

Introduction

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Contacting Us

One of the easiest ways to contact [Easterhouse Baptist Church](#) is to visit the church website at www.easterhousebaptistchurch.com and fill out the form on the "[Contact Us](#)" web page or simply email us directly at EBC@easterhousebaptistchurch.com. Alternatively, call us on 0141-781-0569. If there is no one present, messages can be left via the answering machine.

Useful Names

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Minister: | Rev. Sandy Weddell |
| Children's Worker: | Christine Brown |
| Church Secretary / Treasurer: | David Swan |
| Trustees: | Rev. Sandy Weddell |
| | David Swan |
| | Matt Hall |
| | Annette Holman |
| | Allan Russell |
| | Linda McIntosh |

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Health and Safety Officer: | Allan Russell |
| First Aid Officer: | Allan Russell |
| Child Protection Officer: | Annette Holman |
| Deputy Child Protection Officer: | Ian Monteague |
| Data Protection Controller: | David Swan |
| Fire Safety Officers: | Colin Swan Andrew Sinclair |
| Building Maintenance: | Norman Sinclair |

What we believe

The Church is a member of the [Baptist Union of Scotland](#) which has made the following statement on what Scottish Baptists believe.

‘Baptists believe in the historic creeds of the Church. They lay particular emphasis on the importance of personal faith in Jesus Christ, as Saviour and Lord, and on the Bible as God’s Word, guiding the conduct of individuals and the life of the Church.

One of the distinctive features of Baptist Church life is their practice of Christian Baptism. They follow the New Testament pattern of baptising those who have come to a personal faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism is normally by total immersion in water.

Baptists also lay stress on the responsibility of each local church to govern its own life and affairs.’

Information about the [Baptist Union of Scotland](#) is contained in Appendix A at the end of this Handbook.

[Easterhouse Baptist Church](#) is also a member of the [Evangelical Alliance](#) whose basis of faith is included in Appendix B at the end of this Handbook.

Our Mission is to make disciples as we have been commanded by Jesus.

“God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I’ll be with you as you do this, day after day, right up to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20. The Message)

Our Purpose is set out in our Constitution.

Membership

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in various forms."

(1 Peter 4:10 N.I.V.)

We believe Jesus wants Christians to join together in groups of local believers so that they can grow in faith and understanding and pass on messages of salvation and discipleship to the next generation.

We believe commitment to the fellowship of Christians in [Easterhouse Baptist Church](#) is an essential part of sustaining the spiritual health, development and service in our part of the family of Christ.

Membership is for those who have been baptised, who agree with our **Constitution** and sense Jesus is drawing them to continue their journey of faith at this particular time, by:
participating in His work in this particular Church community;
building up others in the faith in whatever ways they are able to and feel comfortable with;
allowing God to use others to encourage and build them up in the faith.

Supporting the fellowship will include:

praying for the fellowship and its activities,

considering opportunities for serving in one or more Church groups,

considering personal financial responsibility for God's work done through the fellowship

practical acts of help to individuals

When a new member joins the fellowship, the following covenant is made. During the time of covenant making, current members have the opportunity to renew their vow.

Church Covenant

I promise to pray for the fellowship

I promise to build up the fellowship by leading a Christ honouring life

I promise to support the fellowship with all the resources God gives me

I promise to seek to fulfil the words of Jesus

"To serve rather than be served".

Giving

There is an opportunity to give to God's work during the morning service. Some make their gift via an envelope scheme while others give by standing order or an annual gift. If the Gift Aid scheme is used, money, can be reclaimed from the government.

Contact person: David Swan

Our Activities

Information about our range of activities can be found in the What's On section of the website. Some are about helping one another to grow as disciples; others focus on what we do to extend the Kingdom.

A group which it is easy to overlook and which might not be thought to be covered by either of these categories is the Church Cleaning Group. This is a band of people whose efforts often go unnoticed but if they were not active it would soon be obvious. Like the monk, Brother Lawrence, they 'practise the presence of God' as they go about their work. They are always ready to welcome new members.

How We Organise Ourselves To Make Decisions

We do this within the framework of our Constitution, via meetings of the congregation and other groups and by giving due regard to the principles and good practice contained in our policies and guidelines. We pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us as we come together.

