

# THE CODE OF THE EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## PREAMBLE

The Irish Evangelical Church came into being in October 1927, owing to the acceptance of anti-Christian teachings in the Irish Presbyterian Church evidenced by decisions taken by their Belfast Presbytery and General Assembly in that year. The seeds of unbelief widely taught in the German schools of learning began to be sown in the Irish Presbyterian College as far back as the close of the 19th century. It commenced in a small way, but increased until it controlled and filled the College. For many years the late Rev. James Hunter (for 35 years Minister of Knock Presbyterian Church) opposed the trend in the Church. At length, in 1927 he formally charged one of the professors of the College (Dr J E Davey) before the Belfast Presbytery with denying the full inspiration of the Scriptures, and certain other great Bible doctrines. These charges were based on the Professor's published writings, and on notes of his classroom lectures. From his defence before Presbytery it was evident that to him there was no infallible Book of God, no omnipotent Saviour Who walked this earth, and no clear Scripture doctrine of the Trinity. Acquitted by the Presbytery, the General Assembly (to whom appeal had been made) in June 1927 also approved of Dr Davey by a vote of 707 to 32, and placed a Commission armed with full Assembly powers over Mr Hunter and any others who would continue the fight against unbelief within the Church. Mr Hunter felt that to remain under an Assembly which accepted such teaching, and gave no freedom to protest against it, would be unfaithfulness to God and submission to an alien yoke. So he and others of like mind seceded, and formed the Irish Evangelical Church.

On 26th March 1964 ( the name of the Church was changed - by the unanimous decision of the Council, and with no dissenting voice in Its congregations - to Evangelical Presbyterian Church. This title identified the Church more closely in name with the subordinate standards to which it was already pledged - the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. The government of the Church is according to the Presbyterian pattern.

As time passes it becomes more evident that a diluted Christianity is no answer to present day unbelief. We must insist on the full Godhead of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We must maintain the full inspiration of the Scriptures (as originally given) as the inerrant and infallible Word of God. There is no substitute for the substitutionary work of our Lord Jesus, and only the Spirit of God can regenerate souls dead in trespasses and sins.

Such doctrines, and other truths revealed by God in His Word, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church exists to maintain and proclaim. To adjust the Christian message to suit popular demand, and to avoid offending the ungodly, is to follow the departures from the Faith against which we protested in 1927.

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# **A THE CHURCH**

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## **A1 THE CHURCH - CATHOLIC AND PARTICULAR**

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**A1.1** The Church of Christ signifies:

- [1] the whole number of the elect, who, before the foundation of the world, were given by the Father unto the Son that by the Son they might be redeemed; and who, in due time, are called, justified and glorified. Thus taken, it is commonly called the Catholic or Universal Church invisible.
- [2] all those throughout the world who profess true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, are subject to His laws and give obedience to Him, together with their children. In this sense we speak of it as the Catholic or Universal Church visible.

**A1.2** A particular Church

- [1] is a branch of the Catholic visible Church and all its members are members of the same; and such of its members as are, or are ordained of God to be, savingly united to Christ belong to the invisible Church
- [2] is a body or community professing and maintaining the saving truths of the Gospel. It is formed under Christ's authority and exists for the keeping of Christian ordinances and, through the grace of the Spirit accompanying the use of Divinely appointed means, for the gathering, edifying and perfecting of God's people. It may consist of one congregation or a number of congregations under a common government.

**A1.3** The Evangelical Presbyterian Church was first constituted as a particular Church in 1927 (See preamble).

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## **A2 THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH**

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**A2.1** The Lord Jesus Christ is the only King and Head of the Church and He has revealed in His Word that He has appointed offices, ordained orderly government, instituted ordinances of worship and enacted principles and laws of fellowship in His Church

## **B THE STANDARDS OF THE CHURCH**

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### **B1 OUR CREED**

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**B1.1** The Word of God as set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and the supreme standard of the Church.

**B1.2** The subordinate standards of our Church are the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms; we believe these subordinate standards, as amended in this sub-section, accurately summarize, interpret and apply the teaching of the Scriptures on important points of doctrine and worship.

There are the following three amendments:

[1] Chapter 23 - Of the Civil Magistrate.

We do not receive this Chapter in any sense as to mean that the Civil Magistrate has a controlling power over Synods or Councils with respect to the exercise of their Ministerial authority, or power to persecute any for their religion.

[2] Chapter 24 - Of Marriage and Divorce.

We accept all the statements of this Chapter except the last sentence of Paragraph 4, which we omit entirely. The omitted words are: 'The man may not marry any of his wife's kindred, nearer in blood than he may of his own, nor the woman of her husband's kindred, nearer in blood than of her own'.

[3] Chapter 25 - Of the Church.

We omit from Paragraph 6 in this Chapter the following words, 'but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God'.

The revised paragraph now reads:

'There is no other head of the Church, but the Lord Jesus Christ: nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof. The claim of any man to be the Vicar of Christ, the head of the church, is unscriptural, without warrant in fact, and is a usurpation, dishonouring to the Lord Jesus Christ'.

**B1.3** The Presbytery, recognising the special place held by the Psalter in Christian praise, requires that the singing of Psalms from the Scottish Metrical Version (revised edition) edition) or FCoS Sing Psalms has a permanent and regular place in the public worship of all our congregations.

**B1.4** The Hymn Book officially recognised for denominational use is the 'The Book of Praise'.

**B1.5** Every Officebearer and Missionary must subscribe to the Confessional standards stipulated as relevant to their office, having familiarised themselves with their contents.

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### **B2 FORMULAE OF SUBSCRIPTION**

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**B2.1** Standard Questions to be put at all Ordinations, Installations, Licensures, Missionary Commissions.

[1] Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

[2] Do you make the following affirmation? 'I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as accepted by this Church, to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and as such I subscribe them as the confession of my faith; and this I do without any reservations'.

- [3] Do you believe the Form of Government of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and do you promise to adhere to and support it, and to yield submission in the Lord to the Courts of this Church?

**B2.2** Additional Questions to be put to Ministers-Elect:

- [1] Are you resolved through Divine grace firmly and constantly to adhere to the doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as accepted by this Church, and to teach the same and defend it to the utmost of your power against all error so long as you remain a Minister of this Church?
- [2] So far as you know your own heart have you been induced to undertake the work of the Ministry in this place from love to God and from a sincere desire to promote His glory and to win souls to Christ?
- [3] Do you promise through Divine grace to make full proof of your Ministry among this people, preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, administering the Sacraments, visiting the people, instructing the young, visiting the sick, aiding in the government of the Church and discharging all other duties incumbent upon you as a Minister of Jesus Christ?

**B2.3** Additional Questions to be put to Elders-Elect:

- [1] Are you resolved through Divine grace firmly and constantly to adhere to the doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as accepted by this Church, and to teach the same and defend it to the utmost of your power against all error so long as you remain an Elder of this Church?
- [2] So far as you know your own heart, have you been induced to undertake the work of the Eldership in this place from love to God and from a sincere desire to promote His glory and to win souls to Christ?
- [3] Do you promise through Divine grace to make full proof of your Ministry among this people, visiting the people, instructing the young, visiting the sick, aiding in the government of the Church and discharging all other duties incumbent upon you as an Elder of the Church of Jesus Christ?

**B2.4** Additional Questions to be put to Deacons-Elect:

- [1] Do you accept the office of Deacon in this congregation and do you undertake through Divine grace to discharge its duties, so far as in you lies, with diligence and faithfulness?

**B2.5** Additional Questions to be put to Licentiates:

- [1] Are you resolved through Divine grace firmly and constantly to adhere to the doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as accepted by this Church, and to teach the same and defend it to the utmost of your power against all error?
- [2] So far as you know your own heart, have you been induced to seek the office of the Ministry from love to God and from a sincere desire to promote His glory and to win souls to Christ?

**B2.6** Additional Questions to be put to Missionaries:

- [1] Are you resolved through Divine grace firmly and constantly to adhere to the doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as accepted by this Church, and to teach the same and defend it to the utmost of your power against all error?
- [2] So far as you know your own heart, have you been induced to undertake this work for the Lord from love to God and from a sincere desire to promote His glory and to extend His Kingdom on earth?

## **C THE CONGREGATION**

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### **C1 MEMBERSHIP**

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- C1.1** Membership of this Church is open - through the Session - to all such persons as have made a credible profession of faith in Christ as God the Son, their Saviour and Lord, have been baptized and exhibit a teachable spirit.
- C1.2** Members transferring from one congregation to another must obtain a disjunction certificate from the Session, confirming that they are members in good standing. Applications for membership from without this Church should be supported by a disjunction certificate where possible (valid reason being given for failure to produce such certificate) and applicants must satisfy the Session that their profession of faith is credible.
- C1.3** Children of such members (though not admitted to full communion) are, because of God's Covenantal promise, received as infant members of the congregation in the Sacrament of Baptism.
- C1.4** Members have a responsibility to faithfully attend the means of grace, submit to the authority of the Session, respect and encourage their Minister, promote the peace and prosperity of the congregation, give of their substance as the Lord may prosper them, pray for the work of the Gospel at home and abroad and exhibit a Christian spirit at all times.

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### **C2 OVERSIGHT**

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- C2.1** Each congregation, so far as its membership may justify, should have certain persons elected to the position of Overseer (Bishop, Presbyter, Elder, Minister or Pastor).
- C2.2** The Scriptures teach that in each congregation there be a plurality of Overseers and Elders (Acts 14:23, Acts 20:28, Philippians 1:1). In New Testament times all Elders ruled and some of them also laboured in the Word and Doctrine (I Timothy 5:17); hence the titles Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder. The Teaching Elder is herein referred to as the Minister.
- C2.3** The Elders, including the Minister(s) or Interim-Moderator, comprise the Session, which has to do with the whole spiritual oversight of the congregation, including the admission to, or exclusion from, the Sacraments of the Church, and Church discipline (in necessary cases in conjunction with the Presbytery).
- C2.4** We accept the right of every congregation to call its own Minister, or in relevant situations an Associate Minister, subject to the approval of Presbytery.

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### **C3 BUSINESS MEETINGS**

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#### **C3.1**

- [1] Every business meeting shall be called from the pulpit by the authority of the Session.
- [2] At the written requisition of 25% of the members a special meeting must be called by the Session.
- [3] The congregation must also meet when directed to do so by Presbytery.
- [4] An Annual business meeting must be held at which there shall be presented reports (including inter alia, Session, Pastoral and Financial reports) assessing the preceding year and indicating improvements, plans and objectives for the ensuing year; such information and explanation of the reports as may be asked for shall be given.

- C3.2** Announcement shall be made of the meeting on the two preceding Sabbaths. Such announcement shall specify the business to be transacted and no business other than that specified may be brought before the meeting.
- C3.3** The quorum for a business meeting shall be 25% of the membership.
- C3.4** At every business meeting the Minister (or Interim-Moderator) shall preside. At his request, or in his absence, any other Minister of the Church nominated by him shall preside.
- C3.5** Only members in full communion have the right to vote or engage in debate.
- C3.6** Sessions have the right to restrict attendance at a business meeting to members only.
- C3.7** The proceedings and decisions of business meetings shall be recorded in the Session minute books.



## **D THE SESSION**

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### **D1 COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT**

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- D1.1** The Session consists of the Teaching and Ruling Elders of a congregation.
- D1.2** Ruling Elders must be members in full communion with the congregation in which they are appointed. They must be men qualified in accordance with 1 Tim 3vs1-7 and Titus 1vs6-9. They must be chosen by popular vote and submitted to Presbytery in accordance with Section J3.
- D1.3** In a congregation not having two Ruling Elders, the Presbytery shall appoint one or more of the Elders under its jurisdiction to that congregation as Assessor Elders for an interim period.
- D1.4** At his ordination and/or installation a Ruling Elder must answer the questions prescribed for his office per Section B2. He shall reaffirm his subscription to the Confessional Standards annually on the relevant portion of the 'Formula of Subscription/Presbytery Membership Certificate' (DSO 1). The Clerk of Session shall retain those forms in respect of Elders not commissioned to Presbytery.
- D1.5** Ruling Elders are elected for life in the congregation appointing them. An Elder may not of himself demit the duties of his office; but he may ask Session to relieve him of them and his request, if sustained by satisfactory reasons and approved by Presbytery, shall be granted. The granting of such relief shall automatically extend to the duties of Assessor Elder and other Presbytery appointments.

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### **D2 MEETINGS**

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- D2.1** The Minister or the Associate Minister shall preside at all meetings of the Session and in his absence another Minister may preside; or in the case of a vacancy the Interim-Moderator appointed by Presbytery.
- D2.2** The Session shall meet at least bi-monthly for the transaction of ordinary business, public intimation having been given on a previous Sabbath.
- D2.3** Any member of Session may request, in case of urgency, a special meeting of Session.
- D2.4** A quorum consists of a majority of Session members, with a minimum of three.
- D2.5** All Session meetings must be opened and closed with prayer.
- D2.6** The Session must appoint a Clerk who shall make a record of the proceedings of each meeting. Any member of the Session may enter his dissent from any part of the proceedings and may require his dissent to be recorded; or he may dissent and complain to the Presbytery per Section L3.

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## **D3 RESPONSIBILITIES**

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**D3.1** The Ruling Elders shall join with the Minister(s) in the government, nurture and discipline of the congregation. Upon them, equally with the Minister(s), devolves the responsibility of caring for the spiritual welfare of the people and the superintendence of all meetings and organizations within the congregation. It is the responsibility of Ruling Elders to pray with, and for the congregation and to seek fruit among them. They are to visit the people, paying special attention to the sick, and to irregular attenders, and also to instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourner, warn the careless and nourish and guard the children of the Church.

**D3.2** The Session must maintain registers of members and of their baptized children and of attendance at the Lord's Table.

**D3.3** The Session has the responsibility for the administration of the Sacraments.

### **D3.4 BAPTISM**

[1] Baptism shall be administered:

- to those adults who, not having previously been baptized, wish to join in membership upon credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- to the infant children of members in full communion, and to infant children where only one parent is a member in full communion (I Corinthians 7:14).
- by a Minister in the presence of the congregation assembled together in the regular place of worship.

[2] In exceptional circumstances Baptism may be administered elsewhere in the presence of a congregation but only when the Session is satisfied a valid reason exists, public intimation having been made beforehand where possible and the preaching of the Word accompanies its administration. In all such cases a report must be submitted to Presbytery at its next meeting.

[3] The Session must be satisfied that the persons requesting Baptism understand the nature of the ordinance, the doctrine which it exhibits and the special duties which it involves.

[4] It is recommended that, in general, converted Roman Catholics be baptized and their previous baptism be considered invalid. However, recognising the historical complexity of and division upon this matter, the Session of each congregation shall have discretion to act in each case as it so determines.

### **D3.5 THE LORD'S TABLE**

[1] The Session shall admit to the Lord's Table any who make a profession of saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and are not under discipline.

[2] Persons proposing to take communion for the first time should ordinarily do so after they have received suitable instruction, been examined by the Session as to their knowledge, understanding and soundness in the faith, and been received into full communicant membership.

[3] The administration of the Lord's Supper must be accompanied by the preaching of the Word. It is not necessary to administer the Sacrament in any particular place provided its administration is by a Minister in the presence of a congregation following public intimation. Each time it is observed outside the regular place of worship a report must be submitted to Presbytery at its next meeting.

[4] Each Session determines the frequency of observation. It is recommended that the frequency be not less than four times annually.

