

Church Ministry Intern Westlake Church Lausanne

Westlake is seeking to appoint a Church Ministry Intern.

The appointment will be for a period of 6 months to 1 year and requires a minimum engagement of 50% (i.e. at least 20 hours per week), subject to the applicant's availability.

Applicants need to affirm Westlake's Statement of Faith (Appendix A) and inform the appointment committee if they hold a different view on any aspects of the Elder Affirmation of Faith (Appendix B).

Areas of Service:

The internship will provide a rounded exposure to church ministry, including the following areas:

Sundays

The intern will:

- Join the Set-Up team for Sunday morning services
- Be exposed to and trained in:
 - Audio-visual and, according to gifting, music ministry
 - Creche, children and youth ministry (as class helper and/or teacher)
- Facilitate the set up/set down for any Sunday evening events
- Purchase/prepare food for Sunday evening events if needed

During the week:

The intern will:

- Join a cleaning team for Westlake's facilities
- Help with ongoing maintenance/organisation of facilities
- Join the childcare team for the Women's Bible study and Ark playgroup. If female, join the Women's Bible study
- Set up for, purchase and prepare food and clear up after youth and student meetings
- Join the leaders and teaching team for youth and/or students, depending on age and gifting, and be trained in how to prepare and deliver talks and lead Bible Studies.
- Undertake practical tasks to support the Church Administrator, Children and Women's Ministry Coordinator, and Senior Pastor.

Training

In addition to exposure to and training in the above ministries, the intern will attend weekly staff meetings on Monday mornings, and a weekly intern training on Thursday mornings.

The intern may also be invited to observe elders' meetings.

Pay

CHF 1000/month (50% position)

Appendix A

Statement of Faith

As well as other biblical teaching, the church professes the following basic doctrines and principles:

- The divine inspiration and authority of the Holy Scriptures as originally given, and their supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- The unity of God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- The creation of all things, both visible and invisible, by the Word of God; all creation being in, through and for Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.
- The universal sinfulness and guilt of mankind since the Fall, rendering him subject to God's wrath and condemnation and necessitating the regeneration of his whole being.
- The believer's redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin solely through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, the only Representative and Substitute for mankind; This redemption is received through personal faith in Jesus Christ.
- The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
- The second coming of Jesus Christ.
- The resurrection of mankind, and the eternal blessedness of the redeemed and the eternal punishment of the impenitent.
- The work of the Holy Spirit, convicting mankind of sin, bringing the sinner to repentance toward God and Faith in Jesus Christ.
- The indwelling and work of the Holy Spirit, granting new life and power to the believer and granting gifts to the Church.
- The unity and common priesthood of all believers, who together form the one Universal Church, the body of which Christ is the head.
- The believers' common objective to live Christ-centred lives (Ephesians 4:1-3) under the Lord's authority and to make disciples of Jesus Christ according to His commandment (Matthew 28: 19- 20).

Appendix B

Westlake Church Lausanne – Elder Affirmation of Faith

(Please note: the EAF is a work in progress. Items in grey have yet to be finalised.)

Article 1: Qualifications for Eldership

Background

- God has eternally existed as a Trinity - Father, Son and Spirit. All true family is derived from the Father (Eph 3:14-15), and so (arguably) the unity in diversity of the Trinity is the foundation of all true family. In the New Testament, the relationship within the Trinity is not used as a picture or model for leadership within the Church family. However, given the unity in diversity that exists in the very nature of the Godhead, it is perhaps no surprise that leadership of God's family, under both the Old and New Covenants, is always invested in a plurality of called men, not in one single man.
- In the Old Testament, Moses established elders to help him lead the people of Israel (Num 11:16-17) and in the times of the kings, there were three divinely appointed offices - Prophet, Priest and King. These offices were never held by one man, but rather represented a division of power. It might be argued that the times of the Judges exemplified leadership invested in one individual. However, the period of the Judges is one of increasing moral decay, and an example to be avoided not followed (Judges 21:25).
- In the New Testament we see a plurality of elders established in churches and leaders of churches referred to in the plural (1 Tim 5:17; Titus 1:5; Heb 13:17).

Roles of Elders

“I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.”
Jeremiah 3:15

- In his address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, Paul describes the elders as ‘overseers’ of ‘the flock’ (Acts 20:28). Therefore, the role of an elder is first and foremost that of a shepherd - not, for example, a business executive, or military officer. In farming, the tasks of a shepherd entrusted with a flock include oversight, protection, provision, care and guidance.
- It is such tasks that Paul picks up in his address to the Ephesian elders. He says that they are ‘to care for the church of God’. This care involves keeping watch over themselves as well as the flock (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3:5). The Writer to the Hebrews agrees. He says the leaders of a church keep watch over the souls of its members (Heb 13:17).
- Peter tells us that elders are to do this work of oversight as shepherds with a willing attitude and not under compulsion. Rather than it being a domineering oversight, it should be one that flows out of being an example to the flock. It is also done in the understanding that elders are under-shepherds of the chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:1-4).
- Paul’s subsequent comments to the Ephesian elders about wolves arising *from among them* (Acts 20:29) suggest that this watching of self refers to an elder being self-reflective about his personal character, conduct, theology and teaching (Acts 20:30). It also suggests that the body of elders should be watchful for each other, being willing to address issues that arise in the lives of individual elders and holding each other accountable (1 Tim 5:19-20).
- However, as well as watching themselves they are to be on guard and protect the flock from other internal and external threats: wolves that will not spare the flock (Acts 20:29). We see an example of this in Paul’s encouragement to Titus to silence certain false

teachers who use the church for their own financial gain or public platform (Titus 1:10-11). To protect the church, it may be necessary for the elders to exercise church discipline, by approaching individuals on a private basis but also, if necessary, involving the wider church (Matt 18:15-18).

- Elders who serve in these ways will inevitably invest significant time and energy in the church. Given this it would be easy to become possessive and protective of the church in a wrong way. Instead, they must remember that the church is God's (Acts 20:28; 2 Cor 1:1). It does not belong to them or any faction within a church. The people of God are God's people and elders are stewards and servants in his household (1 Cor 4:1-2; Titus 1:7). As they shepherd the flock they do so as those who know they will one day give an account of their stewardship (Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 5:4).
- In keeping with both the example and teaching of the Lord Jesus, elders are to exercise servant leadership, willing to take the last place and modelling service to all (Matt 20:25-28).
- While all elders are to exercise leadership, some do so specifically through preaching and teaching (1 Tim 5:17) and the New Testament requirements for eldership (see below) include the ability to teach (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:9). Elders are tasked with protecting the church from false teaching - and so it is obvious that they should be teachers of the truth - able to rebuke those who teach what is false. To be able to do that, they themselves must have a firm grasp of what the truth is (Titus 1:9).
- The form that teaching and instruction by elders is to take is not stipulated. It could be through preaching, teaching, leading Bible-studies, or mentoring relationships. However, in this regard, it is notable that one other requirement for eldership is hospitality (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8), and so an Elder's ministry of caring, teaching and keeping watch is not to be done at arm's length. Elders are to welcome people into their homes. This will mean the church will know, as much as anyone ever can, that what their leaders teach, they live, and can learn from their example as well as their words (Heb 13:7).
- In the Ephesian 4 ministries, Paul lists shepherds and teachers - in other words, *elders* - as among those whom God has put in place to enable the saints to be equipped for 'the work of ministry' (Eph 4:11-12). The role of elders therefore is not to do all the ministry themselves but to equip others to do it - through teaching and example. Elders are to build up the body so that it grows in maturity in its unity in the faith and its knowledge of Christ. The aim of their service is that the church becomes mature and stable, able to stand in the storms of life, culture, and theological drift (Eph 4:13-14).

Requirements for Eldership

- In 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-11 Paul lists a number of requirements for men to serve as elders. These are used to determine the fitness of someone to serve as an elder within Westlake.

They must:

- be above reproach (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6, 7)
- be the husband of one wife (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6)
- be sober-minded (1 Tim 3:2)
- be self-controlled (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- be respectable (1 Tim 3:2) and upright, holy and disciplined (Titus 1:8)
- be hospitable (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it. (Titus 1:9)
- be able to teach (1 Tim 3:2)
- not be a drunkard (1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- not be violent but gentle (1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- not be quarrelsome (1 Tim 3:3) or arrogant or quick-tempered (Titus 1:7)
- not be a lover of money (1 Tim 3:3) or greedy for gain (Titus 1:7)

- be a lover of good (Titus 1:8)
- manage his own household well with all dignity (1 Tim 3:4) and his children must be submissive (1 Tim 3:4), believers, and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination (Titus 1:6)
- not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil (1 Tim 3:6)
- be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil (1 Tim 3:7)

Men and Eldership

The office and role of elder within Westlake is restricted to men (1 Tim 2:12, 3:2; Titus 1:5-6) who are called to lead in the manner of Christ: loving, life-laying down, sacrificial service (Eph 5:25; 1 Pet 5:1-3). However, multiple areas of teaching and leadership are open to women (Titus 2:3-4; Rom 16:1, 3; Acts 18:26; 1 Cor 11:5), therefore elders should lead in such a way that women, and their ministry, thrive in Westlake.

Article 2: Elder Statement of Faith

Regarding the Bible

1. We believe in [the divine inspiration, authority, clarity, necessity and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures](#) as originally given, without error in their original manuscripts. Properly interpreted, they are wholly true in all they affirm (2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:19; 1 John 5:9).
2. The Bible is the foundation and source from which the church is taught and governed. (Acts 2:42; Acts 4:19-20, 5:29; 2 Tim. 2:15; 4:1-2; John 5:39; Matt. 22:29).
3. We believe that we are to faithfully teach the Bible in such a way that its message can be applied to an individual's life, so that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, that person is led to faith and greater maturity in Christ. (Acts 20:27, 32; John 5:39; Matt 22:29; 2 Tim 3:16-17).

Regarding God

4. We believe that there is one true and living God [Deut 6:4; Is 44:6; James 2:19; Jude 25] who eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit [Gen 1:26; Matt 3:16-17, 28:19; John 1:1-2; 1 Cor 12:4-6; 2 Cor 13:14; Eph 4:4-6; 1 Pet 1:2; Rev 1:4-5], who are equal in their divine nature, power and glory [Isaiah 9:6; John 20:28; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor 2:10-11; Col 1:19].
5. We believe that God is **spirit** [John 4:24]. He is **independent** - that is, he has no need of anything from his creation [Job 41:11; Ps 50:10-12; Acts 17:24-25]. He is **unchanging** (immutable) in the perfections of his being, his purposes and his promises [Ps 33:11; Mal 3:6; James 1:17]. He is **eternal**, having no beginning or end [Ex 3:14; Ps 90:2; Rev 1:8]. He is **omnipresent** [Deut 10:14; Jer 23:23-24; Ps 139:7-10] and **invisible** - that is, we will never be able to see God in the total perfection of his being [John 1:18; John 6:46; 1 Tim 1:17, 6:16]. However, in heaven we will see God 'as he is' [1 John 3:2; Matt 5:8] and 'face to face' [1 Cor 13:12; Rev 22:3-4] - that is, we will have a completely true, though not exhaustive, vision of God. He is **omniscient**, knowing all things [Job 37:16; Heb 4:13; 1 John 3:20], infinitely **wise** [Job 12:13; Rom 16:27] and **truthful**, being the final standard of all truth [Jer 10:10; John 17:3; Titus 1:2; 1 John 5:20]. All that he is and does is **good** [Ps 34:8; 100:5; 106:1]. He is **love** [1 John 4:8, 10] and **merciful** and **gracious** [Ex 34:6; 2 Cor 1:3]. He is **holy** and separated from sin [Lev 19:2; Ps 71:22; Is 6:3]. He is the God of **peace** [Rom 15:33; 1 Cor 14:33] and **justice** [Deut 32:4] who executes his wrath upon sin [John 3:36; Rom 1:8; Eph 2:3].
6. We believe that God is absolutely sovereign, fully accomplishing all that he wills. He knows all things and foresees all things. He is omnipotent - the Almighty (Gen 17:1; 35:11; 2 Cor 6:18; Rev 1:8; 4:8; 19:6) - able to do all that he wants to do. There is nothing too hard for him (Gen 18:14; Jer 32:17, 27). There is no limit to his power (Job 11:7). With him, all things are possible (Matt 19:26).

However, he will never do anything to deny his holy character - it is impossible for him to lie (Titus 1:2; Heb 6:18), to be tempted, or to tempt others to sin (James 1:13).

We believe he governs all things in the universe - upholding all things and directing all things (Neh 9:6; Col 1:17; Heb 1:3) to fulfil his will and purpose (Rom 8:28; Eph 1:11). He is supreme over creation (Ps 135:7) and all earthly kingdoms (Job 12:23; Ps 22:28). He is sovereign over our lives - directing our steps (Jer 10:23; Prov 16:9, 20:24; Acts 17:26), using even the evil purposes of men for his good purposes (Gen 50:20; 1 Pet 2:8).

However, human beings remain morally responsible for their actions and cannot blame God for their unbelief or the sinful choices they make (Acts 1:16; 2:23; 4:27-28; Rom 9:19-20; James 1:13-14).

7. We believe that God concerns himself mercifully in the affairs of men. He does this through his common grace - causing his sun to shine and rain to fall on the evil and the good (Matt 5:45). He is patient with mankind, not wishing any to perish but all to come to repentance (2 Pet 3:9). He hears and answers prayer (Matt 6:6-8; 7:7-11). He forgives the sins, and saves from eternal condemnation all those who repent and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 5:24; Acts 2:38-40; 3:19-20; 4:12).
8. We believe that God created the heavens and the earth (Gen 1:1; 2 Kings 19:15; Acts 4:24), all things visible and invisible (Col 1:15). He did this through his word (Gen 1:3; Heb 11:3), his Son - the eternal Word (John 1:1-3), our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom and for whom all things were made (1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:15-16). Creation displays the glory of God (Ps 8:1-4; Ps 19:1-4) and his eternal power and divine nature (Rom 1:20), rendering all men without excuse for not worshipping him as God (Rom 1:20-21).
9. We believe that God created all things out of nothing (Heb 11:3) calling what he had made 'good' (Gen 1:10, 12, 18, 25) and 'very good' (Gen 1:31). He created the first man, Adam, as a real, historical individual (Gen 1:27; Gen 2:7; Matt 19:4; Rom 5:12-14). Humanity is the pinnacle of God's creation and each individual is an image bearer of God (Gen 1:26-27). Humanity is called to faithfully steward the natural world as God's vice-regents (Gen 1:27-28).
10. We believe in Jesus Christ - the Second Person of the Trinity (Gen 1:26; Ps 45:6-7; Is 9:6; Rom 9:5; Titus 2:13-14; 2 Peter 1:1) and our Lord (Phil 2:9-11). Regarding his divine nature, he is the eternal Word, of one substance with the Father (John 1:1-3; John 8:58; Col 1:15-17; Heb 1:3). He is eternally begotten of the Father, God's only begotten Son (Ps 2:7-12; Luke 1:35; Luke 3:22; Gal 4:4; Heb 1:2, 8-9; 2 Peter 1:17; 1 John 4:14-15).

Regarding his human nature, we believe he was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matt 1:20; Luke 1:31-35), born of the Virgin Mary (Isaiah 7:10-14; Matt 1:16, 18-25; Luke 1:26-35; Gal 4:4), and was fully man (John 1:14; 1 John 4:2; John 4:6; 11:35; Mark 4:38; 19:33-34; Heb 4:15). As the Second Adam (Rom 5:14-21; Luke 3:38), he lived the perfect, sinless life we have failed to live (John 8:46; 1 Peter 1:19; Heb 4:15-16), and in his human nature he fully submitted himself to the will of his Father in heaven (Matt 26:39; John 8:29).

Regarding his divine and human natures, we fully ascribe to the Nicene Creed and the Chalcedonian Definition (see annexes).

11. We believe in his substitutionary death in our place, taking our sin upon himself (Is 53:5-6; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18), and propitiating God's wrath (Rom 3:25; 1 John 4:10). At the cross he defeated the principalities and powers (Gen 3:15, Col 2:13-15; Rev 12:11). For all who trust him, he has secured redemption from slavery to sin and death (Luke 1:68; Eph 1:7), paying our ransom (Mark 10:45; 1 Tim 2:6), justifying us (Rom 3:24, 5:9) and reconciling us to God (2 Cor 5:18; Eph 2:13; Col 1:20). He has become for us an example of enduring suffering with patience and joy (Phil 2:4-8; 1 Peter 2:20-21; Heb 12:1-2).

We believe in his physical, bodily resurrection from the dead (Matt 28:5-10; Acts 1:3; Rom 6:4; 10:9) and his ascension into heaven (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:9-11; Eph 4:8-10; 1 Tim

3:16) where he now sits at the right hand of the Father as our advocate, interceding for us (1 John 2:1; Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25).

12. We believe in the personal, visible return of Christ to the earth (Acts 1:11; 1 Thess 3:13; 4:16; 2 Thess 2:1) and the final, triumphant establishment of His kingdom in the new heavens and new earth (Rev 21:1-5), in the resurrection of the body (John 11:25; 1 Cor 15:20-26; 1 Thess 4:16), the final judgment (Matt 25:31-46), the eternal blessedness of the redeemed, and the eternal punishment of the unrepentant (Matthew 25:46, Mark 9:47-48, John 5:21-25, Rev 20:10-15).

We believe that the prospect of Christ's return should motivate us to personal witness and proclamation of the gospel (Matt 24:14).

Where we disagree on additional details concerning the end times we choose to adopt a posture of humility.

13. We believe in the Holy Spirit—the third person of the Trinity (Matt 10:20; Matt 28:19; Rom 8:9; John 14:26; 15:26; Acts 2:33).

The Spirit was at work in creation (Gen 1:2; 2:7). He inspired and continues to illuminate the Scriptures (2 Tim 3:16; 1 Peter 1:21; 2 Cor 3:14-17). The Spirit glorifies the Son (John 15:26; 16:14).

He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8).

The Spirit brings us to repentance and faith in Christ (John 6:44; Acts 11:18; 1 Cor 12:3). The Spirit regenerates us – giving us new hearts (Ezek 36:26-27; John 3:3-8; Col 2:13), uniting us with Christ, (Rom 6:3-4) and with one another, in his body (1 Cor 12:13; Eph 4:3-4). He sanctifies (2 Cor 3:18), bears fruit in (Gal 5:22-23), and equips and empowers believers for service (Rom 12:6-8).

The Spirit indwells every true believer (Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13). He is our Helper (John 15:25) and Teacher (John 14:26; 1 John 2:20,27).

14. We believe in the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit and the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit [Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:1-11, 27-31; 1 Peter 4:7-11], within scriptural guidelines [1 Cor 14:1-19]. These gifts are given for the common good [1 Cor 12:7, 14:12]. Because differences of opinion exist on some gifts we are each responsible for acting and speaking in love [Rom 12:9-10; 1 Cor 12:31-13:13]. Love is more important than the exercise of any gift [1 Cor 13:1-3].

Elders may take different positions on whether some gifts of the Spirit continue today or not. Westlake chooses, for the sake of unity and our mission in the context God has placed us, to take neither a 'cessationist' nor a 'continuationist' position. For this reason, we do not encourage 'revelatory' gifts in our public worship services. In their teaching, elders should respect both sides of this debate, but are free to declare where they personally stand. They should do so with love and grace to those who differ. Our conviction is that the ministry of the Spirit is Christ-focused, not Spirit- or self- focused [John 14:26, 16:7-10, 13-15; 2 Cor 3:17-18].

Regarding Mankind

15. We believe that all human beings are created in the image of God [Gen 1:26-27; 5:1-2], giving inherent dignity and worth to all [Ps 139:13-14]. It also places upon us a responsibility to care for and protect the vulnerable - for example, the unborn, the elderly, the sick [Lev 19:14, 32; Ezek 34:4; Matt 25:35-36; Col 3:12]. We do not believe that abortion or euthanasia are compatible with a Christian view of human life, dignity, and worth [Ex 20:13; Prov 6:16-17; Eccles 8:8; 1 Cor 3:16-17; Eph 5:29]. We believe racism to be a sin, that the Bible teaches there is no inferior or superior race, and that there is no partiality in God [Acts

17:26; Rom 2:11; Gal 3:28-29; Col 3:11; James 2:8-9]. The kingdom of God is inclusive of every tribe, people, and language, without prejudice. [Matt 28:19-20; Luke 13:29; Acts 10:34-35; Rev 7:9].

16. We believe in the universal sinfulness and guilt of humanity, as a result of the Fall [1 Kings 8:46; