

# The Constitution of Godmanchester Baptist Church

Adopted on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of September 2001, amended on 20<sup>th</sup> day of March 2006 and on

19<sup>th</sup> day of March 2007

## **1 THE NAME OF THE CHURCH**

There has existed since 1845 a body of Christian believers in Godmanchester under the names of Duck End Chapel, Union Chapel and Silver Street Baptist Church, now known as Godmanchester Baptist Church (hereinafter called 'the Church'). It shall consist of Christian believers who have become church members in the manner set out in this constitution and those who regularly attend.

## **2 THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH**

The church acknowledges the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ over its life and decision making. Believing, as we do, in the priesthood of all Christian believers, church members are encouraged to 'Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ' (Ephesians 5:21).

The day to day leadership of the church shall be entrusted to a Leadership Team, constituted by clause 6.1 of this constitution. The members are expected to respect and respond to the lead of the Leadership Team, who in turn shall recognise that, whilst they are responsible to the Lord for the welfare of the church, they are to be sensitive to the consensus of the church members. As the authority to recognise, appoint and dismiss leaders is vested in the Church Members' Meeting, unresolved cases of disagreement between leaders and members shall be determined by the Church Members' Meeting.

In this Constitution, where reference is made to an individual Member of the Leadership Team, the term 'Church Leader' is used for brevity and clarity.

## **3 MISSION STATEMENT & CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES**

**3.1** Godmanchester Baptist Church exists 'to worship God, working with Him to make disciples of Jesus Christ, equipped to live and serve in the power of the Holy Spirit.'

**3.2** The objects of the Church are:

To advance the Christian Religion in accordance with the Church Covenant, in Huntingdonshire and in such other parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Leadership Team may from time to time think fit, and to fulfil such other charitable purposes which are exclusively charitable according to the law of England and Wales and are connected with the charitable work of the Church.

To relieve persons who are in conditions of need or hardship or who are aged or sick and to relieve the distress caused thereby in Huntingdonshire and in such other parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Leadership Team may from time to time think fit.

## **4 POWERS AND LIABILITIES**

**4.1** In furtherance of the objects but not otherwise, the Leadership Team may exercise the following powers:

a) Power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any persons whatsoever by way of loan, subscription, donation and otherwise, provided that in raising funds the Leadership Team shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements of the law;

b) Power to buy, take on lease or in exchange any property necessary for the achievement of the objects and to maintain it and equip it for use;

Power, subject to any consents required by law, to sell, lease or dispose of all or any part of the property of the Charity;

d) Power, subject to any consents required by law, to borrow money and to charge all or any

part of the property of the Church with repayment of the money so borrowed;

It is noted that the Church's buildings and land are held in the name of the Trustees of Godmanchester Baptist Church Buildings Trust, established by Deed of Gift dated 28<sup>th</sup> October 1963. Powers b) c) and d) above would therefore be subject to the agreement of those Trustees insofar as buildings and land are concerned.

- e) Power to employ such staff as are necessary for the proper pursuit of the objects and to make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of pensions and superannuation for staff and their dependants;
  - f) Power to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the objects or of similar charitable purposes and to exchange information and advice with them;
  - g) Power to make donations or loans to other charities, voluntary bodies and Christian workers operating in furtherance of the objects or of similar charitable purposes;
- Power to establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for all or any of the objects;
- Power to appoint and constitute such advisory committees as the Leadership Team may think fit;
- j) Power to produce, sell or otherwise distribute literature, audio and visual aids and other media of communication where it is a direct means of achieving the objects of the Church but not so as to constitute permanent trading on the part of the Leadership Team;
  - k) Power to arrange and provide for, or join in arranging and providing for, the holding of meetings, lectures, seminars, conferences and training courses for the furtherance of the objects of the Church;
  - l) Power to make regulations for the management of any property which may be acquired by the Church and vested in the Buildings Trustees;
  - m) Power to make regulations for the management of any subsidiary organisation or Trading Company;
  - n) Power to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.

