

# Hayling Island Baptist Church

*making a difference*

## Members Handbook

### Mission statement

Hayling Island Baptist Church exists to make a difference on Hayling Island and beyond. **(Mt.28:19-21; Mk.16:16-17)**

### Vision and Values:

Our vision and values are based around our value for tradition and desire to become whole beings that serve God and the community we live in, as well as further afield. We affirm the central truths of historic orthodox Christian faith, seeing ourselves in a long line of generations taking part in the endless conversation between God and people.

We have great confidence that God will restore all of creation under the authority of Christ. We believe that every church has to ask the question: "What does it look like for us to live out that future reality today?" We are constantly exploring, questioning, and wrestling with new and creative ways to live out and communicate the teachings of Jesus. Because we see faith as a journey, change is assumed, innovation is expected, and rebirth is welcomed. We embrace the salvation Jesus offers as the only hope for the healing of our relationships with God, each other, ourselves, and creation.

We value the image of God in all people, everywhere. We believe that we were created to live deeply with one another, carrying each other's burdens, sharing our possessions, to pray for and confess our sins to each other, to suffer and celebrate together. It's in these honest, loving relationships that God transforms us and truth becomes a reality. We believe that Jesus is God in human form and that the Church is God's ongoing presence in the world. Led by the Spirit of God, we are passionate about relieving suffering and fighting injustice, joining the God of the oppressed in living out the transforming message of the resurrected Jesus.

### Main Values: Acts.2:42-47

Those things that we as a church consider to be of fundamental importance for our life and ministry together:

**A. Worship. (Roms.12:1; Ps.34:3)** We are committed to Worship that thrills God and fills us with His Glory.

**B. Prayer.** We believe that when you cannot persuade people for God, you can prevail with God for people. Prayer is powerful; prayer changes everything; when the church prays, God works.

**C. Witness. (Acts 20:24; 2 Cor.5:19f)** Showing and sharing the wonder of what God has done for us in forgiving us and equipping us to live a different quality and calibre of life.

**D. Fellowship. (1 Jn.13:34-35; Eph.2:19)** We believe it is as we love one another and show that love to the world around us that others will want what we have.

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**E. Service. (1 Pet.4:10; Eph.2:10)** We want to serve each other and the world around us in the power of the Holy Spirit so that we might see people forgiven, healed, delivered and brought into an intimate relationship with God.

We will also work to bring about God's justice and wholeness, as befits the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

And these five we will do in order that: "The body of Christ might be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (Eph.4:12f)

## **Statement of Faith**

1. The sovereignty, unity and grace of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. The divine inspiration of the Bible and its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
3. The universal sinfulness and guilt of fallen man, making him subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
4. The deity and incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth and his real and sinless humanity; His death on the cross and His real bodily resurrection which has secured for us redemption from the guilt, power and penalty of sin.
5. The justification of the sinner solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.
6. The personality and working of the Holy Spirit to bring about faith, to produce an increasing likeness to Christ and to equip His church for service.
7. The church, the "body" of which Christ is the head, is committed by His command to show and proclaim the Gospel. All believers are members of the universal church and are entrusted with participation in its ministry.
8. The expectation of the personal, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ in power and glory.

## **Church Covenant**

As we individually rejoice in God as Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and the Holy Spirit as Sanctifier, so we collectively commit ourselves to the fellowship at Hayling Island Baptist Church.

In our united witness, we seek to glorify Christ as Head of the Church as, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures, we endeavour to serve Him in the area in which He has set us.

We recognise as sacraments:

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## The Lord's Supper and Baptism

1. The ordinance of the Lord's supper shall usually be observed on the first and third Sundays in each month and such other days as may be determined.
2. All who love the Lord Jesus Christ and who are in fellowship with His Church are invited to participate.
3. The ordinance of Believers' baptism by total immersion shall be administered at the discretion of the Minister (s) or Deacons when requested, and it is the desire of the church that church membership shall follow.

## The Biblical Responsibilities of a Church Member (See Appendix 1)

As a Baptist church we affirm the place of Church Membership and the Church Meeting.

