

international baptist church  
replant proposal



June 2011

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# Our dear brothers and sisters...

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As you know, following the presentation in January 2011, the elders, with the support of the Advisory Group, have been prayerfully considering what a replanted church here in Cults and Bieldside should look like.

It has been, as we expected, an incredibly tight schedule. With just three months to consider these matters, and the wonderful but busy time of Easter and school holidays, as well as a considerable number of pressing pastoral matters, it has been difficult to fit everything in. But God has been gracious to us.

In addition to a handful of updates from the front, we have tried to have as many individual conversations as possible. We were grateful to those of you who fed back thoughts and comments via the Advisory Group. We are particularly encouraged by the many positive comments about the current four weeks of focussed prayer.

Prayer really has been, and remains, truly fundamental to this process. During these months we have sought many different ways to pray about these issues. Your elders have typically met for prayer and discussion at least once, but normally twice a week. We have been praying together on Wednesday nights. And we've been very grateful for your ongoing prayers, which many have assured us of.

We want to publicly thank the Advisory Group for their help and support during this time. On a number of occasions, they greatly helped us with challenges, feedback and also, vital encouragements to stay the course. We are delighted to present this proposal with their support.

This proposal does not attempt to offer a full picture of what life in the replanted church will look like week to week. It is about getting us to day one, and providing foundations upon which we can build as we seek to honour the Lord going forward.

The following content is not simply the result of some whims or opinions of your elders. As we have sought the Lord, prayed and discussed, we firmly believe that the following proposal represents God's plan for us as a church going forward.

So we humbly submit this proposal to you for prayerful consideration. May God's will be done among us.

With love in Christ,

Andrew, Martin & Colin

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6*

# Summary of Replant Proposals

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The purpose of this replant proposal is not to provide a detailed picture of what the church will look like a year or five years from now. Rather, these proposals are presented to provide us with the framework and structure that God can continue to use and build on over the coming years.

## **Church Values**

It is proposed that the values presented within this proposal document provide a framework for the replanted church, subject always to the Word of God and the continuing direction of the Holy Spirit.

## **Church Vision**

It is proposed that the vision laid out within this proposal document is accepted as a true, right and exciting representation of how we trust God will guide and use us as a church into the future.

## **Church Name**

It is proposed that we rename the replanted church as a reflection of our new start, vision and values.

## **Church Staff**

It is proposed that Martin Clarke should be employed by the replanted church in a permanent capacity and should now be appointed to the position of Lead Pastor and that Andrew Hayes now be employed in a new role as Pastor for Outreach and Family.

## **Church Leadership**

It is proposed that the replanted church should continue to be lead by membership elected Elders, but that Deacons now be those who are appointed by the Elders to leadership in either a service or a ministry area within the church.

## **Church Administration**

It is proposed that the administration of each aspect of the replanted church should be undertaken by an appropriate team and coordinated by one of the Deacons/Elders.

## **Small Groups & Prayer**

It is proposed that the replanted church will emphasise the need for every member to engage with an appropriate small group which will seek to enable them in spiritual growth and discipleship as well as caring for one another's needs. Development of this small groups ministry will begin with the replant.

The church will also continue to affirm and develop a commitment to corporate prayer by meeting together once a month for this purpose.

## **Church Membership**

It is proposed that the replanted church have an increased focus on what it means to be a member of Christ's Church. This will involve embracing a covenantal understanding of membership which is to be reviewed periodically, and the eventual establishment of church membership classes for those desiring to join the church.

## **Church Planting**

It is proposed that the replanted church develop a church planting strategy in the coming years as a key aspect of our commitment to mission.

## **Church Constitution**

It is proposed that the replanted church adopt the new Constitution included as part of this proposal.

## **Church Facilities**

It is proposed that the replanted church commit to a phased upgrade of church facilities in the coming years. The first phase, focussing on the upgrade of the Sanctuary, should be completed by the end of August.

Further details of each of these proposals follow in this document.

# Values – who are we?

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One thing we've been very conscious of throughout these past months is that "there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecl. 1:9). The question of "who we are" is not one that we answer based on simply what we would like, but the answer is found as we open the Scriptures. Therefore, churches all over the world will quite rightly value many similar things.

That said, each local expression of the Body of Christ is unique. As we have sought God through prayer and in His word, and as we have considered our history, location and current makeup, we believe the following five areas capture the essence of who we want to be.

With the Bible as our guide, and the Spirit's enabling, we are seeking to be...

1. **Grace Centred**

*This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 1 John 4:10-11*

Though we see the results of sin – brokenness, struggle, pain and death – both in our world and in our lives, God knows us and loves us and has done everything necessary for us to enjoy a relationship with Him. This amazing good news of the grace of God is foundational to who we are and informs everything we say and do.

2. **Worshippers**

*Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness. Psalm 115:1*

The God of the Bible – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is supremely glorious. We recognise Him to be of ultimate value and worth, and we will proclaim this privately and publicly, on our own and when together. We order our lives – our words, thoughts, actions and goals – around this God, and others should be able to observe that.

3. **Family**

*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! 1 John 3:1*

The Church is the family of God. We are brothers and sisters – people of all ages sharing in each other's lives – not members in a club. We should be generous towards one another; vulnerable and honest with each other; caring for and seeking good for one another. We should be hospitable, both to those inside and those outside the family of God.

4. **Disciples**

*Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18*

Being a Christian is about much more than a one-time decision, or a family heritage. We are followers of Jesus, choosing to continue on a journey with Him, seeking to become more and more like Him each day. Through the life-changing power of God, and the help and input of our brothers and sisters, we are learning what it means to grow in love, godliness and holiness.

