



WESTBOURNE PARK  
BAPTIST CHURCH

## Church Members Meeting Minutes

19<sup>th</sup> November 2023

37 Church Members were present. A number of friends joined the meeting. Apologies given were recorded in the attendance book.

### LOVE GOD

Stuart opened the meeting with reflection on 1 Corinthians 12 and prayer. The minutes of the September 2023 Meeting have been available on the church website. No comments or changes were advised by those present. Stu will sign them as an accurate record of the meeting.

### LOVE CHURCH

#### Worship:

**4. Christmas Plans:** Stu informed members that the theme this Christmas will be 'What are you searching for this Christmas?' This is hopefully a good conversation starter with people we know as well as being the focus for our services.

There will be an All-age service on 17<sup>th</sup> December, followed by Christmas Dinner.

We won't be having a Carol Service at WPBC. Stu encouraged people to support St Stephen's Church and attend their Carol Service on 10<sup>th</sup> December at 18:00.

**5. Prayer Meetings:** Stu encouraged members to engage with the different prayer opportunities throughout each week. Mondays and Wednesdays via zoom 18:30-19:30; Tuesdays and Thursdays via zoom 06:00-07:00; and Fridays via zoom 19:00-20:00 3 weeks each month. Focus was placed on encouraging members to attend the in-person prayer meeting on the first Friday of each month 19:00-22:00. People are welcome to come for all or part of the evening.

A request was made for the early morning prayer meetings to return to being in-person as well. Abena responded that this is currently under discussion, and Stu confirmed that he is thinking through the prayer programme, and decisions will be made in due course.

#### Fellowship:

**6. Church Leadership:** Stu updated the members that we would normally be announcing Leaders Elections at this time of year. Stu explained that he is looking at the Church and Leadership Structure that has been put in place, and ensuring that the roles are clear before having the next elections, so asked the members to allow time for this.

The question 'What is the Church Leadership Structure and what is the hierarchy?' was asked. Stu responded that as a Baptist Church, we are congregational in governance, with the members seeking God's will for the church together. We have elected Elders, Deacons and also members who lead different ministries within the

church life. More details of this were asked for. Stu asked for the diagrams that were discussed in Members meetings earlier this year to be added to the minutes of this meeting. Stu will continue to work through the structure and bring more clarity to the members in due course.

A further questions was asked about what influence the Baptist Union has on WPBC and how much they can 'lean into us'. Stu responded that WPBC is a member of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, but is independent of them, so we are free, under God, to discern God's heart and mind for the church.

Under Item 7. the question was asked about when the church can next review who is in leadership, and with a personal experience expressed of feeling unsupported in leading an area of ministry for a number of years. Stu pointed out that leadership review happens naturally as leaders come up for re-election following their term of service. So this would take place when Leadership Elections will come next year, once Stu has had opportunity to embed the new church structure.

**7. WPBC Animal Policy:** Stu presented this item, following discussion at the Members Meeting in September. The action for this meeting was to agree the Animal Policy, after Members have had time to consider it. Stu informed the members that the Elders have reflected on the conversations from the last meeting and propose another sentence is added to the policy to confirm that Assistance Dogs will be able to be in services, but no other dogs will be allowed in the sanctuary during a worship service. The policy will be reviewed in 3 years.

Agreement of the amendment to the policy was taken to a vote. There were no abstentions from Members. 1 Member voted against. The policy was agreed by a majority vote of 36 Members.

Following the vote concern was expressed by one person that Muslim people would not come to the church if there are dogs in the building. It was also mentioned that people in the church find it hard to speak against dogs as the leaders are the ones who have them.

## LOVE PEOPLE

### Discipleship:

**8. Baptism and Membership Classes:** Stu informed Members that he has written new notes for Baptism and Membership classes. These will be used from now on. Stu asked for the Membership Class material to be attached to the minutes of this meeting, so that all Members can review and be reminded of our commitment.

**9. Small Groups:** Stu is reviewing our small groups and is working towards relaunching them from Easter 2024. He is currently gathering information from across the church and is aware that Members discussed this earlier in the year, so will include the ideas shared in that discussion in his review.

