

BELMONT  TREMORFA  

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**FAMILY CHURCH**

CONSTITUTION

# VERSION HISTORY

Name	Date of change	Changed by	Main change(s)	Status
Constitution 201102	February 2011	Roger Inglis	Re-typed and re-formatted	n/a – as previously approved
Constitution 201305	15th May 2013	Bart Geere	Name change, voting rights etc.	Approved at AGM
Constitution 201402	15th February 2014	Bart Geere	Tidying up	Submitted to AGM 14th May 2014. Circulated for membership approval November/December 2014
Constitution 201512	13th December 2015	Bart Geere	Removal of Associate Membership; tidying up.	Draft to Deacons 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2015. Approved at Church Meeting 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2015

1.0 Name and basis of Belmont Tremorfa Family Church:

1.1 The church's legal name is Belmont Baptist Church. It shall also be known as Belmont Tremorfa Family Church. References to the latter hereinafter shall be construed also as references to the former where the context so requires. It shall be affiliated to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the local Association. It shall consist of those individuals who have become members in accordance with this constitution.

1.2 The Doctrinal basis of the church shall be:

1.2.1 The authority of the scriptures as contained in the Word of God, commonly known as The Holy Bible, in all matters of faith and practice.

1.2.2 The unity of the Godhead and the Trinity of Persons therein; sovereign in creation, providence and redemption.

1.2.3 The full Deity and Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose death was, in accordance with the eternal purpose of God the Father, a perfect offering and satisfaction for human sin, the sinner being justified only by faith in that sacrifice, since salvation is entirely free by grace and not by human merit.

1.2.4 The essential work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification.

1.3 On being welcomed into the fellowship of Belmont Tremorfa Family Church members are required to acknowledge and subscribe to the following set of beliefs as contained in the Apostles Creed and as accepted by the Protestant community:-

Believe in God the Father Almighty,  
Maker of Heaven and Earth:  
And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord  
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilot,  
Was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into Hell;  
The third day He rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father  
Almighty: From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.  
Believe in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Universal Catholic Church; The  
communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the  
body; the life everlasting.

Belief in the Old and New Testaments as the inspired word of God and as being entirely trustworthy in relation to faith and salvation and the ordering of Christian behaviour corporately as the Church and for individual Christians.

## 2.0 Membership:

- 2.1 Membership shall be open to all who give ascent to the afore-stated doctrinal basis of the Church, have repented of their sins and have confessed their faith in the saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ by being baptized by immersion in water.
- 2.2 Membership is also available to those who make such profession as outlined in 2.1 above but cannot, for a good practical reason such as ill health or disability, be baptized by immersion in water.
- 2.3 Those who wish to join Belmont Tremorfa Family Church shall apply to a member of the Church Leadership as defined in paragraph 4.5. Subject to the Church Leadership collectively having satisfied themselves as to the suitability of each applicant, the names shall be brought to the church membership at the next convenient church meeting or by way of a written communication and postal vote (which may be via email for members having this facility) and if accepted they shall receive with prayer the right hand of fellowship by the officiating leader of the service on the first convenient 'Communion' Sunday.
- 2.4 Members shall be received from other Christian Churches by letter of transfer or commendation, such applications to be voted upon as set forth in the foregoing rules.
- 2.5 The letter or commendation on behalf of the applicant shall originate from the applicant's previous Church Leadership and be addressed to the Belmont Tremorfa Family Church Secretary who will inform the Church Meeting after due consideration as outlined in paragraph 2.3 above.
- 2.6 The Church Leadership may waive the requirement for a letter of transfer or commendation. This waiver will usually only be given if the transferring member is known to two or more of them personally or if they have been attendees of Belmont Tremorfa Family Church for a period of time sufficient for the Church Leadership to collectively have satisfied themselves as to the suitability of the applicant for membership.
- 2.7 A roll of members shall be kept by the Church Secretary and shall be kept under constant review by the Church Leadership. The Church Leadership may make recommendations regarding the removal of a name only after efforts have been made by the Church Leadership to reconcile a lapsed member.
- 2.8 In interpreting these rules a member is defined as any person on the active roll of members of Belmont Tremorfa Family Church who has been admitted in accord with paragraphs 2.1 to 2.6 above.

## 3.0 Ordinances:

- 3.1 The ordinances of Believer's Baptism shall be administered as required. All believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are admitted to this ordinance, whether or not such candidates desire membership of Belmont Tremorfa Family Church.