Our Constitution

1. The Church

The Church is to be called [Easterhouse Baptist Church](#) ("the Church"). The Church is congregational in its form of church government and is in membership with the [Baptist Union of Scotland](#) ("the Union") to whose Declaration of Principle the Church subscribes. The purpose of the Church shall be the advancement of the Christian faith primarily in the Greater Easterhouse area and also throughout Scotland and the rest of the world by all means consistent with the teachings of the Christian Bible including worship, ministry, mission, prayer, witness, education, community service and the support of agencies and individuals and other charitable organisations involved in Christian missionary work and the relief of poverty or other social needs.

2. Membership

The members of the Church shall be such as profess faith in the Lord Jesus and have normally been baptized as believers into the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The mode of baptism practised by the Church shall be that of immersion on the understanding that in special circumstances the Pastor may agree to make an exception. All applicants for membership shall be accepted only upon satisfying the Church as to their faith in Christ.

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By joining the Church, members shall come under the following obligations:

To pray for the Fellowship.

To build up the Fellowship by living a Christ honouring life.

To support the Fellowship by using all the resources God has given us.

To seek to be a servant and not seek to be served.

The membership roll will be reviewed annually. Should members fail to fulfil their obligations over an extended period they shall be deemed to have removed themselves from membership. The Church Leadership shall review the position of such persons. Should the situation remain unchanged the Leaders may recommend to the Church Meeting the removal of such persons from the Church's membership. With regards to relationships between members of the Church we would encourage them to seek to fulfil the words of Christ in Matthew 18:15-17.

3. Trustees including Office Bearers

The Office Bearers of the Church shall normally be the Pastor, Secretary/Administrator and Treasurer. The Trustees of the Church shall be the Office Bearers and a minimum of two and a maximum of four other Trustees. All of these positions with the exception of the Pastor are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. One Trustee shall retire each year (at the AGM) on a rotational basis. A replacement will be appointed. Should more than one nomination be made, an election shall take place at the AGM. The retiring Trustee shall be able to seek reappointment. In the event of there being fewer than two other Trustees between AGMs, the Trustees shall make up the shortfall by co-option.

A Trustee who has a personal interest in any transaction or arrangement which the Church is proposing to enter into, must declare that interest at the relevant Church or Trustees Meeting; he/she will not vote on that issue. A Trustee will not be debarred from entering into an arrangement with the Church in which he/she has a personal interest.

4. Church Meetings

An Annual General Meeting (Vision Day) shall be held each year within six months of the end of the Church's financial year. Business shall include a statement of the Church's finances, consultation about the Church's work and policy, the pastoral care of the members and business remitted from the Office Bearers, and other Trustees. Members introducing new business, seeking to amend the constitution, or wishing to nominate a Secretary/Administrator, a Treasurer or a Trustee are required to give two weeks notice in writing through the Church Secretary/Administrator. A special Church Meeting may be called at any time by the Office Bearers or other Trustees.

5. Finance

The Trustees of the Church shall ensure that proper accounting records are maintained. The Church's financial year shall end on 30th April. Prior to the Annual General Meeting (Vision Day) the Church accounts and the accounts of all Church organisations, including

details of salaries or other remuneration and allowances paid to the Church's staff and of expenses reimbursed to such staff and/or to other members of the Church, shall be examined and/or audited by suitably qualified persons in accordance with the requirements of current legislation.

6. Pastoral Vacancy

In the event of a pastoral vacancy an Interim Moderator shall be appointed by the Church. The members shall also appoint a Vacancy Committee. A Call to the pastorate of the church shall only be issued if at least two thirds of those present and voting at a properly constituted Church Meeting are in favour of the candidate.

7. External Pastoral Support

Where there are serious difficulties involving the Pastor and/or the Church Leaders, the Ministry Advisor of the Union shall normally be consulted.

8. Confidentiality

All matters private to the Church shall be treated by the members as strictly confidential.

9. Heritable Property

All heritable properties of the Church shall be held on behalf of the Church by the Trustees of the Church.

10. Alterations to Constitution

No alteration shall be made to this Constitution except by a majority vote of two thirds of the members present at the Annual General Meeting or a special Church Meeting called for the purpose by intimation on two preceding Sundays. Consent to any amendment must be obtained from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) if required.