**D3.6** The Session shall ensure that all congregational Title and Trust Deeds are in order and preserved in a safe place, together with all official congregational documents.

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#### **D4 AUTHORITY**

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- D4.1** All Elders, Deacons, members of and workers in the congregation must submit to the authority and decisions of the Session, but any member who disapproves of or feels aggrieved by a decision of Session has the right of petition to Session and appeal to Presbytery.
- D4.2** The Session shall conduct all elections to the offices of Ruling Elder or Deacon. It may decline any person elected whom it regards as unsuited for the office.
- D4.3** The Session, in exercising its power of discipline, may call before it members of the congregation and, if necessary, admonish, rebuke, suspend or exclude from the Sacraments those who are found to deserve censure.
- D4.4** Members of Session, including the Minister, are subject to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery.

## **E THE DIACONATE**

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### **E1 COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT**

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- E1.1** The Deacons' Board consists of the Deacons and (ex-officio) members of Session of a congregation.
- E1.2** Deacons must be members in full communion with the congregation in which they are appointed. They must be men qualified in accordance with 1 Tim 3vs8-13. They must be chosen by popular vote and approved by the Session.
- E1.3** At his ordination and/or installation a deacon must answer affirmatively the questions prescribed for his office per Section B2.
- E1.4** Elections for Deacons shall be held any time after 3 years, but in no case beyond 5 years following the previous election.
- E1.5** Deacons shall demit their office if:
- they be not re-elected
  - they cease to be members of the congregation
  - their resignation be received and accepted.

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### **E2 MEETINGS**

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- E2.1** The Minister shall preside at all meetings and in his absence the session Clerk or another member of Session may preside; or in the case of a vacancy the interim-Moderator appointed by Presbytery.
- E2.2** The Deacons' Board should meet at least six times annually for transacting ordinary business, with not more than three calendar months between meetings.
- E2.3** A special meeting of the Board may be called by the Minister or the Session or at the request of two Deacons.
- E2.4** Meetings shall be intimated publicly from the pulpit or by notice given to every member.
- E2.5** A majority of Board members, which should preferably include one member of the Session other than the Chairman, constitutes a quorum.
- E2.6** All meetings of the Board shall be opened and closed with prayer.
- E2.7** The Deacons' Board must appoint a Clerk who shall make a record of the proceedings of each meeting. Any member of the Board may enter his dissent from any part of the proceedings. He may require his dissent with/without reasons to be recorded.

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### **E3 DUTIES**

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- E3.1** The duty of the Deacons' Board is to assist the Session by administering the affairs of the congregation, e.g.
- the collection and disbursement of the finances
  - the preparation of audited annual accounts
  - the maintenance, improvement, insurances and uses of the property

- ministration to the poor, the needy, the sick, the lonely and any who may be in distress
- the encouragement of the graces of liberality and concern for the needy among the people
- devising effective methods of collecting and distributing the gifts of the fellowship
- giving assistance in organising projects in, or by, the congregation and any other task which the Session may assign them.

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#### **E4 AUTHORITY**

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**E4.1** The Deacons' Board has no power of discipline.

## **F THE PRESBYTERY**

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### **F1 COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT**

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- F1.1** The Presbytery shall consist of
- All Ministers and Associate Ministers, including retired Ministers (note H3.2)
  - representative ruling (including Assessor) Elders commissioned from each Session
- F1.2** Each congregation may have one Commissioner for the first twenty members and another Commissioner for every additional twenty or part of twenty, provided that no congregation sends more than three Commissioners to Presbytery.
- F1.3** Two weeks prior to the September meeting of Presbytery each Session shall furnish to the Clerk a completed 'Formula of Subscription/Presbytery Membership Certificate' (DSO 1) for each of its Moderator, Commissioners and retired Ministers within its membership (see also FSO 1).

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### **F2 OFFICIALS**

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- F2.1** The officials of the Presbytery are the Moderator and Clerk or Clerks and shall be appointed by the Court from among its members.
- F2.2** The Presbytery shall elect a Moderator annually at the February meeting in accordance with the following rules:
- [1] The Presbytery Arrangements Committee shall, and each congregational Session may, submit in writing the name of the member of Presbytery they wish to nominate to the Clerk at the December meeting for inclusion on the February agenda. To qualify for nomination a Minister or Elder must have completed 5 years as a member of Presbytery.
  - [2] Where there is more than one nomination there shall be an election by ballot.
  - [3] To be elected, a nominee must secure a majority of the total votes cast. Until this is achieved, the nominee with the smallest number of votes is eliminated and another vote taken.
- F2.3** The name of the Moderator-elect shall be announced in all congregations on the Sunday following his election.
- F2.4** The new Moderator shall enter upon his office at the Annual Presentation of Presbytery Reports following his election.
- F2.5** In the absence of the Moderator the immediate past Moderator shall preside, but if he, too, is absent, the Presbytery shall elect a Moderator for that meeting.
- F2.6** The Moderator should be invited to each congregation during his year of office.

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### **F3 MEETINGS**

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- F3.1** There shall be a minimum of seven ordinary meetings during each moderatorial year.
- F3.2** The Moderator and Clerks may call a special meeting.

- F3.3** The Clerk shall summon a special meeting on the written request of four members of Presbytery.
- F3.4** Presbytery shall determine the date, time and place of each meeting.
- F3.5** The quorum for a meeting is ten, of whom two must be serving Ministers.
- F3.6** Any member may express his dissent from any part of the proceedings; he may require his dissent, including reasons, to be recorded.

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#### **F4 COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES**

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- F4.1** Presbytery may appoint a Commission or Committee for such purposes as it may determine.
- F4.2** In every case the Commission or Committee shall report to the Presbytery through its appointed Convenor. [At the request of Presbytery and following due notice the Convenor of a standing Committee shall produce the Committee minute Book for inspection].
- F4.3** A Commission of Presbytery consists of a minimum of three of its members (one of whom is a Minister and one of whom is its Convenor) appointed to consider matters referred to it by the Presbytery and invested with the powers of Presbytery itself so far as these matters are concerned.
- F4.4** Presbytery may authorize temporary co-option, in exceptional circumstances, of persons from within the Church membership.
- F4.5**
- [1] The Standing Committees of Presbytery are:
- Training for the Ministry and Admissions (TOMAC)
  - Inter-Church Relations (ICRC)
  - Church Extension and Home Missions (CEC)
  - Public Morals (PMC)
  - Presbytery Arrangements (PAC)
  - Foreign Missions (FMC)
  - Finance Committee (FC)
- [2] Special Committees are appointed for special business and are dissolved when that business is completed.
- F4.6** All Committees shall consist of not more than five and not less than three members, one of whom shall be a Minister.
- F4.7** Appointments to Standing Committees, other than the Presbytery Arrangements Committee, shall be made annually at the June meeting; members shall ordinarily be appointed to serve for three years.
- F4.8** The Annual Reports of Presbytery Committees (both Standing and Special) shall be submitted to the March meeting for consideration at the April meeting.
- F4.9**
- [1] The Presbytery Arrangements Committee shall consist of the Moderator, who shall act as Convenor, immediate past Moderator, Moderator-elect, and the Clerk.
- [2] The Presbytery Arrangements Committee shall:
- provide members of Presbytery at the April meeting with a list of the members of the Standing Committees, indicated thereon which members are due to retire, and request nominations to be presented at the June meeting

- submit its nomination for the Moderator-elect in sufficient time for inclusion on the February agenda.
- undertake the arrangements for Presentation of Presbytery Reports and report the same to the March meeting for approval
- provide guidance for the Moderator in situations requiring immediate attention
- check the representation of congregations at Presbytery.

**F4.10** Presbytery may resolve itself into Committee on any occasion it deems fit in which case no minutes shall be recorded of the debate and/or discussion. The following provisions also apply:

- a simple majority vote shall normally be sufficient for such resolution; however where changes to the CODE are under consideration a 2/3rds majority of the membership present shall be required
- when the business dealt with in Committee has been completed and the Court sits again, the report and/or proposals as completed in Committee may be adopted or rejected but cannot be amended
- proposals affecting more than one paragraph (or sub-paragraph) of the CODE shall be put separately to the meeting.

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## **F5 RESPONSIBILITIES**

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**F5.1** The Presbytery shall:

- [1] Superintend generally the spiritual and temporal affairs of its congregations, give advice in cases of difficulty and receive and determine petitions, complaints or appeals.
- [2] Undertake an assessment of the affairs of each congregation every seven years (FSO 2).
- [3] See that ordinances are duly administered and discipline upheld in any congregation that may become vacant; appoint a Minister as Interim-Moderator of its Session, and carry out the laws of the Church as to filling the vacancy.
- [4] Approve students for the Ministry, receive them under its care, direct their theological training and after trial, license them to preach the Gospel.
- [5] Examine, approve, ordain and/or install Ruling Elders.
- [6] Approve the appointment of congregational and general Trustees.
- [7] Approve the appointment and demission where necessary of any Officebearer or paid official of the Church.
- [8] Ordain to the Gospel Ministry and watch over all that pertains to the call, ordination, and/or installation of Ministers and to the dissolution of the pastoral relationship.
- [9] Try charges against Ministers, Ruling Elders, Deacons, Licentiates and Missionaries and, if necessary, administer censure.
- [10] Appoint the Editor and Assistant Editor of the 'Evangelical Presbyterian' and review the appointments formally every five years.
- [11] Control the Central Funds of the Church.
- [12] Hold an Annual Presentation of Presbytery Reports normally on the last Saturday in April.
- [13] Receive the views of Sessions before enacting, altering, or abrogating any part of the CODE.
- [14] Require the Clerk to:
  - collate bi-annually the congregational Statistical Reports for circulation to its members at the February meeting
  - collate annually all changes in the CODE and make these available to the Church members.



- send each year to such church bodies, as are agreed from time to time, invitations to appoint a delegate to our Annual Presentation of Presbytery Report.

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## **F6 AUTHORITY**

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**F6.1** The Presbytery is the supreme Court of the Church in legislative, administrative and judicial matters.

## **G THE CONDUCT OF PRESBYTERY BUSINESS**

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### **G1 AGENDA**

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- G1.1** An agenda will be issued to members at least seven days before the date of the meeting.
- G1.2** The agenda is to contain sufficient detail to enable knowledgeable preparation. Documentation should be appended where appropriate.
- G1.3** Items of business for inclusion on the agenda must be communicated to the Clerk not later than fourteen days before the date of the meeting.
- G1.4** Urgent business arising too late for the published agenda may be included at the discretion of the Moderator.
- G1.5** Minor and incidental business only may be raised under 'any other business'.
- G1.6** All business involving the Constitution of the Church shall require written notice of motion submitted to the Presbytery.
- G1.7** Items of business on the agenda may take the form of a proposal, motion (seconded proposal), report, petition, appeal, complaint or reference.
- G1.8** The petitions, appeals and complaints procedures give circumstances where those other than Presbytery members can place business on the agenda.

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### **G2 LAWS OF DEBATE**

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- G2.1** All participants in Presbytery business must address Presbytery through the Moderator in whom is vested control of the proceedings.
- G2.2** A member may put forward a proposal either at the beginning or end of his comments. The item of business can proceed only if the proposal is seconded, making it a motion.
- G2.3** Discussion on the motion may follow for which the Moderator should allow reasonable time and opportunity for those wishing to contribute.
- G2.4** Discussion of a motion may be facilitated by any of the following procedural motions, other than amendment, for which notice of motion is not required:
- that the question be now put
  - that Presbytery pass from the question
  - that the business be postponed
  - that the meeting, or debate be adjourned
  - that the recommendation be referred back
  - that the question be referred to a Committee
  - that a counter-motion be considered.

The Moderator has discretion to accept or reject a procedural motion.

### **G2.5**

- [1] 'That the question be now put' is to conclude discussion. If successful, a vote is taken at once. If defeated, discussion continues.
- [2] 'That Presbytery pass from the question'. If successful, the motion and discussion is discontinued immediately.

- [3] 'That the business be postponed' is to defer discussion because of lack of information or because of untimeliness at that point.
- [4] 'That the meeting, or debate be adjourned'.
- In the case of a meeting - because of unfinished business or tension or lack of quorum.
  - In the case of a debate - in order to give time for consideration or to deal with a more important item on the agenda.
- The Moderator himself may ask the meeting for permission to adjourn.
- [5] 'That the recommendation be referred back' is for further consideration by a Committee.
- [6] 'That the recommendation be referred to a Committee' applies where it is felt that the nature of the business is such that a concentrated treatment by Committee is the efficient procedure.
- [7] 'That a counter-motion be considered' is to interrupt a debate by laying the original motion on the table to give opportunity for an alternative motion to be considered. If the counter-motion is adopted the original motion automatically falls; but if it is not adopted discussion is resumed on the original motion.

- G2.6** A motion may be subjected to amendment and notice of motion is not required. It must not be negative or substantial; it may include a 'rider'.
- G2.7** Only one amendment can be allowed at any one time. Parties to the original motion or previous amendment cannot propose or second. Any number of amendments may succeed.
- G2.8** Amendments to amendments are allowed.
- G2.9** All amendments and amendments to amendments should be individually put to the vote in the order in which they affect the motion.
- G2.10** All adopted amendments are embodied in the motion and put to the vote as a 'substantive motion'.
- G2.11** If all amendments are lost the motion is put to the vote.
- G2.12** A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by agreement between the proposer and seconder and with the consent of the meeting. Such should be minuted.
- G2.13** When carried, a motion becomes a 'resolution'.
- G2.14** Points of order may be raised to deal with a departure from normal procedure in the following areas:
- behaviour
  - lack of quorum
  - ultra vires
  - no question before the meeting
- G2.15** Behaviour will be a ground of censure by Presbytery on any of its members after the member has been given opportunity of withdrawal, explanation and apology.

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### **G3 VOTING PROCEDURES**

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- G3.1** A formal vote is necessary only when the mind of the meeting cannot otherwise be ascertained. ie. 'without objection'.
- G3.2** Voting shall be by a show of hands or, on occasions when Presbytery specifically decides, by ballot. The Clerk shall act as teller and may receive assistance for this purpose.

- G3.3** The Moderator has a 'casting vote' only.
- G3.4** For a motion involving any change in the Constitution of the Church to be carried, a vote in its favour of two thirds of the total Presbytery membership shall be required.
- G3.5** Proxy voting shall not be permitted.

# H THE MINISTER

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## H1 GENERAL

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- H1.1** Ministers and Associate Ministers are Elders who rule and also labour in the Word and Doctrine. They, together with other Ruling Elders, have the responsibility of the Spiritual oversight of the congregation.
- H1.2** At his ordination and at every installation, the Minister must answer affirmatively the questions prescribed for his office (Section B2).
- H1.3** Ministers are subject only to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery.
- H1.4** Conditions of service will be issued by Presbytery from time to time (HSO 1).

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## H2 RESPONSIBILITIES

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- H2.1** The Minister has particular responsibility to:
- faithfully minister the Word both publicly and privately
  - conduct public worship and make arrangements for the pulpit supply and essential ministerial services of the congregation or congregations of which he has the oversight during his absence therefrom
  - administer the Sacraments
  - care, as a Pastor, for his people
  - visit the people, especially the sick
  - instruct the young
  - conduct marriages and funerals
  - aid in the government of the Church
  - provide a Christian example at all times
- H2.2** Ministers of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church are authorised as 'Officiants' under the terms of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order, 2003, to conduct weddings. Such marriages must be conducted according to the form specified in MSO 35.
- H2.3** The Minister shall present annually a report to the congregation and to the February meeting of Presbytery.
- He shall report as follows:
- number of baptized members 1st January/31st December
  - number of communicant members 1st January/31st December
  - number of deaths and disjunctions
  - average number of members at Communion services
  - average attendance Morning Services
  - average attendance Evening Services
  - average attendance Mid-week Services
  - number on Sabbath School and Bible Class Rolls at end of Sabbath School year
  - number of Baptisms
  - number of marriages.