**10. Warm Welcome Cafe:** Adele Elmes reported on the new Warm Welcome Café that is running alongside the Food Pantry on Thursdays. It has been open for 3 weeks, and last Thursday was full, with 57 bowls of soup being served. Adele expressed gratitude to God that the money to run this has been given to the church by Westminster City Council. The Café is providing opportunity to speak with people from different backgrounds and situations, explaining that she met a few Muslim women last week. The team were able to help a couple of homeless people last week by providing them with sleeping bags that were gifted by a member of the church. Adele asked the membership to pray for this event, for her and Zekinah who are supporting the Café, and for the Café to really build on the link with the Food Pantry.

**Prayer:** Stu paused the meeting for a time of prayer in small groups.

## LOVE God's Resources

**11. Church Flat Building Work:** Elizabeth updated the meeting on the progress in the renovation of the church flat. At the last meeting we were under pressure to find temporary housing for Anna and her family. They moved into the church for a few weeks whilst the flat was made habitable. Elizabeth expressed thanks to Anna and Nico for their patience and flexibility over this difficult time. Elizabeth also thanked Ken, for overseeing the works, and for providing great contacts with tradespeople, who responded to his request for help. Their efficiency and response suggests the high regard they hold Ken in, which we are grateful for as a church.

The flat is now nearly completed, with some snagging work to finish off. The damp repair work was extensive and took much longer than the 2 weeks initially quoted for. The work uncovered other structural issues, which have been repaired as well. Elizabeth explained that whilst this felt very difficult, it has in fact been a provision as we wouldn't have known about the damage without this, which could have led to longer term problems with the house as well.

The question was asked as to whether there was a guarantee on previous damp work in the church flat? Elizabeth responded that any previous work would have been done many years ago. We do however have a 20 year guarantee on the tanking work that has just been completed.

Elizabeth explained that financially the costs have escalated due to the extra works. As discussed at the last member's meeting, we gave the opportunity for a Gift Week towards this cost, which has come in at just under £10,000. Thanks were given to God for this provision, and to the membership for their generosity. At the last members meeting, Members agreed that once the level of Gift Week donations were known, the Elders could apply for a loan for the remaining amount that is needed to cover this work. We therefore are applying for a loan of £45,000 to cover the costs of the manse update as well as the flat renovation. The application will be finalised once the audited accounts from last year are ready, as these are needed for the application. The Auditors expect to be completed in the next few weeks.

The question was asked when the lights on the cross on the top of the building are going to be repaired. Elizabeth explained that preliminary investigation suggests that the problem may be the sensors on the roof that detect day and night, so ensuring the lights come on at dusk. Antonio is liaising with the electrician who has done the work in the church flat, and we hope this will be resolved very soon.

**Closing Prayer:** Ken closed the meeting with prayer.

**Date of next meeting:** Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2024

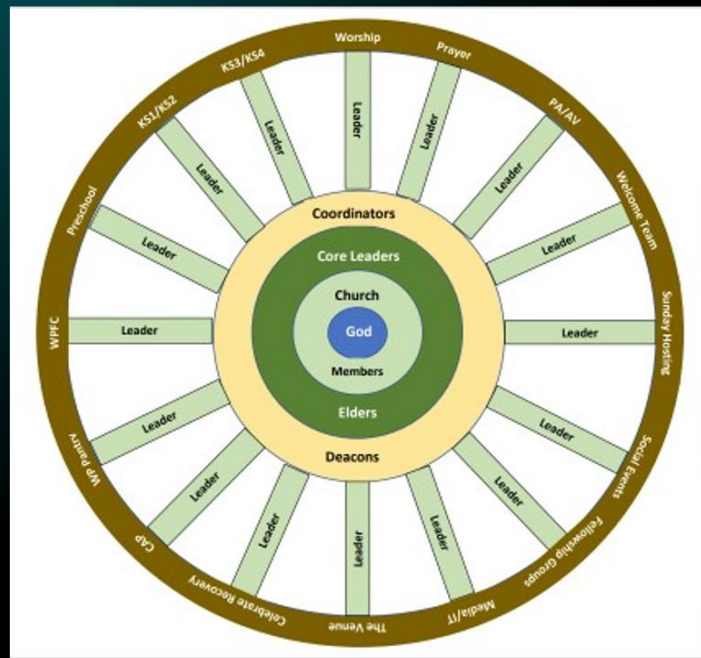
## Appendices:

- A) Slides from March 2023 Members Meeting proposing new Church and Leadership Structure, updated at September 2023 Members Meeting with named Elders and Deacons.
- B) Church Membership Class pack November 2023

- a. Slides from 2022/2023 Members Meetings proposing new Church and Leadership Structure, updated at September 2023 Members Meeting with named Elders and Deacons.