**4.2** A Church Leader shall not be liable for any loss to the property of the Church arising by reason of any improper investment made in good faith (so long as professional advice has been sought before making such an investment), or for the negligence of any agent employed by him or any other Church Leader in good faith (provided reasonable supervision shall have been exercised,) or by reason of any mistake or omission made in good faith by any Church Leader, or by reason of any other matter or thing OTHER THAN wilful and individual fraud or wrongdoing or wrongful omission on the part of the Church Leader who is sought to be made liable.

**4.3** The Leadership Team shall have power to provide for themselves out of the income of the Church, indemnity insurance in respect of personal liabilities which they or any of them may incur in the course of the execution of their duties as Church Leaders, or any other person who from time to time may be acting in furtherance of the objectives of the Church, PROVIDED THAT such insurance shall not extend to:

- a) Any claim arising from any act or omission which the Leadership Team, or Church Leader in question, knew to be a breach of duty, or which was committed by them in reckless disregard of whether it was a breach of duty or not, and

The costs of an unsuccessful defence of a criminal prosecution brought against the Leadership Team or Church Leader in question, in their capacity as Church Leader.

## **5 MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH**

Membership shall be open to all over eighteen years of age who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, who show evidence of this in their lifestyle, and who are prepared to commit themselves to this particular fellowship and its ministry. All full members are expected to play a full part in the life of the church. A

membership list shall be kept of those who have recommitted themselves to church membership on an annual basis. At membership meetings, members who attend shall have one vote.

### **5.1 Membership and baptism**

Christians shall have been baptised before being considered for membership, normally as believers, by immersion. All applicants who have not been baptised as

believers shall be clearly presented with the teaching on believers' baptism. Those accepted into membership without having been baptised by immersion as believers shall be welcomed into the church and be allowed to serve within the fellowship. However, they must accept that believers' baptism by immersion will be freely taught and practised and also accept the limitations on holding office as a Church Leader as set out in this Constitution.

### **5.2 Membership and application**

To become a member the applicant shall first obtain a copy of the church Constitution and of the Covenant from one of the Leadership Team. Following acceptance of the Constitution and the Covenant the person shall attend a commitment course and be interviewed by two church members appointed by the Leadership Team. A report shall then be given to the Church Meeting and the application voted upon. People accepted as members shall be welcomed and prayed for at the earliest suitable opportunity. In exceptional circumstances and with good reason, the Leadership Team shall be able to stop an application before it comes to the Church Meeting if the applicant is clearly unsuitable.

Transfer of membership: Christians from other churches are welcome to apply for membership, subject to the following of the above procedure. A letter of recommendation shall also be requested from the person's previous church.

### **5.3 Membership and ministry**

The overall leadership of any church-based activity shall be in the hands of a church member. Those who are not church members may serve under such leadership at the discretion of the activity leaders together with the Leadership Team.

### **5.4 Membership and church discipline**

Matters of church discipline shall remain confidential at the discretion of the Leadership Team. However, certain specific situations shall be dealt with as follows:

#### **5.4.1 Unresolved conflict between members of the fellowship:**

Both parties have an obligation to be reconciled to one another (Matthew 5:23-24), although they may need help in doing so (Philippians 4:2-3).

The procedure to be followed shall be that of Matthew 18:15-16. If reconciliation is not achieved the situation shall be referred to the Leadership Team who will, if they consider it appropriate, bring the matter to the Church Meeting for any further action.

#### **5.4.2 Cases of blatant sin or unscriptural teaching:**

Suspected involvement in such things must first be brought to the attention of the Church Leaders for inquiries to be made. Where necessary church discipline shall be administered as circumstances require, either by exhortation, suspension or expulsion from the church fellowship. Grace and restoration will be shown to those demonstrating clear evidence of repentance (2 Corinthians 2: 5-11).

