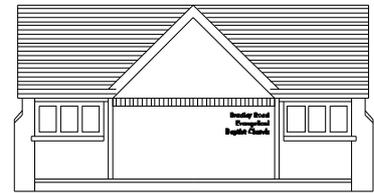


Bradley Road Evangelical Baptist Church

Bradley Road, Wrexham, LL13 7TP



CONSTITUTION

Clause 1 – Constitution

This constitution comprises Clauses 1-7 and Appendix 1 (Declaration of Faith). In the event of any uncertainty or controversy as to the intention of the wording on a particular subject, the church should consult the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith for clarification pertaining to that subject.

Clause 2 – Name

The full name of the church shall be “Bradley Road Evangelical Baptist Church”, hereinafter referred to as “the church”.

Clause 3 – Object

The object of the church shall be to glorify God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This the church does by pursuing the following aims:

- a) To worship God in spirit and in truth.
- b) To proclaim to all the world the gospel of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone.
- c) To pursue and promote holiness and conformity to the will of God, according to the teaching of the whole counsel of the Word of God.
- d) To teach children the Word of God.
- e) To administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, as instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ.
- f) To preserve itself from error by bringing all its teaching and practice under the judgement of Scripture.
- g) To promote the true unity of believers, by encouraging co-operation in the faith and witness of all churches and organisations which embrace the Evangelical faith.

Clause 4 - Church Membership

- a) Membership of the church is open to all who: give satisfactory evidence to the Elders of the church that they are true believers in Christ;

consent to the Declaration of Faith; and agree to abide by the Constitution of the Church.

- b) In accordance with the trust deed, members must have been baptized by immersion.
- c) On receiving an application for membership, the candidate will be interviewed by the Elders; in the absence of a Letter of Introduction or Commendation from the candidate's previous church, the Elders will seek to make contact with the oversight of that church; the name may then be recommended to a church meeting for approval; new members will be formally welcomed into membership at the next convenient observance of the Lord's Supper; their names will be added to the roll of church members kept by the church secretary.
- d) Responsibilities of Church Membership
 1. Constant endeavour to do all that they can to further the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, working together with other members of the church in love and humility, “making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Rom 12, Col 3:17, Eph 4:3)
 2. Conscientious attendance at the services of the Lord's Day, the Lord's Supper, Bible Studies and Prayer-meetings. Any members who absent themselves from the church for six months, without sufficient reason, shall automatically forfeit their membership. (Acts 2:42; Heb 10:25)
 3. Maintain a faithful witness to the Lord Jesus Christ in the world - in their families, their secular callings, and as good citizens, and neighbours. (1Cor 7:17, 2Thes 3:11, 4:11, 1Tim 3:8, 5:8, Rom 13:1-10, 15:2)
 4. Faithful stewardship of time and possessions, and to give to the Lord's work secretly, regularly, cheerfully, and in proportion to their resources. (Acts 4:34-37; Acts 11:29-30; 1Cor 16:2, 2Cor 9:8)

5. Recognition of and submission to the spiritual authority of those over them in the Lord. (1Thess 5:12; Heb 13:17). As to the nature of that authority, see Clause 6 i) b.
6. Submission to the discipline of the church. (Matt 18:15-17; Matt 5:23,24; 1Cor 5:1-13; Tit 3:10; Gal 6:1). Failure to do so may possibly result in the termination of a person's membership at a church business meeting.
7. At the Annual Church Meeting, the members shall be reminded of the necessity of consenting to the Declaration of Faith and agreeing to abide by the Church's constitution.

Clause 5 – Ordinances

The Church recognizes two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

i) Baptism

- a) Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be to the person who is baptised: a sign of his fellowship with Christ in His death and resurrection; of his being engrafted into Christ; of forgiveness of sins; and of that person's giving up of himself to God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.
- b) The only proper subjects for Baptism are those who actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to, our Lord Jesus Christ.
- c) This ordinance shall be administered through the immersion of the person in water, by persons authorized to do so by the Elders of the church.
- d) Although Elders and Ministers of the Word shall exhort them to be baptized, believers are expected to request baptism. On such a request being received by the elders, the candidate shall be interviewed, and at some stage instructed in the Word concerning the importance of this ordinance.

ii) The Lord's Supper

- a) The Supper of the Lord Jesus was instituted by Him the same night on which he was betrayed, to be observed in His churches until the end of the world, as a perpetual remembrance and showing forth of the sacrifice of Himself in His death. It was also instituted by Christ to confirm believers in all the benefits of His death: For their spiritual nourishment and growth in Him; as a commitment to love and serve Him; and to be a

bond and pledge of their communion with Him and with their fellow believers.

- b) Since the Lord's Supper is a proper expression that believers are members of the Body of Christ, it is appropriate that members of the church should diligently seek to attend all such services. Other regular attenders at the church, who are true believers, would generally be welcome to share in the Lord's Supper, but would be encouraged to seek church membership.
- c) Those attending the Supper ought to be aware of the clear warnings in Scripture of receiving the elements ignorantly or unworthily. (1Cor 11:27-29) It is the responsibility of the church officers to ensure that the Lord's Table is not maligned, even if that might mean refusing a person's admission to the Supper. For example, a person under valid discipline from another church would not generally be allowed to share in the Lord's Supper.