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### **H3 DEMISSION OF OFFICE**

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- H3.1** The Minister who resigns his charge in order to enter the Ministry of another Denomination or to pursue alternative employment shall be required to give the Presbytery and his present congregation notice in accordance with the Conditions of Service Statement.
- H3.2** Ministers who, apart from Presbytery appointment, resign their charges in order to engage in other Christian work automatically forfeit their EPC Ministerial standing and Presbytery seat.
- H3.3** The Minister may offer his resignation when he reaches the age of 65; if it is accepted he shall have a seat on the Session should he continue to worship with the congregation.
- H3.4** Where it appears that the Minister has become - through illness, infirmity or other reason - permanently unfit for his work Presbytery may, after consultation with the Session, require him to retire and declare the congregation vacant.
- H3.5** A Contributory Group Pension Scheme has been arranged for Ministers.
- H3.6** Where the Senior Minister in a congregation with an Associate Minister in place ceases his office the Associate Minister does not automatically become the Senior Minister.

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### **H4 DEPOSITION OF OFFICE**

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- H4.1** A Minister shall be deposed by Presbytery if convicted of heresy or immorality.

# **I THE MINISTRY : TRAINING AND ADMISSION**

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## **I1 TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY AND ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE**

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- I1.1** The Committee shall consist of a Convenor, and four other Presbytery members.
- I1.2** Presbytery shall decide all appointments for training and admission to the Ministry after considering reports and recommendations from the Committee. It shall delegate to the Committee the implementation of its decisions and the administration of procedures.
- I1.3** The Committee shall convene twice annually and additionally as occasion may demand, submitting a report to Presbytery of each meeting.
- I1.4** Business at regular Committee meetings shall include:
- Training for the Ministry Fund
  - student progress
  - applications
  - an evaluation of the need for students for the Ministry
  - an evaluation of Theological Colleges.

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## **I2 TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY FUND**

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- I2.1** The Fund shall be administered by the Finance Committee.
- I2.2** All grants and disbursements shall be made by Presbytery considering the recommendations of the Committee and the Finance Committee (See Sect M5).
- I2.3** Each congregation shall make an annual collection for the Fund, the Committee ensuring that each Session is aware of current need.

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## **I3 GENERAL CONDITIONS RELATING TO TRAINING AND ADMISSION**

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- I3.1** Normally applicants for training or for admission to the Ministry shall be University graduates but those of maturer years or whose circumstances are exceptional may apply to Presbytery.
- I3.2** Admission to training or to the Ministry shall be subject to the satisfaction of the Presbytery as to the applicant's foreseeable commitment to the Ministry of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.
- I3.3** Admission to training shall be subject to the applicant's willingness to study at one of the Theological Colleges approved by Presbytery at the last evaluation by the Committee.
- I3.4** Applicants for training must be members in full communion of at least two years' standing with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

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## **I4 APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE FOR TRAINING AND LICENSING**

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- I4.1** All applications shall be made on the 'Appointment to the Ministry' Application Form (ISO 1) and be accompanied by a written reference from the applicant's Session.

- I4.2** The Committee shall interview the applicant, first providing him with a copy of the CODE to assist his preparation for the interview.
- I4.3** The Committee shall submit a written recommendation to Presbytery for its consideration. A decision to accept shall require either
- a 60% majority of total Presbytery membership eligible to vote
  - or
  - an 80% majority of members present, provided that this also achieves a minimum of 50% of the total Presbytery membership eligible to vote.
- The formula which is most advantageous to the candidate shall apply.
- I4.4** The Committee shall communicate the Presbytery's decision to the applicant in writing through his Session. In the event of a declinature the case should first be discussed with the Session and endeavour made to achieve consensus; in either situation communication to the applicant may be by interview followed by written confirmation.
- I4.5** There is a right of appeal against Presbytery's decision by means of petition (Section L1), but the grounds of disagreement with that decision must be submitted.
- I4.6** The Committee shall maintain contact with the students in training, sufficient to ensure effective communication and the monitoring of training progress in particular.
- I4.7** Each student shall sit three Presbytery examinations, one in each year of theological training so far as practicable as follows:
- YEAR [1]**
- Scripture Genesis - Song of Solomon
  - Shorter Catechism Questions 1-31 (Answers to be repeated verbatim)
  - Larger Catechism Questions 1-68
  - Confession of Faith Chapters 1-10
- YEAR [2]**
- Scripture Isaiah - Malachi
  - Shorter Catechism Questions 32-62 (Answers to be repeated verbatim)
  - Larger Catechism Questions 69-121
  - Confession of Faith Chapters 11-22
- YEAR [3]**
- Scripture Matthew - Revelation
  - Shorter Catechism Questions 63-107 (Answers to be repeated verbatim)
  - Larger Catechism Questions 122-196
  - Confession of Faith Chapters 23-33
  - Irish Presbyterian Church History including the history of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church
- I4.8** Each student shall submit during the last two years of theological training a critical study of a prescribed passage of Scripture from each of the Old and New Testaments; the passages may be those prescribed by his Theological College.
- I4.9** Each student shall complete his Theological College's Syllabus and sit the final examinations in those subjects required by the Committee.



- I4.10** Each student shall gain a minimum of six months practical experience either as a summer assistant under a serving Minister of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church or in secular employment (depending on the recommendation of the TOMAC) before becoming eligible for licensure.
- I4.11** Presbytery shall require a student on completion of his theological training to preach a trial sermon on an occasion when a Commission of Presbytery is present or at a special meeting of Presbytery.
- I4.12** When the student has completed his training and the Committee has considered in interview with him his:
- College and Presbytery results
  - College Principal's Report
  - Critical Studies and Trial Sermon
  - Practical Experience Report
  - appreciation of the Questions to Licentiatees
- the Committee shall submit a final training report in writing to Presbytery with recommendation as to licensing.
- I4.13** The licensing procedure is laid down in Section K1.
- I4.14** No student shall be eligible to be ordained until he becomes a Licentiate.
- I4.15** Licensure shall remain valid for one year after which it shall be reviewed by Presbytery to determine whether it should lapse or be renewed for a further specified period not exceeding twelve months.
- I4.16** Licensure may be withdrawn at any time if Presbytery deems such a course to be prudent, necessary, and/or in the best interests of the Church. Licentiatees shall be given a copy of the notice of motion proposing such withdrawal and shall have the right of attending the relevant meeting to put their case to the members.
- I4.17** Renewal or withdrawal of licensure will require either
- a 60% majority of total Presbytery membership eligible to vote
- or
- an 80% majority of members present, provided that this also achieves a minimum of 50% of the total Presbytery membership eligible to vote.
- The formula which is most advantageous to the candidate shall apply.

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## **I5 ADMISSIONS FROM OUTSIDE THE EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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- I5.1** It is permissible in principle for a vacant congregation to call a Minister or Licentiate from outside the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.
- I5.2** As soon as a particular candidate comes under consideration, Presbytery shall be informed and shall assume direction of the procedure through the Training for the Ministry and Admissions Committee.
- I5.3** Presbytery may decide to veto further consideration of the candidate at that initial stage.
- I5.4** The Committee shall liaise closely with the Session concerned at all times.
- I5.5** When Presbytery authorises further consideration of the candidate, he shall be informed of the congregation's interest and his initial response recorded.

- 15.6** The Committee shall issue an 'Appointment to the Ministry' Application Form (ISO 1), interview the candidate and take up references. The candidate should first be provided with the relevant Evangelical Presbyterian Church literature.
- 15.7** Completion of the Application Form is an application for employment by the Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.
- 15.8** The Committee shall submit a written recommendation to Presbytery for its consideration and decision. The decision is that of a willingness to offer a contract of employment to the candidate which may be made subject to the call proceeding, and constitutes a commitment to sustain a regular and valid call should the decision be in the affirmative. An affirmative decision shall require either
- a 60% majority of total Presbytery membership eligible to vote
  - or
  - an 80% majority of members present, provided that this also achieves a minimum of 50% of the total Presbytery membership eligible to vote.
- The formula which is most advantageous to the candidate shall apply.
- 15.9** Presbytery shall communicate its decision to the Session. An affirmative decision will entitle the congregation to proceed with the call (Section J2). in the case of a negative decision the candidate should be informed in writing with consideration given to a supporting interview.
- 15.10** The licensing procedure shall be implemented where appropriate.
- 15.11** The special connotations of confidentiality where other Denominations are involved are to be recognised and permission obtained from the applicant before any approach is made to his present employers.
- 15.12** Presbytery shall acquaint itself with current employment legislation and Codes of Practice and conform to them throughout the procedure.
- 15.13** Where an approach is made to Presbytery regarding appointment to our Ministry which is not in response to the interest of a particular vacant congregation, Presbytery shall consider it, taking into account the need to make an additional appointment, finance and the suitability of the applicant. All stages of the procedure relating to eventual employment apply where appropriate.
- 15.14** Where appointment is made from another Denomination that Denomination should be formally advised.

## **J THE REGULATIONS FOR ELECTIONS AND CALLS**

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### **J1 GENERAL**

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- J1.1** All members of a congregation in full communion, and only such, shall be eligible as qualified voters for the purpose of electing Ministers, Ruling Elders and Deacons.
- J1.2** Two months before a call or election the roll of communicant members shall be checked by the Session, lodged in the hands of the Minister/Interim-Moderator, and a copy made available for the members of the congregation.
- J1.3** Any member of the congregation claiming to be a qualified voter may make an objection regarding any name on the roll, or omitted from the roll; he shall lodge the objection, with reasons, in writing with the Moderator/Interim-Moderator of Session within two weeks of the publication of the roll, and the Session shall give its decision thereon or refer the matter for decision by Presbytery.

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### **J2 ELECTION AND CALLS OF MINISTERS**

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- J2.1** When a vacancy occurs in the Pastorate of a congregation (the Minister or where relevant the Senior Minister), Presbytery shall assume responsibility for its supply with Gospel ordinances and maintenance of discipline by appointing one of its Ministers as Interim-Moderator of the Session.
- J2.2** The Interim-Moderator, in conjunction with the Session, shall seek to bring suitable candidates to the attention of the congregation.
- J2.3**
- [1] When the Session has ascertained that the congregation may be prepared to elect a Minister they must petition Presbytery for permission to make out a call; in necessary cases the procedure set out in Section I5 shall apply.
  - [2] Permission shall not normally be granted to call a Minister who is not already on the payroll if projected Central Fund reserves over the next three years fall below 2/3rds of a year's anticipated expenditure.
  - [3] Permission shall not normally be granted unless the congregation can agree - and can be expected to achieve - a target for contributions to Central Fund of 60% of the cost of supporting a Minister.
  - [4] Congregations unable to meet the 60% financial threshold may be given permission to call a Minister to work in the congregation on a part-time basis provided 90% of the cost of his support is reasonably expected to be met. In cases where Presbytery appoints a joint charge the reasonably expected combined income from both congregations should be at least 90% of the cost of support of the Minister.
- J2.4**
- [1] When the Session has ascertained that the congregation may be prepared to elect an Associate Minister they must petition Presbytery for permission to make out a call; in necessary cases the procedure set out in Section I5 shall apply.
  - [2] Permission shall not normally be granted to call an Associate Minister who is not already on the payroll if projected Central Fund reserves over the next three years fall below 2/3rds of a year's anticipated expenditure.
  - [3] Permission shall not be granted unless the congregation can agree - and can be expected to achieve - a target for contributions to Central Fund of the full cost of their existing Minister plus at least 75% of the Associate.

- [4] A congregation seeking to call an Associate Minister must pay due regard to the potential relationship with the existing Minister.
- [5] Associate Ministers are appointed on a three-year contract which can be renewed should all parties, including Presbytery, be willing. The Associate Minister is, however, open to a call at any point during this term.

**J2.5** A meeting for the purpose of electing a Minister/Associate Minister shall be intimated to the congregation in accordance with Section C3; the day specified for the meeting should not be a Sabbath; and the Interim-Moderator/Associate Minister should preside.

**J2.6**

- [1] Any member in full communion may propose a candidate; if any proposal be seconded the nomination goes to the meeting.
- [2] Should more than one candidate be proposed and seconded a vote shall be taken of the qualified voters and repeated until only one candidate remains.
- [3] A vote shall be taken on this candidate, for and against; and if he be approved by not less than a two-thirds majority, the call shall be drawn up and signed by the communicant members of the congregation concurring (non-qualified voters closely associated with the congregation may sign on a separate list). The Interim-Moderator/Minister and Clerk of Session shall certify the signatures.
- [4] The call may be left in the charge of the Session until the succeeding Sabbath to receive further signatures in the presence of and attested by one Elder.

**J2.7** The Interim-Moderator/Minister shall lay the call before Presbytery at its next meeting.

**J2.8** Where the call is to a Minister presently in charge of a congregation, the Clerk of Presbytery shall notify his Session so that representatives may be given the opportunity of attending and speaking to the issue.

**J2.9** Presbytery shall consider any dissents and representations under J2.8 above, determine whether the call is regular and valid and whether, in all the circumstances, it should be sustained.

**J2.10** If the call be sustained Presbytery shall take steps to present the call to the Licentiate or Minister concerned.

**J2.11** A call may be accepted, declined or retained for consideration; if retained an answer must be given at a time specified by Presbytery.

**J2.12** Following acceptance of a call Presbytery shall take steps to ordain and/or install the Minister-elect or Associate Minister-elect on a day other than the Sabbath.

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**J3 ELECTION OF RULING ELDERS**

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**J3.1** The Session shall normally determine when an election is to take place and the number of Ruling Elders to be chosen.

**J3.2** The Session shall petition Presbytery for approval to proceed with an election.

**J3.3** The Minister/Interim-Moderator shall explain to the congregation the duties and qualifications of Ruling Elders.

**J3.4** The election shall take place by the issue of voting papers, identifying male members, to qualified voters, who shall place a mark opposite the names of those - up to the number required - whom they wish to choose. The papers should be returned to the Session on or before the day appointed by the Session who shall scrutinize and count the votes.

- J3.5** No person can be admitted as a Ruling Elder if:
- he does not receive 60% of the votes cast
  - the Session are dissatisfied with his qualifications notwithstanding the votes received.
- J3.6** The names of every Ruling Elder-elect willing to accept office shall be read to the congregation on the Sabbath following the election making it clear that their formal appointment is subject to Presbytery approval; one week shall be allowed to give opportunity for the lodgement (in writing, with reasons) of any objections with the Moderator of Session.
- J3.7** Should the objection be not sustained or should there be no objection, the Ruling Elders-elect shall appear before Presbytery or a Commission thereof which shall satisfy itself of their suitability.
- J3.8** Presbytery shall make arrangements to ordain and install Ruling Elders-elect approved by them. The day appointed may be a Sabbath.