5. **Missionaries**

*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8*

We have good news to proclaim – hope for now and for eternity – in the person and work of Jesus. And we have Christ's love to share with our family, friends and those in need in Aberdeen and around the world. This is not just the task of 'professionals'. We all participate in God's purposes for this world. The Church exists to point others towards the glory of God; to model something of the Kingdom of God; to be people of restoration and hope and light.

[Visit <http://ibcaberdeem.org/resources/sermons> to hear sermons on each of these values.]

In summary, we are:

*The family of God, sharing the love of God, for the glory of God.*

# The Vision – where are we going?

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As we seek to be who God wants us to be, we need a vision of what God wants for us. This vision should be shared and owned across the church; something we pray and long for, something that excites and energises.

We are just at the beginning of a new stage in our journey. The truth is, we will never arrive, we will never be finished until the Kingdom of God is fully revealed. But meanwhile we want to have a big vision, to the glory of God.

## **We see a church that is Biblical.**

We will teach the Bible with integrity, passion and humility. It will be our guide in everything we do. We will love the Scriptures, finding different ways for all different ages to understand the glorious depths of God's Word.

## **We see a church of authentic worshippers.**

We will declare the greatness of God. We will not be lukewarm in our praise. We will sing passionately, pray earnestly, listen attentively and surrender ourselves regularly. Worship will be a 24/7 reality. We will look forward to Sunday gatherings with great joy and expectation.

## **We see a church that tells people about Jesus.**

We will embrace God's heart to reach this lost and broken world. We will be unashamed of the gospel. We will find ways to share the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. We will encourage our friends and family to respond to Jesus' offer of new life in Him. We will enable others as they take this good news to all nations around the earth.

## **We see a church that embodies Jesus' love.**

We will love the local community of Cults and Bielside, and will seek its good. We will be a place of hope, restoration and life. As we scatter, we will be known as a people who extend love, hospitality and care. We will find ways to serve the poor and those most in need in Aberdeen, and around the world.

## **We see a church that is honest and relevant.**

We will be authentic. We will acknowledge the joys and pains of life, and will seek God's presence and purposes therein. We will not sugar-coat the reality of sin in the world and in our lives. We will confront hard issues, acknowledging that, though we don't know all the answers, God is in control.

## **We see a church that is a loving family, connected in small groups.**

We will be men and women and boys and girls who care for each other. Every member will be part of a small group where we love, encourage and help one another. We will weep when others weep, and rejoice when others rejoice. We will be more concerned about our brothers and sisters than ourselves.

## **We see a church that plants other churches.**

We will make church planting a key strategy in how we reach out with the love and good news of Jesus. We will raise up new leaders. We will plant churches who themselves will plant churches. We will gladly accept and adapt to the resulting challenges for us here in Cults. We will support those who are building the Church around the world.

## **We see a church that is expectant.**

We will never settle down in material affluence or comfort. Rather, we will be active in furthering God's work through this church. We will never give up. We will not see Christian service as a chore. Mindful of God's past faithfulness, we will move forward with renewed expectation.

# Church Name

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For any institution, what it is called is very important. The name says much about its history and becomes tied up with its core identity. Since 1978 this church has been known as International Baptist Church, “IBC”. For those of us who have been around many years, that is who we are.

Yet in replanting we look to a new day and a new future. As we do so we believe it is time to form a new identity and to embrace a new name. Whilst all ex-pats will always be warmly welcomed as part of our church family here, we eagerly desire to be a church firmly rooted in this local area; Cults, Bieldside and then wider Aberdeen. We believe a new name will help us make that transition.

Fairly or unfairly, the name ‘International Baptist Church’ has sometimes proved to be a challenge regarding how the church is perceived in the surrounding area. While it would be foolish to expect that any new name will immediately result in hundreds of people flocking through the doors, we are convinced that a change of church name will, over time, have a significant positive impact in the surrounding areas.

## Guidelines

As we considered a new name, the following guidelines helped us:

1. We should have the word ‘Church’ in the name. This is who we are. And, even in our post-church culture, people do still have at least some sense of what a church is.
2. We should not have anything too obscure. We feel that this would simply confirm any perceptions of us being ‘that weird cult up there’.
3. We should not have the word ‘Baptist’ in the church name. As we’ve made clear previously, the replanted church will remain in the Baptist Union of Scotland. However, few unchurched people know what ‘baptist’ means. In addition, these days there is such great stylistic and theological variety amongst Baptist churches that the title ‘Baptist’ does not really give even Christians much idea of what to expect.
4. We should not use a solely geographical term. Firstly for practical reasons – we don’t really want ‘cult’ somewhere in our church name! Secondly for theological reasons – Cults Church suggests that we are a church only or primarily when we meet in Cults. But we are a gathered church. From Monday to Saturday we scatter all over Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and beyond. We minister as members of this local church body on the golf course at Kemnay, in the office at Dyce, on a business trip in London, at the school gates around Aberdeenshire, etc.
5. The church name should capture something of who we are as a church.
6. Over time, we landed on “Community Church” as what we believe to be the most helpful way to frame our church name. This points to us being a church for the local community and also to the fact that this is a place where you can find true, meaningful, God-centred community.

## How to choose?

This is one area where, as elders, we felt uncomfortable simply giving one suggestion for approval. Rather, we wanted all of us as a congregation to decide upon and ‘own’ our new name.

So, as you know, we have been seeking input on potential church names. Having considered each of those submitted and many other possibilities, over the page we offer three potential names for your prayerful consideration.

### **Grace Community Church**

We are a people saved by the grace of God. This flows through everything we do. And we also desire to be a community of grace – a community which reflects the grace we’ve received. A people who are welcoming, loving, and accepting – all the while pointing to the life-changing gospel of grace.