# LOVE CHURCH

## 7. Leadership Structure



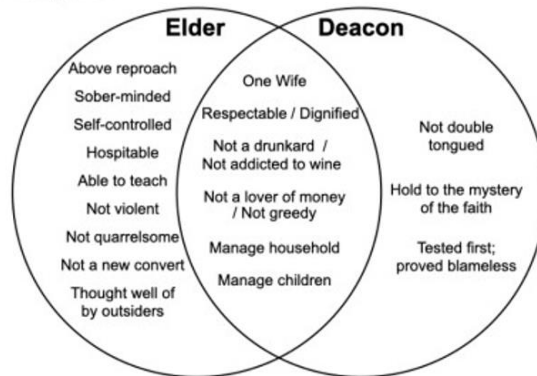
Slide from September 2022 Members Meeting:

### Principles:

- God at the Centre
- Church Members seek the will of God and making decisions based on what God wants
- Elders or Core Leaders oversee the spiritual life and governance of the church
- Deacons serve the church by working alongside the Elders and supporting the Leaders of activities in the church.
- The power for the 'wheel' comes from the 'Hub'. The 'Spokes' turn at the speed determined by the force of the power

### Church Leadership Roles and Qualifications

1 Timothy 3:1-13



**The Bible says more about 'who' should be leaders rather than 'what' they should do. Character is more important than the role.**

### The Church Structure in Action

#### Role Description for Church Members

Church Membership is about being part of a Church Family. As with all families there are roles and responsibilities

**Be present:** attend church services regularly engaging in the worship and prayer life of the church

**Be involved:** 'Know others and be known' – interact with the church family, spend time with people, connect with others through the different opportunities in church life, to encourage each other in the Christian faith and care in practical ways.

**Be spiritually connected:** spend time in prayer for the church, allowing God to speak to you on behalf of the church and share words from God with the Elders

**Be giving:** give of your time, your gifts (spiritual and practical), tithe your finances to support God's work and by being a servant to others

**Be a witness:** share God's love with those who are not part of the church through showing and speaking God's message of salvation

**Be a decision maker:** attend Church Member's Meetings and engage with the decisions that need to be taken for the church family and organisation to function effectively

**Be in accountable relationships:** seeking to live a life that is Holy and pleasing to God, and being willing for others to humbly challenge us for our growth.

#### Role Description for Deacons

##### Be Biblically qualified:

- Meet godly character requirements and be set apart by the church in order to handle specific physical needs or ministerial endeavours (see [Acts 6:1-7](#); [1 Tim. 3:8-13](#)).

##### Be a Servant:

- serve the elders and the congregation by tending to the practical and logistical needs of the church.

##### Be involved:

- Work with the Elders to oversee areas of church life ensuring practical matters are met. (example [Acts 6:1-7](#).)

##### Be available:

- the role requires attendance at meetings with Elders and also meetings with members who are running activities. Being available for members of the church is also required.

##### Be a protector:

- of the reputation of the church, of people in the church, alert to issues that may arise, trustworthy with information and well versed with safeguarding processes, protecting the unity of the church (see [John 17](#)).

Each role builds on the qualities and responsibilities of Church Membership.