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#### **J4 ELECTION OF DEACONS**

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- J4.1** The election of Deacons shall take place in the same manner as in the case of Ruling Elders excepting that:
- Presbytery permission to hold an election shall not be required
  - Deacons-elect are not required to appear before Presbytery for examination and approval
  - They may be ordained and/or installed by the Session
  - The Moderator of Session shall report of any election, ordination and/or installation of Deacons to the next regular meeting of Presbytery
  - 40% is substituted for 60% in Para J3.5

# K THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR ORDINATIONS, INSTALLATIONS, LICENSURES AND MISSIONARY COMMISSIONS

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## K1 FOR ORDINATIONS/INSTALLATIONS (EXCEPT DEACONS), LICENSURES & COMMISSIONS

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- K1.1** The (Commission of) Presbytery shall be constituted.
- K1.2** Praise, prayer and the reading of appropriate Scriptures.
- K1.3** The Moderator shall declare (in these or like words): 'In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole King and Head of the Church, who being ascended on high, hath given gifts unto men for the edifying of the Church, the Body of Christ, we are met here as (a Commission of) the Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church to:
- ordain and/or install \_\_\_\_\_ as Minister in this congregation'
  - ordain and/or install \_\_\_\_\_ as Ruling Elders in this congregation'
  - license \_\_\_\_\_ as a Probationer for the ministerial office'
  - commission \_\_\_\_\_ to the work of home/foreign missions.'
- K1.4**
- [1] Ministers and Ruling Elders: The Clerk of Session or Minister shall give a brief narrative of the history of and steps taken to fill the vacancy and/or the reason for adding to the Session.
  - [2] Licentiates: The Convenor, Training for the Ministry and Admissions Committee shall give a brief narrative of the student's application and acceptance as a student for the Ministry, his theological training and preparation for licensure.
  - [3] Missionaries: The Convenor, Missionary Committee, shall give a narrative of his/her application, acceptance and training for the work.
- K1.5** The Clerk shall put the prescribed questions per Section B2.
- K1.6** The Formula of Subscription shall be signed upon satisfactory answer.
- K1.7** Ordination shall be with prayer and the laying on of hands and installation, licensure and commissioning with prayer. Ordinands shall kneel during prayer of ordination.
- K1.8** The Moderator shall declare: 'In the Name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, we the (Commission of the) Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church declare you \_\_\_\_\_ to be duly:
- ordained and/or installed as Minister/Ruling Elder(s) in this congregation and as such we give you the Right Hand of Fellowship'
  - licensed to preach the Gospel publicly as a Probationer for the Ministerial office; and may the Spirit of the Lord rest upon you and make you sufficient for the work to which you are appointed'
  - commissioned to the work of home/foreign missions; and may the Spirit of the Lord rest upon you and make you sufficient for the work to which you are appointed.'
- K1.9** Suitable charges shall be given to the Minister/Ruling Elder(s) and congregation, Probationer or Missionary.

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## **K2 FOR ORDINATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS OF DEACONS**

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- K2.1** Ordinations and installations of Deacons shall follow the same order as that for Ruling Elders with suitable wording adaptation having regard to the fact that the local Session, not the Presbytery ordains and installs Deacons.

## **L REVIEW PROCEDURES**

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### **L1 PETITION**

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- L1.1** Any member of a congregation may present a petition to the Session regarding:
- [1] Any matter affecting the congregation's welfare and the advancement of the Gospel.
  - [2] A proposed amendment of the CODE.
  - [3] Any grievance he has for redress. Where a grievance concerns a complaint which a member wishes to make concerning another member, the complainant must first confirm to the Session that he/she has first discussed the matter with the other person against whom the complaint is to be made (Matthew 18:15). If the complainant fails to do so, Session will normally dismiss the complaint.
  - [4] A review of its decision(s) in any matter.
- L1.2** The Minister or Session Clerk shall advise the petitioner of procedure if requested.
- L1.3** It is competent for the Session itself or a Minister to petition Presbytery on grounds similar to L1.1 above.
- L1.4** Any person whose application for the Ministry (whether as a student or a Minister) has been declined by Presbytery may petition it to review his case. This right belongs also to a student whom Presbytery has decided not to license on the recommendation of the Training for the Ministry and Admissions Committee. In both cases the grounds for a review must be stated.
- L1.5**
- [1] All petitions shall be presented in writing to the Clerk at least 3 weeks before the meeting of Presbytery/Session; the Court has discretion regarding the time limit in cases it considers exceptional.
  - [2] In the case of students for the Ministry petitions to Presbytery shall be forwarded through their own Session.
  - [3] Where a Minister petitions Presbytery upon a matter affecting his congregation or Session he shall send a copy to the Session Clerk.
- L1.6** The Presbytery/Session may require a petitioner to appear before them, due notice being given him. Should a petitioner refuse or fail (unless through unavoidable hindrances) to so appear the petition shall fall without further consideration.
- L1.7** Should the Session not grant the petition the petitioner may appeal to the Presbytery in which case the whole matter comes before the Superior Court for determination.

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### **L2 APPEAL**

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- L2.1** A member whose petition to Session has failed may appeal the decision in question to Presbytery.
- L2.2**
- [1] The appellant must give notice of appeal, with reasons, to the Session within one calendar month of notification of the failure of the petition.
  - [2] The appellant shall forward his appeal in writing to the Clerk of Presbytery together with a copy of his reasons and any other relevant documents within one month of his notice of appeal.



- L2.3** An outstanding appeal does not have the effect of suspending a Session decision pending its hearing by Presbytery.
- L2.4** The Clerk of the Session concerned shall submit on the request of the Presbytery Clerk the minutes of its proceedings in the case and all other relevant documents and evidence together with any answers to the reasons adduced.
- L2.5** The Clerk of Presbytery shall, at least two weeks beforehand, inform the appellant and the Clerk of the Session concerned of the date, time and place at which the appeal is to be heard.
- L2.6** The appellant must prosecute the appeal in person; if he fails to do so the appeal shall fail. Presbytery may re-convene the hearing if it is satisfied of his failure to prosecute it was unavoidable and not intentional.
- L2.7** In hearing appeals Presbytery shall proceed as follows:
- [1] Read the decision appealed against.
  - [2] Read the reasons of appeal.
  - [3] Read the record of the proceedings of the Session in the case including any of that Court's answers to the reasons adduced.
  - [4] Hear and question the appellant(s).
  - [5] Hear and question the Session concerned through its appointed representatives.
  - [6] Presbytery shall then direct the parties to the appeal, including each member of the Session concerned, to withdraw and proceed to consider the case and come to a decision on the matter, affirming, reversing or varying the original decision as it deems right.
  - [7] Parties are called in and the judgment of the Presbytery intimated to them.
- L2.8** If anything in the conduct of the appellant or the Session concerned be found culpable Presbytery shall admonish, censure or otherwise deal with them as the case may require.

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### **L3 DISSENT AND COMPLAINT**

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- L3.1** Any member of a Court may enter his dissent from any part of the procedure. He may require his dissent, with or without reasons, to be recorded in the minutes.
- L3.2** In order to be received, the dissent must be intimated immediately the decision dissented from is made.
- L3.3** The effect of a dissent is to save the dissenter from any censure that may arise out of the procedure but it does not free him from obligation to submit to the decision until it has been reversed or altered.
- L3.4** A member of Session may also dissent and complain to the Presbytery concerning a decision of Session. In this case notice of dissent and complaint to the Presbytery must be lodged, with reasons, with the Clerk of Presbytery, within two weeks of the decision dissented from being pronounced.
- L3.5** Procedure on dissent and complaint is similar to the procedure for Appeals.
- L3.6** The purpose of a dissent and complaint is to enable a member of Session to have his dissent considered by Presbytery and its effect is to suspend procedure on the matter to which the complaint relates until Presbytery's decision is taken or the complaint is withdrawn.

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## **L4 REFERENCE**

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- L4.1** A Session which finds itself in perplexity over any matter may refer it to the Presbytery for investigation, advice and/or adjudication.
- L4.2** The subject referred ought to be transmitted to the Clerk of Presbytery along with all relevant particulars sufficient to make the reference thoroughly understood.
- L4.3** Presbytery shall either:
- [1] Sustain the reference and investigate, advise and/or adjudicate on the matter, or
  - [2] Refuse to sustain the reference and administer censure if they find there was no occasion for it.

## **M FINANCES**

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### **M1 GENERAL**

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- M1.1** Presbytery shall establish and maintain a Central, Training for the Ministry, Church Extension, Capital Investment and such other general funds as it deems necessary to administer monies and expenses which concern the whole Church.
- M1.2** Presbytery Funds shall be under the day-to-day control of the Finance Committee which shall be:
- appointed by Presbytery
  - required to report on the finances at least every quarter to Presbytery
- M1.3** Presbytery ought to arrange biennial meetings for representatives of the Sessions and Diaconates of each congregation to present to them an update of the financial situation of the Church, its ongoing needs and the most effective ways of meeting those needs. In addition, the Finance Committee may request a meeting with particular Sessions upon consideration of their annual accounts.
- M1.4** The Finance Committee has authority to make payments and otherwise administer, under instruction as necessary, the various monies and accounts held in the name of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

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### **M2 CONGREGATIONAL FINANCES**

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- M2.1** Each Session shall ensure the appointment of a Treasurer who shall record and administer all receipts and payments of the congregation under their authority.
- M2.2** Each congregation is responsible for all expenses connected with the procuring and maintaining of its place of worship and paying for everything immediately connected with it.
- M2.3** Each congregation shall also be responsible for the payment of Minister's expenses as defined in Standing Orders.
- M2.4** Each Session shall see to the preparation of audited annual accounts for presentation at the congregational annual meeting, shall make available copies of a summary of the accounts to their members and adherents and shall also provide copies at the next regular meeting of Presbytery (MSO 1,2).
- M2.5** It is the duty of the Session to see that regular contributions are paid into the Central Fund to meet their Target (MSO 3).
- M2.6** It shall be the aim of the Session to agree a Target figure which meets the full cost of their Minister's salary and expenses.
- M2.7** Each Session shall consider how best to encourage their members to give most effectively to the Church. The following methods are suggested:
- Freewill Offering Envelopes
  - Covenants
  - Gift Aid
  - Regular Gift Days for each fund of the Church
- M2.8** Normally the administration of congregational finances shall be delegated by Sessions to Deacons' Boards.

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### **M3 GENERAL FUND**

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- M3.1** Presbytery shall maintain a General Fund for use as it deems appropriate.
- M3.2** All monies, unless otherwise stated, shall be paid into the General Fund. Undesignated bequests under £5000 shall be paid into the General Fund. The Finance Committee shall advise Presbytery of their recommendations in relation to undesignated bequests in excess of £5000 (MSO 32).
- M3.3** Presbytery recommends that special offerings shall be received annually in each congregation for Training for the Ministry, Help the Needy, Home and Foreign Missions, Church Extension, General and Central Funds.

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### **M4 CENTRAL FUND**

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- M4.1** The main purpose of the Central Fund shall be to pay the salaries and certain expenses of Ministers in service and to pay pensions to those who retired prior to 1983 and to their widows.
- M4.2** Normally the minimum amount each congregation shall pay into the Central Fund each year shall be determined by the Finance Committee with the agreement of the Session, but the Targets set for each congregation shall require the approval of Presbytery.
- M4.3** Special monies shall be received into the Fund for the work of Home and Foreign Missions and a grant, agreed annually, shall be paid to the Free Church of Scotland towards the support of their foreign mission work.
- M4.4** Salaries paid to Ministers shall be determined by Presbytery and reviewed annually (MSO 6,7,8,9,11).
- M4.5** Ministers shall be paid a mileage-graduated car-allowance as determined by Presbytery from time to time (MSO 12,13).
- M4.6** Presbytery shall provide suitably approved sick and pensions allowance schemes (MSO 14,15).
- M4.7** An allowance, to be reviewed annually, shall be paid to the incoming Moderator at the commencement of his year in office (MSO 18).
- M4.8** Loans may be made to Ministers to assist with house purchase/improvement (MSO 24).
- M4.9** Loans may also be to congregations for specific building projects and Presbytery shall endeavor to be as helpful as possible in such cases. However the decision as to whether or not a loan shall be granted rests with Presbytery (MSO 25).
- M4.10** Any profit/loss on the publication of 'Evangelical Presbyterian' shall be paid into/met out of the Central Fund.
- M4.11** Audited annual summarized statements of the Funds under the Presbytery's control are to be published and made available to members and adherents of the Church.
- M4.12** Presbytery shall aim to maintain the Church reserves at not less than the level of one year's budgeted expenditure and any failure to do so shall be for a temporary period only; in no case shall they be permitted to fall below 2/3rds anticipated expenditure.

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## **M5 TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY FUND**

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- M5.1** The purpose of this Fund shall be to provide financial support to students training for the Ministry of the Church.
- M5.2** The main source of income for this Fund shall be by means of annual contributions from congregations (M3.3).
- M5.3** Grants shall be paid to students in training by the authority of the Presbytery on the recommendation of TOMA, following their consultations with the Finance Committee. (MSO 34).
- M5.4** All appropriate College Fees shall be met out of this Fund.
- M5.5** Salaries paid to students for the work in which they engage as part of their training shall be financed by the Training of the Ministry Fund.
- M5.6** Any deficit arising in the Fund shall be met by the Central Fund.

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## **M6 CHURCH EXTENSION FUND**

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- M6.1** The purpose of the Church Extension Fund shall be to provide financial support for new outreach work.
- M6.2** The main source of income for this Fund shall be by means of annual contributions from congregations (M3.3).
- M6.3** Payment, in the form of grants, shall be considered from available funds for both building work and specific evangelistic activities connected with new outreach projects. Normally the request for such grants shall be made by the Church Extension Committee.
- M6.4** Grants shall not normally be made from the Fund to established congregations. However under certain circumstances interest-free loans may be made available on a short-term basis to such congregations (MSO 27).

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## **M7 CAPITAL INVESTMENT FUND**

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- M7.1** The purpose of the Capital Investment Fund shall be to achieve significant capital growth.
- M7.2** The main source of income for this Fund shall be from designated bequests and undesignated bequests in excess of £5000 (M3.2).
- M7.3** The Finance Committee shall present to Presbytery an annual review regarding the investment policy and allocation of investment income of this Fund (MSO 31).
- M7.4** Up to 60% of the investments in this Fund may be realized for suitable capital projects; authorization for such realizations shall require a 2/3rds total Presbytery membership approval.
- M7.5** The Capital Investment Fund shall maintain a minimum balance of £20,000.

# **N MISSIONS**

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## **N1 GENERAL**

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- N1.1** In obedience to the command of Christ to preach the Gospel to all creatures, baptizing and teaching them to observe all things which He has commanded, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church shall engage in missionary activity according to the measure of her God-given ability.
- N1.2** This missionary activity shall include the work of Church extension and Church reformation as well as the task of carrying the Gospel to the unchurched and heathen.
- N1.3** While each congregation has a duty to endeavour to evangelise and further the Lord's work in their own district the Presbytery shall coordinate the work of home and foreign missions through its Church Extension and Foreign Missions Committee.
- N1.4** Sessions ought to stimulate interest in and encourage support for the missionary activity of the Church. They may appoint a Missions Secretary to assist them in this task.
- N1.5** It is recommended that Home and Foreign Missions collecting boxes be made available to our members and that each congregation have an annual Home and Foreign Missions gift day.