Clause 6 - Church Officers

We acknowledge the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ in the government of this church. Through the person of the Holy Spirit, he appoints and equips men and women for the different tasks within the church. We believe that proper rule and order within the local church is provided for by two distinct ministries: Elders (which includes the Pastor or Minister); and Deacons. They must be men "who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" (Acts 6:1-6).

i) Elders

- a) The church shall be governed by Elders who are themselves under the authority of the Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ. Their function is to oversee and direct the affairs of the church (Acts 20:28; 1Tim 5:17)) and to be shepherds of the flock (Acts 20:28). All meetings and organisations connected with the church come under the oversight of the Elders.
- b) Their character and conduct must be in accordance with the principles laid down in 1Tim 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1Pet 5:2-3.
- c) The Elders may add to their number from amongst the members of the church. The responsibility for the appointment of an Elder rests with the existing Elders (Acts 14:23), but this appointment must be confirmed by 75% of a church meeting. Elders (excluding the Pastor) must have been members of the church for at least 6 months. Church members may bring names to the Elders for their consideration.

- d) A Pastor/Minister may be appointed, in accordance with the Trust Deeds of the Church, who shall also be an Elder, but who is recognised as one who has been called to devote himself to the ministry of the Word of God (1Tim 5:17; 2 Tim 4:2). He will preside at Elders meetings, and attend Deacons meetings unless he wishes to delegate these tasks to one of the other Elders.
- e) The nomination of a Pastor shall be made by the Elders, giving due consideration to the mind of the church, and the calling to the pastorate shall be by at least 75% of a church meeting specially convened for this purpose.
- f) In the event of any accusation being raised against an Elder (including the Pastor), 1Tim 5:19,20 must be followed. An Elder (including the Pastor) may only be dismissed by a 75% vote of church members at a meeting specially convened for that purpose, and only on the grounds that he has committed a sin deemed to have brought the church into disrepute, or that he has departed from the Declaration of Faith of the church, or if, after a period of time, it becomes evident to the church as a whole that he is no longer fulfilling his spiritual ministry.
- g) The Pastor or the church shall give the other at least 4 months notice of the desire of either to terminate his Pastorate.
- h) In the absence of elders, the deacons will assume their responsibilities whilst endeavouring to lead the Church to the appointment of one or more suitable elders.

ii) Deacons

- a) Deacons shall administer the material affairs of the church, thus relieving the Elders of those responsibilities, and enabling them to give their attention to prayer and the ministry of the word. (Acts 6:1-4). Their responsibilities may vary from time to time, but would be expected to include the supervision of the maintenance and cleanliness of church property; the supervision of stewards; the collecting, storing and accounting of church finances; and the presentation of a full statement of accounts at the annual church meeting.
- b) Deacons shall have been members of the church for at least 6 months. Their character and conduct shall be in accordance with the principles laid down in 1Tim 3:8-13.
- c) Nominations may be brought to the Elders on the Sunday before any church meeting, with the names of the proposer and seconder, provided

they have first obtained the consent of the Nominee. They shall be elected by at least 75% of a church meeting.

- d) Deacons hold office for three years and retiring Deacons shall be automatically nominated for re-election unless they indicate otherwise. Where appointments are made at times other than at the Annual Church Meeting (ACM), it will be counted for re-election purposes as having been made at the previous ACM.
- e) Deacons may meet as and when they deem it necessary. The Elders must be informed of any such meeting, who may send a representative, but in any case, a copy of the minutes of that meeting shall be given to the Elders before the next Deacons meeting. The Deacons may request to meet the Elders at any time.
- f) In the absence of both elders and deacons, the Church Meeting will seek to appoint suitable officers.

Clause 7 - Conduct of Church Business

- a) Meetings of Church Members shall be an Annual Church Meeting, a Half-yearly Church Meeting, and meetings at other times as deemed necessary by the Elders. Such meetings shall be chaired by an Elder or deputed Deacon. At least two Sundays' notice must be given, publicly and orally.
- b) A Church Meeting may be called at the request of one third of the total membership. This should be put in writing with at least two Sundays' notice given. The elders must be notified before a meeting of "Any Other Business" which members want to raise. "Any Other Business" would not normally be permitted in the ACM.
- c) A quorum at a church meeting shall be 50% of the membership.
- d) All voting at church meetings shall normally be by open show of hands. However, where the election/removal of officers is concerned or where the elders consider it prudent, voting shall be by secret ballot. A simple majority of those present shall decide a vote, except concerning the following, which shall require a 75% majority: Election/removal of officers; Changing the Constitution; Amending the Declaration of Faith. Abstentions do not count either for or against a motion. No proxy/postal votes are allowed.

Appendix 1 – Declaration of Faith

The following Declaration of Faith is based on the revised Doctrinal Basis of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, adopted by the church in 1990. The Declaration of Faith cannot be amended (even if the aforesaid FIEC Doctrinal Basis were to be amended) except by a 75% vote at a Church Meeting called specifically for that purpose.

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 unchangeable in his holiness, justice, 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

All men and women, being created in the image of God, have inherent dignity and equal worth. Their greatest purpose is to obey, worship and love God. 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 under the just condemnation 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. On the cross he died in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by his blood. He rose from the dead and in his resurrection body ascended into heaven where he is exalted 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, adopted into the family of God and receive eternal life.

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. He builds up the Church and empowers its members for 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. It is made visible in local churches, which are congregations of 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, and for evangelism. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between churches by mutual love, care and encouragement. True fellowship exists only where they are faithful to the gospel.

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 the believer's union with Christ and 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 in glory. He will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. The wicked will be sent to eternal punishment and the righteous will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God. God will make all things new and will be glorified forever.