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DUKE STREET CHURCH (Richmond-upon-Thames) HANDBOOK

We certify this to be the Church Handbook adopted by the members of Duke Street Church (Richmond-upon-Thames) at a meeting of the members held on the 14th May 2020.

Chairman:

Trustee:

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As amended in accordance with the provisions of this handbook as set out below:

Revision History

Date of Church Business Meeting	Revision Summary	Signature of Trustee	Signature of Trustee

Principles for Charity Purposes

The Church Constitution

The Church is established as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation under a constitution first adopted on **21st November 2019** (“the Constitution”) which contains the main legal provisions governing the Church, its purposes and Basis of Faith, and its powers. Under the Constitution, the people with the responsibility for the general control and management of the administration of the Church are known as the charity trustees and they are identified in the Constitution by reference to the office they hold in accordance with this handbook.

The Church Handbook

This Church Handbook sets 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.

The First Church Officers

The date of the legal establishment of the Church is the date that the Constitution is registered by the Charity Commission (rather than the date on which the Constitution was adopted by the members).

Clause 2.7 contains the provisions for the appointment of Church Officers. The first Church Officers are not appointed but are the people who are listed below.

No	Name	Office
1	John Samuel	Elder and Senior Minister
2	Ivan Baird	Elder
3	Simon Buss	Elder
3	Paul Chambers	Elder
4	Philip Long	Elder
5	Simon Pethick	Elder and Associate Minister
6	John Taylor	Elder
7	Ali Azzopardi	Deacon
8	Gareth Batten	Deacon
9	Lisa Coleridge	Deacon
10	Jonathan Niblett	Deacon
11	David Shafik	Deacon
12	Angie Vincent	Deacon

1. Basis of Faith, Doctrinal Distinctives and Mission

1.1. Basis of Faith

The Basis of Faith (see Appendix 1) sets out matters that we believe all Christian believers should be able to accept wholeheartedly and a person can only become a member of the Church if they have indicated that they do so accept those beliefs.

1.2. Doctrinal Distinctives

We recognise that there are a number of doctrines, not referred to in the Basis of Faith over which genuine Christian believers may take different views. Our Doctrinal Distinctives (see Appendix 1) set out the position and teaching of the Church on these matters. Church members are not required to agree with the matters in the Doctrinal Distinctives and may hold and discuss views to the contrary, but members are required to respect the positions set out in the Doctrinal Distinctives as the teaching of the Church and should not be insistent on their own views nor divisive over these matters.

Amendments to this part of the Church Handbook (section 1) shall only be permitted where the provisions of Clause 2.20. have been satisfied.

1.3. Mission, Strategy and Values of the Church

1.3.1. Mission

- To glorify God by making disciples from all nations

1.3.2. Strategy

- We will reach out with the message to those who have not yet heard or understood the great news of rescue through the Lord Jesus Christ
- We will build up believers in their life of trusting and obeying the Lord Jesus Christ
- We will send out people who will take the message of this great news to London and to the ends of the earth.

1.3.3. Values

The table below shows what we want to be with God's help.

No	Value	Meaning
1	Prayerful	We are consciously dependent on God in everything
2	Bible-driven	We are directed and empowered by God's authoritative, living and life-giving Word
3	Growing more like Jesus	Individually, we're growing in likeness to the character of our Lord Jesus Christ
4	Loving and Generous	We show we're true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ by our genuine concern for the welfare of one another, regardless of race, age, stage of life or anything else; giving ourselves, our money and our people in the service of the Church and the spread of the Gospel
5	Passionate to share Good News	Motivated by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that we have each been shown, we're confident in the truth and power of the message of the great news of rescue through the Lord Jesus Christ, and always ready to share the reason for our hope

6	Looking to the Future	We are thankful for the past, but want to live in the present, always looking to the future and what God has for us as we seek to serve His purpose in our generation
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2. Provisions for the Internal Governance of the Church

2.1. Members and Membership

- 2.1.1. Clause 2.1 comprises the membership requirements of the Church Handbook referred to in the Constitution.
- 2.1.2. Members of the Church shall be those persons who have confirmed in writing (or other means permitted by the Elders) their unreserved agreement to the Basis of Faith and their acceptance of the Constitution and this Church Handbook in its entirety (including the duty of members referred to in the Constitution) and whose Membership has been approved by the Elders and has not been suspended or terminated, all in accordance with the provisions of this Clause 2.1.
- 2.1.3. 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. The responsibilities of membership include recognising the Biblical authority and leadership of the Elders subject to decisions of Church Members' Meetings carried out in accordance with the provisions of this Church Handbook and the Constitution, to participate in the work of the Church and its activities, to attend meetings regularly, to bear each other up before the Lord in prayer, and to share in the financial needs of the Church. In particular this will involve:
- a. Regular attendance at Sunday worship. (Acts 20:7, Hebrews 10:25)
 - b. Regular personal prayer and Bible reading. (2 Timothy 3:15-17, Philippians 4:6)
 - c. Regular attendance, when possible, at the main weekday meeting of the church for prayer, Bible study and fellowship and at Church Business Meetings. (Acts 1:14, 2:42)
 - d. Sharing in the life, work and witness of the local church. (Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 15:58)
 - e. Regular giving to the local church and the Lord's work in general. (1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7)
 - f. 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 Thessalonians 3:12)
 - g. An endeavour to live a life consistent with the faith we profess. (Romans 6:1-2, Ephesians 4:1)

- h. Regular attendance at the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:42, 20:7)
- 2.1.4. Members shall enter into a covenant with one another to express their commitment to one another within the body of the Church in accordance with the responsibilities laid out above. New Members will be required to subscribe to this covenant. The terms of the covenant are set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.1.5. The first Members of the Church are those registered as members of the charitable company Duke Street Baptist Church (reg company number 07118491) immediately prior to the Church being registered by the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
- 2.1.6. The Senior Minister and his wife, if he is married, shall be received into Membership on the taking up of his appointment as Senior Minister subject to their compliance with Clause 2.2.3.
- 2.1.7. Any new members of staff whose appointment has been approved by the Church Business Meeting shall be received into membership on the taking up of their appointment subject to their compliance with Clause 2.2.3.
- 2.1.8. The Membership Secretary shall maintain a register of all Church Members.