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## **N2 HOME MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION**

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- N2.1** In humbly accepting the duty of evangelism the Presbytery shall endeavour, where possible, to establish new congregations of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.
- N2.2** Such mission work shall be entirely under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery whose regulation, supervision and advice shall normally be effected by the Church Extension Committee.
- N2.3** The Church Extension Committee shall ensure that there is regular liaison between the Mission Church and the Presbytery.
- N2.4** The Presbytery shall, to the best of its ability as the Lord shall enable, allocate resources - monetary and personnel - so that the work may be furthered.
- N2.5** Mission personnel shall consist of ordained Ministers, where possible, and other approved workers.
- N2.6**
- [1] A Mission Church shall be defined as a number of professing Christians who, with their children, meet together for worship, teaching and outreach under the auspices and authority of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. It is distinguished from a regular congregation in that it must be governed or supervised by those appointed by Presbytery. However, its goal is to achieve the status of a regular congregation.
- [2] Ordinarily, the responsibility for initiation and oversight of a Mission Church lies with Presbytery, exercised through its Church Extension Committee, or by a Session in co-operation with the Committee.
- [3] Depending on the circumstances and at its own discretion Presbytery shall provide for such oversight in one of several ways; for example:
- appoint a Missionary or Interim-Moderator and entrust him with organisational powers for a specified period.
  - co-operate with the Session of a regular congregation in arranging a mother-daughter relationship with the Session providing the oversight.
  - appoint a Commission to serve as a temporary Session of the Mission Church.

- [4] A Mission Church may maintain a membership roll.
- [5] It is proper that the Sacraments be dispensed in a Mission Church.

## **N2.7**

- [1] It shall be the duty of Missionaries authorised by Presbytery to exercise a church-planting ministry to use all means warranted by Scripture and the subordinate standards of the Church to preach the Gospel to the unconverted, to gather for worship and instruction all interested people and generally to work in the establishment of a new congregation or congregations in the area authorised by Presbytery.
- [2] The Missionary shall enjoy all reasonable freedom, consistent with the Denomination's standards, testimony and government, to achieve the above objectives.
- [3] In the discharge of their duties Missionaries shall take cognisance of the local cultural ethos and, taking care not to compromise or jeopardise the testimony of the Church, feel free to organise the work in such a way as to make it truly an indigenous work set firmly in the local context.
- [4] The Missionary shall manifest a charitable and sympathetic attitude to evangelical church-planting undertaken by other bodies working in his area and shall seek to foster a spirit of evangelical Christian unity, whilst taking care not to compromise the testimony of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church or jeopardise the objectives outlined in N2.7 (1) above.

## **N2.8**

- [1] A Mission Church may have its status raised to that of a congregation in regular standing.
- [2] Application for such a change shall be in writing to the Presbytery and shall be subscribed, at a meeting called for the purpose, by those who wish to have the congregation so formed. This petition shall be presented to the Presbytery by Commissioners appointed by the subscribers.
- [3] Before such petition can be granted Presbytery shall be satisfied concerning the following criteria:
  - that there are at least twelve subscribers who are either eligible to become full communicant members of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church or who are at the time of petition full communicant members.
  - that there be evidence of ability to conform to the relevant financial legislation.
  - that there be within the group evidence of a plurality of Elders.
- [4] Presbytery in determining the matter shall make full enquiry concerning the following:
  - The circumstances and reasons that have led to the application
  - the building in which the congregation proposes to meet for worship
  - any objection from a neighbouring Evangelical Presbyterian Church congregation.
- [5] After thorough examination of all the circumstances Presbytery shall make its decision according to the general interests of the Church.
- [6] If the application be granted Presbytery shall recognise the regular standing of the congregation at a meeting convened for the purpose at which, through its appointed Commissioners, the Confessional testimony of the Church, the duties of Officebearers and the responsibilities of congregations shall be set forth.
- [7] On being formed into a regular congregation the members have the right to elect Elders and call their own Minister in accordance with the procedures laid down in the CODE.

- [8] Presbytery has discretion, in approving an application under N2.8 (6) above, to give simultaneous approval to the petitioners to proceed with the election of Elders and calling a Minister, and charge a Commission to see to all that is necessary for the incorporation of their ordination and/or installation at the said meeting. The Order of Service in such circumstances shall be determined by the Commissioners in conjunction with the Presbytery Arrangements Committee.

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### **N3 FOREIGN MISSIONS**

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- N3.1** Presbytery recognises that the missionary mandate, enshrined in the Great Commission of Matthew 28.16-20, requires the Evangelical Presbyterian Church to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to teach the whole counsel of God beyond its immediate bounds.
- N3.2** To this end the Evangelical Presbyterian Church shall co-operate with and send missionaries to:
- Churches and organisations in membership of the International Conference of Reformed Churches.
  - Other Churches, Organisations and Mission Agencies, whom Presbytery specifically approves as being aligned with our doctrinal position.
- N3.3** While congregations have liberty to take interest in and give support to Missionaries of organisations other than those specifically approved by Presbytery under N3.2, Sessions ought to ensure that this is additional. and not detrimental to those in N3.2.
- N3.4** Presbytery disapproves of support for mission work associated directly or indirectly with bodies outside the reformed constituency, which in any way compromises the doctrinal position of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.
- N3.5** A Missionary is a Minister or Elder whom God has called to preach the Gospel and teach the Word in a cross-cultural context, and whom the Church has ordained/ installed to this work (Acts 13).
- A Diaconal Missionary is an Elder/Deacon/Member engaged in diaconal work, eg, education, medicine, construction and social (Matt 10.5-8 ,25.34-46) with the approval of the Presbytery or local Session. The wives of missionaries, who carry out this role, can be recognized as support missionaries.
- N3.6** Ministers, Elders or Members of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church who wish to explore the possibility of missionary work shall have access through their Session, to the International Missions Committee for consultation, such consultation shall be strictly confidential and Presbytery shall be given details only where necessary and at a mutually agreed time.
- N3.7** Missionaries/Diaconal Missionaries will normally be employed by another Church/Organisation. Where Presbytery is the Employer, it shall take account of the particular nature and location of the work in fixing terms and conditions of employment (including pension). Presbytery may seek input to the terms and conditions of another Church/Organisation.
- N3.8** Ministers or Elders of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church may serve as missionaries in Churches or Mission Agencies-Societies other than those specifically approved by Presbytery under N3.2 provided they comply with the following principles:
- the involvement of Presbytery throughout shall be mandatory
  - such work must be in keeping with their ordination vows and the constitutional position of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church
  - such Ministers and Elders shall remain under the Jurisdiction of the Presbytery with regard to matters affecting their status as Ministers or Elders of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Churches-Organisations concerned



shall be advised of this fact

- though such Churches-Organisations are in no respect under the jurisdiction of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Presbytery shall take due care that the work being performed is consistent with the constitution of the Church
- Ministers may act as Pastors of such Churches provided they comply at all times with the foregoing conditions
- Such Ministers/Elders would be entitled to sit on Presbyery in a non-voting capacity and have their names transf-erred to Presbytery's Register of non-serving Ministers/Elders.
- All such Missionaries would be expected to report on their work regularly and when home on furlough.

# **STANDING ORDERS**

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## **SECTION D THE SESSION**

## **SECTION E THE DIACONATE**

- ESO 1 Regular surveys of congregational premises shall be undertaken to identify items requiring repair and maintenance in the short, medium and long term.
- ESO 2 Each congregation ought to have a Building Fund to provide for major repairs/refurbishment/extensions; it is recommended that 5 - 10% pa of total income be allocated to such Fund.
- ESO 3 A congregation whose target is less than the cost of a Minister shall require the approval of Presbytery before proceeding with any proposed building/construction project costing in excess of 20% of their target.
- ESO 4 Each congregation shall obtain comprehensive insurance cover for their buildings, based on reinstatement value. The valuations shall be revised annually and copy policies and annual confirmation of cover shall be submitted to the Building Inspection Committee.
- ESO 5 Each congregation shall identify and budget for local overheads and eliminate unnecessary expenses as far as possible.

## SECTION F THE PRESBYTERY

- FSO 1 Sessions may register an Alternate Commissioner who shall be able to act in the place of any of their regular Commissioners to Presbytery.
- FSO 2
- (1) The Presbytery shall visit each congregation in rotation at least once in seven years. If necessary, additional special visitations shall be held.
  - (2) The visitation shall be undertaken in the exercise of its duty of oversight of the congregation; it is not intended to be of an inquisitorial character, but designed rather:
    - to promote the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
    - to encourage self-examination and assessment of the work and witness of the congregation.
    - to strengthen the hands of the Minister, Ruling Elders and Deacons.
    - to provide the benefit of independent advice and counsel.
    - to challenge to recognition of actual or potential problems so that they may be addressed.
  - (3) The visitation shall be conducted by a suitably appointed Commission. The Commission shall, where possible, include one member from each of the Building Inspection and Finance Consultative Committees.
  - (4) Upon appointment the Convenor of the Commission shall contact the Session Clerk of the relevant congregation regarding the proposed visitation; in particular they shall arrange:
    - suitable date(s).
    - for all the requisite books, records and accounts to be made available.
    - for adequate notice of the visitation to be given to the congregation.
  - (5) Any member of the congregation may forward to the Session a written statement regarding any matter they wish the Commission to consider. The Convenor shall be provided with copies of all such statements at least one week before the visitation takes place. The Commission alone shall determine whether and which of these statements shall be considered.
  - (6) The visitation itself shall be made by inspection and interview.
  - (7) Inspection shall be made by the Commission of all the property of the congregation (calling in the assistance of technical experts if necessary) and of the minute books of its Session and Board of Deacons, the Membership Roll, Registers of Baptisms and Marriages and Trust Deeds.
  - (8) Interviews with the Minister, Ruling Elders and Deacons (jointly and/or separately) shall follow. All should be reminded of and challenged with their ordination vows and opportunity given to raise any matter pertaining to the congregation (including its Minister and Officebearers) and to discuss problems, needs, hopes and encouragements. The Commission shall see that statements admitted under (5) above are fully considered.
  - (9) For guidance purposes, suitable questions to be put to the relevant parties during interview are listed in the Appendix.
  - (10) The Commission shall seek to resolve and remove any grievance or irregularity it may find and to make such recommendations as it deems fit.
  - (11) After completing the visitation the Commission shall, with requisite discretion, report to the next Presbytery. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Session Clerk of the congregation for its information.

(12) Upon receipt and consideration of the report Presbytery shall determine if any and what follow-up is necessary.

FSO 3

Ordinary meetings of Presbytery shall normally:

- be held on the 1st Monday of the months of February, March , April, September, October and December, and the 2nd Monday of June.
- commence at 7.30pm.
- break from 9.00 to 9.15pm.
- conclude no later than 10.30pm.

FSO 4

Apart from the Moderator, no member shall act as the Convenor of more than one and/or serve on more than two committees at any one time. Service as an Assessor Elder/Interim Moderator shall not count under this order.

## SECTION H TERMS OF SERVICE

HSO 1 The following are the Terms of Service applied to all Ministers in Employment:

### Appointment

- 1 Your contract of employment will be with the Presbytery of The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (hereinafter referred to as 'The Church'). The Presbytery is the employer of all Ministers employed within The Church.
- 2 Your appointment will be subject to:
  - The completion of all formalities including the receipt of satisfactory personal and previous employer references. You should take no immediate action to terminate your present employment until we advise you to do so. We will not approach your present employer or church organisation until you give us written permission.
  - The call from ..... Congregation proceeding to conclusion. (If appropriate)
- 3 Your appointment will be effective from DDMMYY (or a date to be agreed) after we have concluded the administrative arrangements.
- 4 Your statutory continuity of employment will commence on your start date.
- 5 Information relating to the Terms and Conditions set out in the Code of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. (hereinafter referred to as *The Code*).

### Remuneration

- 6 Your salary will be ££££ per annum, which is the basic salary we pay our Ministers.
  - Your salary will be paid monthly by Credit Transfer into your Bank Account on the last working day of each month.
  - We can alternatively make arrangements to pay your salary into a Building Society Account, although this may involve a little delay in the credit reaching you.
  - Salaries are reviewed annually in April. The next salary review will be effective from April YYYY.
- 7 The following allowances are paid in addition to salary:
  - A rates allowance equivalent to the net sum of domestic rates. You are required to claim any available rebate. (payable by local congregation).
  - A mileage-graduated car allowance as determined by Presbytery from time to time. You are required to keep a record of business miles for this purpose. You should ensure that you carry the requisite business insurance for driving your vehicle on church business.
  - You are eligible for a loan for the purpose of house purchase up to a level and on terms and conditions determined by Presbytery.

### Contractual Working Hours

- 8 Your average contractual hours are 40 hours per week, but you are expected to adjust your hours and patterns of work so as to discharge the responsibilities and commitments of office described in Section H2 and B2.1-B2.2 of *The Code*. Upward variations should not exceed 8 hours in any week. You should however establish the practice of taking one full day off each week.

### Termination

- 9 Termination of service will be by 3 months written notice on either side irrespective of length of service. The Church may pay salary in lieu of notice.

### Holidays

- 10 Your annual paid holiday entitlement will be 30 days (based on a 6 day working week) plus Public/Bank/Local Holidays as defined below. In the year of commencement or termination of employment, your holiday entitlement is calculated on the basis of a twelfth of your normal annual entitlement for each completed month of service in the holiday year.
  - The holiday year is from 1 January - 31 December.
  - Your main holiday should be of at least two weeks duration.
  - You must agree all holiday dates in advance with the Session of your congregation.
  - Public/Bank/Local holidays are defined as:





minimise the risk of your developing upper limb disorders (ULD) by providing information and training required by current regulations and good practice.

We ask you to be aware of information on <http://www.hse.gov.uk>

Please report any symptoms of possible ULD to The Church immediately.

### **Medical Issues**

- 18 You must advise the Clerk of Presbytery if you develop any medical condition or disability which may require additional care or special arrangements by the Church. The church will treat such information with complete confidence.

You should, for example, seek medical confirmation that such condition or disability does not impair your ability to drive safely.

There is also a duty to inform the Driver and Vehicle Agency of certain conditions

It is possible that the Church's Doctor may need to obtain information about your health from your GP or Specialist. In these circumstances, the Church will always seek your permission and discuss the procedures with you.

### **Disciplinary and Grievance procedures**

- 19 In accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996, as amended, you are referred to *The Code* for disciplinary, appeals and grievance procedures and for all other matters relating to your employment.

### **Immediate Arrangements**

- 20 *For new appointments only:*

The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 makes it an offence to employ anyone not entitled to work in the UK. To ensure compliance with the Act, please forward the original of one of the following:

- A document showing your National Insurance Number if issued by an employer or UK Government agency
- Birth Certificate if issued in the UK or Irish Republic
- Your Passport if it shows you are a British citizen or have a right of abode in the UK
- Passport, National Identity Card or UK residence permit, if you are a citizen of an European Economic Area.

There are various other administrative arrangements we need to make in advance of your start date:

- In connection with your membership of the EPC Pension Scheme, please enclose your birth certificate to provide evidence of age.
- Acceptance of this offer of employment will be taken as your request to join the EPC Pension Scheme. If you do not wish to join the Scheme you must advise the Clerk of Presbytery within 14 days.