#### Role Description for Core Leaders / Elders

Elders lead or oversee the church, a role God has given to them

##### Be a Shepherd / Guide:

- discern, set and follow the vision and direction of the church
- define the church's doctrine and practice
- lead by example in faith and conduct
- Provide care through pastoring
- bring fatherly/motherly direction
- teach truth, through preaching or teaching groups or individuals
- delegate duties to others to help growth and development in gifts and service

##### Be a Guardian:

- protect the spiritual life and teaching
- provide discipleship to help people grow in maturity
- protect the reputation of the church, dealing with negative influences, internal or external
- provide checks and challenge where appropriate and necessary

##### Be a Leader / Governor:

- generate and sustain the culture of the church
- make key strategic decisions on the mission, vision, structure and strategy
- manage people, programs and resources
- ensure governance of the church processes and systems

## 5 Essentials of Church Life

### Stronger Warmer Deeper Broader Larger

#### Worship

Definition:

Strengthening our relationship with God - personally and corporately

#### Pastoral

Definition:

Caring for our members / congregation within WPBC

#### Discipleship

Definition:

Encouraging growth along the Christian journey and towards increased commitment and service

#### Fellowship

Definition:

Encouraging growth through serving; building stronger connections

#### Outreach

Definition:

Serving and ministry to people who are not part of the church, seeking to bring them to personal knowledge of God and connection to His church



# LOVE CHURCH

## 4. Leader's Roles

### Five Essentials of Church Life

#### Worship

(Stronger)

**Stuart**

- Church Services
- Worship Group
- PA/AV
- Prayer
- Partnerships with other WP congregations
- Iranian Ministry
- Connections with local churches

#### Pastoral

(Warmer)

**Abena**

- Pastoral Care
- **Welcome Team (Iretiola)**
- Hosting
- Fellowship Groups
- Overseas Mission

#### Discipleship

(Deeper)

**Ken**

- **Newcomers (Lorna)**
- Discipleship course / group
- Baptism Prep
- Church Membership
- Nurture Groups

#### Fellowship

(Broader)

**Elizabeth**

- Children's Ministry
- Youth Ministry
- Men's Ministry
- Women's Ministry
- Celebrate Recovery
- Small Groups
- Fellowship Lunches/events
- **Inclusion and Justice (Iretiola)**

#### Outreach

(Larger)

**Geoff**

- Alpha
- WPFC
- Food Pantry
- **CAP Money Advice (Lorna)**
- Events
- Messy Church
- Publicity / Promotion / Social Media
- Window Ministry

## B) Church Membership Class Material

# MEMBERSHIP

### **An introduction**

Each church and denomination has its own way of welcoming people into Church Membership.

At Westbourne Park Baptist Church (WPBC) this consists of three classes (each lasting approximately an hour) exploring what the Bible has to say about Church Membership. These classes provide the opportunity to explore our approach to membership and what it entails, as well as the context for questions that may arise. They also provide the opportunity to grow in relationship and to get to know one another. During these classes we will spend time praying for you as you explore membership.

Following the classes, there will be the opportunity to share your testimony with one of the Leadership and another church member during a visit and explore any other questions you may have. Following this, should you wish to apply for membership, a recommendation is brought to the Church Meeting where current members make the decision whether to receive new applicants into membership. Once received into membership this will be recognised in a normal Sunday service where the new members will be welcomed in with 'the right hand of fellowship' and prayed for.

## **Session 1: Why be a church member?**

At WPBC our normal mode of entry into membership is through a personal profession of faith expressed in baptism by immersion. Indeed membership within the local church is the next logical step after baptism. When people are born again by the Spirit, like babies who are born into a family, so new believers are born into the church. Although church membership is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible, the New Testament does hold forth some compelling evidence for church membership.

### ***Jesus' intention is to build His church (Matthew 16: 15-16, 18)***

Jesus told Peter that He would build His church. The idea being that as the gospel was preached people would believe in Jesus, be born again and become disciples of Jesus. They would then grow as disciples within the community of the church.

### ***The example of the church (Acts 2:41-47)***

The growth of disciples in community is seen clearly in Acts 2:41-47, following the day of Pentecost when the church was born. Those who believed were baptised and then became a part of this new community. The word **devoted** in Greek is an important one and was used in a variety of different ways:

- it means to be joined in and connected
- to adhere to the teaching and vision of the church
- to be attentive to the needs of others
- willing to serve others
- faithful in meeting and willing to meet

This is not a casual affiliation or acquaintance but a committed engagement. Together this early church devoted themselves to four things together:

- learning about Jesus
- building loving relationships with one another
- celebrating the Lord's Supper
- prayer

All this drives home that, to follow Jesus, is to be integrally linked to His church.