2.2. Membership Application Process

- 2.2.1. Any person wishing to apply for membership must in the first instance make their desire known to the Membership Secretary, or the Senior Minister, or one of the Elders, or the Church Office.
- 2.2.2. The person will be given a Membership Application Form as shall all those who are baptised in the Church.
- 2.2.3. The person will complete the Membership Application Form and return it to the Church Office. The Membership Application Form will include the following
 - a. A summary of the applicant's Christian testimony.
 - b. A statement of the applicant's acceptance of the provisions of the constitution and the Church Handbook.
 - c. A statement of what the applicant finds useful or helpful about the Church, together with a statement of the potential areas where the applicant might like to serve within the Church.
 - d. A statement that the applicant consents to the use by the Church of their personal private data provided on the Membership Application Form for the purposes of managing the Church's relationship with its members.
- 2.2.4. Upon receipt of a completed Membership Application Form, one of the Elders will liaise with the Membership Secretary who will then appoint two members chosen from a panel of interviewers approved by the Elders from time to time, who will liaise with the applicant and agree a date and time to meet with the applicant. Also on receipt of a completed application, the candidate's name will be published in the Church weekly bulletin for three weeks, inviting existing members to provide any relevant comments to the Membership Secretary.

- 2.2.5. The two interviewers will meet with the applicant to review the application. Following the meeting the interviewers will prepare a written report for the Elders, which includes a recommendation regarding whether the application for membership should be approved, or not.
- 2.2.6. The Elders will review the interviewers' recommendation, and at their discretion the Elders acting together, either at a meeting where the Elders are present, or via an exchange of emails (or other suitable electronic means) will be responsible for proposing the application for membership to the Members of the Church to be approved by a majority of Members present at the meeting. The quorum for Church Business Meetings where the only business to be discussed is the admission of individuals into membership of the Church shall be the greater of [insert quorum X% or X members]. Notice shall be given in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.
- 2.2.7. Subject to the approval of the Members referred to in Clause 2.2.6, the new membership shall not commence until the new Church Member has been publicly welcomed into Membership at a Sunday service of worship during which they will be asked to answer questions about their agreement with the Church's Basis of Faith, commitment to the life and other members of the Church, and submission to the government of the Church.
- 2.2.8. The new member will not be added to the Membership Roll, or permitted to attend Church Business Meeting until they have been publicly welcomed into Membership.
- 2.2.9. In the event that an application is not considered suitable, one or two of the Elders will meet with the applicant to explain the reasons why the application was not approved.

2.3. Termination of Membership

- 2.3.1. A Member may voluntarily resign by submitting in writing a letter to that effect to the charity trustees through the Membership Secretary.
- 2.3.2. A Member may be removed from Membership by the application of the disciplinary procedure set out in Clause 2.17.

2.4. Baptism

- 2.4.1. The Doctrinal Distinctives set out the view of the Church with regard to Baptism.
- 2.4.2. Any person wishing to be baptised shall submit their request to one of the Elders. The Elders acting together will be responsible for deciding whether the person wishing to be baptised should be baptised or not.
- 2.4.3. An applicant who is to be baptised will always be encouraged to give testimony to their faith before their baptism.

2.5. The Lord's Supper

- 2.5.1. The Lord's Supper shall usually be celebrated two times per calendar month. The table shall be open to all who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and know Him as their own personal Saviour.

2.6. Ministry Structure

- 2.6.1. All ministries in the Church shall be under the spiritual oversight of the Elders.
- 2.6.2. The different ministries of the Church shall be organised into a Ministry Structure that is shown in Appendix 2. The Ministry Structure will be varied as different ministries commence and others cease, at the discretion of the Elders.

2.7. Church Officers

- 2.7.1. There are two types of officer within the Church: Elders (including the Senior Minister), and Deacons. The appointment of Church Officers shall be undertaken by processes that are public, clear and open (save that voting shall be by secret ballot) so that all members are able to consider prayerfully who should be appointed. Each person appointed to the office will also act as a charity trustee in accordance with the Constitution. The provisions for how a Church Officer is identified, nominated, and appointed are shown in clauses 2.10, 2.11, 2.13, 2.14 and 2.15 of this Church Handbook.
- 2.7.2. The charity trustees, being the appointed Elders and Deacons (other than any Associate Minister), will together form the Church Council. The provisions for the meeting of the Church Council are shown in clause 2.13 of this Church Handbook.

