

LANDBEACH AND MILTON BAPTIST CHURCH
CHURCH RULES adopted at AGM on 25th April 1997

1. Name of Church

The church shall be known as the Landbeach and Milton Baptist Church. It shall be affiliated to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and to the Eastern Baptist Association. It shall consist of those individuals who have become members in the manner set forth below.

2. Membership.

- (a) Membership shall be open to all who profess repentance toward God, who hold the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ and profess faith in Him and whose lives bear evidence of their Christian profession. Members are usually received after baptism by immersion. All applicants for membership shall be asked earnestly to consider the New Testament teaching on Baptism but the church welcomes to full membership all who conscientiously follow our Lord Jesus Christ.
- (b) Those who wish to join the Church shall apply to the Minister, Church Secretary or any Deacon. Their names shall be proposed at a Church Meeting and after visitation and report by the Minister and/or two members of the Church, shall be voted upon at the next convenient Church Meeting and, if elected, receive with prayer the right hand of fellowship at the Lord's Table on the first convenient Communion Sunday.
- (c) Members shall be received from other Christian Churches by letter of transfer or commendation, such applications to be voted upon as set forth in the foregoing rule.
- (d) Applications for a transfer from the Church shall be dealt with by the Church Meeting and a letter of transfer or commendation shall be sent by the Church Secretary.
- (e) A member's Roll shall be kept by the Church Secretary and shall be revised annually.
- (f) Members in good standing with other Christian Churches who are otherwise qualified for membership in accordance with Rule 2(a) but who by reason of their membership of such other Church feel unable to accept the obligations of full membership of the Church may be elected as Associate Members. Associate Members shall undertake to take a prayerful interest in the work of the Church. An Associate Member may undertake any office in the Church other than that of Deacon and may attend but not vote at Church Meetings.
- (g) An Associate Member's Roll shall be kept in the manner of Rule 2(e)

3. Ordinances

- (a) The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper will normally be observed on one Sunday morning and one Sunday evening in each month and on such other occasions as the Minister, Deacons or Church Meeting may decide. Members should do their utmost to be present at the Communion Service for it is a great and sacred privilege so to do. All Christian believers shall be invited to be present at and participate in this service.

- (b) The Ordinance of Believer's Baptism shall be observed as required. All believers in the Lord Jesus are admitted to the Ordinance, which will normally be linked to Church membership.

4. Church Officers

(a) Minister

In making or considering a call to a Minister the procedure being recommended at the time by the Baptist Union shall be observed. The appointment, reappointment or dismissal of a Minister shall be considered only at a Special Church Meeting called by notice on two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting and a Minister may not be declared appointed unless he or she has received a number of votes equal to or in excess of 75% of the numbers present and eligible to vote at the Special Church Meeting.

(b) Diaconate

(i) A number of deacons, proportional to the Church Membership but not exceeding twelve, shall be elected from amongst the Members of the Church. Deacons, together with the Minister, shall be responsible for the spiritual leadership, oversight and administration of the Church.

(ii) Nominations for the office of Deacon shall be made to the Church Secretary not less than fourteen days before the Annual General Meeting or fourteen days before a Special Church Meeting called to fill a casual vacancy on the Diaconate. Nominations must be submitted in writing and be signed by two Church Members, the consent of the person nominated having previously been obtained. Voting shall be by secret ballot and the persons receiving the highest number of votes at the election shall be deemed elected provided that they have received a number of votes equal to or in excess of 75% of the number present and eligible to vote at the Church Meeting.

(iii) Deacons shall serve for a period of three years, one third of the Diaconate retiring annually, but a retiring Deacon shall be eligible for re-election if willing.

(c) Executive Officers

A Secretary and a Treasurer, both of whom shall be Deacons, shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting by ballot or otherwise as the Church may determine.

4. Church Meetings

(a) The Church shall meet for Christian fellowship and for the transaction of business once a quarter. Due notice of all Church Meetings shall be given at public worship.

(b) The Annual General Meeting at which the election of Deacons and the election of the Secretary and Treasurer shall take place shall normally be held in the month of April. At this meeting a statement of the Church Accounts, duly audited to comply with current recommendations, shall be presented.

(c) A Special Church Meeting shall be called at the discretion of the Minister and a majority of the Deacons, or at the written request of five members. Notice of such a meeting shall be given at public worship on the two Sundays prior to the meeting.

(d) Full members shall be entitled to vote at Church Meetings and the business shall be conducted under such rules as ordinarily govern the conduct of public meetings.

(e) A quorum shall consist of five members or ten percent of the Membership, whichever is the greater.

5. *General*

- (a) The Minister shall ordinarily preside at all Church Meetings and meetings of constituent societies of the Church.
- (b) Applications for meetings to be held in the premises shall be made to the Church Secretary. No meetings shall be held on Church premises without the permission of the Minister and/or Deacons and upon such conditions as they may decide.
- (c) The appointment of all Church officers and leaders of organisations shall be vested in the Church.
- (d) Each Church organisation shall be required to submit rules defining its purpose and governing its procedure. Such rules shall be operative only after they have been approved by the Diaconate and by the Church Meeting.
- (e) Every organisation shall present to the Church Treasurer on or before 28th February in each year, a statement of its accounts, duly audited, for the preceding year.

6. *Alteration of Rules*

The foregoing rules, a copy of which shall be given to each Church Member, may be altered only at the Annual General Meeting, notice of such change having been given at the previous Annual General Meeting. Any amendment to the rules shall require a majority of votes equal to or in excess of 75% of the number present at the meeting and eligible to vote.

7. *Church Members shall covenant together:-*

1. To live a life consistent with the Gospel and worthy of our high calling in Christ.
2. To develop the practice of prayer and reading Scripture.
3. To share whenever possible in the corporate worship of the Church and the observance of the Lord's Supper.
4. To fulfil the ministry of intercession, both privately and by being present, whenever possible, for corporate prayer.
5. To live in loyal love and fellowship with all the other members of the Church.
6. To take some part in the work of the Church, according to our calling, gifts and opportunities.
7. To accept personal responsibility for the government of the Church by being present, whenever possible, at the Church Meeting.
8. To set aside and give a sum of money regularly for the work of the Church.
9. To attempt, by personal invitation, hospitality and visitation, to introduce and bring others to the Church.
10. To witness to the Lord Jesus Christ by word and deed, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world.