# SECTION I APPLICATION FORM



## APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION AS A CANDIDATE FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*N.B. Please type answers or use black ink*

<p>1. Full Name</p>	
<p>2. Home address and Tel. No.</p>	
<p>3. Present address and Tel. No. (if not as above)</p>	
<p>4. Date and place of birth</p>	
<p>5. Marital status:                  . Any previous marriage?                  . Children and their ages.</p>	
<p>6. Do you hold a current driving licence?</p>	
<p>7. List schools attended, with dates.</p>	
<p>8. List all results, with grades and dates, in GCSE, University entrance, or equivalent examinations.</p>	
<p>9. List positions of responsibility held at school (e.g. prefect, team leader, etc.)</p>	
<p>10. List Universities or Colleges (including Theological or Bible Colleges) attended, with dates</p>	

11. List all classes attended at University/College, with dates and results.  
(Enclose certified transcripts from the relevant University/College authorities)

12. State degrees or other qualifications held.

13. Give details of all previous employment.  
  
(Employers are not normally contacted, but if it is deemed necessary, your permission will be sought)

14. List positions of responsibility held in higher education or employment (e.g. supervisor, union officebearer etc.)

<p>15. Have you been a communicant member of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church for the past two years?        . If not, for how long?        . Of what other church are you or have you been, a member?        . Give dates.</p>	
<p>16. Where relevant, give reasons for any change of denomination.</p>	
<p>17. Name of present minister and congregation.</p>	
<p>18. What part have you taken in church work and Christian service?</p>	
<p>19. Have you been licensed or ordained to the ministry?        . If so, by whom?</p>	
<p>20. Which religious and theological books, apart from the Bible, have most interested and influenced you?</p>	
<p>21. Are you familiar with the <i>Westminster Confession of Faith</i>, and would you be willing to subscribe it?        (See Code of EPC, Section B)</p>	

22. Are you willing to under-take a theological course recommended by the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?  
· Have you a preference for a particular Theological College?

23. *Health:*  
How long have you been away from work or study because of ill-health during the past three years?  
· Have you ever received treatment for nerves or depression? (A positive answer is not necessarily prejudicial to application)  
· Have you any chronic conditions or permanent disabilities?  
· Have you any other health problems liable to affect your work or study?  
· Are you willing to undergo medical examination or have the Church consult with your medical attendant?  
· Please give the name and address of your medical attendant.

24. Supply names and addresses of four persons who know you well, and who would be willing to act as referees on your behalf. One should be your minister, and another a College Principal, Tutor, or Head of Department under whom you have studied.

25. On a separate A4 sheet ( or sheets ) please set down in writing a brief account of your conversion to Christ and subsequent Christian progress. Indicate what induced you to seek to take up the work of the ministry within the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, e.g. evidence of being called by God in this direction; how you have come to this position; difficulties you have encountered and encouragements you have received in coming to it; and the strength of commitment you and your family feel towards it.

**The details given above and herewith are correct to the best of my knowledge, and I now apply to be considered as a candidate for the ministry of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.**

Signed .....

Date .....

# SECTION M FINANCES

MSO 1 The following is the approved model for the presentation of financial statements by congregational Treasurers:

<b>Ballyport EPC</b>									
<b>End of Year Accounts 2013</b>									
<b>INCOME</b>					<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
		<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>				<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	
106301	Balance in Bank 1st January	34309.25	61937.07	96246.32					
	<b>General Income</b>					<b>Utilities</b>			
	Offering	38493.00				Heat & Light	2504.00		
	Sunday School	274.00				Insurance	588.00		
	Prayer Meeting	121.00				Rates	578.55		
42565		<b>38888.00</b>		<b>38888.00</b>		Telephone	238.15		
						Water Rates & Bin Collect	336.31		
						Tuck Shop	100.00		
	<b>Special Income Denominational Funds</b>				4151		<b>4345.01</b>		
	Central Fund		4184.00			<b>Denominational Funds</b>			
	Home & Foreign Missions		1230.00			Central Fund	34816.00	4184.00	
	Help the Needy		199.00			Home & Foreign Missions	570.00	1830.00	
5865			<b>5613.00</b>	<b>5613.00</b>		Help the Needy	1.00	199.00	
						From the Frontiers	20.00		
						Magazines	450.00		
					43225		<b>35857.00</b>	<b>6213.00</b>	
	<b>Special Income Congregation</b>					<b>Congregational Activities</b>			
	Donations	100.00				Evangelical Bookshop	602.52		
	Minibus Fund		909.00			Gifts			
	Mums & Tots					Bank/ Legal Fees	53.36		
	Girls Bible Club					Holiday Bible Club	247.80		
1210		<b>100.00</b>	<b>909.00</b>	<b>1009.00</b>		Pulpit Supply	410.00		
						Repairs & Renewals	5754.78		
						Sundries	328.38		
						Harvest	358.61		
	<b>Special Income Missions</b>					Sunday School	124.18		
	CWI	6.00	116.00			Outreach	570.32		
	CEF					Minibus	743.46	909.00	
	YPA Project		2862.32		9985		<b>9193.41</b>	<b>909.00</b>	
	Pamela MA					<b>Other Missions and Societies</b>			
	MERF		200.00			CWI	34.00	116.00	
	SCFS		150.00			SCFS	150.00	150.00	
	EMF		93.00			Merf		200.00	
	Rogério Ramos Portugal		100.00			EMF	207.00	93.00	
	Manuel Franco		100.00			Ben McFall - YFC	1000.00	100.00	
3556		<b>6.00</b>	<b>3621.32</b>	<b>3627.32</b>		Pamela MA	400.00		
						UFM	100.00		
	<b>Other Income</b>					Every Home Crusade	100.00		
	Magazines & Calendars	216.00				CEF	201.00	199.00	
	Building Fund		1560.00			Dumisani Senior YPA Project		2930.00	
	Net Interest	1190.99				Rogério Ramos Portugal		100.00	
	Income Tax Refund					Spain Team	200.00	0.00	
	Sundries	37.00				Almunecar Senior YPA Project		2778.00	
	First Trust deposit					Spanish Gospel Mission	100.00		
3255		<b>1443.99</b>	<b>1560.00</b>	<b>3003.99</b>		MAF	100.00		
							<b>2592.00</b>	<b>6666.00</b>	
162752	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>74747.24</b>	<b>73640.39</b>	<b>148387.63</b>	9145				
					66506	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	51987.42	13788.00	
					162752	<b>Total Income</b>	74747.24	73640.39	
					96246	<b>Balance Carried forward</b>	22759.82	59852.39	

MSO 2

The following observations on the above model should be noted:

(1) The Statement should open with the Church and Congregation name, a description of what is presented (ie a 'Receipts and Payments Account') and the period covered by the Statement.

(2) Most Statements are presented in an 'horizontal' format with receipts on the left hand side of a page and payments on the right, but it is acceptable to present the Statement in a 'vertical' format with receipts at the top of a page followed by payments.

(3) Comparative figures for the previous period should be shown.

(4) The receipts section of the Statement should commence by showing any balances of cash in hand or at bank brought forward from the previous period. There should follow, in summary form, the receipts during the period summarised under appropriate headings and sub-headings. The final heading in the receipts section should be the balances of cash in hand or at bank at the end of the period.

(5) The payments section should commence by showing the amount of any borrowings brought forward from the previous period. There should follow, in summary form, the payments made during the period summarised under appropriate headings and sub-headings. The cost of the Minister's salary and expenses shall be shown, to which shall be added or deducted the amount by which the congregation's contributions to Central Fund exceeded or fell short of this figure. The final heading in the payments section should be the balances of the cash in hand or at bank at the end of the period.

(6) Whilst the headings and sub-headings may not all be appropriate for each case, congregations are urged to adopt headings as close as possible to those shown; the reasoning behind the format is one of priorities.

(7) The Statement should be signed on behalf of the Deacons Board and Session, normally by the Treasurer and Clerk respectively, to indicate their approval of it.

(8) The Statement should be audited, not necessarily professionally, but by someone independent of the Session and Deacons Board.

(9) Consideration should be given to supplementing the Statement with certain other details such as the number of members, freewill offering sets in use and number of covenanters.

(10) Accounts should be presented, and audited, for all funds maintained by the Deacons Board for Sessions in addition to general funds (Building Funds etc).

MSO 3

(1) Proposed targets (per M4.2) will be set in December each year and will be finalised in the following March after publication of congregational accounts.

(2) From April 1993 each congregation shall contribute, as a minimum target, whichever is the greater of:

- 60% of the cost of supporting a Minister, or
- 70% of general offerings, in addition to special Central Fund offerings.

Exemption from these arrangements will apply to congregations:

- under 5 years old.
- without a Minister.
- whose target exceeds 200% of the cost of supporting a Minister.
- who make special application (with reasons).

Further exemptions may be granted at the discretion of Presbytery upon demonstration of necessary and pressing expenditure.

(3) In the case of a congregation with an Associate Minister in place the minimum target is the full cost of the first Minister plus 75% of the cost of the Associate Minister.

(4) In order to regularise payments and assist cash flow, contributions towards targets shall be made by Standing Order on the 20th of each month, to be adjusted annually in April.

- MSO 4 In order to maximise interest from investments, congregations are encouraged to place any surplus funds with the Finance Committee and/or pay all, or a significant proportion, of their target early in the financial year. Credit in lieu of interest will be given.
- MSO 5 To encourage more gifts from friends outside the Church a regular note ought to be inserted in the Magazine advising that gifts for the work of the Church should be forwarded to the Convenor, Finance Committee.
- MSO 6 The Finance Committee shall pay Ministers salaries and expenses by cheque or credit transfer at the end of each month.
- MSO 7 The salary year shall run from 1st April to 31st March.
- MSO 8 Ministers ought not to participate in the annual salary review debate or vote.
- MSO 9 All Ministers, including Associate Ministers, from ordination shall receive a basic salary for the ministerial office with no graduations.
- MSO 10 Students for the ministry shall be paid, pro rata, 60%, 65% and 70% of basic salary level respectively in their 1st, 2nd and 3rd years of practical experience work (per I4.9, M4.5). Licentiates in employment before ordination and installation shall receive pro rata, 75% of basic salary level.
- MSO 11 Salary supplements shall be permitted under the following conditions:
- congregational target must be at least 1.5 x cost of a Minister.
  - must not exceed 10% of normal salary level.
  - must keep within the spirit of our financial policy.
  - must be in the form of money paid through the payroll.
- MSO 12 Ministers shall keep a record of official mileage travelled in each tax year and shall advise the same to the Finance Committee as soon after the end of the tax year as practicably possible.
- MSO 13 The car allowance shall be kept in line with that permitted by HMRC.
- MSO 14 When a Minister is unable to carry out all his duties because of illness he shall be entitled to sick pay for a period not exceeding, or periods not exceeding in the aggregate during any period of consecutive 12 months, as follows:
- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Under 2 complete years service | 14 weeks full pay                      |
| Over 2 years complete service  | 28 weeks full pay<br>28 weeks half pay |
- MSO 15 All Ministers shall be invited to join a Group Personal Pension Plan with People's Pension under advice from McClelland, Yarr and Co. Contributions to this plan shall be reviewed annually. The maximum contribution is 6% of basic Salary with the funding 2/3rds by church, 1/3rd by members. A Minimum Death Benefit will also be provided and reviewed every three years.
- MSO 16 Pensions under the "Scheme" shall be at the level of 35% basic salary.
- MSO 18 The Moderator's allowance is currently £200.



- MSO 19 Each congregation shall pay their Minister's rates.
- MSO 20 Costs of attendance at one Ministers/theological conference (within the British Isles) per annum shall be met by TOMA funds.
- MSO 21 Telephone bills may be paid at the discretion of the local congregation but the Minister should make a contribution for private use.
- MSO 22 Lighting, heating and other costs, to the extent that they are incurred in the performance of ministerial duties, may be met at the discretion of the local congregation.
- MSO 23 The Church may pay salary in lieu of notice.
- MSO 24 The following regulations shall apply to loans to Ministers to assist with house purchase:
- (1) Upon application, loans of up to a maximum of the Minister's salary shall be made available.
  - (2) The rate of interest will take account of prevailing rates for unsecured finance at the time of the making of the loan.
  - (3) Ministers shall not normally be granted more than one such loan in a period of 10 years.
- MSO 25 The following restrictions and conditions on the granting of a loan to a congregation for specific building purposes shall apply:
- (1) A brief written outline of the project, including cost and other borrowing requirements shall be given.
  - (2) A loan shall normally only be made available insofar as liquid funds are available to the Finance Committee over and above those required or likely to be required in the short term.
  - (3) The amount of the loan shall normally be restricted to an amount equal to the congregation's target at the time the application is made.
  - (4) The term of the loan shall not exceed 10 years.
  - (5) The rate of interest will take account of prevailing rates for unsecured finance at the time of the making of the loan.
- MSO 26 Congregations with surplus funds are encouraged to consider setting aside a portion of such surplus for the Church Extension Fund.
- MSO 27 The following regulations shall apply to interest-free, short-term loans to established congregations from the Church Extension Fund:
- (1) Such loans shall be considered only where the funds are available and not required for other activities in the short term.
  - (2) The recommendation of the Church Extension Committee shall be attached to the application.
  - (3) The amount of the loan shall be limited to one half of the congregation's target at the time of the application.
  - (4) The period of repayment shall be no longer than two years.

(5) No more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the balance of the funds on hand shall normally be made available for such purposes.

- MSO 29 The Presbytery shall be registered as a Charity with the Northern Ireland Charity Commission.
- MSO 31 Investment income from the Capital Investment Fund shall be primarily allocated to the Church Extension Fund. Present allocation policy shall be:
- 30% Training for the Ministry Fund.
  - 70% Church Extension Fund.
- MSO 32 In advising of allocation of undesignated bequests in excess of £5000 the Finance Committee shall take into account:
- what the donor is likely to have desired.
  - particular, present and pressing needs of the Church.
  - Current, or foreseeable, capital projects.
  - level of Capital Investment Fund.
- MSO 33 Congregations are urged, in accordance with and in addition to regulation M5.2, to provide regular and increasing support for the Church Extension Fund.
- MSO 34 Students for the Ministry shall be paid a grant amounting to 60% of the basic Minister' salary. In addition student fees will be paid and travel expenses will be refunded to a maximum of £500pa.
- MSO 35 Marriages conducted by Ministers of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church must include the declaration by both parties in the presence of the Minister and witnesses -
- 'I do solemnly declare, that I know not of any lawful impediment why I A.B may not be joined in matrimony to C.D.'
- 'I call upon these persons here present to witness, that I A.B. do take you (thee) C.D. to be my lawful wedded wife (husband).'

## SECTION N MISSIONS

- NSO 1
- (1) Any decision to engage a Church Planter/Evangelist shall be taken by Presbytery, taking into account the availability of a suitable person and the opportunity for his gifts to be advantageously utilised.
  - (2) His duties will be under the direction of Presbytery, with control vested in the Church Extension Committee, ideally in conjunction with the Session of the Congregation promoting the endeavour.
  - (3) Preferably the man chosen should be an ordained Elder.
  - (4) The duration of any engagement shall be at the discretion of Presbytery. Progress reports shall be given to Presbytery at least every three months.
  - (5) The provision of finance for salary and other expenses should be carefully ascertained before an appointment is made.
  - (6) Appointments may be made of suitable persons who are partially or wholly self-supporting.
- NSO 2
- Congregations should channel support to a few rather than many Missions.

# POLICIES

## EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

This policy applies to Presbytery members of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

### Why we have a policy

Presbytery members have a legal obligation to act in the best interests of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and in accordance with Presbytery's governing document.

Conflicts of interest may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties to some other individual or group conflicts with those of Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Such conflicts may create problems. They can:

- inhibit free discussion
- result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of Evangelical Presbyterian Church
- risk the impression that Presbytery has acted improperly.