3.2 The ordinance of the Lord's Supper to which all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ are invited will be observed as a general practice on the first Sunday of each month.

#### 4.0 The Church Officers:

##### 4.1 The Pastor:

In making or considering a call to a Pastor the following shall apply:

4.1.1 The prospective Pastor shall subscribe to the Doctrinal Basis as laid down in the foregoing paragraph 1.2.

4.1.2 The prospective Pastor and the church members under the guidance of the Church Leadership shall agree on the Conditions of Service.

4.1.3 In making a call to a Pastor a minimum of two-thirds of the members present at a church meeting should vote in favour of the call.

4.1.4 Should it be necessary to ask an incumbent Pastor to cease office; the decision must be approved by a minimum of two-thirds of the members present at a church meeting.

4.1.5 The Pastor appointed to serve Belmont Tremorfa Family Church shall be the Presiding Elder and shall also be an ex-officio member of all church committees and societies and may preside at all meetings, both of the church and its constituents and societies.

##### 4.2 The Elders:

4.2.1 The Elders' responsibilities and functions shall be as set out in Appendix 1.

4.2.2 In calling an Elder to office, or on asking him / her to cease from office, the decision must be approved by a minimum of two-thirds of the members present at a church meeting.

4.2.3 The appointment of an Elder shall be in relation to the need and then only provided there are those in fellowship possessing the essential qualifications.

4.2.4 There shall be no fixed number of Elders appointed by the church.

4.2.5 No person shall be appointed Elder merely as a merit award for long service to the church in any capacity.

4.2.6 An Elder should be re-appointed or not re-appointed after a three year term of office. An Elder should not be appointed for lifetime office due to the following considerations:

4.2.6.1 Faculties degenerate in some persons earlier than others;

4.2.6.2 Misplaced sentiments often make it difficult for church members to ask an Elder who is declining in spiritual graces to retire.

##### 4.3 The Deacons:

- 4.3.1 The Deacons shall be responsible for the secular affairs of the church as set out in Appendix 2 which are to be administered with spiritual grace.
- 4.3.2 The Deacons shall normally be seven members over 18 years of age. The Scriptures speak only of brethren in this capacity and the qualifications relating to such are given in the masculine gender. It has been the custom however where there has been deficiency of suitable brethren in some churches for sisters who exhibit spiritual grace to be called to the office of Deacon. This shall be the custom of Belmont Tremorfa Family Church.
- 4.3.3 Each Deacon shall be appointed for a term of three years, at the end of which time they shall retire at a subsequent church meeting but shall be eligible for re-election providing they still conform to the scriptural qualifications.
- 4.3.4 The name(s) of the retiring Deacon(s) shall be announced and nominations called for on two consecutive Sundays prior to the final date for receiving nominations, which shall be two clear weeks before the church meeting at which they are to retire and at which nominations are to be considered.
- 4.3.5 Nominations for the position of Deacon must have the support of two members, one a proposer and one a seconder, which must be given to the church secretary. The consent of the nominee must be obtained and confirmed to the Elders.
- 4.3.6 In order to be appointed, each Deacon must receive the support of at least two-thirds of the members present at the church meeting. Should the number of candidates be the same as the number of vacancies or fewer there will have to be a ballot to confirm their election. In the event of there being more candidates than vacancies the number of candidates shall first be reduced to the number of vacancies by ballot and then a confirmatory ballot held.

#### 4.4 Executive Officers:

- 4.4.1 There shall be a Secretary and a Treasurer.

4.5 Church Leadership is defined as the Pastor, the Elders and the Deacons acting in accordance with scriptural principles and this constitution. Should any conflict arise in any situation between the interpretation of scriptural principles and this constitution, the Elders' interpretation of scriptural principles shall prevail.

4.6 The Church Officers as at the date of publication of this revision of the constitution are listed in Appendix 3.

#### 5.0 Church Meetings:

- 5.1 Belmont Tremorfa Family Church shall meet for Christian fellowship and for the transaction of the business of the church at such intervals as the church

fellowship, on the recommendation of the Church Leadership, shall agree. Due notice of all such meetings shall be given at the time of public worship.