2.8. Roles within the Church

- 2.8.1. In order to support the overall ministry of the Church, there are many different roles, and they will vary according to the different needs and priorities at the time. The different roles will be identified in the Ministry Structure shown in Appendix 2. From time to time a revised Ministry Structure will be published and shared with members as and when needed.
- 2.8.2. Many of the roles will be undertaken by Church Officers, (Elders, or Deacons) and other roles will be undertaken by persons who are not Church Officers.
- 2.8.3. The following roles must be held by a person appointed to the office of Elder:
 - Chairman of the Elders
 - Member of the Eldership
- 2.8.4. The role of Church Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Head of Facilities, and Head of World Mission, must be filled by a person who has been appointed to the office of a deacon.
- 2.8.5. The following roles may, at the discretion of the Elders, be filled by a member of the staff team or a member of the Church without the requirement to be first appointed to the office of elder or deacon.
 - Pastoral Care Coordinator
 - Children's and Youth Ministry Coordinator
 - Men's Ministry Coordinator
 - Women's Ministry Coordinator

Senior's Ministry Coordinator
20s and 30s Ministry Coordinator

2.9. Senior Minister and Associate Minister

- 2.9.1. The Senior Minister shall be male and have been baptised as a believer.
- 2.9.2. The Senior Minister will be an employee of the Church, notwithstanding that he shall be a charity trustee of the Church. The role of the Senior Minister will be documented in a Job Description, and the tasks fulfilled may vary depending on the different skills and experiences of the appointed Senior Minister. The Senior Minister will share the duties of the Elders as outlined in clause 2.10.5. The Senior Minister shall undertake his role in Christian love and shall be in a relationship of mutual accountability with the charity trustees and also with members.
- 2.9.3. The Senior Minister shall be the ex-officio head of all Church Ministries, and the Chairman of the charity trustees.
- 2.9.4. Before undertaking the office, the Senior Minister must indicate wholehearted acceptance of the Church Basis of Faith and all Doctrinal Distinctives, as well as the provisions of the constitution and the Church Handbook.
- 2.9.5. In the event of a vacancy, the Elders shall be responsible for agreeing the process for selecting and identifying candidates for the role of Senior Minister. When a candidate has been selected, the charity trustees, acting together, shall be responsible for nominating the candidate for approval by members. The charity trustees shall convene a Special Members Meeting with at least three Sundays' notice for the purpose of approving, or otherwise, the candidate's appointment. The appointment shall require 75% of votes cast at the meeting.
- 2.9.6. If not less than three quarters (fractions to be rounded up) of the members of the Elders (not including the Senior Minister and any Associate Minister) resolve that the Senior Minister should be removed from office, then the charity trustees shall convene a Special Church Business Meeting with at least three Sundays' notice for the purpose of considering a resolution to remove the Senior Minister from office. The resolution shall require 75% of votes cast at the meetings. Notwithstanding the provisions of the constitution concerning the removal of a charity trustee, the Senior Minister shall be allowed to hear what is said to the members at the Church Business Meeting and to correct any errors of fact and offer any explanation of the circumstances or reasons for his actions before withdrawing so that the members at the Church Business Meeting may prayerfully and carefully consider whether the appointment should be terminated. If at that meeting the resolution to remove is carried by the requisite majority, a second Church Business meeting shall be called within one calendar month and if the resolution to remove is confirmed, subject to the same required majority as above (75% of votes cast at the meeting) then the Senior Minister shall be treated as having been given notice to terminate his employment at the second meeting.

- 2.9.7. During any period or periods when there is no Senior Minister, the Elders shall be responsible to see that the duties of a Senior Minister are discharged by others. At the discretion of the Elders, the charity trustees may recommend a person who is a member of the Church or a member of another Church to act as a Moderator who will hold this Office until a new Senior Minister is appointed. The charity trustees' recommendation shall require 75% of votes cast at the meeting, including proxy votes, if allowed by the charity trustees.
- 2.9.8. An Associate Minister shall be male and have been baptised as a believer. He may be appointed as an Elder and if so appointed shall be a charity trustee.

2.10. Elders

- 2.10.1. A person appointed to the office of Elder shall be male, shall be persons who are marked by their integrity, vision and faith and must satisfy the qualifications set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-15, 19-25; 2 Timothy 2:24-25; Titus 1:5-9; and Acts 6:3-6. In addition, Elders must have been a member of the Church for at least two years before they are nominated for office.
- 2.10.2. Before undertaking the office, an Elder must indicate their unreserved acceptance of the Church Basis of Faith, as well as the provisions of the constitution and the Church Handbook.
- 2.10.3. An elder is also required to indicate, before taking office, that he subscribes wholeheartedly to all of the Doctrinal Distinctives.
- 2.10.4. The Elders may at their own discretion appoint an additional Elder to fill a vacancy but any person so appointed shall retire at the next Church Business Meeting but shall be eligible for nomination as an Elder at that meeting.
- 2.10.5. The duties of the Elders shall include the following: -
- a. To be devoted to prayer and the study of God's word. This will include sustaining a caring ministry for the flock; serving as partners with the Minister(s) for the Church's spiritual growth; praying for the sick and visiting the congregation as required; developing and maintaining the strategy of the Church; encouraging the development of new ministries within the Church; identifying and appointing leaders to key teams within the life of the Church; carrying responsibility for the exercising of Church discipline, and if necessary dealing with any member who acts in a manner that is detrimental to the welfare of the Church.
 - b. To support the Senior Minister in his task of teaching and preaching. This will include refuting those who contradict the truth; ensuring that instructors, Bible study leaders and youth leaders are spiritually qualified and equipped; supporting the Senior Minister in arranging for appropriate preachers during the Minister's absence; studying together bible doctrine and related themes; responsibility for the prayer life of the Church, for corporate worship and for discipleship issues.

- c. To lead by Christ-like example. This will include consistently modelling spiritual character, attitudes, values and behaviour amongst the congregation; providing and inviting the opportunity for frequent and ongoing contact with members of the congregation; conducting the affairs of the Church in an atmosphere of openness and mutual sensitivity, focusing on nurturing one another; maintaining a visible presence at events of the Church; and being proactive in ensuring quality of service at all levels

2.11. Appointment of Elders

- 2.11.1. Elders are appointed by the members in accordance with clause 2.11.6. The serving Elders shall be responsible for the nomination of additional members of the Eldership. The Elders shall invite the Members to propose individuals as potential eldership candidates, giving at least four weeks' notice to members prior to the date of a members meeting that is planned to include the nomination of elders.
- 2.11.2. A member who proposes a potential eldership candidate shall not indicate to the potential candidate that they have suggested the member's name until they have spoken with the Elders and the Elders have approved the proposed nomination.
- 2.11.3. The Elders, acting together, shall prayerfully consider potential eldership candidates and shall determine the compliance with the Biblical requirements referred to in clause 2.10.1 and their suitability to conduct the duties of an Elder referred to in clause 2.10.5.
- 2.11.4. The Elders shall not nominate candidates who are first degree relatives of any other Elder. The names of the nominated candidates shall be notified to members at least two weeks prior to the Church Business Meeting at which the vote regarding their proposed appointment is to be taken.
- 2.11.5. Elders will serve for a period of four years. Elders whose term of office has come to an end, or will shortly come to an end, may stand and are eligible to stand for re-election subject to the agreement of the Elders, acting together. They shall not require further nomination, but their names shall be notified to members at least two weeks prior to the Church Business Meeting at which the vote regarding their proposed appointment is to be taken.
- 2.11.6. Whether the appointment of a new person to the office of Elder, or the re-appointment of an existing elder, the candidate shall require 75% of votes cast at a Church Business Meeting, including postal votes, if permitted by a Church Business Meeting.
- 2.11.7. In the event that the Elders shall fail to nominate anyone for eldership where the number of elders has fallen below three (excluding elders employed by the church) or where for at least a year no nominated elder has been appointed by the members, a name shall be nominated for eldership at the next members' meeting provided the nomination is in a letter to the Elders signed by at least 10% of the membership.

2.12. Eldership Meetings

- 2.12.1. Elders will meet from time to time to conduct their duties as set out in clause 2.10.5. At the invitation of the Elders, other members of staff of the Church may attend meetings of the Elders
- 2.12.2. The Elders shall ensure that a majority of its members are not employed by the church and in the event of there being a minority of such members the Eldership shall, in addition to the provisions of the constitution regarding interim charity trustees, as soon as practicable make arrangements for the appointment of additional elders in accordance with clause 2.11, so as to cause there to be a majority of such members.
- 2.12.3. The Elders shall nominate a Chairman of its meetings who shall be appointed for such a role by members at the next following members Meeting before commencing his role. The appointment shall require a majority of votes cast at a Church Business Meeting, including postal votes, if permitted by a Church Business Meeting.

2.13. Deacons

- 2.13.1. Persons appointed to the office of deacon, shall together with the Senior Minister, and the Elders, become charity trustees and comprise the Church Council. The Chair of the Church Council shall be elected by a majority vote of the Council, and for such term of office as the Council shall from time to time determine.
- 2.13.2. A person appointed to the office of deacon shall be male or female, shall be persons who are marked by their integrity, vision and faith and must satisfy the qualifications set out in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In addition, deacons must have been a member of the Church for at least one year before they are nominated for office.
- 2.13.3. Before undertaking the office, a deacon must indicate their acceptance of the Church Basis of Faith, as well as the provisions of the constitution and the Church Handbook.
- 2.13.4. The duties of deacons shall vary depending on the different roles that they undertake. Some roles will be ministry support roles, such as finance, facilities management, and the administration of membership applications. Other roles will be ministry coordination roles. Clause 2.8.5 provides a list of different roles, although these roles will vary from time to time as different priorities change over time.

2.14. Appointment of Deacons

- 2.14.1. Deacons are appointed by the members in accordance with clause 2.14.5. The Church Council shall be responsible for the nomination of deacons. The Church Council shall prayerfully consider candidates. The Church Council shall also invite the Members to propose individuals as potential deacon candidates, giving at least four weeks' notice to members prior to the date of a members meeting that is planned to include the nomination of deacons. A member who suggests a potential deacon candidate shall not indicate to the potential candidate that they have suggested the member's name until they

- have spoken with the Church Council and the Church Council have approved the suggestion.
- 2.14.2. Potential candidates shall be interviewed by the Senior Minister who with the Church Council shall determine their compliance with the Biblical requirements referred to in clause 2.13.2 and their suitability to conduct the duties of a deacon referred to in clause 2.13.4.
- 2.14.3. The Church Council shall not nominate candidates who are first degree relatives of any other Church Council member. The names of the candidates shall be notified to members at least two weeks prior to the Church Business Meeting at which the vote regarding their proposed appointment is to be taken.
- 2.14.4. Deacons will serve for a period of four years. Deacons whose term of office has come to an end, or will shortly come to an end, may stand and are eligible to stand for re-election subject to the agreement of the Elders, acting together. They shall not require further nomination, but their names shall be notified to members at least two weeks prior to the Church Business Meeting at which the vote regarding their proposed appointment is to be taken.
- 2.14.5. Whether the appointment of a new person to the office of deacon, or the re-appointment of an existing deacon, the candidate shall require 60% of votes cast at a Church Business Meeting, including postal votes, if permitted by a Church Business Meeting.
- 2.14.6. Once appointed, the Church Council, acting together, and with the agreement of the deacon, can ask a deacon to undertake a different role, without a requirement to be reappointed to the office of a deacon. However, the original term of office will remain four years.

2.15. Other Roles

2.15.1. Church Treasurer

The Church Treasurer must be a person who has been appointed to the office of a deacon. The Church Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial management of the Church, for providing advice to the charity trustees concerning financial policy and direction, for providing periodic financial statements to the charity trustees, and for the overall preparation of a Church budget and maintaining the accounts of the Church.

2.15.2. Head of Facilities

The Head of Facilities must be a person who has been appointed to the office of a deacon. The Head of Facilities will be responsible for all aspects of the Church buildings and manse, including the maintenance and repair of the plant and equipment, and advising and consulting with the charity trustees concerning improvement initiatives.

2.15.3. Head of Mission

The Head of Mission must be a person who has been appointed to the office of a deacon. The Head of Mission shall chair the committee

responsible for coordinating and managing the Church's relationship with its mission partners.

2.15.4. Membership Secretary

The Membership Secretary must be a person who has been appointed to the office of a deacon. The Membership Secretary will be responsible for managing the membership application processes shown in clause 2.2 of this handbook, and for maintaining accurate records of the membership roll.

2.15.5. Head of Ministry Support

The Head of Ministry Support (HOMS) shall be a member of the staff team and will not hold the office of an elder or deacon. Although the HOMS will not be a charity trustee, the HOMS will attend charity trustee meetings and act as secretary to the meeting.

The HOMS will be accountable to the charity trustees for the overall operational and administration of the Charity. The HOMS shall be responsible for the preparation of notices of any Church Business Meetings and the issuing of all papers and reports to be presented to such meetings.

2.16. Charity Trustees

- 2.16.1. The Constitution sets out which of the Church Officers are the charity trustees of the Church.

2.17. Church Discipline

2.17.1. Removal from membership

Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 5 teach that local churches should remove from among them members who refuse to repent of sin. We believe that local churches should always take this action with the aim that it will prompt the person who has been removed from membership to repent so that he or she can be welcomed back into the church and with the aim that it will help to prevent other members from being tempted to follow their example.

2.17.2. A member of the church may be removed from membership for any of the following reasons:

- a. He or she errs in doctrine so that he or she no longer affirms the Basis of Faith of the Church
- b. He or she is no longer willing to respect the practices and doctrinal positions adopted by the Church set out in Part 1 of this Church Handbook
- c. He or she errs in conduct by committing open sin which brings the church into disrepute
- d. He or she has consistently failed to fulfil the obligations of a member of the church



- e. He or she refuses to repent of sin committed against another Member which has been drawn to his or her attention
 - f. He or she has made false and malicious allegations against an Elder, Deacon or other member of the church
- 2.17.3. A member may only be removed from membership by a resolution of the members at a Church Business Meeting which has been proposed by the charity trustees of the Church. The resolution will require a simple majority of members present at the meeting.
- 2.17.4. The charity trustees shall not propose a resolution to remove a member unless the following steps have been taken:
- a. The Elders have held a disciplinary meeting at which they considered whether or not to propose a resolution to remove the member from membership;
 - b. The Elders have given to the member 21 clear days' notice of the disciplinary meeting, informing the member why his or her removal from membership is being considered, and inviting the member to make representations to the Elders as to why he or she should not be removed from membership;
 - c. The Elders invited the member to make those representations at the disciplinary meeting himself or herself or through his or her representative; and
 - d. The charity trustees took those representations into account when deciding whether to propose a resolution that the member be removed from membership.
- 2.17.5. The member whose removal from membership is proposed shall be entitled to a reasonable amount of time during the meeting at which the members can vote on the resolution to remove him or her from membership to address the members and make such representations as he or she wishes prior to the vote on the resolution.
- 2.17.6. The member shall be informed of the decision of the members by the Head of Ministry Support and the register of Members amended accordingly where termination of membership is to be applied.
- 2.17.7. A person who has been removed from membership shall be welcomed back into membership if they apply for membership in the normal way and their application is approved.
- 2.17.8. The steps set out at Clauses 2.17.9-13 should also be followed prior to the disciplinary meeting taking place, but failure to follow those steps will not invalidate a resolution of the members to remove a person from Membership.
- 2.17.9. The Elders must be informed where it is believed that any of the reasons set out in Clause 2.17.2 apply to a member of the Church. Where a person's behaviour is being reported by a member who has been sinned against by the person he or she is reporting, that member should normally raise the issue first with the person concerned and only report it to the Elders if the

two persons concerned are unable to resolve the matter between themselves.