The purpose of this policy is to protect both the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and Presbytery members from any appearance of impropriety. It applies to meetings of Presbytery, Committees or any other form of Presbytery business

### What to do if you face a possible conflict of interest

All conflict of interest, whether actual or potential, should be declared promptly at the earliest opportunity:

- Any Presbytery member who has a conflict interest in a matter under discussion should declare the nature of their interest and withdraw from the room, unless they have dispensation to speak
- If a Presbytery member has any interest in the matter under discussion, which creates a real danger of bias, that is, the interest affects the organisation which they represent, or a member of their household, more than the generality affected by the decision, they should declare the nature of the interest and withdraw from the room, unless they have dispensation to speak
- If a Presbytery member has any other interest which does not create a real danger of bias, but which might reasonably cause others to think it could in their decision, they should declare the nature of the interest, but may remain in the room, participate in the discussion, and vote if they wish
- If a Presbytery member is in any doubt about the application of these rules, they should consult with the Moderator/Convenor..
- If you fail to declare an interest that is known to the Moderator/Convenor, the Moderator/Convenor will declare that interest. Presbytery members' interests are listed in a register. You should ensure that your entry in this register is updated to reflect any new interests.

# EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - DATA PROTECTION POLICY

## Data Privacy Statement

### 1. Purpose of this Privacy Notice

This Privacy Notice covers the various unincorporated Committees of the Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (now known as EPC) which is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (NIC104483). The Church recognises the importance of your privacy and this Notice sets out the way in which we will use, disclose and protect your personal information.

### 2. Your personal data – what is it?

Personal data is any information relating to a living individual who can be identified from that data. Identification can be by the information alone or in conjunction with any other information in the data controller's possession or likely to come into such possession. The processing of personal data is governed by the General Data Protection Regulation (the "GDPR").

### 3. Who are we?

The EPC is the data controller (contact details at the end of this notice). This means that we decide how your personal data is processed and for what purposes. EPC may change this policy from time to time and any such changes will be published on our website. Notwithstanding any change to this policy, we will continue to process your personal data in accordance with your rights and our obligations in law.

### 4. How do we process your personal data?

We collect data necessary for the EPC to pursue its stated charitable objective of the advancement of religion.

In furtherance of this we will use your personal data for one or more of the following purposes depending on the way in which you are connected to, engage with, or avail of services provided by the Church:

- To run the central administration of the Church including its Committees.;
- To liaise with and support EPC congregations; including maintaining records of ministers, clerks of session, treasurers and other officials.
- To maintain contact details for officials in groups that are part of the EPC, other denominations and partner churches ;
- To provide pastoral care;
- To provide loan and grant funding for congregational projects;
- To provide information about news, events, prayer request and activities within the Church including the distribution of publications, mailings and newsletters, etc.;
- For administration and related purposes for those who have subscribed to church publications and social media;
- To recruit and appoint volunteers to posts within the EPC;
- To provide safeguarding services to the Church and its congregations;
- For the purpose of conference management;
- For the purpose of responding to queries about Constitutional, Discipline and Practice of the EPC;
- To manage properties owned or occupied by the EPC;
- To manage recruitment processes and train, support, administer personnel procedures and provide a central payroll in respect of employees;
- To manage the central finances of the Church including the payment of expenses/invoices, the payment of wages/salaries and the recording of income including related gift aid administration.
- For the purposes of administering the candidate process and training of students for the ministry and for the education and training of other students, elders and those attending courses provided by the Church;
- Archiving for research and historical purposes;
- For the fulfilment of contractual, regulatory compliance and legal obligations
- To respond to general enquiries;



Data collected and processed may include, but not be limited to:

- name and title;
- contact information including email address;
- demographic information such as postcode, preferences and interests;
- Sensitive data\* may be collected where necessary for safeguarding purposes, or upon application to become a minister or to hold an office in the Presbyterian Church, or for employment purposes, or where required by law.

## 5. What is the legal basis for processing your personal data?

Organisations are permitted to process data if they have a legal basis for doing so. The EPC processes data on the basis that:

- Processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by EPC or a third party except where such interests are overridden by the interests, rights or freedoms of the data subject; and/or
- Express and informed consent has been given by the person whose data is being processed; and/or
- It is necessary in relation to a contract or agreement which the person has entered into or because the person has asked for something to be done so they can enter into a contract or agreement; and/or
- There is a legal obligation on the EPC to process data; and/or
- Processing is necessary to protect the vital interests of a data subject or another person.

Where we process special category sensitive data (under Article 9 of the GDPR) we process data on the basis that:

- Explicit consent has been given by the person whose data is being processed; and/or
- It is necessary for the EPC to carrying out its obligations under employment, social security or social protection law, or a collective agreement; and/or
- Processing is necessary to protect the vital interests of a data subject or another individual where the data subject is physically or legally incapable of giving consent; and/or
- The EPC is a not-for-profit membership organisation with a religious aim and the processing relates only to members or former members or those who have regular contact with it in connection with its purposes, and no disclosure is made to a third party without consent of the person whose data is being processed; and/or
- Processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research purposes or statistical purposes.

## 6. Data Integrity and Security

We comply with our obligations under data protection regulations by keeping personal data up to date; by storing and destroying it securely; by not collecting or retaining excessive amounts of data; by protecting personal data from loss, misuse, unauthorised access and disclosure and by ensuring that appropriate technical measures are in place to protect personal data.

## 7. Sharing your personal data

Your data will not be shared outside of the EPC, except where required to do so by law, or with trusted third parties (mailing, cloud storage, printing etc.), and only once satisfied that any such use of data will accord with this policy. Explicit, informed consent will be sought from individuals whenever and wherever required in accordance with data protection legislation.

## 8. How long do we keep your personal data?

The EPC will only retain your personal data for as long as it is legitimately required to fulfil the purpose or purposes for which it is required. This will include compliance with statutory retention periods. Our aim is based on the following:

<b>Record Type</b>	<b>Retention Period<sup>1</sup></b>
Membership rolls	Indefinitely
Members, adherents and friends' names or contact details	Indefinitely
Gift aid declarations and paperwork	6 years after the calendar year to which it relates
Registers of Marriage	Indefinitely
Register of Baptisms	Indefinitely
Register of Funerals	Indefinitely
Personal data relating to events for which additional information is gathered eg Church Conferences	Disposed of immediately after the event unless anything has occurred (eg an accident) which indicates that records should be retained for a longer period.
Records of attendance of children/young people and helpers	Indefinitely for safeguarding purposes
Photographs and videos of events	Indefinitely – selected items retained for historical records
Insurance Records	Indefinitely
Safeguarding matters	Indefinitely or until advised otherwise by authorities
<i>Accident Books</i>	Indefinitely
Complaints (non -safeguarding)	Indefinitely
Minute Books	Indefinitely
Employee Records	6 years after the date of termination of employment
Pension Records	6 years after the date of termination of employment
Other Record	

We will regularly review the data we hold and securely delete or destroy any personal data that is no longer necessary for processing.

## 9. Your rights and your personal data

Unless subject to an exemption under the GDPR, you have the following rights with respect to your personal data: -

- The right to request a copy of your personal data which EPC hold about you;
- The right to request that EPC correct any personal data if it is found to be inaccurate or out of date;
- The right to request your personal data is erased where it is no longer necessary for EPC to retain such data;
- The right to withdraw your consent to the processing at any time
- The right to request that EPC provide you with your personal data and, where possible, to transmit that data directly to another data controller
- The right, where there is a dispute in relation to the accuracy or processing of your personal data, to request a restriction is placed on further processing;
- The right to object to the processing of personal data.
- The right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office.

<sup>1</sup> Retention periods shown are for illustration only. The Church must determine its own retention periods to meet its own need and statutory compliance.



## **10. Further processing**

If we wish to use your personal data for a new purpose, not covered by this Data Privacy Notice, then we will provide you with a new notice explaining this new use prior to commencing the processing and setting out the relevant purposes and processing conditions. Where and whenever necessary, we will seek your prior consent to the new processing.

## **11. Contact Details**

To exercise all relevant rights, queries or complaints please in the first instance contact:

**Clerk of Presbytery c/o 20 Mount Aboo Park, Belfast, BT10 0DJ**

Their contact details are:

### **The Information Commissioners Office**

3rd Floor, 14 Cromac Place, Belfast, BT7 2JB

## **12. Unincorporated Committees of the Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church**

Presbytery Arrangements Committee

Finance

Training Of Ministry and Admissions

Church Development Committee

International Missions

Public Morals

### **Other committees / commissions associated with Presbytery:**

Youth Committee

Protection Of Children & Vulnerable Adults

# EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - FINANCE POLICY

## Section One

### Legal and Financial Responsibilities

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church has charitable status as recognised by the Northern Ireland Charities Commission & Her Majesty's Revenue & Custom. The Charity is governed by its code dated [REDACTED]. It has legal identity and therefore can own property and take legal action.

The Trustees and/or employees can be personally liable if they act criminally, negligently, beyond their powers or the objects of the charity, in breach of statutory duty or if they are guilty of wrongful or fraudulent trading.

### FINANCIAL FUNCTION OF PRESBYTERY / FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee takes on the day to day legal and financial responsibility for all financial activities on behalf of Presbytery of Evangelical Presbyterian Church. It maintains an overview of financial policy, planning and implementation the same at a day to day level.

### Finance Committee

#### Terms of Reference

##### **Membership**

The Finance Committee shall consist of at least a Convenor, 2 other members of Presbytery & a book keeper/administrator.

##### **Appointment of Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee shall be appointed in accordance with the Code.

##### **Frequency of Meetings**

The Finance Committee shall meet not less than 8 times in each year. A quorum at each meeting shall be not less than three quarters of the total membership.

##### **Record of Meetings**

The Convenor of the Finance Committee shall ensure that an agreed written record of each of their meetings is forwarded to the Finance Committee and maintained for future reference.

##### **Functions of the Finance Committee**

To administer the financial aspects of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church  
Maintain regular payments, process and record to employees & suppliers  
Liaise with Charities Commission for Northern Ireland  
Liaise with HMRC  
Advise on Congregation Targets for each year  
Advise on Ministers Salaries for each year  
Advise congregations on financial matters  
Administer financial loans in accordance the Code

## Finance Committee

### Role

The role of the Finance Committee is to administer the financial affairs of the Church, to ensure that it remains viable and that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.

The responsibilities of the Finance Committee will include:

- Managing and presenting budgets, accounts and financial statements.
- Informing Presbytery of the financial resources required to meet present and future needs.
- Presenting financial reports to Presbytery.
- Ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place.
- Liasing with any paid employees and volunteers about financial matters.
- Ensuring that there is no conflict between any investment held and the aims and objectives of the charity
- Monitoring the organisation's investment activity, where appropriate.
- Ensuring that the accounts are prepared and disclosed in the format required by funders and relevant statutory bodies.
- Ensuring that the accounts are reviewed / audited in the manner required, and any recommendations of the reviewer / auditors addressed.
- Keeping Presbytery informed about its financial duties and responsibilities.
- Considering budgets for new activities.
- Presenting the annual accounts to Presbytery for approval and then the AGM
- Advising Presbytery on any other matters referred to the committee for consideration

All accounts and related records to accounts must be retained for at least seven years.

## **SECTION 2**

### **Controls on expenditure**

#### **Overview**

As the Finance Committee administers the Finances of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, they will advise the affordability and explain any implications there may be on Presbytery's financial wishes. At all times this document and the Code will be referenced.

The Finance Committee does not undertake any purchases without the authority of Presbytery and the Code.

### **Bank Mandates and Cheque Signatories**

The Bank mandate (list of cheque signatories) will always be approved and minuted by the Presbytery.

The organisation will not use overdraft facilities or invest speculatively unless authorised, approved and minuted by Presbytery.

There will be a minimum of three authorised cheque signatories on the bank account. A minimum of four authorised On-Line Banking Administrators, two for setting up payments and two for approval of payments. All cheques must be signed by two signatories. The following procedures must be adhered to in respect of all cheques issued:

- Each cheque must be signed and authorised by two of the signatories.
- Both signatories should ensure that full relevant supporting documentation is provided before signing the cheque. A method of demonstrating good practice is for the inspection of invoices and initialling invoices
- Cheques should never be pre-signed by one signatory, thus effectively allowing payments to be made on one signature.

Account transfers must only be authorised upon signature by 2 signatories. Movement between the accounts can only be possible upon signature by 2 signatories. This must be recorded in the Finance Committee minutes

### **Reimbursement of employees expenses**

Original Receipts / Invoices are required for all claims.

## ***SECTION THREE***

### **Controls of the Financial Assets**

#### **Cash Receipts**

All monies received are banked without undue delay. All individual amounts received and the total lodged are recorded in the cash book (spreadsheet), thus facilitating the bank reconciliation.

#### **Reconciling cash book to bank**

##### **Banks Reconciliation**

A bank reconciliation for all accounts is carried out on a quarterly basis. It is vital control, as it gives the true cash position at that moment in time.

##### **Fixed Assets**

The Church will maintain, if required, an inventory stating the date of purchase, cost and location etc of assets that continue to be of value year after year. All serial numbers should be recorded. Items disposed of should be removed and all supporting documentary evidence retained.

##### **Budgetary control**

Budgetary control is effected by Presbytery on advice from the Finance Committee and controlled as set out in the code.

Corrective action is agreed upon by Presbytery and implemented by the Finance Committee.

## ***SECTION FOUR***

### **Auditing / Independent Review**

A statutory annual audit / Independent Review of the financial statements (annual accounts) is carried out by a registered auditor / independent qualified individual appointed by the Finance Committee.

The book keeper/administrator prepares a draft of the financial statements together with full working papers for presentation to the auditor / independent reviewer.

The annual audit / independent review will normally incorporate a detailed examination / review of the financial systems and records and result in recommendations to the Finance Committee as to how improvements could be made.

The audited / independently reviewed financial statements are provided for approval by the Finance Committee and hence presented to Presbytery during the April meeting.

## **SECTION FIVE**

### **Lodgement Book**

This spreadsheet book is used to record all money, i.e. cash and cheques received.

All lodgements are to be fully itemised and entered into Lodgement spreadsheet book.

All monies that are received should be banked without undue delay, with due regard to cost effectiveness. Cash must not be used.

### **Cheque Journal**

This spreadsheet book is used to record all cheques that are written by the organisation.

All payments, except those made through on-line banking, should be made by cheque. Cash should not be used to pay expenses.

The cheque journal should be set out with the analysis columns reflecting the accounts/budget headings. Do not use general headings such as 'general expenses' or 'sundry' as these will require further analysis at a later date.

The cheques journal is written up from the stubs of the chequebook.

The cheque journal should record the date the cheque is issued, the amount, the cheque number, detail of to whom the cheque is made payable, the account the cheque is being paid from and invoice number.

The bookkeeper/administrator should carry out 'random checks' periodically to ensure best practice procedures are in use.

### **Wages**

Wages are to be paid monthly, before the end of each month. Payments are made by Bank Transfer and are presented by bookkeeper/administrator online for the Chairperson to authorise.

## **SECTION SIX**

### **Managing Finance**

#### **Record Keeping**

Working papers should be retained on file, for seven years, to back up any financial statements in relation to a project. The type of information that should be kept includes:

- The calculations, and working papers on which the original transaction was based and record of approval by Presbytery.

Working papers must be referenced to each project to which they relate and in a format which can be readily understood in future years.

