



CC@W

Christ Church at Whetstone Constitution

1. The church shall be called CHRIST CHURCH AT WHETSTONE. The church is a local church of the United Reformed Church (URC).
2. As a local church of the URC, the church is governed by the Scheme of Union of the URC and those constitutional decisions of General Assembly binding on local churches. This constitution supplements the provisions of these as they affect the church. In the event of any conflict between those provisions and this constitution, those provisions prevail.
3. Property is held on trust for purposes which include the charitable purposes of the church. This includes:
 - (a) land and buildings governed by trusts set out in Schedule 2 to the United Reformed Church Acts 1972 and 1981 which provide that the statutory power of appointing new trustees and certain powers of direction are vested in the Church Meeting.
 - (b) the general funds of the church, comprising all assets and funds held by and on behalf of the church (other than land and buildings held under the Trusts declared in Schedule 2 of the URC Acts and those held on other specifically declared trusts), on trust for the advancement of the Christian faith for the benefit of the public in accordance with the Scheme of Union and whose charity trustees are the members of the Elders Meeting qualified to serve as such, acting in accordance with procedures laid down by the Church Meeting.
4. The Church Meeting, after considering the recommendations of the Elders Meeting and any guidance issued under the authority of the Councils of the wider URC, will review:
 - (a) The uses to be made of the property as at 3(a).
 - (b) Procedures for proper administration of the general funds of the church.
5. CHRIST CHURCH AT WHETSTONE shall be constituted of those who have made public profession of their Christian faith and commitment through baptism, have expressed a wish to become formally linked with the church, and have been publicly received into membership.
6. Those seeking membership will be seen by the Minister (or if no Minister is in place, by an Elder) who will, after making appropriate enquiries, and in conjunction with the Elders, nominate them at a Church Meeting. Their acceptance shall be signified by prayer and the giving of the right hand of fellowship during a service of public worship.
7. In the case of those transferring from another church, the Secretary shall request an appropriate document from that church.
8. Names shall be removed from the church roll only:
 - (a) following the death or resignation of a member
 - (b) by resolution of a Church Meeting on the recommendation of the Elders Meeting
9. The purpose of the Church Meeting is to seek the Spirit of Christ through discussion, responsible decision-making and care for one another; and thereby to strengthen each other's faith and to foster the life, work and mission of the church.
10. The Minister of the Church or an Interim Moderator or, in the absence of both, an Elder, shall preside at a Church Meeting.
11. For the purpose of taking decisions a quorum shall normally be one tenth of the number of members on the Church Roll. A Church Meeting may decide in advance that for a major item of business a larger quorum will be required.
12. The Church Meeting shall have power to appoint from time to time such committees as it thinks fit, to determine their terms of reference and to authorise them to act within the scope of those terms.
13. The Church Meeting shall have power to decide the frequency of meetings, as long as they are held not less than four times a year.
14. At one meeting in each year the Secretary shall submit a report upon the life and work of the church and the accounts of the preceding calendar year shall be presented. Other reports may be presented as desired from time to time.

15. Church meetings for urgent business shall be held when necessary, notice being given in the services of the church on at least one Sunday preceding the date fixed for such meeting.
16. The Chairperson of a Church Meeting shall have power to rule that a decision on any item of business shall be deferred to a later Church Meeting.
17. The Minister is called to be the church's leader and guide in spiritual matters, to preach the word, to exercise pastoral care, and by his or her influence, character and service to build up the church in its faith and in its experience of Christ.
18. No Minister shall be called to the pastorate unless:
 - (a) He/she receives the votes of at least two-thirds of such members as are present at a Special Church Meeting convened for that purpose, and
 - (b) the concurrence of the Synod has been expressed to the church.
19. Elders shall be elected to share with the Minister the oversight of the life of the church. Elders will be elected for a fixed term of 5 years, with the possibility of re-election to serve up to two further 5 year periods. Elders elected for the first time shall be ordained and inducted to their office.
20. The functions of the Elders Meeting shall be those set out in the Basis of Union for the URC and include:
 - (a) to foster in the congregation concern for witness and service to the community, evangelism at home and abroad, Christian education, ecumenical action, local inter-church relations and the wider responsibilities of the whole church.
 - (b) to see that public worship is regularly offered and the sacraments are duly administered, and generally to promote the welfare of the congregation.
 - (c) to ensure pastoral care for the congregation in which the Minister is joined by Elders having responsibility for groups of members.
 - (d) to nominate a Church Secretary and a Church Treasurer to be elected by the Church Meeting to serve both the Church Meeting and the Elders Meeting.
 - (e) elect a person to represent the church on the Synod.
 - (f) to arrange for pulpit supply in a vacancy.
 - (g) to keep the roll of members and details of others attached to the congregation, and in consultation with the Church Meeting to maintain standards of membership and to advise on the admission of members on profession of faith and by transfer, on the suspension of members, and on the removal of names from the roll.
 - (h) to be responsible for the institution and oversight of work among children and young people and of all organisations within the congregation.
 - (i) to call for the election of Elders and advise on the number required.
 - (j) to consider the suitability of any applicant for recognition as a candidate for the ministry and to advise the Church Meeting about its recommendation to the Synod.
 - (k) to recommend to the Church Meeting the arrangements for the proper maintenance of buildings and general oversight of all financial responsibilities of the local church.
 - (l) to act on behalf of the Church Meeting and bring concerns to the wider councils of the URC.
 - (m) to do such other things as may be necessary in pursuance of its responsibility for the common life of the church.
21. The Church Secretary and Treasurer will be appointed for a fixed term of 5 years with the possibility of appointment for one further 5 year term.
22. Others from within the church family may, on recommendation of Elders and with the agreement of the Church Meeting, be co-opted to serve with the Elders on a Leadership Team to fulfil defined roles for specified periods of time.
23. Any proposed change to this constitution should be submitted to the Secretary in writing. Not less than two months' notice of the intention to move an amendment should be given to the church by the Secretary.