

Paulsgrove Baptist Church

Church Rules

**As approved by unanimous vote at a Special Members meeting held on 12th March,
2009**

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PAULSGROVE BAPTIST CHURCH RULES

Part 1- Principles for Trust Purposes

- 1.1 The Church is established under a Constitution dated 1965 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. The Constitution appoints The Fairburn Trust as Holding Trustee and the Church Officers as the Managing Trustees.
- 1.2 The Constitution contains provision for the meetings of the Church Officers meeting as 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 Church Officers.
 - 1.2.2 The Chairman of their meetings shall be appointed by the Church Officers and shall have a casting vote.
 - 1.2.3 They shall meet not less than 4 times a year.
 - 1.2.4 A quorum shall consist of at least one half of the Church Officers.
 - 1.2.5 Written minutes of their meetings shall be maintained.
 - 1.2.6 The Pastor, other Pastoral Workers and Church Workers, if any, may be remunerated from church funds provided those paid are not more than one half of the number of Church Officers, but they must not be present in the Church Officers' meetings whenever their salary or financial benefits are discussed.
 - 1.2.7 Subject to 1.2.6 above no Church Officer shall receive any financial benefit from the church funds in connection with his service as an Officer, other than the reimbursement of expenses incurred in carrying out his duties as an Officer or reimbursement of costs of the purchase of goods or services supplied to or for the Church.
 - 1.2.8 Legal rules calling for the disqualification of trustees and therefore Church Officers.
- 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 is that of believer's baptism by immersion in Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, upon open confession of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38,41; Romans 6:3,4; Acts 8), but on the recommendation of the Elders an alternative mode may be applied where this is felt appropriate. It is recognised that baptism is not an issue that should divide the church of Christ.
 - 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 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 12th March 2009 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 those persons who have 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. Each of these privileges brings with it the additional responsibilities 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; all to be done within the confidentiality of Church membership.

Admission to Membership

- 2.1.3 A person may apply to the Eldership to become a Member of the Church and that application, if thought fit, laid before the Members at Church Meeting for their approval.
- 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 2.6 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 Church Officers, 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 Eldership.

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 Eldership who will arrange for two of their number to interview the applicant. The representatives shall report back to a meeting of the Eldership and within their report will be any recommendation as to the mode of Baptism if it 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 once 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

- 2.4.1. The duly appointed and/or elected Elders as set out below are the Officers of the Church and are the Trustees of the trust governing the Church, other than the property, which is governed by the trust deed referred to in Rule 1.1. Under English law certain persona are not allowed to be a trustee. Appendix 2 sets out the exclusions and these must apply, even though the Church may wish to appoint such a person an Officer, unless the Charity Commission has otherwise agreed in writing.
- 2.4.2. There shall not be fewer than 3 Church Officers

2.4.2.1 The sole governor of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Head of the Body. (Isaiah 9:6,7; Ephesians 1:22,23)

2.4.2.2 The one infallible means by which He governs His church is the Word of God, the Bible.

2.4.2.3 Christ's government is exercised in local churches through the duly appointed officers who teach and apply the Holy Scriptures, namely Elders who are variously described in the Bible as 'bishops', 'elders' or 'overseers' or pastor/teachers' according to the particular function of the office to which the reference is being made. (Acts 20:17-28; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Hebrews 13:17; Acts 14:23)

2.4.2.4 Elders are assisted in attending to the affairs of the church by Deacons and the Elders may rely on the Deacons' expertise on matters such as finance, risk assessment and other issues they deem appropriate. (Philippians 1:1; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:8-13)

2.4.3 Rules

Function – the responsibilities of the Eldership include:

2.4.3.1 To have oversight of the local church. Overall authority is committed to them and no decision or policy may be implemented which does not meet with their approval. (1 Thessalonians 5:12,13; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:2-5; Acts 16:4)

2.4.3.2 Church-wide vision casting and strategy.

2.4.3.3 To pastor or shepherd the flock which is the local church. This means to feed and strengthen it with the Word of God, to guard the Church from error and false teaching, to oversee the church discipline process, and to ensure that each Member receives appropriate pastoral care.

