
2. We promise to meet together on the Lord's day and at other times, as the Lord shall give us opportunity, to serve and glorify God in the way of His worship, to edify one another and to promote the good of His Church.
3. We promise in a special manner to pray for one another, and for the increase of this Church; for the presence of God in it, and the pouring of His Spirit upon it, and His protection over it to His Glory.
4. We promise to watch over one another and stir up one another to love and good works; to warn, rebuke and admonish one another with meekness and love according to Christ's rule.
5. We promise to bear one another's burdens and to have a unity of feeling with one another in all conditions both spiritual and physical, as GOD by His providence shall place any of us into.
6. We promise to bear one another's weaknesses and failings, with much love and tenderness, not revealing them to any outside the Church, nor to any within the Church unless according to Christ's rule.
7. We promise to work together for the truth of the Gospel to the people of South Ockendon in particular, and to present and support the presentation of the Gospel to the world at large.
8. All this we freely promise, not relying on our own strength for we are conscious of our weaknesses, but relying on the power and strength of the blessed God, whose we are and whom we seek to serve. To whom be glory and honour for evermore. Amen.



## Declaration Of Faith

1. The divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; their supreme authority and sufficiency as the Word of God, containing all things necessary for our Salvation and as the final court of appeal in all matters of faith and practice.
2. The Unity of the God head in the three persons of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; the sovereignty of God in creation and redemption.
3. The necessity of regeneration because all have sinned by reason of the fall.
4. The true and proper deity of our Lord Jesus Christ; His virgin birth; His real and proper manhood; the authority of His teaching and the infallibility of His utterances; His work of atonement for the sinners of mankind by His vicarious sufferings and death; His bodily resurrection and His ascension into Heaven; His present priestly intercession for His people at the right hand of the Father; and His personal return in Glory.
5. The justification of the repentant sinner by faith, through the atoning merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
6. The necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, conversation and sanctification; also in ministry and worship.
7. The ordinances of Baptism of Believers (by immersion) and the Lord's Supper as being instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, but not in Baptism as conveying regenerating grace, neither in the Lord's Supper as being a sacrifice for sin, nor involving any change in the substance of the bread and wine.
8. The resurrection of the body; the judgement of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessedness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked. This is the declaration of faith as laid down in the trust deed.

## Constitution

### The Church

A Christian Church is a company of 'born again' persons, baptised on a profession of faith in Christ, united in covenant for worship, instruction, the observance of Christian ordinances, and for such service as the gospel requires; recognising and accepting Christ as their supreme Lord and Law giver, and taking His Word as their only and sufficient rule of faith and practice in all matters of conscience and religion. The Church of Belhus Park Chapel shall function as an Evangelical Free Church.

### Membership

Membership is open to all who can satisfy the conditions of:

- A. A 'born again' heart.
- B. A Confession of Faith
- C. Believers Baptism
- D. A Christian Life
- E. Acceptance of the contents of this Hand book.

Application for membership shall be made to the Pastor, who in fellowship with a deacon, shall interview the applicant with regard to the conditions of membership. Those accepted shall receive the right hand of fellowship at the Lord's Table and be enrolled on the Church Register.

### Church Government

The government of the Church shall consist of Pastor and Deacons. Two of the deacons shall serve as Treasurer and Secretary. This Government shall meet at least once a month and shall be responsible to exercise authority in all matters for the prosperity of the Church. There is nothing to prevent the recognition of Elders whom the Holy Spirit may raise up.

