



Policy for Discipline of Church Members

Our church Memorandum and Articles of Association sets out the formal procedure for the withdrawal of church membership in Articles of Association 4:

4 TERMINATION OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

4.1 A person will cease to be a Church Member:-

4.1.1 on delivering written notice of resignation to the Registered Office; or

4.1.2 if the Church Members resolve (by a 75% majority of the Church Members present and voting) to terminate his membership provided that he shall first have had reasonable opportunity to explain to the Church Members at a General Meeting why he should not be removed.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the grounds on which the trustees are likely to recommend termination of church membership or other actions to the members.

The primary purpose of discipline is always the restoration of the church member concerned to godly doctrine and behaviour and fellowship in the church. A member of the church may be subject to the discipline of the church for any of the following reasons:

- (a) He or she errs in doctrine so that he or she no longer affirms the Statement of Faith of the church
- (b) He or she is no longer willing to respect the Doctrinal Distinctives of the church
- (c) He or she errs in conduct by committing open sin which brings the church into disrepute
- (d) He or she has consistently failed to fulfil the obligations of a member of the church
- (e) He or she has made false and malicious allegations against an Elder, Deacon or other member of the church
- (f) He or she is no longer living in submission to the leadership and authority of the Elders of the church

Forms of Church Discipline

The elders will normally recommend one of the following courses of action to church members:

A member of the church may be disciplined by the church in any of the following ways:

- (a) A member of the church may be excluded from participation in the Lord's Supper
- (b) A member of the church may be suspended from membership of the church
- (c) A member of the church may be dismissed from membership of the church
- (d) A member of the church may be dismissed from membership of the church and the remaining members of the church instructed not to have any association with them.

Process of church discipline

Where a member of the church alleges that another member has acted in such a manner as to require the exercise of church discipline the trustees church shall thoroughly investigate that allegation.

A member against whom such an allegation has been made shall be given every opportunity to answer the allegation before two or more trustees of the church.

If the trustees conclude that the member in question has acted in a manner warranting the exercise of church discipline, they shall give the member concerned opportunity to repent and seek forgiveness, whether of the church in general, or of such individuals as have been affected by his or her conduct.

Where the member in question repents and seeks such forgiveness, the trustees will take no further action.

If the member in question fails to take the opportunity to repent and seek forgiveness, the trustees shall be entitled to bring the member to the church for discipline as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

They shall submit a written or oral report to the members of the church stating the allegation raised against the member concerned, why they believe there are sufficient grounds for the exercise of church discipline, and what disciplinary action they consider appropriate in the circumstances.

Following the submission of such a report, the Elders shall call a church business meeting to discuss the allegations made against the member concerned, and to determine whether any disciplinary action should be taken.

At such a church business meeting the member in question must be given the opportunity to answer the allegations brought against him or her.

Where a member of the church has been subjected to church disciplinary measures but remains a member of the church, the disciplinary measures shall be removed by the elders if he or she demonstrates repentance and seeks forgiveness, whether of the church in general, or of such individuals as have been affected by his or her conduct.

Where a member of the church has been dismissed from membership of the church and subsequently demonstrates repentance and seeks forgiveness, whether of the church in general, or of such individuals as have been affected by his or her conduct, he or she may apply for readmission to membership.