Nigel Wright, in his booklet on Church Membership from the Baptist Union website adds these 6 reasons for pursuing membership:

1. Church membership demonstrates that we have **understood the importance** of the church in the mission of God. The church is described in the Bible as the people of God (1 Peter 2:9), the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-30) and the temple of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22). Each of these images requires commitment from us as living parts of God's project. When you belong to a people, you take your identity from them. When you are part of a body, you are organically joined to it. When you are part of a temple, you are like a brick or a stone cemented together with others (1 Peter 2:4-5).
2. Church membership demonstrates the reality of our **personal commitment** as declared in baptism. It shows therefore, the sincerity of our commitment to Christ and to Christ's people because we are not holding back from people. Church membership follows on from baptism by showing that we have truly entered into a new way of life, just as the first Christians 'devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer' (Acts 2:41-42).



3. Church membership helps to **build strong churches** by making sure that each church is supported by a core of people who are prepared to commit time, energy, finance and their own spiritual gifts and talents to the building up of the body of Christ. Being a member therefore means becoming an active participant in the crucial work of sustaining congregations and passing on the faith to new generations. It also means taking a responsible part in the church's government since church members share in the process of making decisions in Baptist churches.
4. Church membership means that once we have accepted the Christian way of life we have the **support of other Christians** in sustaining our discipleship and in enduring testing times of illness, bereavement and crisis when they come to us. It also means that we live out our lives under a degree of pastoral oversight that will enable others to correct and guide us should we begin to stray or deviate from a truly Christian lifestyle. This is what Paul means when he says in Galatians 6:1, 'My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit, should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness'.
5. Church membership connects us to **other church members** in the local Christian community and more widely with other such communities. It is a solid bond that enables us to say that we belong to a movement and to take our place within the universal Church.
6. Church membership enables us to **challenge the modern tendency** to see ourselves as consumers rather than as contributors. Being a Christian is not a spectator sport but requires our personal and dedicated involvement in the things of God and of the church.

*Some questions to consider:*

- What about the example of the early church resonates with you most?
- Which of the reasons for Membership noted above resonates with you the most?

## **Session 2: What does church membership mean?**

There are several pictures different pictures or metaphors used of the church in the New Testament such as the people of God or the family of God. However, there are three main pictures, each of which conveys an idea of what church membership means. They are:

- The Bride of Christ - Ephesians 5:21-33
- The Body of Christ - 1 Corinthians 12
- A Spiritual Temple - 1 Peter 2:4-10

### ***The Bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:21-33)***

The primary application of this passage is regarding the relationship between a husband and wife. But in describing the relationship and responsibilities that husbands and wives have toward one another, Paul weaves in the mystery of Christ as the bridegroom and the church as His bride. Although not explicitly mentioned here, at the heart of both these relationships is the idea of covenant.

In short a covenant is a promise between two parties to perform certain actions. It could be seen as a partnership. In the example of marriage, a husband and wife covenant together to be faithful to one another, to love one another and to serve one another. The New Covenant is the promise that God makes to humanity to forgive sin and restore our relationship with him through faith and trust in Jesus, who died to redeem us from sin. Our response is to then live in thankful obedience to Jesus and trust in Him as Lord.

This idea of covenant is a picture of the kind of relationship we have in the church. It is a covenant, a partnership where both parties agree to perform certain actions and carry certain responsibilities. Below is an excerpt from our Constitution (our governing document) of the responsibilities to which we agree.

### **6. Belonging to the Church**

6.1 The responsibilities of membership normally include:

- Attending worship and participating in Church Activities;
- Personal prayer and Bible study;
- Participation at the Communion of the Lord's Supper as a privilege and priority;
- Helping the church wherever possible by using gifts and abilities to advance the Purpose of the church through its Activities;
- Attending and participating in Church Member's Meetings;
- Giving regular financial support to the Church in proportion to personal resources and circumstances;
- Upholding Christian values.

### ***The Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-31)***

Paul's metaphor of the church as a body is nothing short of brilliant in that it is not simply a clever way of illustrating the church and the way we should work together but rather expressing the depth of connection we are given when we are born again (Ephesians 4:1-6).