2.4.3.4 To teach which, though part of shepherding the flock is put separately because of its importance. All Elders must understand and be able explain the core doctrines of the church as revealed in the Bible, but not all need to be able to preach. (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9; 1 Timothy 5:17)

- All teaching materials used in the church and all literature distributed by its ministries must be approved by the Elders.
- All speakers invited to address meetings and groups within the church must have the Elders' approval.

2.4.3.5 To recommend an annual budget to the Membership.

2.4.3.6 An Elder shall have the right to attend any meeting of the church, or any meeting of any ministry or group of the church.

Qualifications

2.4.3.7 The qualifications for an Elder are laid down in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9. The Eldership must be comprised of qualified men. (1 Timothy 2:12)

Appointment

- 2.4.3.8 Elders shall be nominated and appointed by the existing Elders and shall normally have been Members for a minimum of one year.
- 2.4.3.9 The Elders must have the confidence of the church otherwise they cannot function in a Biblical manner, for they must not exercise their authority “by constraint, but willingly” not domineering over the flock. Thus they must command the respect of the church and then be accepted. (1 Peter 5:3)
- 2.4.3.10 The name of any men, therefore, whom the Elders wish to appoint to the office of Elder must be brought before the church that a vote of confidence may be given through a Special Resolution. Only those who receive such affirmation shall be appointed.

Review of appointment and removal

- 2.4.3.11 Each Elder shall stand for re-election after 3 years, except the paid Elders who are subject to the provisions of 2.4.4.3 to 2.4.4.7.
- 2.4.3.12 In the event of an accusation being made against an Elder, in most circumstances, it must be brought in the first instance by at least 2 members, to the other Elders. This will be reviewed by the Church Officers and an appropriate response be made.

2.4.4 Rules

Function

- 2.4.4.1 The regular ministry of the Bible should be committed to one or more Elders who shall, wherever possible, be financially supported. (1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Corinthians 9:3-14; Galatians 6:6; Revelation 1:20)
- 2.4.4.2 He or they shall be known as the “Pastor”, Other paid Eldership positions will be given a title appropriate to their designated ministry.

Appointment

- 2.4.4.3 Any Pastoral position shall be nominated and appointed by the Elders.
- 2.4.4.4 If a situation arises where there is no serving Pastor, the Elders shall appoint another of their number to act as “Presiding Elder” until another Pastoral appointment is made. If there are no other Elders, the Diaconate shall appoint a “Presiding Deacon”. Such appointment in either event shall require the confirmation of the church Membership by a Special Resolution.
- 2.4.4.5 If any paid Church Officer should wish to resign, 3 months notice must be given. However, at the discretion of the Church Officers, this period of notice may be waived.

2.4.4.6 Similarly, if the dismissal of a paid Church Officer is confirmed by a Special Resolution of the church, he shall be given either 3 months written notice or the equivalent of three months financial support (at the level paid up to that time) in lieu. In special circumstances at the discretion of the Church Officers, this period of notice may be extended. The same conditions apply where the Church Officers deem it advisable for reasons such as laid down in Rule 2.6.7.

2.4.4.7 The remuneration and material support of the paid Church Officers and any other servants of the church shall be determined by the non-paid Church Officers or by a committee set up by the Church Officers and shall be reviewed at least once a year. (1 Timothy 5:17,18; Galatians 6:6)

Meetings

2.4.5 The Church Officers shall meet not less than 4 times a year.

2.4.6 The Chairman or any 2 of the Church Officers may call a meeting at any time.

2.4.7 A Quorum at a Church Officers meeting shall consist of at least one half of the Church Officers.

2.4.8 The Church Officers shall appoint one of their number to be Chairman.

2.4.9 The Chairman shall have a casting vote.

2.4.10 At least one weeks written notice shall be given to all Church Officers on any meeting and of the business to be conducted at the meeting unless all the Church Officers agree to waive these requirements.

2.4.11 Written minutes shall be maintained of Church Officers Meetings.

Remuneration of Church Officers

2.4.12 Any Pastor or Church Employee may be paid reasonable remuneration relative to their duties in connection with the Church notwithstanding that they are Church Officers provided that not more than one half of all the Church Officers are remunerated. A Church Officer shall be absent from any part of an Officer's meeting where any term of his employment of remuneration or that of any connected person is being discussed and determined and must not vote on the subject.