### **Hillview Community Church**

This name reflects our location, with four significant roads near the church having that name. Crucially, it can be infused with theological meaning. We want to be ‘a city on a hill’. Consider also the Psalms of Ascent – that journey ahead of us towards the presence of God through the realities of life – hills can be hard to climb, tiring, a struggle – but worth it! Finally, it points us to the vision of the cross on another hill far away.

### **Hope Community Church**

We desire to be a place of hope for those around us. Hope is something everyone understands and longs for. But, for the Christian, it also has a greater depth of meaning – our hope in Christ is steadfast and sure. This is what we want to communicate to a lost world: that there is real, lasting and unshakable hope in the person of Jesus Christ.

Please prayerfully consider each of these. Don’t be concerned if you don’t immediately love any of them. What is certain is that whatever name we choose, in a few months it will seem completely natural to us!

### **Your choice**

To decide on which name to call the replanted church we are going to use a transferable vote system. Please indicate your first preference by writing the number 1 in the box next to the relevant name then mark your second preference by writing the number 2 in the box next to the relevant name. If no name has a clear majority on the basis of the indicated first preferences alone, we will then be able to see which name is most acceptable on the basis of second preferences.

# Staffing

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## **Andrew Hayes**

Andrew has now served IBC as Senior Pastor for nearly seven years. Even when he first came to the church he considered his main calling to be helping the church move forward and develop in a time of great transition both for the church and the wider context of the oil industry and the city of Aberdeen. Over these past seven years Andrew has ministered to help the church understand its purpose and vision as well as deepen fellowship and commitment both to the Lord and to one another. Alongside this, one of his core passions has been to call the church to mission.

With the presentation of this replant proposal there is a sense of having completed one side of the Lord's purpose in calling him to serve the church - in having helped the church transition and clarify its ongoing calling in the Lord. But Andrew also has a sense of work yet to be done in helping the church be the spiritually healthy, deeply relational, Christ-centred, mission focussed body that it is called to be.

## **Martin Clarke**

Throughout these last months, Martin's service within the church and his involvement in the replant process has been invaluable. It is not an understatement to say that without the Lord opening the possibility of Martin's participation to us, we would not have experienced much of the blessing we have within the church these past months, nor would we have completed this proposal. One of the intentions of our invitation to Martin to join as one of the pastors was with the aim of the church discerning whether the Lord might lead us to call Martin to further pastoral service, as well as enabling Martin to discern if this was indeed God's calling on his life at this time.

Martin is now certain that the Lord is calling him to pastoral service and he has a passion to be involved in a developing and growing church that will, in time, also be able to plant further churches. He has clear leadership, teaching and communication gifts as well as a deep pastoral heart and passion for God. He has a real burden for this church and its ongoing life. All of these qualities have been much in evidence in the church over these past months and the elders (with the full support of the Advisory Group) have no hesitation in recommending that the church call Martin to a permanent pastoral position in the replanted church.

With these considerations in mind, we propose that we reconfigure our staff roles as follows:

### **Lead Pastor**

We propose that we confirm the call of Martin Clarke to lead the replanted church. As the church builds on all that is past with new beginnings, we believe that God has shown us that the renewed leadership focus that Martin is able to bring will help to shape and guide the church to become what the Lord is calling it to be. Martin will take on primary leadership responsibility for the vision and direction of the church in the coming years. He will also lead the church on in this process, enabling us to stay true to the word of God and the direction of Scripture.

Besides this pastoral oversight role, his main responsibilities will encompass teaching and preaching. In this new role he will also take the core leadership responsibilities for the eldership team, Worship ministries, Small Groups, Men and Women's ministries as well as leadership development, church communications and coordinating the overall ministry of the church.

### **Outreach & Families Pastor**

We propose a new role of Outreach & Family Pastor for the replanted church. This pastoral focus will help to shape and develop the outreach activities of the church through Alpha, marriage, parenting and other such courses offered within the church and local community, as well as special church outreach events. It will also ensure and focus leadership of family ministries in the church, and – as

we acknowledge where God is already at work – the children’s and schools’ ministries. This would include enabling preparation for and execution of summer missions along with other leaders.

We propose that Andrew Hayes now be called to this new role. We believe Andrew’s ongoing input in this role will help us to develop in line with the changes the Lord is calling us to as a church. Andrew will also continue to lead in crisis pastoral care, development of the church’s local and worldwide missions involvement as well as seeking, in time, to develop the church’s local involvement in gospel-centred compassion ministries. Andrew will have continued involvement in teaching and preaching, though to a lesser extent.

Though we did also consider other configurations of staff, we believe these proposals will help us to prioritise and move in the direction that the Lord is leading us in. As the church moves on, future staffing needs will be reviewed and adjusted as the Lord leads.

### **Wider Eldership Team Context**

Martin and Andrew will, of course, also continue to be part of the eldership which we anticipate expanding as the Lord gives us those who are able to serve as elders, each of whom will also have specific leadership responsibilities. At this time of replanting, Colin Ross will have oversight leadership responsibility for church Youth ministries. All of the elders will together share the responsibilities of pastoral care of the membership and wider congregation.

### **Potential Challenge**

In making these proposals we are keenly aware of just how unorthodox they are; particularly in proposing a significant change in pastors’ roles.

For both Martin and Andrew there is a deep sense of the Lord having prepared them for this opportunity over many years, from developing a close and deeply respectful working relationship in the early years when Andrew came to IBC to work alongside Martin, and then on in friendship and mutual respect as Martin moved away from the church to lead the Souled Out ministry. The fruits of God’s work in each of their lives, but in particular both Martin’s responsibility of leading the Souled Out team and Andrew’s participation in the Arrow leadership programme, give us confidence in making this particular proposal to the church. Over the past three months, Martin and Andrew have taken up the challenge of working alongside each other and once again this has confirmed their shared vision, passion and calling to the church, as well as their willingness and ability to serve alongside each other, honouring the respective strengths, and gifts they each bring.