- 2.17.10. Where the Elders are informed or they themselves believe that any of the reasons at Clause 2.17.2 apply to a member, they shall appoint two persons of spiritual maturity to meet with the member to enquire into the matter and to investigate the matter thoroughly, and where appropriate to encourage the member against whom the allegations have been made to repent.
- 2.17.11. After the persons appointed under Clause 2.17.10 have investigated the matter and have met with the member against whom the allegations have been made (or the member has been given reasonable opportunity to meet and has refused), they shall report back to the Elders who shall decide whether it is necessary for a disciplinary meeting to be held and what additional steps they should take, if any.
- 2.17.12. Even in cases where there has been genuine repentance, the Elders may still be required to report the facts arising from the investigation to the relevant secular authorities. In such cases the Elders shall give to the Member concerned all the support that is appropriate for a Member who is genuinely repentant.
- 2.17.13. Additional Disciplinary Measures

Irrespective of whether the Elders have proposed a resolution to remove the member from membership or not, the Elders, at their discretion, may resolve to impose any of the following measures:

- a. A restriction from participating in particular activities or ministries of the Church;
- b. Taking part in any or all of the meetings of the Church, including meetings or activities that are normally open to the public;
- c. Asking the church members to approve a resolution that members shall not associate with the person who has been removed from membership, in line with specific guidance from the Elders.

2.18. Church Business Meetings

- 2.18.1. The provisions for Church Business Meetings are set out in the Constitution under the Clauses headed “Members’ decisions” and “General meetings of members”. A “general meeting of members” under the Constitution is referred to as a “Church Business Meeting” in this Church Handbook.
- 2.18.2. Decisions covering any matters that are listed in Appendix 3 to this Church Handbook require the approval of the church members at a Church Business Meeting by the majorities set out in Appendix 3 for them to be recognised as decisions of the Church.
- 2.18.3. Church Members shall meet together in a Church Business Meetings prayerfully seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit and under the Lordship of Christ to consider and review matters associated with the life of the Church and the furtherance of its purposes and mission, including those related to church membership, the appointment of Elders and Deacons and the approval of the budget, and to seek consensus regarding the matters to be

decided at the meeting. All Church Business Meetings shall be conducted throughout in a manner which seeks to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

2.19. Church Safeguarding Policy

- 2.19.1. The charity trustees shall operate a church safeguarding policy and shall ensure that activities involving children and vulnerable adults are carried out in accordance with that policy.
- 2.19.2. Each person serving in a church activity involving children or vulnerable adults and every charity trustee shall provide a current Disclosure and Barring Service certificate or equivalent, as required by law.

2.20. Amendment of the Church Handbook

- 2.20.1. Other than the section headed “Principles for Charity Purposes,” any provisions of this Church Handbook can be amended by the charity trustees under the authority of a resolution of the members of the Church approving such a change at a Church Business Meeting, provided that the proposed amendment shall not be such as would cause the Church to lose its charitable status or such as would cause this Church Handbook to be inconsistent with the Constitution. The section headed “Principles for Charity Purposes” can only be amended where this is required because the provisions of the Constitution have changed.
- 2.20.2. A majority of 60% of those members present and voting at the Church Business Meeting is required to approve a proposed amendment to any clause excepting (i) any provision of this Church Handbook requiring the approval of a matter by percentage of the members which is greater than a simple majority of the members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting, in which case the majority required to amend that provisions shall be the greater of (a) 75% of members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting and (b) the majority required by the provision itself as currently drafted, (ii) the provisions contained in Part 1 of this Church Handbook where a majority of 75% is required, (iii) the provisions in the section headed “Principles for Charity Purposes” where the charity trustees shall make the amendment without the need for a vote following any change to the Constitution; and iv) Appendix 2, “Ministry Structure” where the Elders shall make the amendments without the need for a vote.
- 2.20.3. 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 four weeks before the meeting at which the proposal will be put to the vote.
- 2.20.4. No amendment may be made under this Clause to any provision of the Constitution, including the Basis of Faith.

3. Appendix 1 – Basis of Faith, Doctrinal Distinctives & Members’ Covenant

Basis of Faith

Duke Street Church is committed to these truths of historic, biblical Christianity as our Doctrinal Basis.

1. God

There is one God, who exists eternally in three distinct but equal persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is perfect and unchangeable in his holiness, justice, goodness, 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.

2. 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.

3. The Human Race

The human race is created male and female in the image of God. Thus all people have inherent and equal dignity and worth. Their great purpose is to worship, love and obey God. Marriage is a creation decree, being the union of one man and one woman, intended for life. 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 by nature under the just condemnation and wrath of God and needs to be born again, forgiven and reconciled to God in order to know and please him.

4. 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. He is the only mediator between God and mankind. On the cross he satisfied God's justice by dying in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by his blood and defeating the devil. He rose bodily from the dead and in his resurrection body ascended into heaven where he is exalted and reigns as Lord of all. He intercedes for his people in the presence of the Father.

5. 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, credited with Christ's righteousness, adopted into the family of God and receive eternal life; resulting in works that please God, all to the glory of God alone

6. 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 indwells all believers, brings assurance of salvation and produces increasing likeness to Christ despite sin's continuing presence. He builds up the Church, and renews and empowers its members in holiness, repentance, faith, love, hope, wisdom, worship, service and mission.

7. The Church

The universal Church is the body of which Christ is the head and to which all who are saved belong. Its mission is to make disciples from all nations. Its mark is mutual, loving, care and concern. Its members are all priests, called to serve God with the gifts he has given them, with equal standing before God and equal access to the Father through the Son by the Spirit. It is made visible in local churches, which are congregations of baptised believers who are committed to each other for the worship of God, the preaching of the Word, the administering of baptism and the Lord's Supper; for pastoral care and discipline, for the preservation of sound teaching, and for evangelism. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between churches by mutual love, care, correction and encouragement in accordance with the Scriptures. True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the gospel of salvation by grace alone.

8. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been given to the churches by Christ as visible signs of the gospel. Baptism is a symbol of union with Christ in his death and resurrection, of the washing away of sins and of entry into his Church, but does not impart spiritual life. The Lord's Supper 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.