2.4.13 Church Officers shall be entitle to receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in the carrying out to their duties and for the costs of the supply of goods or services purchased for the use of the Church.

2.4.14 A Church Officer may receive reasonable and proper remuneration for goods or service he provides to the Church provided that:

- They shall actually be required by the Church;
- He shall have fully disclosed to the other Church Officers the interest which he has in and any benefit he may derive, either directly or indirectly, from the supply;
- He shall be absent from any discussion on and shall not vote upon any matter connected with the supply of such goods or services; and,

- The arrangements shall be approved by the majority of the other Church Officers who must be satisfied that the arrangements are advantageous to the purposes of the Church.

2.4.15 No Church Officer shall acquire any property of goods belonging to the Church without the prior written approval of the Charity Commission.

2.5 Deacons

Function

2.5.1.1 The function of the Deacons is to relieve the Elders of administrative and logistics responsibilities which could include leading specific ministries of the church, the collection and allocation of money, secretarial duties, caring for the poor and needy by practical help, and the care and maintenance of all property and materials connected with the church. The Deacons thus seek by all possible means to enable the Eldership to concentrate on the duties of their office, i.e. the overall government of the church, pastoral oversight and teaching. (Acts 6:1-6)

2.5.1.2 Deacons shall generally be appointed for a specific task or ministry.

2.5.1.3 Some Deacons may be employed by the Church and shall be known as Church Workers or an appropriate job title.

Qualifications

2.5.2 The qualifications for Deacons are described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In addition, Acts 6:3 states that they must be “of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom”.

Appointment

2.5.3.1 Deacons shall be nominated and subsequently appointed, contingent upon 2.5.3.3 by the existing Church Officers and shall normally have been members for at least one year.

2.5.3.2 The Deacons must have the confidence of the local church otherwise they cannot function in a Biblical manner, for they must not exercise their authority “by constraint, but willingly” not domineering over the flock. Thus they must command the respect of the church and then be accepted.

2.5.3.3 The name of any men or women, therefore, whom the Church Officers wish to appoint to the office of Deacon, must be brought before the church that a vote of confidence may be given through a Special Resolution. Only those who receive such a vote shall be appointed.

Review of appointment and removal

2.5.4.1 Each Deacon, other than Church Workers, shall stand for re-election after 3 years.

2.5.4.2 In the event of a charge made against a Deacon the same rules for possible removal apply as for an Elder as outlined in 2.4.3.12.

Elder/Deacon Meetings

- 2.5.5.1 Deacons shall meet the Elders as requested.
- 2.5.5.2 The Elders may invite all Deacons to a combined Elder/Deacon meeting which shall be known as Leadership Team Meetings.

Church Secretary and Church Treasurer

- 2.5.6.1 The Church Officers shall appoint from among the Elders or Deacons a Church Secretary and a Church Treasurer.
- 2.5.6.2 The Church Secretary shall be responsible for the preparation of notices of any General or Special Church Meetings and the issuing of all papers and reports to be presented to such meetings. Members shall deliver to the Church Secretary any notice of items of business to be discussed at a Church Meeting in sufficient time to enable them to be circulated to all Members before the Meeting.
- 2.5.6.3 The Church Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining the accounts of the Church. Any Member holding any church funds shall account for those funds to the Church Treasurer together with such explanations and documentary evidence as will enable him to incorporate the figures into the church accounts.

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 Elders shall appoint two of their number to meet with the Member to enquire into the matter and report the facts to a meeting of the Church Officers 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 six months the Elders shall appoint two of their number to interview that person and if no valid reason, in their judgement, is given for the absence then they may recommend to the Church Officers 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 Church Officers shall ensure that they review the situation at least at six 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 Church Secretary and the register of Members amended accordingly where suspension or

termination of Membership is to be applied.