However, we remain alert to potential challenges as well as the relative numerical weakness of our eldership at this time, so in coming months will seek to identify and put in place an appropriate leadership mentor who they can be accountable to specifically in this regard. They will look to meet with this person once or twice a year to help ensure that possible differences, tensions, and misunderstandings have been dealt with and grounded relationally as the Lord continues to be at work in their lives.

### **Finance**

Clearly the employment of two full-time pastors is a considerable commitment for a church of this size. In the past the church has recognised the position of Youth Pastor alongside a Senior Pastor as good stewardship of the church’s financial resources and has consistently been able to meet the financial challenges involved. We believe that these two pastoral positions are a rightful stewarding of the resources of the church at this time and continue to look to the Lord in this replant process to confirm His direction through His continued supply of necessary resources.

We are encouraged that during these past months, even with the increased outgoings with two stipends to pay, the giving and incoming finances of the church have kept pace, maintaining our finances without recourse to the church’s capital funds. As an additional safeguard, due to the banked capital resources of the church, even if giving to the church was to completely stop in coming months, the church could continue to pay the notice periods of these two pastoral positions.

# Leadership Structure

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## Biblical Leadership

When considering New Testament instruction on Church leadership it is notable how little is spelled out about specific leadership roles in the Church.<sup>1</sup> We find reference to Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers<sup>2</sup> as well as the categories of Elder/Overseer and Deacon. The Greek words used to describe these positions can help us to better understand them. The word translated as 'elder' in English translations is actually expressed in three different Greek words; *presbuteros* meaning elder as in respected and mature members of the community, *episkopos* meaning overseer, and *poimanos* meaning shepherd or pastor. For the other category of leadership, instead of translating the Greek word into English idiom, the Greek word itself, *deaconos*, has been appropriated, so giving us 'Deacon', which in Greek was used to signify someone who served others.

Most of what is said about these roles focuses on the principles of leadership and character qualifications. So we find that Elders/Overseers/Pastors are to be; men above reproach, holy, lovers of good, monogamous if married, clear thinking, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, gentle, humble, not motivated by money, managing their own homes and family responsibilities well, mature believers, with a good reputation in the wider world, holding firmly to the teaching of the Apostles, as well as being able to teach or give instruction in the faith.<sup>3</sup> Deacons/Servants are to be men or women (Paul speaks of Phoebe as a deacon/servant of the church in Cenchrea in Rom 16.1) who are to exhibit similar character qualities but are not required to teach.<sup>4</sup> Clearly these lists of character qualifications are meant to be indicative rather than exhaustive.

Roles and responsibilities are largely inferred from these character requirements. Thus we understand from these requirements that Elders were charged with a special responsibility for leading and teaching in the church.<sup>5</sup> Their role was to oversee, and shepherd the local body by maintaining the teaching and faith, such that it remained connected to, centred in and focussed on Christ Jesus, its Head and Lord.

Very little is said about the role of Deacons in the New Testament.<sup>6</sup> Often Acts 6:1-6 is used as a reference point for understanding the role of Deacons / Servants of the Church, but the noun 'Deacon' is not used in relation to the role described there so it would be wise to see the passage as descriptive rather than prescriptive. What can be inferred from what we are told is that Deacons were appointed to help and enable the Elders in the administration and ministry of the local church body.

This then, in brief summary, is the Biblical and theological framework for our consideration of local church leadership and the proposals for the current context of the replanted church.

## Replant Leadership Proposals

Our proposal for the replanted church is to retain continuity with the categories of leadership we currently recognise; those of Elder/Overseer/Pastor and Deacon/Servant as being the only valid leadership categories for the local church authorised by the New Testament.

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<sup>1</sup> Information and principles on this area are found in; Acts 6.1-6, Acts 14.23, Phil 1.1, 1 Tim 3.1-13, Titus 1.5-9, Ja 5.14, 1 Pe 5.1-5

<sup>2</sup> Eph 4.11-13

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim 3.1-7

<sup>4</sup> 1 Tim 3.8-13

<sup>5</sup> Acts 20.28

<sup>6</sup> Mentioned only in Rom 16.1 in relation to Phoebe, Phil 1.1 and I Tim 3.8-13

## **Elders**

We want to affirm the leadership and oversight role of Elders in the Church. Elders should continue to be men who are recognised by the membership of the church by means of election. The Elders will thus consider all nominations for Elder submitted by the members and if satisfied that the character and calling of the individual concerned qualifies them and they are willing to serve, will submit them to the consideration of the church membership in election. A majority of 75% would be required for them to serve a 3 year term as Elder. After which term they may, if able and with the support of their fellow Elders, be put forward once again for re-election to further 3 year terms of Eldership.

Full-time paid Elders/Overseers/Pastors will also have their calling recognised by the vote of the membership. Appointment of a full-time pastor will be made with a 75% majority of the voting membership. As at present, unless the term of full-time paid service is defined at the outset, such pastors will continue to serve the church without further election whilst they remain qualified and called to serve.

As well as their general duty of leading the church together, each of the Elders will have specific areas of oversight defined to clarify accountability and responsibility.

## **Deacons**

It is proposed that Deacons should be those from among the membership of the church who are recognised as having a leadership of service or a leadership of ministry within the church. By a leadership of service it is meant to include those who lead in caring for the buildings, finance, grounds, hospitality and other such areas of service in the church. By a leadership of ministry it is meant that this category should include ministry leaders within the church such as those for music, family ministries, prayer ministry, small groups, and so on.

Moving forward, each of these roles will be appointed by the Elders overseeing the ministry of the church. The key difference being that these specific ministry or service leadership roles will in future make up the diaconate of the church, rather than election to the general role of Deacon as at present.

The Elders will remain accountable to the membership of the church for these appointments, which will be made for specified periods. Each role will be reappraised by the Elders through annual reviews as well as overseen by a specific Elder for that particular area of church life. The deacons will generally not need to meet as a constituted body separate from the Elders and the Members but may need from time to time to meet with some of the other Deacons and Elders for the purpose of coordinating and administrating particular affairs or ministries of the church.

# Administrative Structure

One of the major challenges for our church in the recent past has been the weakness of our administrative structure. This has real implications for the effectiveness of our ministry and has placed an unnecessary burden on a small number of people. Moving forward, we believe that it is vital to provide an administrative structure which allows the church to appropriately steward our finances, maintain our facilities, equip our ministries and therefore fulfil our legal responsibilities.

### Administrative Teams

In line with our revised leadership structure, it is our intention to appoint deacons who will take responsibility for and lead teams to manage key areas of church life and administration. Each team will have an appointed elder who will oversee the connections with the overall vision of the church. Deacons will typically lead and recruit team members, seeking to coordinate activity rather than ‘do’ all the work themselves.

While this list is not exhaustive and the exact responsibilities are likely to change as we implement this structure, it is envisaged that the following teams will be formed:

Administrative Team	Example Responsibilities
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Banking</li> <li>○ Gift Aid Claims</li> <li>○ Book Keeping</li> <li>○ Management Accounts</li> <li>○ Payments</li> <li>○ Salaries</li> <li>○ HMRC Liaison</li> </ul>
Building Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Building Lets</li> <li>○ Maintenance</li> <li>○ Utilities</li> <li>○ Cleaning</li> <li>○ Capital Campaign/Upgrade</li> </ul>
Grounds Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work days</li> <li>○ Grounds Care</li> <li>○ Snow Clearing</li> </ul>
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Website</li> <li>○ Promotional Materials</li> <li>○ Newsletter/bulletin</li> <li>○ Membership Directory</li> <li>○ Podcasts</li> <li>○ Mailings/Email</li> </ul>
Children’s Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Crèche</li> <li>○ Mainly Music</li> <li>○ Children’s Church</li> <li>○ Children’s mission</li> <li>○ All age services</li> <li>○ Schools ministry</li> </ul>

*Continued...*

<b>Administrative Team</b>	<b>Example Responsibilities</b>
Music Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Music Rota</li> <li>○ Audio Visual</li> <li>○ CCLI requirements</li> <li>○ Easter/Christmas music</li> </ul>
Youth Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SNAC</li> <li>○ Breathe (or similar)</li> <li>○ Youth mission</li> <li>○ Youth trips and special events</li> <li>○ Rotas/logistics</li> </ul>
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Service Support</li> <li>○ Administrative Support for Pastors</li> <li>○ BUS Liaison</li> <li>○ Staff Contracts</li> <li>○ OSCAR Liaison</li> <li>○ Child Protection</li> </ul>
Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Coffee Fellowship</li> <li>○ Fellowship Meals</li> <li>○ Catering Support for Ministries (e.g. Alpha)</li> <li>○ Kitchen</li> </ul>
Congregational Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prayer Chain</li> <li>○ Meals Ministry</li> <li>○ Welcome Rota</li> <li>○ Visitor Liaison/follow up</li> <li>○ Benevolence Recommendations</li> <li>○ Transportation</li> </ul>

# Small Groups

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In replanting the church, there are some clear strengths that we want to ensure are carried forward and developed. One which is consistently mentioned is the friendliness and warmth of welcome many experience on coming to the church. However, we are also aware that this relational strength of the church could become much deeper. One of the identified concerns is that, for many in our congregation, church is confined to Sunday mornings only. Though corporate worship each Sunday remains central to who we are, there is much more to 'being church' than getting together for worship Sunday by Sunday.

There is a need to ensure the ongoing growth and spiritual development of each member as well as ensuring effective care and support of all the congregation as we grow numerically. We want to be a church where we are increasingly authentic, vulnerable and accountable to one another before God. We want to take our need to be instructed and shaped by the Spirit of God through the Word of God as well as our need to deepen our expression of thanksgiving and dependence on God in prayer very seriously.

As we have considered how to best develop each of these aspects of church life, the importance of small groups has become clear. Small groups are, in a sense, the church in miniature, perhaps giving us the nearest glimpse possible as to the nature and shape of the earliest Christian churches.

We propose that we should seek to develop a strong and committed small group ministry within the life of the replanted church. Each group will be made up of a mix of 12-15 people from the congregation of the church and look to meet weekly with the groups meeting at various locations and times through the week. Together they will study the Scriptures, share needs, pray, support one another as well as sharing celebration and food together from time to time. Bible study materials will be established and agreed by the elders and the small group leaders. Each group will have a leader who the elders will appoint, who will help to lead and care for the group and remain accountable to the elders in doing so. Each small group will also have a host (who may also be leaders) and someone who will care for the administration of the group.

We also want to restate our commitment to developing the corporate prayer life of the church by, alongside our small groups ministry, gathering together as a congregation once a month for joint prayer and worship.

## **Starting Small Group Ministry**

Establishing such a small group ministry is not simply a matter of agreeing our commitment to it and pressing a big 'start' button. Our proposal is that we carefully work through the development of such ministry in coming months. We want to learn the lessons of past years when we tried to establish 'Home Groups' but ended up with some groups working well whilst others struggled.

To that end, in the next month or two, the elders will identify members who may be potential leaders, hosts and administrators and will invite them to an information evening for further consideration of their place in this developing ministry during the early summer. Then from August, the elders will run one or two training small groups with those who are prepared to commit to leading, hosting and administering small groups to train them in these roles and establish our small group model.

Once this has been done, we will roll out small groups to the congregation as a whole and look to see every member of the congregation regularly participating in a small group.