11. Remaining Assets

In the event of the Church being dissolved or otherwise ceasing to exist, the assets of the Church shall be applied for charitable purposes. In the absence of any contrary decision by a majority vote of two thirds of the members present and voting at a properly constituted Church Meeting, the assets shall become the property of the Union (or should the Union not then exist, the association of Baptist Churches which may then be engaged in promoting objects similar to those of the Union ("the Association"), to be applied in accordance with the charitable purposes of the Union or the Association (if applicable).

12. Constitution & Handbook

This Constitution shall be printed and a copy given to each member. Applicants for membership shall be made fully aware of its contents before acceptance into membership.

In addition the Church shall produce a Members Handbook which will supplement the Constitution. This Handbook shall include Financial, Health & Safety, Child Protection, and any other Policies considered necessary by the Trustees.

Adopted by the membership on 29/08/08

Meetings

Refer to "[Church Meetings](#)" in the [Constitution](#) for details of the **Annual General Meeting (Vision Day)**.

Election of Trustees also takes place on Vision Day.

In May, there is a short meeting to approve the budget for the financial year.

N.B. Chair of congregational meetings. The meeting is normally chaired by the Minister unless another person has previously been elected Chair. If, for any reason, the Chair is not present within 15 minutes of the time specified for the start of the meeting, the members present at that time that are entitled to vote, shall elect a chair.

Specific activities within the Church organise themselves to take day to day decisions on the way the activity is run. They are expected to adhere to Church policies and to consult the Trustees and/or the minister on any matter affecting a change in the way the Church premises are used, in the purpose of the activity and in a major change of use of any finance or equipment allocated to it. A report of the activity is made to the Annual General Meeting on Vision Day.

Servant Groups alongside being a place where we are nurtured spiritually, from time to time, the groups act as 'sounding boards' for ideas and suggestions that arise during the course of our Church life. These matters would not be ones for which a congregational meeting would be necessary, e.g. should we have a Hogmanay Party? Should a particular kind of fund-raising event take place? Each has a pastor appointed to have an oversight of the spiritual welfare of the group.

Servant Group Pastors fulfil many different functions within our group system. They look after the well-being of their group from a spiritual and practical perspective, seeking to fulfil the biblical mandate of caring for one another. If anyone in their group is ill or in need, they can access help for them from the Church leadership or other people within the Church.

They also have an administrative role, ensuring information pertaining to the health and smooth running of the fellowship is communicated to their group. Equally, they can pass information and ideas to the Church leadership and other groups.

They are a vital part of the Church's life. If interested in joining a Servant Group, please see our Minister, Sandy Weddell or Norman Sinclair.

Policies and Guidelines

The Church has also agreed a number of written policies and guidelines which have been agreed by the congregation. These policies are there largely to promote the safety and wellbeing of individuals. Currently they are:

- Child Protection with accompanying Good Practice Guidelines
- Data Protection and Copyright Principles and Guidelines
- Health and Safety which has accompanying Good Practice Guidelines
- Risk Assessment

These policies can be found in full in the Policy section of the Church website (*currently unavailable*) and paper copies are available from the Health and Safety Officer.

Forms connected to policies can be found in the Church Forms File. It is kept in the Church Office which is off the Upper Hall.

Child Protection Policy

The Church regards child protection and good working practice as a priority. The policy is registered with the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.

Everyone working with children and young people should:

- Have undergone a Disclosure Scotland check at an enhanced level.
- Be adequately trained and supervised
- Understand and follow the Church's Child Protection Policy and Guidelines

Because the protection of children is everyone's responsibility, please make sure you read the fuller policy and the guidelines, either via the website or a paper copy.

Data Protection Principles

The Data Protection Act 1998 is designed to provide privacy protection for individuals about whom personal, identifying data is kept. It lays down 'best practice' principles for those who keep the data and it applies to paper records as well as computerised information. The Act covers the whole of the UK, and all organisations, including churches, must comply with the rules on processing data.

Copyright Issues

The Church will hold copies of relevant copyright licences. Information on current licences held can be obtained from the Church Secretary.

Health and Safety Policy

The Church recognises and accepts its responsibilities for providing, so far as it is practicable a safe healthy environment, with a view to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of those who use church premises. The Church will, therefore, take all necessary steps within its power to meet its responsibilities so far as is reasonably practicable. The policy and guidelines are comprehensive and indicate the statutory requirements the Church has towards its employees and those who use its premises.