The bookkeeper/administrator on behalf of the Finance Committee should carry out checks on cheque journals, payroll, bills and all areas of finance, control etc. Details of all checks carried out, together with the findings, should be fully documented and reported back to the Finance Committee.

#### **Planning Cash flows**

The Finance Committee discuss the year ahead in order to present to Presbytery, during the April meeting, a proposed Budget for the forthcoming year. This will include Salaries to be paid and

Congregational Targets. Presbytery will confirm and authorise these figures.

In order to maintain a day to day running of the Church finances it is strongly recommended that Congregations provide regular monthly donations to central fund, or in advance payments to allow the smooth running of salaries and other expenses.

## **SECTION SEVEN**

### **Fraud Policy & Procedures**

#### **Fraud Policy Statement**

Fraud can be defined as 'any act of wilful dishonesty to gain individual or collective advantage'. It is taken to include theft, misuse of property, corruption, the alteration of financial or other records or any unauthorised act, which results directly or indirectly in financial gain to the perpetrator or third party.

On Presbytery's behalf, the Finance Committee is committed to taking all practical steps to prevent the Church being subjected to fraud whether perpetrated by Trustees, employees, suppliers, or members of the public.

We will endeavour to maintain robust control mechanisms to both prevent and detect fraud. The Finance Committee has responsibility for maintaining documented controls.

The trustees and employees have responsibility to protect the assets and reputation of the charity and are expected to be alert to the potential for fraud.

Confidential mechanisms have been established to allow trustees and employees to report suspected fraud to the Finance Committee. All that is reported to the Finance Committee or Presbytery will lead in the first place investigation of suspicions.

If any initial investigation by the Finance Committee, suggests that there is a case for further investigation, Presbytery will be immediately informed. The Finance Committee will then decide, in consultation with Presbytery, which body is best placed to undertake the further investigation and will together inform the Police if criminal activity has taken place.

If fraud is proven, and found to involve a trustee or an employee, disciplinary action will be taken. Such action may be considered not only against those found to have perpetrated the fraud, but also against trustee or employees whose negligence may have facilitated it.

### **Procedures**

#### **Fraud Prevention**

The prime responsibility for preventing fraud lies with the Presbytery through:

- Identification of risks to which systems and procedures are exposed;
- the implementation, documentation and operation of internal controls;
- Establishing an environment that promotes compliance with internal controls;
- Promoting fraud awareness among employees;
- Fostering an anti-fraud culture.

The Finance Committee also have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with common fraud techniques in areas for which they have control. This should also include being alert to signs which indicate that fraud is taking place. These may include:

- Employees under stress without a heavy workload
- Unexplained wealth and sudden change in lifestyles
- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Prime documents being lost and replaced with photocopies

- Cosy relationships with suppliers/customers

**Internal controls** are the key element in preventing frauds. They should be documented, communicated to all employees and the importance of compliance should be regularly reminded to employees. Finance should periodically monitor compliance with internal controls.

The HM treasury report concludes that **employees** provides the best protection against fraud.

### ***Fraud Detection and Reporting***

Having proper and consistently applied procedures for reporting and investigating fraud will have an important part to play in preventing fraud. Such investigations will remain confidential, but the Finance Committee will ensure that lessons learnt from any incident are disseminated appropriately.

Anyone with suspicions of fraud should in the first instance if appropriate report their concerns to the Convenor of the Finance Committee. If for any reason this is inappropriate employees may report direct to another member of the Finance Committee.

When suspicion of fraud is reported, it is important that the suspicions are treated seriously and that all details provided are accurately recorded and dealt with properly.

Having recorded the details of the individual case, the recipient will immediately contact a member of the Finance Committee, providing all recorder details together with any supporting evidence or documentation.

The individual to which the fraud was first reported will retain a copy of details and record the time and date when they notified the Finance Committee. The maintenance of detailed and accurate records is important in supporting any subsequent investigation.

At this stage the Finance Committee should also take whatever steps are necessary to prevent further losses – e.g. by changing procedures or suspending payments – without compromising the quality of the evidence or alerting the fraudsters.

### ***Fraud Investigation***

It is Presbytery's responsibility to assess the information on the reported fraud and advise the auditors and if appropriate the Police of all significant cases.

On receiving details Presbytery will undertake a limited review to establish whether the accusation does require further investigation. Until there is sufficient evidence to support the accusation, the details of the case should be kept internally. If such an initial investigation does support the allegation Presbytery, CCNI and the Police should be advised.

If a trustee or employee is implicated at this stage and it appears that there is sufficient evidence to justify future disciplinary action, the possibility of suspension must be considered. In such circumstances the organisation's Disciplinary procedures apply.

Once it is agreed that there is sufficient evidence to justify a fuller investigation Presbytery should meet with the Police and the other relevant bodies to decide who is best placed to undertake the further investigation. It is important that any further investigation is undertaken by individuals with experience in fraud investigation (e.g. auditors)

### ***Case Conclusion***

At the end of the case, irrespective of outcome, it is important that the progress of the investigation is reviewed to see what lessons can be learnt and to assess the effectiveness of the action taken.

Review should be undertaken by Presbytery and a brief report produced for discussion and consideration.

## ***EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - RESERVES POLICY***

### **General Fund**

It is the Policy of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church to keep all monies within the General Fund as cash. This enables the fund to be accessed when required to meet those financial needs of running expenses. Up to the value of £100k will be kept. Above this value the Finance Committee will present ideas to the Presbytery for approval.

### **Other Funds**

All other Funds are restricted Funds



## **EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - FULL DISCLOSURE POLICY**

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church requires Trustees and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As Trustees, Employees and representatives of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

This Full Disclosure Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns internally so that the Evangelical Presbyterian Church can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is the responsibility of all Trustees, employees and volunteers to report concerns about violations of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church's code of ethics or suspected violations of law or regulations that govern Evangelical Presbyterian Church's operations.

### **No Retaliation**

It is contrary to the values of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church for anyone to retaliate against any trustee, employee or volunteer who in good faith reports an ethics violation, or a suspected violation of law, such as a complaint of discrimination, or suspected fraud, or suspected violation of any regulation governing the operations of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

### **Reporting Procedure**

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church has an open door policy and suggests that Trustees or employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with a member of the PAC. If you are not comfortable speaking with this committee or you are not satisfied with the committees' response, you are encouraged to speak with the moderator. Everyone is required to report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations in writing to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church's full Presbytery which has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints.

### **Acting in Good Faith**

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

### **Confidentiality**

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

### **Handling of Reported Violations**

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church will notify the person who submitted a complaint and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation. The team investigating the complaint will be set up by Presbytery and be an independent body within the organisation and report back to Presbytery. The body should include either the Clerk of Presbytery or the current Moderator.

## ***EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - FULL DISCLOSURE POLICY***

This Policy applies to those Funds and Trusts for which Presbytery has a managing trustee responsibility:

### **The Policy**

- **A1.** The Policy of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church is to invest its funds in suitable portfolios as advised by our Stockbroker Specialists.
- **A2.** Investments held within these portfolios will be reviewed for acceptability under the following headings:
  - alcohol and tobacco;
  - armament;
  - corporate governance and business ethics;
  - environment;
  - fair trade and debt relief;
  - gambling;
  - human rights;
  - media ethics (including pornography);
  - medical and food safety issues.
- **B.** When property is given, devised, bequeathed or otherwise lawfully transferred to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church to hold as trustees (i.e. to have management responsibility) and not solely as custodian trustees and the property is stocks, shares or funds to which the Policy in A1 and A2 is applicable, the Board shall seek advice as to whether the stock etc., is acceptable under the Policy and if not shall dispose of any not acceptable.

## **APPENDIX [see FSO 2 (9)]**

### **A QUESTIONS TO THE MINISTER.**

- 1 Is it your concern in your ministerial labours to promote God's glory, bring sinners to Christ and build up believers in faith and holiness?
- 2 Do you prepare carefully for your pulpit ministrations?
- 3 Do you preach on extended portions of Scripture as well as on separate texts?
- 4 Do you ever preach/give lectures on special subjects?
- 5 Do you regularly give a children's address?
- 6 How do you conduct pastoral visitation? Do you endeavour to have worship in the homes of your people?
- 7 How often have you visited the congregation during the past year?
- 8 Do you visit regularly the sick and afflicted, the aged and the infirm?
- 9 Do you conduct a Bible Class in which the young people are educated in the doctrines of the Gospel and in the distinctive principles of the EPC?
- 10 What means do you adopt to prepare young people or other applicants for admission to the Lord's table? Are the implications of Church membership explained?
- 11 How many baptisms have you had within the past two years? Is Baptism always dispensed in public and preceded by the preaching of the word?
- 12 Are you satisfied with the Christian life and character of your Ruling Elders?
- 13 What is your relationship with your Elders like?
- 14 Do they set an example to the congregation in their attendance at public worship?
- 15 Do the Elders visit the families of the congregation? Have they been allocated districts?
- 16 Apart from visitation what special part do the Elders take in the life of the Church?
- 17 Do they co-operate with you in carrying out the discipline of the Church faithfully?
- 18 Does the Session issue Transfer Certificates to those who have left your congregation and do you endeavour to put them in touch with another Minister? How many Transfer Certificates have you issued during the past two years?
- 19 Do you regularly attend Presbytery?
- 20 Do you hold any office or position outside the pastorate of the congregation? If so, what are its nature and duties?
- 21 What is your assessment of the spiritual condition of the congregation?
- 22 How would you describe your present state of soul?
- 23 Are there any problems/encouragements/other matters relating to the congregation that you wish to bring to our attention?

## **B QUESTIONS TO THE RULING ELDERS**

- 1 How many members of Session are there? When was the last election of Elders held?
- 2 How often does the Session meet? Are all meetings constituted and closed with prayer?
- 3 Are all matters coming before the Session treated according to our Church CODE and are the minutes properly recorded and kept?
- 4 Where are the minute books of Session and Deacons Board, the Membership Roll and registers of Baptisms and Marriages kept? Have they been examined by the Commission?
- 5 How many families are there in the congregation and how many people do they comprise?
- 6 How many communicant members are there on the Roll? What change has there been in the membership during the past five years?
- 7 Is the Membership Roll revised annually?
- 8 What is the average attendance at Public Worship and at the Lord's Table?
- 9 How many regularly attend the Prayer Meeting? Is a spirit of Prayer evident in the congregation?
- 10 How often is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper observed?
- 11 How many communicants have participated at least once during the past year?
- 12 How many during the past year were communicants for the first time?
- 13 Are they examined and approved by the Session previous to their admission to the Lord's Table? What form does their admission to church membership take?
- 14 Is the Sacrament of Baptism ever administered without prior Session approval?
- 15 Is the Sacrament of Baptism administered only to the children of members?
- 16 Do you safeguard the purity of the Church fellowship and endeavour to maintain the discipline of the Church?
- 17 Are the members of the congregation submissive to the authority of the Session in the exercise of discipline and in its endeavours to promote a high standard of Christian practice?
- 18 Are the parents attentive to the religious education of their children?
- 19 How many Sunday Schools are connected to the congregation? How many teachers and pupils are there? How many Elders teach in the Sunday School? Where do pupils come from?
- 20 Have you a Young Peoples Association/Youth club? Is it adequately staffed? Does it have a vital spiritual content?
- 21 What other organisations/activities exist in the congregation? Does the Session exercise adequate oversight of them?
- 22 What efforts are being made to reach the non-church-going in your district?
- 23 Is there a definite missionary interest in the congregation? Is sufficient encouragement of missions, home and overseas, given? Have you a missions secretary?
- 24 Are any of the members of the congregation studying with a view to the Ministry?

- 25 How many copies of the 'Evangelical Presbyterian' and 'From the Frontiers' magazines are circulated in the congregation?
- 26 Are you satisfied with the state of religion in the congregation? Are there evidences of growth or decline?
- 27 Is there a spirit of fellowship, harmony, love and peace? Do you try to prevent and remove all offence in the congregation and comfort and instruct the members?
- 28 Do the Elders so appointed attend Presbytery regularly?
- 29 Are all communications from Presbytery passed on to the Session/Deacons/Members as appropriate?
- 30 Are you satisfied with the Christian life, character and work of your Minister? Does he reveal himself as a worthy example? Have you good relations with him?
- 31 Do your Minister's pulpit services indicate careful preparation and display an accurate knowledge of the Word of God?
- 32 Does he faithfully preach the Gospel of Christ in all its fullness, upholding the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as accepted by this Church?
- 33 Does he regularly visit all the families of the congregation? Does he visit faithfully the sick and afflicted, the aged and the infirm?
- 34 Does he visit and take an interest in the Sabbath School and YPA and endeavour to promote the spiritual well-being of the young?
- 35 Does he visit and take an interest in the other organisations/activities of the congregation?
- 36 Does he have access to the Day Schools in the district and take part in their RE?
- 37 Does he seek to keep in touch with the lapsed and unconnected in the district?
- 38 Is he faithful and impartial in the exercise of Church discipline?
- 39 Is he a man open to advice and counsel and gracious in acknowledging error?
- 40 Do the people respect their Minister and are they profited by his labours?
- 41 Is he a man of reading and study and is he devoted as much as possible to the exercise of his office?
- 42 Does he engage in any regular activity which interferes with the due performance of his work as a Minister?
- 43 Do all the Elders support and help the Minister in every way that they can?
- 44 Do your Deacons give evidence of personal integrity and of faithfulness and devotedness in their work?
- 45 Are there any matters relating to the congregation that you wish to bring to our attention?

## **C QUESTIONS TO THE DEACONS**

- 1 How many Deacons are there? When were they installed?
- 2 How often do you meet? Do you all attend faithfully the meetings and seek the welfare of the congregation?
- 3 Can you produce audited annual accounts for the past three financial years?
- 4 Do the people generally contribute in proportion to their means to the support of the Lord's Work in this place?
- 5 Do you encourage use of the weekly Free-will Offering envelopes in the congregation, and tax-payers to **covenant** their givings?
- 6 What was the Central Fund Target set for this congregation last year? By how much did it exceed/fail to meet this target? How often in the past five years has it exceeded/failed to meet the Target?
- 7 Are you satisfied with the congregational contributions to Training for the Ministry and Help the Needy Funds?
- 8 How much was contributed last year to the Home and Foreign Missions Fund? Do the members make use of the Missions Boxes as much as they could? How much was contributed to 'other' Missions last year?
- 9 What steps do you take to encourage the people to contribute to the Lord's work?
- 10 What provision is made for the needy?
- 11 Do you encourage the members of the congregation to take an interest in current social problems and play their part in the life and government of the community?
- 12 Are there any congregational debts? If so, what are they and what efforts are you making to clear them?
- 13 Are there any congregational endowments or invested funds? Have you sought the advice of the Finance Committee concerning their investment?
- 14 Are all bequests duly recorded in the minutes with the purposes for which they were given?
- 15 Are you satisfied with the integrity, competence and efficiency of your treasurer?
- 16 Who are the Trustees of the congregational property? Are the trust Deeds kept in safe custody?
- 17 Are you satisfied with the condition of the fabric of the property? And its facilities?
- 18 For what amounts are the congregational properties severally insured? When was the amount of insurance last revised? Has recent advice been sought as to the adequacy of insurance?
- 19 Have you a comprehensive Accident/Public Liability policy?
- 20 In your opinion do the Ministers and Elders set an example of piety, activity, devotedness and zeal in the discharge of their duties?
- 21 Are there any matters relating to the congregation that you wish to bring to our attention?



