

DECISIONS AND CHURCH GOVERNMENT AT IMMANUEL

1. BIBLE TEXTS AND PRINCIPLES

Mark 10:42-45
John 13:14-16
Acts 14:23
Acts 20:17-38
Ephesians 4:11-12
1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

1 Timothy 3:1-13
1 Timothy 5:17-18
2 Timothy 1:13-14, 2:1-2
Titus 1:5-9
1 Peter 5:1-5
Hebrews 13:7, 17

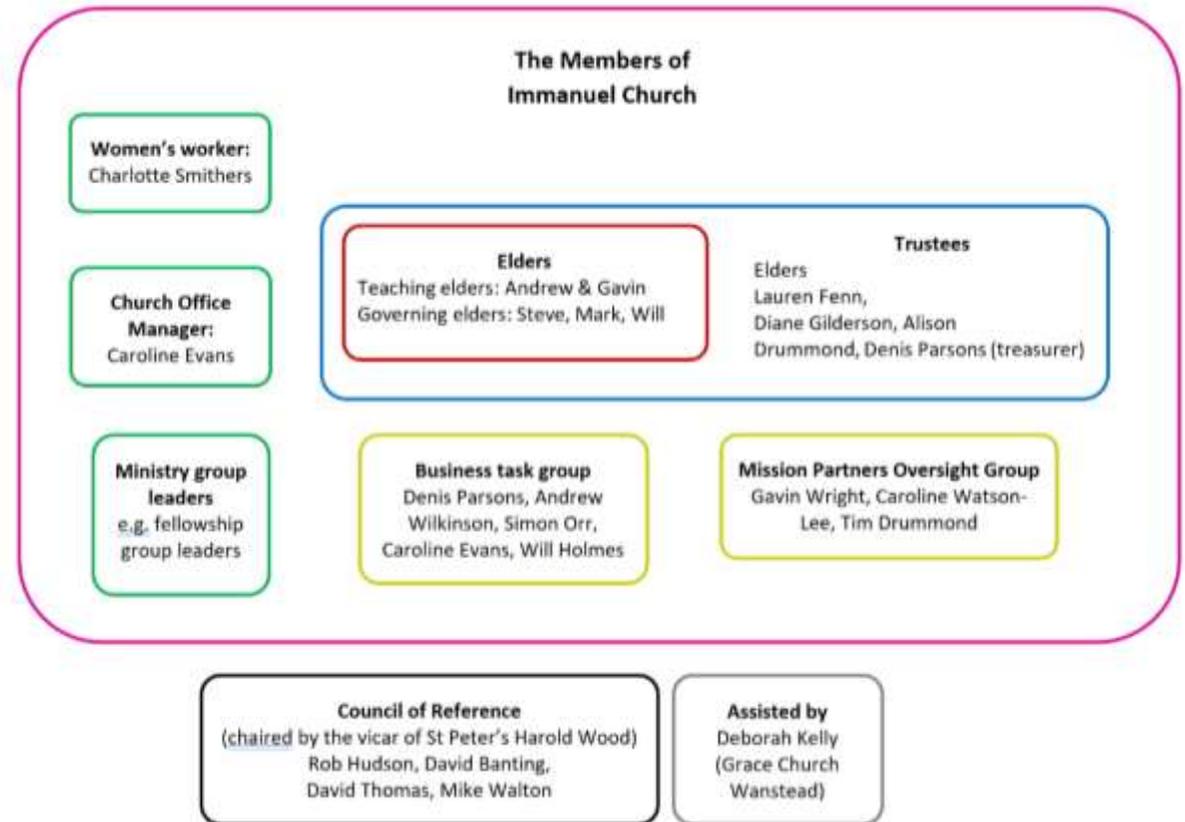
(a) CHURCH LEADERS

- **Who?** “elder / overseer / pastor or pastor-teacher... minister”
- **Qualifications and appointment? To do what?**
- **How many? Where?**

(b) CHURCH MEMBERS

- **Follow lead**
- **Active in “ministry”** (e.g. Romans 16)

2. HOW IT WORKS AT IMMANUEL



3. KEY DOCUMENTS

- Westminster Confession of Faith – doctrinal standards of our church
- Immanuel's constitution – the legal basis of the church
- Church membership covenant (see below) – what the church and her members promise

4. RECOMMENDED READING

- “Church government: Biblical principles & their practical outworking” (elders' discussion paper)
- *Church Elders*, by Jeramie Rinne
- *How Jesus runs the church*, by Guy Prentiss-Waters

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Different churches invite members to express commitment in different ways. How does it work at Immanuel?

Practically, church members must be **baptized, aged 16 or over**, and have been **attending regularly** at Immanuel for 6 months. (Please ask if you've got questions about our baptism practice at Immanuel.)

Spiritual commitments are summed up in three short statements. These are listed below, together with some practical implications.

Every honest Christian knows that they fall short of God's standards. But we believe these statements – which are both simple and searching – sum up the Lord's plan of salvation, holiness and church commitment.

1. I am trusting the gospel of grace for my salvation

- I know that I am a sinner in God's sight. Without Jesus and his death upon the cross I would face His holy judgement. My only hope is God's sovereign mercy. *See Psalm 51:4*
- I believe that Jesus Christ is both Lord and Saviour. I trust Him alone for my salvation, as He is presented to me in God's Word the Bible. *See Acts 4:12*

2. With the Holy Spirit's help I am seeking to grow in godliness

- I want to be devoted to personal Bible reading and prayer. *See 1 Peter 2:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*
- I want to share Christ with unbelievers such as I am able. *See 1 Peter 3:15*
- I want to live a holy life in line with the ethical teaching of the Bible in those different relationships to which God has called me – e.g. in marriage, family, workplace, community, church, etc. *See 1 Thessalonians 4:7*

3. I am committed to the people and work of Immanuel Church Brentwood

- With the Lord's help I want to love the members of Immanuel as members of my own family. (E.g. God wants us to encourage each other, resolve tensions biblically and respect those who lead the church). *See 1 Peter 4:8, Ephesians 4:2-3, Hebrews 13:17*
- I will be committed to meeting regularly with and praying for my church. (E.g. attending church regularly on Sundays and where possible joining a fellowship group and attending the church prayer meeting). *See Hebrews 10:25*
- Such as I am able I will give regularly to support the work of Immanuel. (The Old Testament pattern of the 10% tithe is a great challenge, but the New Testament doesn't state a percentage. It simply says that, before the Lord, we should give cheerfully and sacrificially. Obviously, we also encourage giving to other needs outside of Immanuel.) *See 1 Timothy 6:18*
- I want to use the gifts God has given me to help the church family and to aid our outreach to the unconverted. I understand and support the mission of Immanuel, and will seek to be involved in an area of service. *See Ephesians 4:16*