- 5.2 Agenda for all church meetings shall be prepared by the Church Secretary in consultation with the Church Leadership.
- 5.3 A special church meeting shall be called at the request of the Church Leadership.
- 5.4 A special church meeting may however be called at the request of six church members who must give adequate notice to the Church Secretary, together with the proposed business to be discussed. The Church Secretary shall then announce the intention to hold the meeting within a fortnight of the request at the Sunday service following the request,
- 5.5 Members intending to raise questions requiring discussion must give notice of the subject matter, either at the previous meeting to that at which the matter is to be considered or by letter to the Church Secretary which must be received not later than seven days before the date of the ordinary meeting.
- 5.6 Unless notice is given in either modes specified in the foregoing rule, the question, unless it is one of great urgency, will not be entertained until the succeeding meeting and a majority of the members present shall determine whether or not it should be discussed at the meeting.
- 5.7 A recommendation from the Church Leadership in regard to any matter, if not accepted by the church meeting at which it is presented, shall be referred back for further consideration and resubmitted, if the Church Leadership deems it advisable, at the next church meeting before final rejection by the members or other recommended action.
- 5.8 Members shall be entitled to vote at church meetings and the business shall be transacted under such rules as ordinarily govern the conduct of public meetings.
- 5.9 A quorum shall be twenty five percent of the church membership or ten members whichever is the greater and shall include a minimum of three members of the Church Leadership within the quorum.
- 5.10 The AGM shall ordinarily be held in the month of May, at which time the annual statement of accounts and reports of service for the previous year shall be presented. Prior to the date of the meeting the statement of accounts shall be printed and issued to the church members.
- 5.11 The election of the Church Secretary and Treasurer shall take place at the AGM. All outgoing officers shall be eligible for re-election.

- 5.12 Decisions taken at church meetings shall take effect immediately unless otherwise specified in the resolution.
- 5.13 Applications for meetings shall be made to the Church Secretary as outlined in the foregoing paragraphs. No meetings shall be held on the church premises without the permission of the Church Leadership.
- 5.14 All Belmont Tremorfa Family Church Officers and Leaders of church organisations and societies must be Belmont Tremorfa Family Church members.
- 5.15 Each Belmont Tremorfa Family Church organisation or society shall present to the church a report of its work and activities at the AGM.
- 5.16 The foregoing rules, a copy of which shall be given to each member, may be altered only at the AGM or at a church meeting called for that purpose and notified to the members in writing not later than seven days before the date of the meeting. A minimum of two-thirds of the members present at the meeting must vote in support of the alterations.
- 5.17 The existing rights of church members with regard to church meetings shall not be altered by the Church Leadership unilaterally.

#### 6.0 Expectation from members:

- 6.1 Members are expected to take membership of the local church seriously as members of the Body of Christ and therefore the matter should be attended to with diligence.
- 6.2 The first and most important responsibility is to maintain the quality of their personal and spiritual life. On no account neglect to pray and read the Bible every day; seeking fullness of the Holy Spirit in their life. In the event of the need for help in this matter members are recommended to contact the relevant Church Leadership member responsible for pastoral affairs. Ultimately the Elders hold this responsibility and members should not hesitate to contact them in case of need whether or not a Church Leadership member responsible for pastoral affairs is available.
- 6.3 Be faithful and loyal in their attendance at church meetings. The worship service may not always agree with your temperament and fellowship with other members may sometimes disappoint, however be prepared to contribute to the service rather than withhold. Do not wait to be welcomed but greet someone else.
- 6.4 Be actively concerned in the prayer life of the church. The Prayer Meeting is not an optional extra to the church programme; it is the very 'heart beat' of the church's life.



- 6.5 Ask the Lord what He would have you do to serve Him; refer to the pastoral member(s) of the Church Leadership for guidance in the exercise of any gifts you may possess. As the hymn expresses:-  
“There’s a work for Jesus ready at your hand:  
‘Tis a task the Master just for you has planned.  
Haste to do His bidding; yield Him service true,  
There’s a work for Jesus none but you can do.”
- 6.6 Also ask the Lord about your contribution to the church’s finances. Offering envelopes are available to assist you in regular giving. Bank standing orders may also be set up to give on a regular basis. The system is completely confidential. Income tax-paying Church members are reminded of the government Gift Aid scheme whereby tax refunds are available both to the church and the donor on covenanted donations. The Treasure can give advice on this subject.
- 6.7 The Old Testament norm was to give one-tenth of ones income to the Lord as His right. This and other gifts should be a love-offering to the Lord in the light of His giving of Himself to us.

#### 7.0 Church Discipline:

- 7.1 Where a member falls into sin or poor Christian living, such as to bring disgrace on the Name of our Lord Jesus or upon His family (the Body of Christ; the Church Universal), such member(s) shall be interviewed by the pastoral member(s) of the Church Leadership and then called to meet the Elders as a whole who shall decide what action shall be taken:-
- 7.1.1 To maintain the standard of Holiness in the Church.
  - 7.1.2 To restore the fallen member if such exhibits a sense of shame and repentance.
  - 7.1.3 Where an Officer of the church is concerned, such shall be expected to resign from that position for a given period of time which shall be set by the Elders.

#### 8.0 Members Reminder:

- 8.1 The Scriptures state “Obey them that have rule over you and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they must give account; that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.” (Hebrews 13:17)
- 8.2 So many who have fallen from grace, think that to leave the Church is the easy way out. It is not; it is cowardice leading further away from the Lord and on to additional indiscipline and spiritual decline.

## Appendix 1 – Duties and Responsibilities of an Elder:

- 1.1 To share the work of shepherding the flock including regular meetings with other Elders (which shall include the Pastor if one is appointed) to decide on the general strategy of Belmont Tremorfa Family Church. To receive reports from the Pastoral Helpers where a Pastoral Helper's scheme is in operation.
- 1.2 To plan the quality, content and lead the worship; preach and teach the Word of God according to individual spiritual gifts.
- 1.3 To preside at meetings and foster good relations within the church.
- 1.4 To prepare and nominate candidates for membership, train members for service, consider matters of doctrine, guard and feed the flock and make recommendation regarding transfers and erasures.
- 1.5 To recommend Officers of Belmont Tremorfa Family Church for nomination and suitable leadership for organisations and auxiliaries for appointment by the church, but the Elder(s) would not have the exclusive right in this matter.
- 1.6 To plan and oversee the Mission Outreach programme and policy.
- 1.7 To take the lead in nominating persons for election as Elder.
- 1.8 To fulfil a Pastors roll during intervals when Belmont Tremorfa Family Church is without a Pastor, either through lack of appointment of a Pastor or during extended absence of the appointed Pastor.
- 1.9 To be available to church members on all matters pastoral including prayer for healing of the sick.
- 1.10 To share in the Deacons meetings to encourage the unity of Belmont Tremorfa Family Church Leadership. Such participation shall carry voting power.
- 1.11 Elders shall report direct to the church membership.
- 1.12 An appointed Elder must be in harmony with the rest of the Elders.
- 1.13 To serve Communion in company with the Deacons.
- 1.14 To prepare items to be discussed at church business meetings.
- 1.15 In conjunction with the Deacons seek suitable candidates for the Pastorate.
- 1.16 The Pastor is the Presiding Elder.

## Appendix 2 – Duties and Responsibilities of the Deacons:

The Deacons are to be responsible to Belmont Tremorfa Family Church, in accordance with any trust deeds for the following:

- 2.1 Administration and co-ordination of collections, church finances including recommendations for expenditure by budgets and other means including the regular review of all wages, salaries and stipends paid by the church.
- 2.2 The use, repair, decoration, rating, heating, lighting, cleaning and custody of all church property including land, buildings, plant and equipment, fixtures, furniture and other contents. The physical safety of people when on and leaving the church property.
- 2.3 The purchase or otherwise of all furniture, plant and equipment and all other supplies. The sale, rent, loan or gift of such items to other parties.
- 2.4 The purchase or sale of land; the receipt of gifts and legacies. The purchase, demolition, erection or otherwise acquiring, leasing, selling, gifting or deeding of buildings.
- 2.5 The engagement of occasional preachers and the making of arrangements for hospitality.
- 2.6 The arrangements for stewarding at services and preparation of the baptismal pool and gowns.
- 2.7 Preparing rotas of Deacons and Elders to serve Communion.
- 2.8 The arrangement for organists, pianists and instrumentalists.
- 2.9 Arranging advertising and publicity of church events and services as necessary.
- 2.10 Arranging and co-ordinating transport for services, meetings and outings. Arranging maintenance, taxation and safe keeping of church vehicles.
- 2.11 In conjunction with the Elder(s) when necessary to seek suitable candidates for the Pastorate and arranging interviews and preaching engagements.
- 2.12 Preparing items to be discussed at church meetings.

Deacons shall report directly to the church membership.

Appendix 3 – Church Officers:

Pastor	There is no Pastor presently appointed
Elders	Ken Bell Bart Geere John West
Deacons	Sharon Geere Molly Newman Aldo Rodriguez Michael Woodington
Secretary	Ken Bell
Treasurer	Michael Woodington