9. The Future

The Lord Jesus Christ will return to this earth personally, visibly, suddenly and gloriously. He will raise the dead bodily and judge the world in perfect justice and righteousness. The unbeliever will be sent to eternal punishment and the believer will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God. God will make all things new, creating a new heavens and a new earth, and will be glorified forever.

Doctrinal Distinctives

1. Sufficiency of Scripture

The Bible contains all we need in order to know God and the way of salvation. We need no further 'inspired verbal revelation' (2 Timothy 3:15-17; Psalms 19:7-11).

So we need to listen to God speaking to us through the Scripture read, preached, prayed and sung. We are committed to systematic, consecutive, expository preaching of Scripture as our staple diet (2 Timothy 3:15 - 4:5).

2. Baptism

Baptism is for believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and is both an act of personal obedience and a sign of personal identification with the Lord Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection, and also a sign of the washing away of sins. However, we welcome into membership any believer in the Lord Jesus Christ who subscribes to the Basis of Faith but who on grounds of conscience has not been baptised as a believer, provided that they satisfy the Elders that they have given serious and prayerful consideration to the Biblical basis for believers' baptism, and are unreservedly supportive of believers' baptism as the practice of the church.

So we offer baptism, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, to all who publicly profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but only to such people. We normally baptise by immersion in water.

3. Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a rich commemoration and celebration in which Christian believers share bread and wine. The bread and wine are symbols which represent the body and blood of Christ, taken as a reminder of his death for his people and what it accomplished. The Lord Jesus Christ is spiritually present at a celebration of the Lord's Supper, as indeed he is at all gatherings of the local church.

So we will celebrate the Lord's Supper on a regular basis and offer it both to members of the church and to other believers in attendance. We expect participants to have expressed their faith in baptism (according to the conventions of this or another church).

4. Election & the Sovereignty of God –

God is sovereign in the salvation of men and women. For anyone to come to the Lord Jesus Christ in repentance and faith requires God to choose them and draw them to himself. Knowing this truth leads to humility and assurance of salvation among believers. It does not imply that believers should be inactive in evangelism. Far from it – proclaiming the gospel is the means by which God's chosen ones are brought to salvation.

So while we look to God to bring new life by his Spirit, we are committed to seeking and taking every opportunity to share the gospel with others, in obedience to the commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Leadership in the Local Church

The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church. A local church is to be led by a group of elders. Further, although God created men and women with equal worth and richly equips both men and women for active ministry, leadership in the context of the church (as in marriage and the family) is the functional responsibility of suitably qualified men (the qualifications are listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1). Such men are to operate as under-shepherds of Christ, loving and serving the members of the church and striving for personal godliness.

So eldership in the church is male and plural. Elders are qualified by character and gifting, and undertake their role in appropriate humility and love. Members of the church agree to submit to their leadership in the church in so far as that leadership is exercised in a manner consistent with the Bible.

6. The Mission of the Church and the Kingdom of God

We believe that the mission of the church is to make disciples from all nations. The church bears witness to the Kingship of the Lord Jesus, proclaiming the forgiveness of sins available through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The primary purpose of the church is to rescue individuals from the kingdom of Satan and transfer them to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ through the message of the gospel. Individual Christians are encouraged to serve in whatever context they think right before God, but the church as church is not concerned primarily to change the social, economic or political order of the present world, or to solve the problems of poverty, sickness, social inequality and race relationships in the world. God will do all this when his Kingdom comes in its fullness at the return of Jesus the King in power and glory.

So in our ministries we focus as a church on our mission to make disciples.

7. Marriage and Divorce

Marriage is a God-given blessing whereby a man and a woman may enjoy lifelong union, intimacy and mutual support picturing the relationship between the Lord Jesus Christ and His church. Divorce is a departure from God's purpose in marriage and is permitted explicitly only in the case of adultery (Matthew 19:9) or of desertion by an unbelieving partner (1 Corinthians 7:15) – and even in these cases, only as a last resort where there is no repentance and reconciliation proves impossible.

So we celebrate marriage and endeavour to assist couples as they prepare for and live out godly marriages. Where divorce or remarriage is being considered by a church partner, we will seek to understand the individual circumstances to determine if it is biblically permissible and counsel those involved accordingly.

Duke Street Church Covenant of Membership

This covenant is a summary of how we, the members of Duke Street Church, promise to live together as a church family, following the practice of Christian believers throughout the centuries who have pledged to God and one another to live out the gospel in community.

Our mission as Duke Street Church is to glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ from all nations in the power of the Holy Spirit.

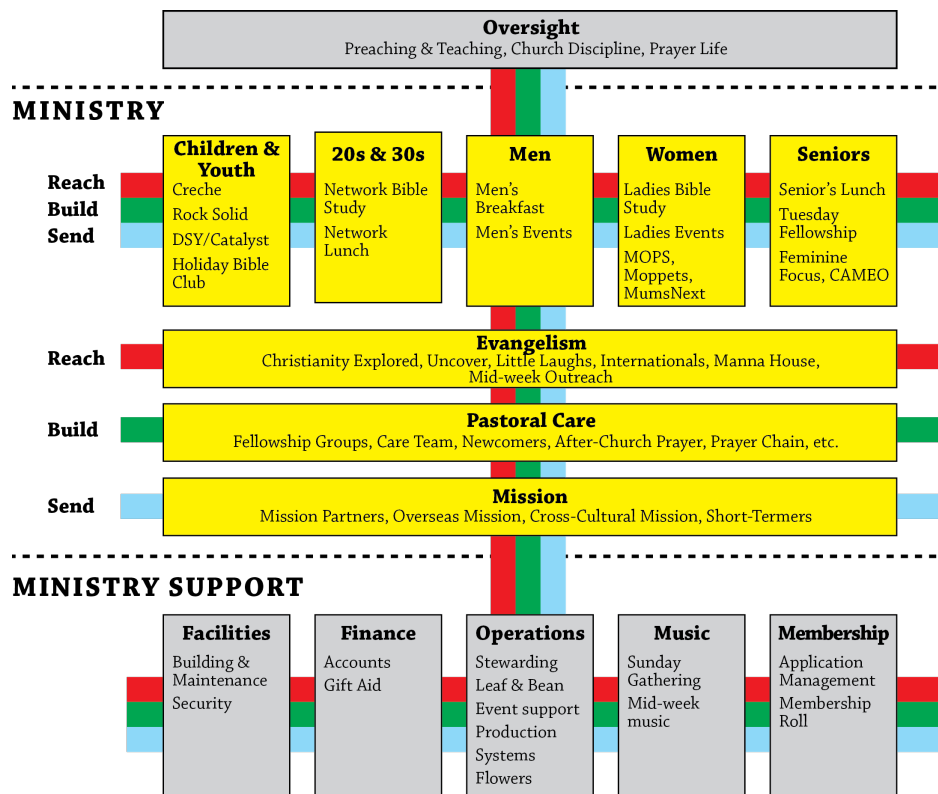
Having been brought by God's Spirit to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give our whole lives in service to Him, and having been baptised in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and in complete dependence upon Him, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other:

- We will make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit and the peace and purity of the church.
- We will be devoted to one another in love. With humility and gentleness we will patiently bear with each other, forgiving, encouraging and building one another up; exercising due care and watchfulness over each other; faithfully admonishing one another, remembering one another in prayer, helping one another in times of sickness and distress, being slow to take offence and quick to seek reconciliation.
- We will serve in the church according to its needs and our gifting.
- We commit to being faithful and regular in meeting together for weekly corporate worship and for the Lord's Supper, and whenever possible to be at prayer gatherings.
- We accept our responsibility for the government of the church through attendance at members' meetings; we will submit to the government and discipline of the church; and, if we leave the church, we will unite ourselves with a like-minded church.
- We will work together for the continuance of a faithful Bible-based and Christ-centred gospel ministry in the church by upholding its basis of faith and doctrinal distinctives and through supporting the preaching of the Word of God.
- We will contribute cheerfully, generously and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor within the church family, and the spread of the gospel to the nations.
- We will seek to bring up those in our care in the training and instruction of the Lord and to fulfil our family responsibilities in submission to Christ, prayerfully seeking the salvation of our family.
- We will seek to witness to the Lord Jesus Christ by word and deed as part of the church's evangelisation of the world.
- We will live in private and in public in a manner consistent with the message we speak, saying yes to godliness and no to ungodliness, while we wait for the glorious return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

4. Appendix 2 – Ministry Structure, Offices and Roles within the Church

The table below shows the current ministry as of November 2019. The Ministry Structure will be varied as different ministries commence and others cease, at the discretion of the Elders.



Sen. Minister Roles	Elder Roles	Deacon Roles	Other Roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ex-officio head of all Church ministries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman of the Elders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church Treasurer* Head of Fabrics Head of Facilities* Head of World Mission* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Ministry Support Sunday School Coordinator 20s and 30s Ministry Coordinator Pastoral Care Coordinator Children's and Youth Ministry Coordinator Men's Ministry Coordinator Women's Ministry Coordinator

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors' Ministry Coordinator
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- * Must be conducted by a person who has been appointed to the office of deacon; other deacon roles may, at the discretion of the elders, be performed by elders in the event of a vacancy, or by a member who has not been appointed as a deacon

5. Appendix 3 – Matters Requiring Approval at a Church Business Meeting

The table below sets out the decisions that need to be approved by members at a Church Business Meeting. Some items within the table simply reproduce requirements that are set out elsewhere in the Constitution or Church Rules (“Type A Items”).

Other items cover decisions which are only required to be approved by Church Members by virtue of having been included in this table (“Type B Items”). Type A Items will be amended whenever the relevant provision of the Constitution or Church Rules is amended. Type B Items may be amended in accordance with clause 2.17.2.

No	Decision	Majority required
Type A Items		
1	To allow a Church Business Meeting to proceed on short notice (Constitution - 11.3.2)	90% of all Church Members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting
2	To amend the Constitution (Constitution - 27.1)	75 % of Church Members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting
3	To amend the Basis of Faith (Constitution - 27.3)	75 % of all Church Members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting
4	To wind up the Church (Constitution - 28)	75% of Church Members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting
5	Removal of a person from membership (Handbook – 2.17.3.)	A simple majority of Church Members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting
6	Appointment of an Elder (Handbook – 2.11.)	75% of Church Members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting including postal votes
7	Appointment of a Deacon (Handbook – 2.14)	60% of Church Members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting including postal votes
Type B Items		
8	Appointment of a ministry member of staff	60% of Church Members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting and including postal votes
9	Approval of a project or initiative that costs, or is likely to cost over £25,000, apart from items in a budget approved by Church Members	60% of Church Members present and voting at a Church Business Meeting