To facilitate the implementation of the policy, in addition to a Health and Safety Officer, all Church members are expected to co-operate in putting the Church's Health and Safety Policy into practice.

Please note that there is a book in which you can record any health and safety concerns. It is kept at the rear of the church on the left-hand side. The Health and Safety Officer checks it regularly.

Risk Assessment Policy

Identifying, assessing, minimising and controlling risk is vital part of ensuring a safe environment. There are a number of forms associated with specific risk assessments e.g. safety on church property, and fire safety, as well as a matrix for assessing levels of risk. Leaders of activities are expected to make and record risk assessments.

Financial Principles and Guidelines

The following principles and guidelines apply to the financial affairs of the Church. These do not form part of the constitution but are supplementary to it. They can be changed by a decision of the Trustees (except where full congregational approval is specifically required).

General

The financial year end of the church is 30th April.

Treasurer

The treasurer is responsible for:

- Maintaining the day to day financial records;
- Arranging for the weekly offerings to be counted and recorded;
- Holding the cheque book;
- Promptly paying invoices and salaries;
- Dealing with the Church's bank(s);
- Arranging for the annual accounts to be prepared and audited;
- Preparing the annual estimates for submission to the trustees;
- Arranging suitable insurance cover for the Church.

Income

Weekly offerings, etc should be counted by a minimum of two persons, who should then initial the appropriate cash book, etc.

Authorisation of Expenditure

- The treasurer or pastor singly can authorise expenditure up to £100;
- The treasurer and pastor together can authorise expenditure up to £500;

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- The treasurer can authorise routine expenditure over this amount e.g. electricity, sundry repairs;
- Non-routine expenditure over £500 must be authorised by the Trustees;
- Major contracts and donations must be authorised by the congregation as a whole.

Payments

- All cheques, bank transfers, etc. must be signed by two authorised signatories;
- New bank signatories must be authorised by the trustees;
- The Treasurer him/herself is authorised to transfer money between the Church's accounts.

Annual Estimates

- The pastor's and any other staff salaries will be considered by the Trustees meeting without the pastor (and any other paid staff);
- The Trustees will approve the annual estimated expenditure before (or soon after) the start of each financial year.

Annual Financial Statements

The annual financial statements (accounts) will be presented to the trustees for formal approval before they are presented to the congregation each year. Copies will then be made available to the congregation on the Sunday before Vision Day at the latest. At Vision Day members of the congregation will have the opportunity to discuss and ask questions about the financial statements.

External Auditors and Accountants

The Church will conform to the requirements of Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and other regulatory bodies concerning the format of the financial statements, the appointment of an external auditor, etc.

Where an external auditor is appointed, this appointment will normally be for a maximum of 5 years after which the Trustees will normally seek new tenders for the work.

Church Organisations

The Trustees have a legal responsibility for all income, expenditure, and funds of the Church. Such income and expenditure must be incorporated into the Church's annual financial statements, potentially as restricted funds. This includes organisations and events within the church, e.g. Noah's Ark, Men's Breakfast, and Weekends Away if their income and expenditure is material. If there is the possibility of a Church organisation or event incurring a material deficit which will require a subsidy from general church funds, this should be requested from the trustees and approved by them beforehand.

Property

A Church members Meeting will be required before the trustees are authorised to purchase, sell, or offer as security any land or buildings belonging to the Church.

Liability of members

Members of the Church have no liability to pay any sums to help meet the debts (or other liabilities) of the Church if it is wound up: accordingly, if the Church is unable to meet its debts, the members will not be held responsible.

Role of Trustees

The term Trustees refers to all of those with certain legal responsibilities as described below. Trustees may also be called Charity Stewards in the relevant legislation.

There are two categories of trustee.