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## **5.5 Annual renewal of commitment to the fellowship**

Each year, at the Annual General Meeting, those present will renew their commitment to the fellowship by reading the church Covenant together. Those who are unable to attend the Annual General Meeting will be given a letter enclosing a copy of the Covenant for them to sign.

It is recognised that sometimes members may pass through a crisis of faith or for other reasons may not conscientiously feel able to commit themselves to fulfil the responsibilities of membership. Such persons will be treated with pastoral sensitivity. However, anyone who does not return the signed Covenant within the following year will normally be deemed to have voluntarily relinquished their membership.

## **5.6 Failure to adhere to the principles of the Church Covenant**

In the case of a sustained failure on the part of a member to uphold their commitment to the Covenant, the member will be contacted by the Leadership Team to ascertain the situation. Every reasonable effort will be made to encourage the member to meet their commitment. If these efforts are unsuccessful, then on a majority vote at a Church Members' Meeting, that person will be removed from the membership list.

## **5.7 Associate Membership**

Where a member is unable to attend Sunday Services and/or Church Members' Meetings over a protracted period, they may, after consultation, be transferred to Associate Membership by the Leadership Team. This type of Membership is intended for those who are unable to take full part in the affairs of the Church due to infirmity or living away from the area and yet wish to maintain an association with the Church. The Members' Meeting will be informed of those so transferred.

Associate Members will not be expected to play a full part in the life of the church. They may attend Members' Meetings, but shall not have a vote and will not be counted when assessing the number of members for the purpose of determining a quorum. They will not be asked to sign the Church Covenant annually. It will be at the discretion of the Leadership Team whether or not written information for Members is also sent to Associate Members and the decision may vary from person to person and from time to time. The list of Associate Members will be reviewed annually, prior to the AGM. Where appropriate a person may be asked whether they wish to continue their association with the church.

If, due to a change of circumstances, an Associate Member wishes to return to full membership, they may do so by applying to the Leadership Team and signing to indicate their acceptance of the Church Covenant. They may then attend Members' Meetings and may vote.

An Associate Member is still subject to church discipline under 5.4 above, and may be removed from membership by majority vote at a Church Members' meeting.

In this Constitution references to 'Church Members' may include Associate Members, but references to 'full Church Members' do not include Associate Members. However, references to 'Members' in the context of those eligible to vote at Church Members Meetings will, by inference, only include full Members.

## **6 LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH**

Many people will be involved in leadership within the church at different levels. The aim is to recognize gifts of leadership and encourage their use.

## **6.1 The Leadership Team**

The Leadership Team shall function as the Executive Committee of the Church and individually and corporately shall fulfil the requirements relating to Trustees of the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision).

The Leadership Team shall consist of those whose leadership abilities have been recognized by the church members and who have been appointed as Church Leaders by the Church Members. The Team will include those appointed as Ministers as well as those appointed from within the membership. The Leadership Team shall be responsible to God and the church membership for the leadership of the church. The Senior Minister shall be recognised as Chairman of the Leadership Team, shall be 'first among equals' and shall be male.

### **6.1.1 Qualifications**

Church Leaders (equivalent to New Testament 'Elders') shall be appointed primarily on the basis of Christian character and lifestyle (13:2-7). In terms of gifts, they shall have varied contributions, but all shall be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2), although not necessarily in the context of the whole congregation. Church Leaders shall be church members who are not recent converts (1 Timothy 3:6) and they shall have been baptised by immersion as believers.

### **6.1.2 Roles**

Church Leaders are to be examples of Christian living and ministry to the whole church. Together they will be responsible for:

- a) The spiritual direction of the church.
- b) Worship and prayer.
- c) Discipleship (doctrinal teaching and pastoral care).
- d) Outreach.
- e) Overseeing the administration of the church, which provides the resources for the functions listed above.