Membership of the Church is, irrespective of age, to all who love God and have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord and whose lives bear witness to this. This witness should normally include believers' baptism.

Membership happens within the idea of "covenant". It's an idea that comes from the Ancient Near East, where covenant was a binding agreement in which covenant members had certain obligations and could expect certain benefits in return. What makes a covenant different from a simple binding agreement is that covenant implies meaningful relationship. For example, God covenanted with Noah, with Abram, with the people of Israel at Mt. Sinai, and eventually brought about a new covenant, available to all through Christ. Through covenant God continually called people back to the kind of life he intended for them.

In the Scriptures, covenant meant an agreement that lasted for life. At HIBC we're attempting to use this meaningful term while recognizing that membership at a local church is often not for life. This is one reason why we occasionally ask members to renew their Covenant.

## Church Discipline (See Appendix 2)

Where a matter is brought to the attention of the Minister/Deacons that may damage either the growth of the individual, the standing of the Gospel, the reputation of the church in the community or its collective life together, then it will be seen as a matter that may require church discipline.

The Minister/Deacons will seek at all times in such situations to act in accordance with **Matthew 5:21-26 & 18:15-20**. The tenet of their actions will always be to bring about repentance, reconciliation and restoration wherever possible.

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Biblical Qualifications for Deacons (See Appendix 3)

## **The Role of Deacons**

To enable the church's Vision and Values to be implemented effectively in the church and/or the specific areas for which they are responsible.

The tenet of the Deacon's role is to be responsible for the smooth running of the church's on-going programme.

Deacons have authority to implement/interpret the outworking of the vision in their area, once goals have been determined by the Minister/Church Members Meeting.

## **Church Guidelines**

As a Charity we have a constitution which deals with the legal side of the church and alongside that we have several good practices that we operate in and have agreed at a church members meeting.

At the church members meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012 the following was agreed:

The age for voting will be 18 due to the legal responsibilities (Constitution 13.11)

The number of Charity Trustee's (deacons and office holders at one time will be no more than 7 alongside the minister (Constitution 15.4)

Elders at this time will not be a role in HIBC (Constitution 15.5)

Although not mentioned in the constitution we recommend that a charity trustee must have been in church membership for at least one year before appointment.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### **The Biblical responsibilities of a Church Member**

- Col.3:17** To give a life dedicated to Christ and to seek at all times to live as to glorify Him.
- Gal.5:16,25** To seek to walk in the Spirit at all times and in so doing, live a life of love, worship, holiness, prayer, obedience and spiritual growth towards God, the Church Family and the Community in which we are set.
- Hebs.10:25** To share in corporate worship each Sunday unless unavoidably prevented, and to be regular in attendance at Holy Communion,
- 2 Tim.2:15** To be faithful in prayer and in Bible study, both privately and by being  
**1 Thess.5:17** present, whenever possible, at meetings held for this purpose.  
**Hebs.10:25**
- Acts.2:42** To live in love, fellowship and unity with all other members of the Church Family.
- 1 Cor.12:27** To discover, develop and deploy their spiritual gifts and so play an active part in the work of the church, according to those gifts and opportunities.
- Hebs.10:25** Personally to accept responsibility for the government of the local church by being present at the Church Family Meetings.
- Mal.3:8-10** To give regularly a dedicated sum of money for the work of God's Kingdom  
**1 Cor.16:1-2** at home and overseas.  
**2 Cor.9:6-11**
- Matt.28:19-20** To attempt, through personal witnessing by lip and life, to introduce and  
**Acts.1:8** bring others to a knowledge of Christ and a commitment to His church.
- Hebs.13:7,17** To respect and pray for those with positions of leadership in the local church.