# Church Membership

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## Living relationships

The New Testament uses many different pictures when it speaks of Christ's Church – a bride, a vine, a flock, a family, a building etc. All of these images emphasise the importance of relationships. That is, our relationship with God – as Husband, Father, Shepherd, Builder – as well as our relationship with fellow believers – branches of the same vine, sheep of the one flock, brothers and sisters in the same family. Being part of the church is to be in a relationship with God and His people.

We see this with even greater clarity when we consider Paul's favourite picture for the Church. Particularly in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4, Paul likens the Church to a body – the "body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:27). Again in this image, there is a sense of the profound and dynamic inter-connectedness that we should experience.

We're to serve together, grow together, share pain and joy together. To be a "member" is to be alive and at peace, connected and committed, busy at work, with Christ as our head, enjoying Him and doing His work here on earth.

## Name on a list?

But the Church in this part of the world has lost some of this understanding. "Membership" has been stripped of much of its meaning. Someone can be disillusioned with God and the church, can choose to not be involved in any area of service, but can still rest assured of their position as 'member'. Or someone can join as a church member and then never again really consider what that means.

Membership has often been reduced to a name on a list or the ability to vote at church 'business meetings'.

## Covenantal membership

As we move forward as a church, we want to recapture the depth of meaning that church membership should have. We feel it is right to 'raise the bar' on what it means to be a member of this local church body. We are eager that church membership be a living, breathing reality that we all participate in, for our own up-building, to the glory of God.

We propose that we root our understanding of membership in this church around a short but significant covenant (overleaf) which we would all enter into. In addition to opportunities throughout the year (e.g. when a new member joins), we would plan to have one service each year given over to this focus on what membership in the Church means. During this service, and in the run up to it, each existing member would be encouraged to examine their heart with regard to their place within the church.

This would be a time to reflect and ask questions such as:

- Do I care for and pray for my brothers and sisters in this community?
- Am I willing to intentionally open my home and my life to others with this church family?
- Am I finding ways to encourage someone younger-in-the-faith than me?
- Am I honouring my church leaders just now?
- Do I have a place to serve in ministry?
- Am I giving financially to God's work here in this church?
- Do I align myself afresh with the vision and values of this church?

At this point each year, we would encourage members to embrace the church covenant afresh. We would find ways for this to be, spiritually speaking, a very meaningful moment of annual recommitment to who God has called us all to be as a church. As well as a valuable process of annual self-examination, it would also be precious to have this annual corporate focus on why we're here, and where God is taking us a church family.

We will, of course, maintain our current commitment to welcoming everyone and anyone who comes to the church, member or not.

**Church membership classes**

In addition to the above yearly focus, we plan to establish a “new members’ class” which would run at least twice-yearly. It would be our expectation that new members would attend this class. The class – which would most likely run over three or four sessions – would cover items such as doctrine, vision and values, spiritual practices and spiritual gifts.

**Small groups**

Crucial to our understanding of meaningful church membership will be our small group ministry. As stated previously, all members will be encouraged to be part of a small group.



**Church Membership Covenant**

Trusting in Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord, we affirm the following covenant relationship with our Father in heaven and our brothers and sisters in Christ.

With the Holy Spirit’s enabling we will...

**Gather**

We will make it a priority to gather together. This goes deeper than just Sundays.  
We’ll endeavour to open our lives and be available to each other.

**Pray**

We will embrace the privilege of bringing our prayers – individually and together – before our Father in heaven, in the knowledge that  
He only gives good gifts to His children.

**Care**

We will love one another, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who rejoice. We will put others’ needs before our own.

**Give**

God has given us so much, so we will be a generous people. With time, with abilities, with finance – we will give to God through the life of this local church.

**Serve**

God has given each of us a unique role to play in His work.  
We will seek to find out what that is and join Him in His work.

**Submit**

We will submit to God and the Scriptures. As they also do that, we will respect the leadership of the Elders. As brothers and sisters, we will submit to each other in love.

# Church Planting

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Church planting is having something of a resurgence in the western world. As churches consider how best to win people to Christ, they are increasingly identifying church planting as probably the most effective method. Much research has been done in recent years which points, with great persuasiveness, to the merits of having a focused emphasis on “church multiplication” as a key missional strategy.

If we, as a replanted church, were faithful in sharing the gospel message with those around us, God might be pleased over 10-20 years to bring scores of people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus. But if we had a vision to make church planting a central focus of our outreach, we believe we could see God multiplying this effectiveness many times over.

Clearly we are not in a position to plant another church at present. However, churches do not need to be many hundreds strong before considering a church plant.

As elders, we believe that – in this moment of replanting– God is calling us to make church planting part of our DNA. Our heart is that, for years to come, this church would be a place which plants other churches, who then themselves would plant churches.

## **Part of our mission**

Over the coming years we will develop this strategy. This will involve seeking God in prayer, allocating finances to a church planting fund, training up leaders and perhaps hiring staff who could facilitate this ministry or who could themselves lead a church plant.

Our hope is that sometime around three years from the re-launch date, we would be ready to send out a team to plant a church, either to another part of Aberdeenshire or further afield. It may be that we would focus this around one of the established and thriving small groups, but we acknowledge that God could guide in a different direction.

This is a significant shift in our long-term mission strategy and we are excited about the Kingdom potential of this. Wouldn't it be thrilling if in coming decades many new churches (who themselves were planting churches) existed around Scotland and the world? We are well placed, in this location and church building, to be an incredible resource and blessing to Christ's Church in Aberdeen, Scotland and beyond.

# Constitutional Requirements

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As God's people, we must ensure that we are operating fully within the legal requirements of our time. As we seek to move forward into all that God has for us as a church, we must have a suitable and helpful administrative support structure to our vision, values and strategy.

For some time, our current constitution has needed some significant changes in order to fall in line with the requirements of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). Further, constitutional changes are required to implement some of the proposals we are now making. So as part of this replant process, it is necessary for us to propose that the church adopt a new constitution.

This proposed document (Appendix 1) is largely based on a model constitution the Baptist Union of Scotland has agreed as suitable to meet Scottish charitable law requirements with OSCR. It retains the key elements of our current constitution (e.g. election of elders) and is updated to incorporate the required changes (e.g. appointment of deacons).

If the church agrees to these proposals, this new Constitution will need to be carefully checked in terms of legalities. It would also need to be further approved by OSCR in line with the requirements of Scottish charity law. We have been advised that this process could take up to 6 months to complete.

# Church Facilities Upgrade

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As a church, we are blessed with incredible facilities. Those who have gone before us had great vision and foresight to build a building which has served us very well and will continue to do so for a great many years to come.

However, after 33 years of use there is a significant amount of maintenance and modernisation to the facilities required in order to honour what the Lord has given us and to enable future ministry. With that in mind, we propose a phased approach to these upgrades which will, in time, be supported by appropriate capital campaigns.

We will look to begin the first phase immediately and it is our hope that it would be completed in time for the launch of the new church in late August/early September. Phase 1 will focus on an upgrade of the Sanctuary including carpeting, new chairs, new furnishings, refreshed decoration and Audio-Visual improvements. We would also like to install a more effective and efficient lighting system in the sanctuary, but this may not be complete before the end of August. The first phase will also include replacing signage to reflect our new identity.

Moving forward, we see the following potential phases:

**Phase 1** (complete by September 2011)

Sanctuary upgrade

Signage update

**Phase 2** (complete by 2012)

Essential maintenance (e.g. external woodwork, external lighting)

Lounge refurbishment

Staff office improvements

Old building side rooms/corridors refurbishment

Crèche upgrade

**Phase 3**

Old building toilets upgrade

New building upstairs rooms

Coffee fellowship area

**Long term opportunities**

Courtyard conversion

Kitchen upgrade

There is clearly a huge amount of work listed above and we will follow the Lord's prompting and provision to enable these works. At the heart of all of these improvements is a desire to enable ministry and honour the Lord with what He has entrusted to us.

Importantly, this is a project which the existing elders and deacons will not be able to complete alone. We will require a significant amount of help from the members and wider congregation to complete these aims.

## Initial Capital Campaign

To enable the first phase of the upgrades to the sanctuary, we will be running a capital campaign where we will be asking those who can afford it, to buy a seat for themselves and at least one additional seat for a future believer. We will make more information available about this moving forward – we pray that you will catch a vision for the importance of this and will join with us in this initiative.

# Procedure Going Forward

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## Questions

Having presented this proposal to the church on Sunday 5th June, the elders will be open to individual follow-up in respect of any questions or points of clarification. Though we have sought to present matters as clearly as possible, we understand that these proposals are significant and as such, a lot to take in. Please feel free to ask for time together with the elders to discuss any matters requiring clarification.

The elders will also be available for questions from 7pm on Wednesday 15th June, and we will spend time in prayer together after any discussion.

## Prayer

We are very conscious that whatever decision we make together, it will be critical to the future of the church, and that is why we need to know the heart of God in these matters. That is why we have presented this proposal in the midst of a call to the whole church to join us in four weeks of prayer. Please continue to pray and use the prayer guide to help focus our daily prayers as we move to a decision on these matters.

## Voting

Church members have also been given a voting slip which simply states:

To enable the replant of IBC we agree to the proposal presented by the elders and summarised at the beginning of the proposal document.

On this ballot, members may indicate whether they Agree or Disagree with the proposal.

Following this, the ballot separately lists the three suggested names for the replanted church and members are asked to indicate their first and second preferences by inserting the numbers '1' and '2' in the appropriate boxes.

A ballot box will be placed in the church foyer from Sunday 5th June and completed ballots may be placed there any time up to the start of the morning service on Sunday 19th June, after which the ballots will be counted and the results announced by the conclusion of the service.

# Appendix 1

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## CHURCH CONSTITUTION

1. The church, formerly known as INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH, shall be called **[NAME]**. The church is Baptist in policy, is in membership with the Baptist Union of Scotland (Registered Scottish Charity Number SC020153) and subscribes to its Declaration of Principle.
2. The church's objectives are the advancement of the Christian faith primarily in Aberdeen 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.
3. The church is congregational in its form of government.
4. The membership of the church shall comprise:
  - 4.1. Persons professing a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and who have been baptised as believers into His name. The mode of baptism practised by the church shall be that of immersion except in circumstances for which provision is made in 4.2.
  - 4.2. Persons professing a faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord but who, on account of age or disability, can only be baptised by affusion, or those who, for the same reasons are unable to submit themselves to the ordinance of baptism at all.
  - 4.3. In addition, full membership is also open to those believers who have undergone a water sprinkling baptism ceremony as long as the ceremony occurred after believing and they maintain a conviction that baptism is only appropriate for a believer after having come to faith in Jesus Christ.
  - 4.4. Associate membership of the church is open to all other Christians. Associate Members may vote on all matters other than those relating to:
    - (a) the Constitution
    - (b) the reception or discipline of a member; or
    - (c) the election of an elder.
  - 4.5. If the elders are satisfied that a person who wishes to become a member is eligible for membership, the name of the person wishing to become a member shall be announced. Such person will be welcomed into membership on the following, or next convenient, Sunday morning unless the Elders cease to be satisfied that the person is eligible for membership.
  - 4.6. The Elders shall maintain a record of the names of the members, showing whether they are full or associate members. The elders may remove a member's name from the record if that person moves away from the area without requesting that his or her membership is retained; if they notify the elders in writing of their desire to withdraw membership; or if the church so votes as part of the discipline process. On being removed from the record, that person shall cease to be a member.
5. In pursuance of the objectives set out in clause 2 (but not otherwise), the church shall have the following powers:-
  - 5.1 To carry on any other activities which further any of the objectives.
  - 5.2 To purchase, take on lease, hire, or otherwise acquire, any property or rights which are suitable for the church's activities.
  - 5.3 To sell, let, hire out, license, or otherwise dispose of, all or any part of the property and rights of the church.
  - 5.4 To borrow money, and to give security in support of any such borrowings by the church.