Several immediate things stand out when we think of church in this way:

- if one part of the body hurts, we all hurt.
- if one part of the body is cut off, it affects the whole (imagine losing a limb).
- every part of the body has a vital function to play for the health of the whole.
- not every part of the body has the same function.

However, there are two points of application which are worth emphasising:

1. *Growth in holiness*: the idea that 'it doesn't matter what I do in private, it doesn't affect anyone', is not true. Our pursuit of growing to be more like Christ affects the health of the whole body. My zeal to spend time with the Lord or choice not to will affect the whole of the church. However we are not yet perfect and we are still in a battle against sin. Thus, from time to time, as Christians we fail the Lord and do things that are wrong. There is no excuse for this but it does happen and the Lord is gracious to forgive and restore us when we confess sin, repent and turn to Him. In this we grow and become committed to growing in holiness of life and becoming godly in our ways. There are moral values at the core of the Christian life and we must seek to live in their light.
2. *We all have a part to play*: every believer receives a gift from the Holy Spirit to use to serve the church and purposes of Christ. We need to discover our gift and then use it to build up the church. It is only as we do this that the body functions properly as a healthy unified whole with every part doing its work (see SHAPE worksheet at the end).

### ***A Spiritual House (1 Peter 2:4-10, Ephesians 2:19-22)***

The metaphor here is that we are being built together to be a house and to fulfil the function of offering praise to God who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Again there is an emphasis on individuals being called into community. Although Peter identifies believers as living stones, so we are each an individual living stone, it is written in the plural which points to being built together in community.

Three further points are worth noting:

- We share a common foundation - Jesus who is the cornerstone and capstone. These are architectural terms and the cornerstone is at the base of the structure and an important stone of the foundation. The capstone is the final stone placed on top that helps hold the structure together. But both are important metaphors for Jesus and His prominence as Head of the church and the kingdom of God. Paul's point in Ephesians 2:19-22 is that Jesus is the foundation on which we are built and the One who unites us together, binding us together. We cannot build our lives on Christ without being united to the rest of his body.
- To reject this idea of Jesus is to stumble and fall (vs.8). The fact that we are built together and stand together on a firm foundation, helps us to stand true and strong. When we draw away from fellowship, like a coal taken out of a fire, we grow cold, and this often leads to stumbling.
- Again, the description of our new identity in Christ in vs.9, is all written in the plural. We are called to declare the praises of God together as a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a people belonging to God.

*Some questions to consider:*

- What is your understanding of the covenant relationship you are entering into?
- Where would you place this covenant relationship in an order of your priorities?
- How do you feel about regularly attending worship services on a Sunday?
- What spiritual gifts do you think you may have or have been praying for?
- Do you know the different gifts?
- What are you passionate about?

### **Session 3: Leadership & Priorities of the Church**

These three pictures we explored last time, together instruct us about the relationship between the church and Christ and identify the priorities we have as a church.

#### ***The relationship between Christ and his church***

First, Jesus is Lord of His church. Thinking of the three pictures of the church we see Jesus as the bridegroom, the head of the body and the Living Stone. All this underscores the truth that Jesus is Lord of His church. He prepares His bride, nurtures and guides His body and is the foundation upon which the spiritual house is built. In our baptist tradition the Lord's authority or rulership is exercised through His body - the gathered church meeting. When the church gathers - we do so collectively to discern the heart and mind of Christ for His church. Therefore the authority for making decisions and discernment lies with the church body.

#### ***So what about leaders?***

Although authority for making decisions lies with the church, none the less, the church calls leaders to lead the church forward in mission. The Bible is replete with examples of God calling people to fulfil leadership roles within His purposes and this extends to His church (Acts 6:2-3).

However this is a distinct kind of leadership. Primarily it is a servant leadership following the model of Christ who laid down his life to serve us. It is also a shepherding role to guide and lead the church into the mission and purposes that God has for them. These two pictures from Scripture convey three important principles:

3. The church appoints servant hearted leaders to lead the church and entrusts them with the authority to do so and lead in making decisions.
4. The leaders always remain accountable to the church for the decisions they make while remembering that any major decisions, as relates to appointments, calling ministers, buildings and resources need to be made by the church.
5. At the same time, Hebrews 13:17 encourages the church to follow the lead of leaders through obedience and submission.