- Office Bearers of Easterhouse Baptist Church i.e. Pastor, Secretary/Administrator and Treasurer.
- A minimum of two and a maximum of four Other Trustees

On behalf of the Church the trustees will, in line with the principles and guidelines on the regulation of the financial affairs of the Church and subject to the agreement of members in major matters:

- improve, manage or develop or otherwise deal with any part of the property and rights of the Church
- purchase, take on lease, hire or otherwise acquire, any property or rights which are suitable for the Church's activities
- sell, let out, license or otherwise dispose of, all or any part of the property or rights of the Church
- ensure that proper accounting records are maintained in accordance with all applicable statutory requirements
- prepare annual accounts, complying with all relevant statutory requirements; if an audit is required under any statutory provisions or if they otherwise think fit, they shall ensure that an audit of such accounts is carried out by a qualified auditor.
- borrow money and give security in support of any such borrowings by the Church
- employ such staff as are considered appropriate for the proper conduct of the Church activities and make reasonable provision for the payment of pension and /or other benefits for members of staff, ex-members of staff and their dependents
- engage such consultants and advisers as are considered appropriate from time to time
- effect insurance of all kinds (including Trustee liability insurance)

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- invest any funds which are not immediately required for the Church's activities in such investments as may be considered appropriate (and to dispose of and vary such investments)
- liaise with other voluntary sector bodies, local authorities, UK and Scottish government departments and agencies and other bodies, all with a view to taking forward the purpose of the Church
- establish and/or support any other charitable body, and make donations for any charitable body falling within the purpose of the Church
- take such steps as may be deemed appropriate for the purpose of raising funds for the Church's activities
- accept grants, donations and legacies of all kinds (and to accept any reasonable conditions attaching to them).
- form any charitable company with similar objects to those of the Church, and if considered appropriate, transfer to any such company (without payment being required from the company) the whole or any part of the Church's assets or undertaking
- do anything which may be incidental or conducive to the furtherance of the purpose of the Church.

The Trustees of a Church have certain legal duties under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; and the statement made about liability and membership. earlier does not apply to any personal liabilities they might incur if they are in breach of these duties. They would not be liable for errors of judgement etc., as long as they have taken appropriate advice before making decisions.

As a Church we expect our Trustees to set a high standard of honesty and integrity in all financial and business dealings. This primarily applies to dealings on behalf of the Church but it should also apply to their personal lives. Acts 3:6 is relevant –'known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom'.

As Christians we believe that God completely forgives repentant sinners, however the Government does not always take the same view! Therefore, certain people may be excluded from being trustees by legislation, e.g. people convicted of an offence involving dishonesty. They will still be welcome in our Church.

Appendix A - Website and Useful Links

| | |
|--|--|
| Easterhouse Baptist Church | www.easterhousebaptistchurch.com |
| Baptist Union of Scotland | www.scottishbaptist.org.uk |
| Baptist Union of Great Britain and Wales | www.baptist.org.uk |
| Churches Child Protection Advisory Service | www.ccpas.co.uk |
| Scripture Union Scotland | www.suscotland.org.uk |
| Evangelical Alliance | www.eauk.org.uk |
| Pastorspowerpoints | www.pastorspowerpoints.com |

Appendix B - [Baptist Union of Scotland](#)

The purposes of the Union, as declared on its website, are 'to enable and equip mission and ministry to express our interdependency as a family of believing communities to encourage our distinctive way of being within the wider church.'

Staff serve the denomination and work to fulfil these purposes. The Union 'strives for simplicity in its organisational structure.' It has a collegial Council and there is an Annual Assembly consisting of both pastors and delegates appointed by member churches who gather together for 'inspiration and celebration; deliberation and decision; for informing and resourcing; and for fellowship across the churches.'

For further information, see the list of websites in [Appendix A](#).

Appendix C - [Evangelical Alliance](#)

The Evangelical Alliance basis of Faith is:

- 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, male and female, made 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 yet truly human, born without sin.
- The atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross: dying in our place, and paying the price of sin, 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.

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- The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.
- The ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who leads us to repentance, unites us with Christ through new birth, empowers our discipleship and enables our witness.
- The Church, 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 a new earth.

This basis of faith was approved in 2005 by the Evangelical Alliance Council.

Copyright Statement

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Revision History

| Revision | Date | Changes |
|----------|-----------|--|
| a0 | 21-Jul-10 | Initial draft. |
| | 22-Aug-10 | Updated Child Protection and Deputy Child Protection Officers. |
| | | Added a Revision History Table. |
| a1 | 09-sep-10 | Corrected typo in McIntosh name. |