## APPENDIX 2

### Church Discipline

Sadly, there are times in any family where the behaviour of an individual can lead to difficulties which, if not addressed, can prove damaging both to the individual's well being, that of their biological family and the family of the church. In such situations the following discipline will apply:

In instances where church discipline may prove necessary, the Minister/Deacons will seek to act in accordance with **Matthew 5:21-26 & 18:15-20**:

1. They will first encourage the person expressing the concern to go to the individual themselves and speak with them directly.
2. Should this prove not to be possible or not to bring about the outcome of repentance, reconciliation and restoration, then they will be encouraged to take another member, or possibly a Church Leader. That person will then seek to ascertain the true facts regarding the situation. **Gal 6:1 & Lk 6:41-42**
3. Should this still prove not to resolve the situation, the Minister/Deacon will then inform the deacons, who together will determine how best to proceed.

Depending on the seriousness of the situation, the church Leaders may decide to:

1. Temporarily suspend Church Membership for a period without reference to the Church Members Meeting, in order to give such time as is necessary to offer help to address the issues.
2. Where the situation cannot be resolved or there is unwillingness on the part of the individual(s) concerned to recognise a problem, then the Minister/Deacons will bring a recommendation to the Church Members Meeting that membership be withdrawn permanently.
3. In some cases it may prove necessary for the Minister/Deacons to warn other churches that the person(s) may choose to attend, of the facts that have led the church to resort to church discipline. This would be in order to preserve the unity of the churches and protect the other church from any threat to its own unity.

It needs to be stressed that all such actions:

1. Will be discussed with the individual(s) concerned (thought not necessarily agreed) and confirmed in writing prior to such action being taken.
2. Will progress up to the point where the person is believed to have addressed the issues that led to the need for church discipline to be applied.

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3. Will be applied, not with the aim of punishing, but rather to bring the person(s) to repentance, reconciliation and restoration and, as far as possible, will be accompanied by continuing Pastoral visits by the Minister, ideally accompanied by any Deacon.

In matters of Church Discipline concerning the Senior (or only) Minister, in the first instances the normal rules shall apply, bearing in mind **1 Tim 5:19**. Should these prove not to resolve the matter, then the Senior Regional Minister of the Southern Counties Baptist Association may be approached by the Senior (or only) Minister, Deacon or aggrieved parties for advice, and if necessary, the Church Members Meeting may invite him/her to act as arbitrator.

If you have an issue with the Senior Minister (or only Minister) then the following actions are to be taken:

1. To speak with the Senior Minister (or only Minister) expressing the concern to them directly.
2. Should this prove not to be possible or not to bring about the desired outcome of, then they should write to the church deacons / leaders for it to be discussed with the minister. The deacons will then seek to ascertain the true facts regarding the situation. **Gal 6:1 & Lk 6:41-42.**
3. Following this a meeting may be had with the minister, deacons and the individual (or group) to try and resolve the situation.
4. If there is no resolve the issue will be taken to the church members meeting; each person will be given opportunity to outline the issue and be open to questioning by the church members.
4. Should this still prove not to resolve the situation, the Minister/Deacon or chair of the members meeting will then inform the deacons, who together will determine how best to proceed.

## APPENDIX 3

### **Biblical Qualifications for Deacons**

### **1 Timothy 3:8-12**

1. **Individuals of Dignity**  
Deacons must be mature, of sound mind and character, and yielded to the Holy Spirit.
2. **Not Double-Tongued**  
Deacons must demonstrate verbal consistency. They must not be prone to saying one thing to one person and something else to another.
3. **Not Addicted to Wine**  
Deacons must be free from addictions, and must be willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others.
4. **Not Fond of Sordid Gain**  
Deacons must be purely motivated in their service.
5. **Holding to the Mystery of Faith with a Clear Conscience**  
Deacons must have a sound knowledge of Christian truth and a lifestyle that mirrors that knowledge. They must not be easily swayed from the truth.
6. **Beyond Reproach**  
Deacons must display a lifestyle free from on-going patterns of disobedience.
7. **First Tested**  
Deacons must have proven over time that they are faithful and that their walk with the Lord is credible.
8. **Their Spouses must be Faithful, Dignified, Temperate – not malicious talkers.**  
Deacons, if married, must have spouses understands the commitment of the Deacon
9. **The Husband of One Wife**  
Deacons, if married, must be devoted spouses.