Within this corporate sense of ministry and responsibility, Church Leaders may have a particular brief for a specific area of church life. They may be responsible for a group of Church Officers and may take on the role of a Church Officer.

The Leadership Team may from time to time appoint a person to act as Secretary and such a person may be (but need not be) one of the Leadership Team.

The Leadership Team may from time to time appoint one of their number to act as Church Treasurer.

### **6.1.3 Appointment:**

There shall be at least six Church Leaders. The number of Church Leaders shall be determined with reference to the character, gifts and availability of individuals, together with the ministry needs of the fellowship. If the number of Church Leaders falls below six, it shall be the priority of the Leadership Team and the Church Members to prayerfully appoint further Church Leaders. The proceedings of the Leadership Team shall not be invalidated by any vacancy among their number or by any failure to appoint or any defect in the appointment or qualification of a member.

Church Leaders may be appointed from within or from outside the membership.

In the case of Church Leaders being appointed from within the membership, the process shall be one of recognition of gifts already being used. This means that potential Church Leaders may have served as Church Officers. However, this is not mandatory. A Church Officer subsequently appointed as a Church Leader may continue in that role if he or she is able.

From time to time the Leadership Team will announce that there will be an opportunity to elect or re-elect Leaders. The Leadership Team will be looking out for suitable potential Church Leaders, but any church member may suggest someone, in writing, to the Leadership Team. This shall be before any approach is made to the person concerned.

The Leadership Team shall actively consider people who have been brought to their attention, discerning the character and gifts of the person and the ministry needs of the fellowship. The Leadership Team may then approach the person and if this is successful, bring a nomination to a Church Meeting. Nominations will include any existing Leaders who are standing for re-election. There shall then follow a period of at least four weeks during which any member may, after prayerful consideration, privately approach the existing Church Leaders to endorse or express concern about the nomination. It will be normal practice for profiles of the nominated persons to be distributed to members during this period, and for the names of the nominees to be announced each week. No earlier than the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the announcement of nominations, an election will be held, the date having been announced on preceding Sundays. On that Sunday the nominations shall be confirmed and the election held. After each service on that day, members will be given a voting slip to choose Yes, No or Abstain for each nominee. A member may only vote once. To be a valid election, at least 50% of the membership shall have returned a voting slip. For the appointment to be made, at least 80% of those votes must be in favour.

The appointment shall be for 3 years. At the end of this time the Leader may stand for re-election by following the same process.

c) When a Minister / Pastor is to be appointed to the Leadership Team, usually from outside the Fellowship, there will be opportunities for the whole Fellowship to meet the candidate and observe them leading a service or meeting appropriate to the post. Then a formal nomination will be brought by the Leadership Team to a Special Church Members' Meeting at which the nominee will be discussed. There will follow a period of at least two weeks for reflection and prayer before a second Special Church Members' Meeting for more discussion and an election. At this second meeting, a quorum of 50% of the membership will be required. For the appointment to be made, at least 80% of those present must vote in favour. Such a Minister shall become a church member on appointment.

Ministers will be members of the Leadership Team as long as they hold that post, except whilst suspended from duty as a result of disciplinary procedures.

If the Leadership Team so decides, other key staff appointments may follow this process and voting criteria, even though the person is not being appointed to the Leadership Team.

d) The calling of a Church Leader is contingent upon their acceptance of the Constitution and the Covenant.

No person shall be entitled to act as a Church Leader whether on a first or subsequent entry into office until after signing in the minute book of the Leadership Team a declaration of acceptance and of willingness to act in the trusts of the Church.