#### ***Leadership at WPBC***

The church appoints **Elders** to oversee the life of the church, who are the Charity Trustees. They are responsible to God for the ongoing wellbeing of the body. Their primary role is spiritual oversight but they are also required to ensure that the practicalities of being a church are taken care of. Elders are appointed by the church membership as a whole, on the recommendation of leadership. The lead Elder is the Minister of the Church.

The church appoints further appoints **Deacons** who, alongside the Elders, are responsible to ensure the practicalities and administrative tasks of church life are taken care of. Together, the Elders and the Deacons make up the **Leadership Team**.

#### ***Church life at WPBC***

- Life at WPBC incorporates the Church, Westbourne Park Family Centre, Westbourne Food Pantry, Warm Welcome Space (Nov – Mar) and our Buildings
- other ministries we offer – for example Celebrate Recovery, CAP
- World Mission: we support a number of different organisations
- Small Groups

***How can you get involved***

- Serving in an area of church life
- Giving financially to the mission of the church
- Being an active part of church life through worship, prayer and service

**APPENDIX 1****The Churches Beliefs and who Membership is open to.**

Our Constitution outlines the Beliefs of the Church as follows:

**3. BELIEFS**

3.1 As a Member of the Baptist Union the Church subscribes to the Baptist Union's Declaration of Principle:

"That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each church has liberty, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer His laws.

That Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ who 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures; was buried, and rose again on the third day'.

That it is the duty of every disciple to bear personal witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world."

3.2 "We also believe in...

- The one true God who lives eternally in three persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- The love, grace and sovereignty of God in creating, sustaining, ruling, redeeming and judging the world.
- The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which are the written Word of God – fully trustworthy for faith and conduct.
- The dignity of all people, made male and female in God's image to love, be holy and care for creation, yet corrupted by sin, which incurs divine wrath and judgement.
- The incarnation of God's eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ – born of the virgin Mary, truly divine and truly human, yet without sin.
- The atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross: dying in our place, paying the price of sin and defeating evil, so reconciling us with God.
- The bodily resurrection of Christ, the first fruits of our resurrection; his ascension to the Father, and his reign and mediation as the only Saviour of the world.
- The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.
- The ministry of the Holy Spirit, who leads us to repentance, unites us with Christ through new birth, empowers our discipleship and enables our witness.
- The Church, the body of Christ both local and universal, the priesthood of all believers – given life by the Spirit and endowed with the Spirit's gifts to worship God and proclaim the gospel, promoting justice and love.

- The personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to fulfil the purposes of God, who will raise all people to judgement, bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal condemnation to the lost, and establish a new heaven and new earth.”

Our Constitution outlines the requirements for Membership as follows:

Church Membership is open to those who:

- accept the Beliefs of the Church;
- meet the Church’s qualification on Baptism;
- commit themselves to serving Christ within the Church and beyond;
- abide by the decisions of the Church Members’ Meeting;
- acknowledge their responsibilities as Church Members;
- have their membership application accepted by the Church Members’ Meeting.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Discerning if God is calling me to membership at WPBC.**

- ☐ I accept the responsibilities of being a church member
- ☐ I have been baptised by immersion.
- ☐ I believe that marriage is the union between a man and woman?
- ☐ I believe that God calls both women and men to leadership (as Ministers, Elders or Deacons) of the church according to their faith, their gifting, their calling from God to be faithful servants and representatives of Christ?
- ☐ I am willing to abide by previous decisions of the Church Meeting or where not possible, to abstain in voting.
- ☐ I understand the church’s purpose, *‘Our purpose is to be building God’s kingdom wherever we are, by loving God and loving people’*.
- ☐ I am willing to serve in the life of the church and anticipate doing one thing and doing it well.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Exploring your SHAPE**

S - Spiritual Gifts (what are your spiritual gifts)

H - Heart’s desire (write down your hopes, dreams, ambitions)

A - Abilities (write down the natural talents that you have)

P - Personality (write a brief description of your personality type)



