

## **GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

1. A church within the Open Brethren, or Christian Brethren network of churches exists to function as a Christian congregation, and to carry out all the purposes and ministry of a Christian church, including Christian worship, and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

2. In common with other Christian Brethren churches, the Church accepts and follows the Doctrines and Practices set out in the attached Schedule. Beyond those specific statements, the Church follows the principles and teachings of the New Testament in matters of church order.

3. The Church, as far as its spiritual functions are concerned, is governed by a group of Elders. Elders are appointed in recognition of their spiritual qualities. Details of the manner of appointment may change from time to time, but in principle, the appointment of an Elder requires approval by both the existing eldership, and the membership of the Church at large. Should there be no existing Elders, then the appointment is made by the members.

4 (a). Membership of the Church consists of those people who:

- Declare their faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord, and their commitment to worship and serve God, and
- Have indicated their wish to make the Church their church home, and
- (Normally) have been baptised as Christians.

4 (b). People cease to be members of the Church if they:

- Notify a Church leader that they are leaving the Church.
- Are continually absent from services of the Church.
- Are excluded from membership as a result of church discipline.

If there is any question as to whether or not a person is a member of the Church, the decision of the Elders will determine the matter.

5. All funds received by the Church, and all of its assets, are held and used for its ministry as a Christian church, and for that purpose only. This includes making grants for the relief of poverty and distress, for education for ministry, and the advancement of the cause of Christ generally. Although the funds and assets of the Church are not to be used for private pecuniary gain, this does not preclude:

- Payment of reasonable salary and expenses to Church staff
- Payment of professional fees to Church members who have been retained in a professional capacity
- Payment of normal charges to tradesmen or service providers, who may be Church members, for work done or services rendered
- Payment of grants, as specified above, to individuals who may be members of the Church.

6. The administration of the property and assets of the Church, is conducted by the Church Secretary, and Treasurer, and such other persons as may be appointed by the

Elders, or by some other method approved by the Elders. The Secretary, and Treasurer, and the persons so appointed are the "Church officers". They will render an account of their administration to the members at least once a year. Financial statements will be prepared each year, and presented to a meeting of Church members.

7. If the Church should close down, all of its remaining funds and assets shall be distributed to Christian and charitable causes, as the Elders decide, or, if they are unable or unwilling to decide, then as decided by a majority of the members at the time of closure.

8. Subject to the foregoing, the Church is at liberty to determine its own practices and procedures.

## **SCHEDULE**

### **DOCTRINES**

1. THE Divine Inspiration, Authority and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures – (2 Tim. iii. 15-17; 1 Peter i. 10-12; 2 Peter i. 20-21; Psalm xix 7-11).
2. THE Unity of the Godhead with the distinction of Persons in that Unity namely the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit to Whom equal honour is due – (Deut. vi. 4; Gen. i. 2, 26; John i. 1, 2; v. 17, 22, 23; xiv. 25, 26; xvi. 7, 27, 28; Phil. ii. 6; Heb. i. 1-3, 8).
3. (a) THAT the Son of God truly became man being begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary – (John i. 14; Rom, viii. 3; Gal. iv. 4; Matt. i. 20-25; Luke i. 35).  
  
(b) THAT His death was a sacrifice to God and a propitiation for the remission of sins – (Rom. iv. 25; 2 Cor. v. 21; Heb. ix. 24-28; x. 12-14).  
  
(c) THAT He was raised from the dead – (Matt. xxviii. 5-7; 1 Cor. xv. 20).  
  
(d) THAT He ascended to the right hand of God and is now the all-sufficient High Priest of His people – (Mark xvi. 19, 20; Luke xxiv. 50, 51; Acts i. 9; Eph. iv. 8-10; Heb. iv. 14-16; vii. 25).  
  
(e) THAT He will come again to receive His people unto Himself and to set up His Kingdom – (John xiv. 3; 1 Thes. iv. 13-18; Luke i. 32, 33; Isa. ix. 6, 7; Dan. ii. 44, 45; vii. 13, 14).
4. THAT in consequence of the fall of Adam man became "lost" and at "enmity" against God; that he is also "without strength" to do the will of God – (Psa. liii. 2, 3; Luke xix. 10; Rom. iii. 19; v. 6, 12-19; viii. 5-7).
5. THE need of the Holy Spirit's work in regeneration and sanctification – (John iii. 5-8 xvi. 8-11; Tit. iii. 4-7; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14; 1 Peter i. 2).
6. (a) THAT the justification of the sinner before God is by faith alone – (Rom. iii. 21-26; iv. 4, 5; v. 1; Gal. ii. 16).  
  
(b) THAT every justified one is also born of God – (John i. 12, 13; James i. 18; 1 Peter i. 23). THAT such new birth results in and is made evident by holiness of life and good works – (Eph. ii. 10; iv. 24; Tit. iii 4-8).
7. (a) THAT at death the spirit of man does not cease to exist or become unconscious – (Eccl. xii. 7; Luke xvi. 19-31; xxiii. 43; 2 Cor. v. 6-8).  
  
(b) THAT the dead will be raised either to life or to condemnation and that the blessedness of the righteous and the punishment of the unrighteous will be alike

eternal – (1 Cor. xv. 51-57; Phil. iii. 20, 21; Rom. xiv. 9, 10; 2 Cor. v. 10; Dan. xii. 2; Acts xvii. 31; Rev. xx. 11-15; Matt. xxv. 46).

## **PRACTICES**

8. THE customary observance of the ordinance of Believer's Baptism by immersion on personal confession of faith and the commemoration of the Lord's death in the Breaking of Bread on the first day of the week in so far as circumstances allow – (Matt. xxviii. 18-20; Acts ii. 41, 42; viii. 36, 38; x 47, 48; Luke xxii. 19-20; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 23-26).
9. THE reception at the Lord's Table of all Believers known to be sound in faith and godly in life – (Rom. xv. 7; 2 Cor. v. 6-8; x. 14-17).
10. THE conducting of meetings for worship under the guidance of the Holy Spirit with opportunity for the exercise in the assembly of all true gifts for edification subject to the Lordship of Christ. – (Rom. xii. 6-8; 1 Cor. xii. xiii and xiv; 1 Peter iv. 10, 11).