#### **6.1.4 Removal**

A Church Leader shall cease to hold office if he or she:

- a) Is disqualified from acting as a member of the Executive Committee by virtue of section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision);
- b) Becomes incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering their own

affairs;

- c) Is absent without the permission of the Leadership Team from all their meetings held within a period of six months and the Leadership Team resolve that his or her office be vacated;
- d) Ceases to believe in or adhere to the Statement of Beliefs set out in the Church Covenant; or
- e) Notifies to the Leadership Team a wish to resign;

**Or if**

The Leadership Team, at a meeting at which the majority of members are present, decide by clear majority for a good and sufficient reason that the Church Leader should not continue to hold office, provided that he or she shall be given 21 days notice of the proposal to remove him or her and shall have the right to be heard by the rest of the Leadership Team before any vote is taken. If the proposal to remove the Church Leader is carried, the matter will be put to a Special Church Members' Meeting, at which there is a quorum of 50% of the membership and 2/3 of those present vote in favour of removal. The Church Leader will have the right to address the meeting before a vote is taken. The final decision rests with the Church Members' meeting. This clause will not be applied to Church Leaders who are ministers.

In cases where any of 6.1.4 a) to d) apply to a Minister, the process will follow the Grievance & Disciplinary Procedure as set out in the Ministerial Recognition Rules of the Baptist Union, mediated by a Regional Minister and subject to relevant employment legislation. If this process fails to resolve the issues, the Minister may be removed from office by a vote at a Special Church Members' Meeting at which there is a quorum of 50% of the membership and 2/3 of those present vote in favour of removal. The Minister will have the right to address the meeting before a vote is taken.

#### **6.1.5 Remuneration:**

Apart from the provisions outlined below, no Church Leader, or connected person, shall acquire any interest in the property belonging to the Charity (other than as a Trustee) or receive remuneration (other than reimbursement of all reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred in the pursuit of their duties) or be interested (other than as a Church Leader) in any contract entered into by the Leadership Team.

- b) A Church Leader, or connected person, may be remunerated out of Church Funds or receive other benefits for services rendered to the Church, PROVIDED
  - i) That at no time shall a majority of Church Leaders benefit under this provision
  - ii) That a Church Leader shall withdraw from any meeting at which his or her own remuneration is under discussion
  - iii) That the other Church Leaders are satisfied that the level of the proposed remuneration or the nature and value of any such benefits is reasonable and proper, having regard to the nature of the work carried out or services undertaken, and to the income of the Church.
- c) Any Church Leader for the time being, or connected person, who is a solicitor, accountant or other person engaged in a profession may charge and be paid all the usual professional charges for business done by him or her or his or her firm when instructed by other members of the Leadership Team to act in a professional capacity for the Church: PROVIDED
  - i) That at no time shall a majority of Church Leaders benefit under this provision
  - ii) That a Church Leader shall withdraw from any meeting at which his or her own instruction or remuneration, or that of his or her firm, is under discussion.

#### **6.1.6 Leadership Team meetings:**

- a) The Church Leaders will meet together at least twelve times per year. A special meeting may be called at any time by the Chairman or by any two Church Leaders upon not less than 4 days' notice being given to other Church Leaders of the matters to be discussed.
- b) The Senior Minister shall have the right to act as chair of the Leadership Team meetings, but may choose to delegate that role to another Church Leader. If so delegated, the Senior Minister may, at his own discretion, resume the chair at any point during the meeting. In the absence of the Senior Minister, the

- Church Leaders present will choose one of their number to be chairman before any business is transacted.
- c) There shall be a quorum when at least one third of the Church Leaders for the time being, or three Church Leaders, whichever is the greater, are present at a meeting.

Where a vote is taken, the matter shall be determined by a majority of the Church Leaders present and voting on the question, but in the case of equality of votes, the chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

The Leadership Team shall keep minutes of the proceedings at meetings of the Leadership Team and any sub-committee.

The Leadership Team may from time to time make and alter rules for the conduct of their business, the summoning and conduct of their meetings and the custody of documents. No rule may be made which is inconsistent with this constitution.

- g) The Leadership Team may appoint one or more sub-committees consisting of three or more members of the Leadership Team for the purpose of making an inquiry or supervising or performing any function or duty which in the opinion of the Leadership Team would be more conveniently undertaken or carried out by a sub-committee, PROVIDED that all acts and proceedings of any such sub-committees shall be fully and promptly reported to the Leadership Team.

