

Approved by OSCR October 2017  
Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017  
as per agreement at church meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2017

# **Constitution of Castlehill Baptist Church**

**(Registered Scottish Charity Number SC016697)**

## **Constitution of Castlehill Baptist Church (Registered Scottish Charity Number SC016697)**

1. The name of the Church shall be Castlehill Baptist Church.
2. The Church's purposes are the advancement of the Christian Faith by all means consistent with the teachings of the Christian Bible, including worship, ministry, mission, prayer, witness, education, community service and the relief of poverty or other social needs and the support of agencies and individuals and any other charitable organisations involved in all such work.
3. This Church recognises Jesus Christ as its supreme head and seeks to order its affairs according to His word and the practice of His Apostles as found in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments
4. The teaching of the Church is based on belief in:
  - a. God as the Creator of all people, and the Father of all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - b. The Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, Redeemer of the world and the sole mediator through faith in Whom alone we obtain forgiveness of sins.
  - c. God the Holy Spirit.
  - d. The fact of sin, and the necessity for the Atonement.
  - e. The Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, Ascension and coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - f. The whole Bible as the Inspired Word of God.
5. Membership of this Church shall be open to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour and acknowledge His

Lordship over their lives. Applicants for membership shall be interviewed by two members who shall report to the Church. If the report is approved the applicant shall be received into membership.

6. The form of Baptism normally practised in the Church is that of total Immersion.
7. The Communion of the Lord's Supper shall be open to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour and acknowledge His Lordship over their lives.
8. The Deacons' Court shall consist of the Minister and not less than three Deacons, two of whom fill the offices of Secretary, and Treasurer.
9. The Minister and Deacons shall be baptised as believers.
10. On appointment, the Minister, Deacons and Leaders of Church Organisations shall affirm their acceptance of the Basis of Belief as stated in clause 4.
11. The policy decisions of this Church shall be taken by members at a church meeting called for this purpose.
12. The Deacons' Court shall provide spiritual leadership and oversight in all the affairs of the Church.
13. The Deacons' Court shall regularly review the membership and bring to the Church for consideration the names of any who have lapsed.
14. No alteration shall be made in this constitution except by vote of two-thirds of the members present at a Church meeting called for the purpose by special intimation on two preceding Sundays

- 15.** The Annual General Meetings of the Church will take place as soon after the 30<sup>th</sup> April as is convenient, but not more than 13 months after the preceding Annual General Meeting. Normally Church Meetings will be held in February, September and December. Special Church Meetings may be called at other times if a majority of the Deacons' Court consider this necessary, or, if at least ten per cent of the membership request it. Church Meetings will normally be held after two Sundays' prior intimation. Church meetings will normally be open to all, but voting shall be by members only, as defined in the constitution. Church decisions will be made by majority vote of those attending, except in situations mentioned elsewhere in the Church constitution.
- 16.** Any member of the Church having a personal interest in any transaction or arrangement which the Church is proposing to enter into, must declare that interest at the Church meeting, or Deacons' meeting or any other relevant meeting at which such matter is discussed, and will be debarred from participating in or voting on whether or not the Church should enter into that transaction or arrangement.
- 17.** Financial Statements:

  - a. The Church's financial year will end on 31 March.
  - b. The Trustees of the Church shall ensure that proper accounting records are maintained in accordance with all statutory requirements

- c. The Trustees shall prepare and present to the church Annual General Meeting annual accounts complying with all statutory requirements.
  - d. The Annual Accounts shall be independently examined in accordance with the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.
  - e. The Independent Examiner will be elected annually by the Church for this purpose.
  - f. A proposed budget for the incoming year will be submitted at the Annual General Meeting for members approval.
- 18.** The Office-Bearers of the Church shall normally be the Church Secretary, Treasurer and Minute Secretary to the Deacons' Court.
- 19.** All properties of the Church are held for the Church by the Office-Bearers as Trustees for title-holding purposes.
- 20.** The Trustees of the Church are those persons having general control and management of the administration of the Church and shall be the Minister and Deacons.
- 21.** In accordance with Section 69 of The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 the following individuals may not serve as a Trustee of the Church:
- a. someone with an unspent conviction for dishonesty or an offence under the Act
  - b. an undischarged bankrupt
  - c. someone who has been removed under either Scottish or English Law or the courts from being a charity trustee
  - d. a person disqualified from being a company director.

The Church Secretary shall ensure that each Trustee signs a form confirming that they are not disqualified from acting as a Trustee.

- 22.** Deacons shall hold office for three years. At the end of their period in office they shall retire, but will be eligible for re-election. The procedure for the election of new Deacons will be as follows: Nominations are to be in the hands of the Church Secretary not later than 14 days before the Church Meeting. Nominations must be signed by two church members who have previously obtained the consent of the nominee. Elections will be by ballot vote. Those elected must receive votes from at least 60% of those returning ballot papers. No second ballot will be held without the authority of a Church Meeting.
- 23.** The Church Secretary and the Church Treasurer shall be elected at a Church Meeting. They shall hold office for three years, at the end of which they shall retire but will be eligible for re-election. They shall not serve for a third period of three years without a special resolution of the Church Meeting to that effect.
- 24.** In the event of a pastoral vacancy the Church will appoint a moderator and form a vacancy committee composed of three members of the Deacons' Court and an equal number of Church members. The procedure adopted will follow the guidelines given by the Baptist Union of Scotland. A two-thirds majority of members voting must be in favour of a call before it is sent.

- 25.** No new agency or organisation may be set up in the Church without the approval of the Deacons' Court and, if they deem it necessary, the approval of a Church Meeting. In the event of any agency or organisation ceasing to exist the Deacons have the authority to dispose of any equipment or funds as they see fit in accordance with the charitable purposes of the church.
- 26.** All conveners of Church Committees and leaders of Church Organisations are to be Church members and their appointment must be approved or ratified at a Church Meeting.
- 27.** The Deacons may prepare Standing Orders setting out how the Deacons Court will operate and other administrative procedures for the management of the Church as they see fit. The Standing Orders, and any subsequent amendments, must be approved by vote of two-thirds of the members present at a Church Meeting called for the purpose by special intimation on the two preceding Sundays.
- 28. Dissolution.**

  - 28.1 If 20% or more members of the Church are of the opinion that the Church should be dissolved, they shall call two consecutive Church Meetings of which not less than 21 days' notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed) shall be given to all the members of the Church.
  - 28.2 If a two thirds majority of members attending and voting at two consecutive Church meetings resolve that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the church then it shall be dissolved.

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28.3 In the event of the Church being dissolved or otherwise ceasing to exist the Trustees will remain in office as Trustees of the Church and will be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Church.

28.4 In the event of the church being dissolved, or otherwise ceasing to exist, the assets of the church shall, on the dissolution of the church, be distributed to organisations with charitable purposes similar to those of the Church as detailed in clause 2 above and in accordance with the wishes of a majority vote of two thirds of the members present and voting at a church meeting of which not less than 21 days' notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed) shall be given to all the members of the Church.