- 5.5 To employ such staff as are considered appropriate for the proper conduct of the church activities, and to make reasonable provision for the payment of pension and/or other benefits for members of staff, ex-members of staff and their dependents.
  - 5.6 To engage such consultants and advisers as are considered appropriate from time to time.
  - 5.7 To 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).
  - 5.8 To establish and/or support any other charitable body, and to make donations for any charitable purpose falling within the objectives.
  - 5.9 To take such steps as may be deemed appropriate for the purpose of raising funds for the church's activities.
  - 5.10 To do anything which may be incidental or conducive to the furtherance of any of the objectives.
6. For the general oversight of the church, the church shall elect an eldership who shall be elected for a period of three years and be eligible for re-election.
    - 6.1 Men who are full members and who meet the qualifications for an elder, as set down in 1 Tim 3.1-7 and Titus 1.6-9, and who give full assent to the Articles of Faith shall be eligible for nomination as an elder. A boy shall be treated as having become a man at the age of 16 years.
    - 6.2 The elders shall organise an election for elders at least once a year. All full members shall be able to nominate men who are eligible for election. If the Elders are satisfied that a man who has been nominated is eligible for election and that he is willing to become an Elder, his name shall be placed on a ballot paper. If there are no serving Elders at the time, the names of all those nominated shall be placed on the ballot paper.
    - 6.3 The election of Elders shall be conducted by secret ballot with each full member aged 14 years and over being entitled to vote. A man shall be elected as an Elder if at least 75% of those voting vote in his favour.
    - 6.4 An elder shall cease to be an Elder if a motion of no confidence in him is passed at a members meeting.
  7. The Elders shall elect a chairman. A new election for the chairman shall be held at such times as the Elders may decide and in any event after each election of Elders.
  8. The Elders shall also appoint as Deacons those who are accountable to the church as leaders in service or in ministry. The ministry of each Deacon shall be overseen by the Elders and annually reviewed by them.
  9. The Elders shall be the Office-Bearers of the church and the Elders shall also be the Church Trustees.
  10. An ordinary church meeting shall be arranged regularly, the Chairman of Elders or, in the absence of or on the request of the Chairman of Elders such other person as the meeting may elect, presiding. The Annual General Meeting shall be held as soon after 31st May as practicable. Should the need arise, however, special church meetings may be called, provided two Sundays prior intimation is given. Voting at church meetings shall be by members and associate members only. Members introducing new business must give a week's notice in writing to the Elders.
  11. The financial year shall end on 31st May. All auxiliary and church accounts shall be examined after the financial year end by a qualified Independent Examiner appointed by the church. A financial statement shall be made available to members annually.
  12. In the event of a Pastor being, from any cause, unable to fulfil his function, the Elders shall be responsible for the supply of the ordinances.
  13. In the event of a pastoral vacancy, the members of the church shall appoint a Vacancy Committee. All members of the Vacancy Committee shall have full voting powers in committee. A Moderator shall be appointed by the church and shall be responsible for chairing the Vacancy Committee meetings and church meetings. A call to the Pastorate shall be issued if at least 75% of those voting by ballot as set by the church members are in favour of appointing the sole nominee of the Vacancy Committee.

14. By joining the church, members come under the obligation to attend regularly upon the public means of grace; to contribute systematically as the Lord has prospered them towards the support of His cause; to engage in some form of Christian work in connection with the church; to maintain the spirit of Christian love and unity and to adorn the doctrine of God in all things.
15. All matters pertaining to the business of the church shall be regarded as strictly private and confidential.
16. All heritable properties of the church shall be held for the church by the Office-Bearers of the church.
17. Administrative rules for the management of its affairs can be made by the church and included as an addendum to the constitution.
18. No alteration shall be made to the constitution except by the vote of two-thirds of the members at a church meeting called for the purpose by special intimation from the pulpit on two preceding Sundays at which the proposed amendment shall be presented for consideration. Copies of the proposed amendment shall be made available to the members on such Sundays or by letter sent to each member.
19. The constitution and addendum shall be printed and a copy made available to each member and all applicants for membership.
20. Any remuneration paid to a Church Trustee must satisfy the criteria laid down in Section 67 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act, 2005 or any other legislation enacted thereafter.
21. In the event of the church being dissolved or otherwise ceasing to exist, the Elders shall remain in office as trustees and shall be responsible for the winding up of the church affairs.
22. No part of the income or property of the church shall be paid or transferred (either directly or indirectly) other than in pursuance of the church's charitable activities, either in the course of the church's existence or on dissolution.
23. The expression "charitable purpose" shall mean a charitable purpose under Section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act, 2005 which is also regarded as a charitable purpose in relation to the Taxes Acts.

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We believe in...

1. The one true God who lives eternally in three persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
2. The love, grace and sovereignty of God in creating, sustaining, ruling, redeeming and judging the world.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. The incarnation of God's eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ—born of the virgin Mary; truly divine and truly human, yet without sin.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.

## **BAPTIST DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLE**

1. That the Lord Jesus Christ our God and Saviour 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.
2. That Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sins according to the Scriptures; was buried and rose again the third day.
3. That it is the duty of every disciple to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world.