The Leadership Team, or any sub-committee thereof, will draw on the gifts and skills of the Church Officers, or other qualified persons, in their discussions, as appropriate.

## **6.2 Church Officers**

Leaders of certain church-wide ministries and of homegroups will be known as Church Officers (equivalent to New Testament 'Deacons').

### **6.2.1 Qualifications**

Church Officers are to be church members gifted to fulfil the specific role to which they are appointed. They shall be people who display a consistent Christian walk (1 Timothy 3:8-13).

### **6.2.2 Roles**

The number and specific roles of these Church Officers will vary, depending on the needs of the fellowship and the availability of individuals with suitable gifting. They shall normally seek to include and draw on the gifts of others in furtherance of the role allocated by the Leadership Team.

### **6.2.3 Appointment**

Church Officers will be appointed by the Leadership Team to fulfil a particular leadership role. The appointment is without a time limit. They may cease to hold office by resignation or by resolution of the Leadership Team. Details of new appointments will be conveyed to the church fellowship in the news sheet and also at the next Members' Meeting. A list of Church Officers will be made available.

## **6.3 Other leaders**

The overall leader of any church-based activity shall be a church member and their appointment approved by the Leadership Team. All aspects of these activities shall be contingent on the approval of the Leadership Team.

## **6.4 Other staff**

In addition to salaried Church Leaders, further salaried staff may be appointed as appropriate. Except for salaried Church Leaders (see 6.1.3), core staff may be appointed by an 80% vote at an ordinary Church Meeting. Staff with access to confidential matters shall be church members. At the discretion of the Leadership Team, ancillary staff may be appointed directly by the Leadership Team. Staff working specifically for a self-financing community project, may be appointed by the committee responsible for that project, subject to ratification by the Leadership Team.

## **7 RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE**

The funds of the Church, including all donations, contributions and bequests, shall be paid into accounts operated by the Leadership Team in the name of the Church at such institutions as the Leadership Team shall from time to time decide. All cheques drawn on the accounts must be signed by two of the signatories chosen from the Church Leaders and Church Officers.

The funds belonging to the Church shall be applied only in furthering the objects and in accordance with the powers set out in this constitution.

## **8 ACCOUNTS, ANNUAL REPORT AND ANNUAL RETURN**

The Leadership Team shall comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to:

- a) The keeping of accounting records of the Church
- b) The preparation of annual statements of account for the Church
- c) The auditing or independent examination of the statements of account of the Church
- d) The preparation of an annual report of the Church

The preparation of an annual return of the Church

The transmission of the statements of account, annual report and annual return of the Church to the Commission.

## **9 MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH**

### **9.1 Procedure for all Church Meetings**

Church Meetings shall be chaired by a Church Leader. Notice of such meetings shall be given at public worship on the preceding two Sundays.

All business shall be treated as private and confidential, and members are urged to use the utmost discretion when discussing church affairs with non-members. The chairman's guidance shall be accepted concerning issues of particular sensitivity and his ruling on procedure shall be final.

#### **9.1.1 Agenda Items and Propositions**

Any full Church Member who wishes to raise an agenda item at a Church Members' Meeting shall give notice of the nature of the item to the Leadership Team, in writing, at least 2 weeks before the date of the Meeting.

Any proposition which arises without prior notice during a meeting may be postponed until a subsequent meeting if such a wish is expressed by the chairman or by a majority of members present.

#### **9.1.2 Voting**

Only church members are entitled to attend and vote at Church Meetings. Each member present shall have one vote. Unless specifically stated otherwise, there shall be a quorum of a quarter of the total voting membership, and each issue shall require the agreement of at least half the membership present. All propositions approved in this way shall be considered binding on the whole church. Ballot papers shall be used for the appointment of Church Leaders and may be requested by a majority of the membership present on any other issue.

### **9.2 Ordinary Church Meetings**

Ordinary Church Meetings shall take place at least every quarter.

### **9.3 Special Church Meetings**

A Special Church Meeting may be called at the discretion of the Leadership Team or at the written request of at least twelve members. Notice of such a meeting and its purpose shall be given at public worship on the preceding two Sundays.

### **9.4 Annual Church Meeting**

An Annual Church Meeting shall normally be held in March or as soon as practical thereafter. Written reports of ministry activities for the previous year shall be received, the goals and aims of the whole Church reviewed and its ministry activities for the future outlined. A Treasurer's Report shall be presented, along with a budget for the coming year. The independent examiners (or auditors) shall give an opinion on the church accounts and advise the Church of any unsound financial practice. The appointment of independent examiners (or auditors) shall be ratified annually. The Church Covenant shall be read together. Those members present shall thereby renew their membership.

Those not present for the reading of the Covenant shall be given a copy of the Covenant to sign and return (see section 5.5).

## **10 BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER**

The baptism of Christian believers by immersion shall be administered as required. Believers may be accepted for baptism, whether or not they also seek church membership.

The Lord's Supper will normally be observed on the first Sunday evening and the third Sunday morning of each month. All who know and love the Lord Jesus will be invited to participate.

## **11 CHURCH CENTRE**

### **11.1 Use of the Church Centre**

All activities taking place on the premises do so at the discretion of the Leadership Team and subject to any conditions they may impose. Requests for the use of the premises shall be made to the Church Officer responsible for bookings who will refer to the Leadership Team where necessary. Charges may be made to meet expenses.

### **11.2 Trustees of the Church Centre**

The Leadership Team shall cause the title to all land held by or in trust for the Church and all investments held by or on behalf of the Church, to be vested in the Trustees of the Godmanchester Baptist Church Buildings Trust. The Trustees will act in accordance with the Deed of Gift dated 28<sup>th</sup> October 1963 and made between Annie Priscilla Juggins and Thomas Manley Thurley plus 6 others. The Deed requires that there are between three and seven Trustees.

The Trustees are nominated by the Leadership Team and appointed by the Church Members' meeting. Their primary responsibility is to hold title to the premises and to ensure that they are used for the purpose consistent with the Trust Deed. Their advice may also be sought on financial matters concerning the buildings. The ongoing management of the premises, however, rests with the Leadership Team and the Church Meeting.

## **12 DISSOLUTION**

If the Leadership Team decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Church, it shall call a meeting of all Church Members. The Trustees of the Buildings Trust shall be invited to attend as non-voting observers. Not less than 21 days' notice of the meeting, in writing, shall be sent to each person, stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed. If the proposal is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, after satisfying any proper debts and liabilities, the remaining assets (other than buildings) will be distributed among similar local churches as the Leadership Team see fit. The buildings will be disposed of by the Buildings Trustees in accordance with the provisions in the Deed of Gift and such legal requirements as are in force at the time.

## **13 CHURCH CONSTITUTION AND COVENANT**

- 13.1** Every church member shall have a copy of both the Constitution and Covenant of Godmanchester Baptist Church. No alterations shall be made to these two documents EXCEPT at the Annual Church Meeting or at a Special Church Meeting called for that purpose. Notice of the meeting must include notice of the resolution, setting out the terms of the alteration proposed. A two-thirds majority shall be required for any alteration, with half the voting membership forming a quorum.
- 13.2** No amendment may be made to clause 1 (the name of the Church), clause 3.2 (the objects of the Church), clause 6.1.5 (remuneration of the Leadership Team), clause 12 (dissolution) or this clause without the prior consent in writing of the Commissioners.
- 13.3** No amendment may be made which would have the effect of making the Church cease to be a charity in law.
- 13.4** The Leadership Team should promptly send to the Commission a copy of any amendment made under this clause.

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