- 2.6.7 The Church Officers 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 Church Officers should follow the provisions set out in Rule 2.4.2

2.7 Church Business Meetings

- 2.7.1. General Church Meetings shall be held at least four times a year on dates determined by the Church Officers. A quorum shall be 50% of the Church Members. The Church Officers shall appoint one of their number to be Chairman of any General Church Meeting. If no Officer is prepared or is not available to act as Chairman then the Members attending the Meeting may appoint a Chairman 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 Chairman of the Church Officers, or failing him another Church Officer agreed by the Church Officers, shall be the Chairman of the Annual General Meeting.
- 2.7.3. Meetings may be called by at least one third 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 Chairman 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 votes at a General or Special Church Meeting shall be carried by a simple majority of those Members present and voting in favour of the proposal.
- 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 Chairman agrees or where 20% of the Members present at the Meeting so request. Only those Members present at the Meeting shall be entitled to vote unless a summary of the discussions surrounding the resolution is prepared and circulated to all Members.

2.9 Special Resolutions

- 2.9.1 The expenditure of large sums of money, major policy decisions, the election of Deacons, the approval of the appointment of Elders and any other matters specified as such in the Church Rules shall be brought to the church membership by Special Resolution.
- 2.9.2 The Church Officers shall decide what constitutes a “large sum of money” or “major policy decision”.
- 2.9.3 Notice of the terms of a Special Resolution must be circulated by the Church Officers to all Members at least 21 days before the date set for the meeting.
- 2.9.4 For a Special Resolution to be passed, it shall require a majority of at least two thirds of the vote cast unless otherwise stated in the Church Rules. A ballot shall be deemed invalid if less than half of the Membership vote.
- 2.9.5 Any Member may propose a Special Resolution on any other matter to the Church Officers who shall decide whether it shall be put to the Church or not.
- 2.9.6 If, however, the Member can show that the proposed Special Resolution has the support of at least one third of the Church Membership the Church Officers shall be required to process it as at 2.9.3 and 2.9.4 above.

2.10 Church Property

- 2.10.1 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 Church Officers 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 Church Officers 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 Church Officers 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 is required to any proposed use of the property by third parties.
- 2.10.2 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 Church Officers’ recommendation for that transaction.
- 2.10.3 No alcoholic drink or smoking shall be allowed on the premises.

2.11 Amendment of the Rules

- 2.11.1 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.

- 2.11.2 A majority of 75% of those Members present at the Church Meeting and voting in favour is required to approve a proposed amendment to any Rule excepting Rule 1.5 where a majority of 90% 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.
- 2.11.3 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 3 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.
- 2.11.4 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.

2.12 Closure of the Church

- 2.12.1 In the event of the Members of the Church resolving to close the Church the remaining Church Officers 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.

BASIS OF FAITH

God

There is one God, who exists eternally in three distinct, but equal, persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God is unchangeable in his holiness, Justice, wisdom and love. He is the almighty Creator, Saviour and Judge who sustains and governs all things according to his sovereign will for his own glory.

The Bible

God has revealed himself in the Bible, which consists of the Old and New Testaments alone. Every word was inspired by God through human authors, so that the Bible as originally given is in its entirety the Word of God, without error and fully reliable in fact and doctrine. The Bible alone speaks with final authority and is always sufficient for all matters of belief and practice.

The Human Race

All men and women, being created in the image of God, have inherent and equal dignity and worth. Their greatest purpose is to love, worship and obey God. As a result of the fall of our first parents, every aspect of human nature has been corrupted and all men and women are without spiritual life, guilty sinners and hostile to God. Every person is therefore under the just condemnation of God and needs to be born again, forgiven and reconciled to God in order to know and please Him.

The Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life in obedience to the Father. He taught with authority and all his words are true. On the cross he died in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by his blood. He rose from the dead and in his resurrection body ascended into heaven where he is exalted as Lord of all. He intercedes for his people in the presence of the Father.

Salvation

Salvation is entirely a work of God's grace and cannot be earned or deserved. It has been accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ and is offered to all in the gospel. God in his love forgives sinners whom he calls, granting them repentance and faith. All who believe in Christ are justified by faith alone, adopted into the family of God and receive eternal life.

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit has been sent from heaven to glorify Christ and to apply his work of salvation. He convicts sinners, imparts spiritual life and gives a true understanding of the Scriptures. He dwells in all believers, brings assurance of salvation and produces increasing likeness to Christ. He builds up the Church and empowers its members for worship, service and mission.

The Church

The universal Church is the body of which Christ is the head and to which all who are saved belong. It is made visible in local churches, which are congregations of believers who are committed to each other for the worship of God, the preaching of the Word, the administering of Baptism and Communion, for pastoral care and discipline, and for evangelism. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between churches by mutual love, care and encouragement. True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the gospel.

Baptism and Communion

Christ has given Baptism and Communion to the churches as visible signs of the gospel. Baptism is a symbol of union with Christ and entry into his Church but does not impart spiritual life. Communion is a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice offered once for all and involves no change in the bread and wine. All its blessings are received by faith.

The Future

The Lord Jesus Christ will return in glory. He will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. The wicked will be sent to eternal punishment and the righteous will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God. God will make all things new and will be glorified forever.

CHARITIES ACT 1993, SECTION 72— DISQUALIFICATION OF TRUSTEES

A person is disqualified from being a trustee (*of any charity*) under Section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 if:

- a) he or she has been convicted of any offence involving dishonesty or deception;
- b) he or she has been adjudged bankrupt or sequestration of his/her estate has been awarded and (in either case) he/she has not been discharged;
- c) he or she has made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, his/her creditors and has not been discharged in respect of it;
- d) he or she has been removed from the office of charity trustee by an order of the Charity Commissioners or of the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which he/she was responsible or to which he/she was privy, or which he/she by his/her conduct contributed to or facilitated;
- e) he or she has been removed under Section 7 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions)(Scotland) Act 1990 from being concerned in the management or control of any body; or
- f) he or she is subject to a disqualification order made under the Company Director's Disqualification Act 1986 or the Insolvency Act 1986.

The Charity Commission has discretionary power to waive the disqualification and they must be approached with the facts and their written approval sought.

PAULSGROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Notes for those considering application for membership

The Bible teaches that the Church is the whole company of believers in Christ, those who have repented of their sin and have received the Lord Jesus by faith, and who have personally committed their lives to Him as their Lord and Saviour. (1 John 1:9, John 1:12, Eph. 2:19-22). Membership of a local church is only appropriate for those who have taken this step of faith and commitment.

Scripture also teaches that a believer should be baptised. (Matt. 28:19, Acts 2:38)

Membership also involves other responsibilities:-

1. Regular attendance at Sunday worship. (Acts 20:7, Heb. 10:25)
2. Regular personal prayer and Bible study. (2 Tim 3:15-17, Phil. 4:6)
3. Regular attendance, when possible, at the main weekday meeting of the church for prayer, Bible study and fellowship. (Acts 1:14, 2:42)
4. Sharing in the life, work and witness of the local church. (Rom. 1:16, 1 Cor. 15:58)
5. Regular giving to the local church and the Lord's work in general. (1 Cor. 16:2, 2 Cor. 9:6-7)
6. 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)
7. An endeavour to live a life consistent with the faith we profess. (Rom. 6:1-2, Eph. 4:1)
8. 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)

The Statement of Faith in the Rules has been adopted as the doctrinal basis to which applicants for membership of Paulsgrove Baptist Church are asked to give their wholehearted assent. Should you wish to discuss any particular clause with an Elder please notify the church secretary.

The Rules of the church are enclosed and you are asked to study them before applying for membership.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OF PAULSGROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Name:

Address:

I would express my relationship to God in the following way. (Please answer in one or two brief sentences):-

I have read the notes on the responsibilities of church membership set out above, together with the Rules. I have studied the Scripture references. I am willing to accept the responsibilities and I agree wholeheartedly with the Basis of Faith and acceptance of the Rules in their entirety. I am 16 years of age or over.

If I am accepted into membership I undertake to abide by the decisions of the Church Officers and to acknowledge their authority, in so far as the decisions and the exercise of their authority are in accordance with the teaching of Scripture and the Rules of the church.

In applying for membership I affirm that I have personally repented of sin and put my trust in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.

Date:

Signature: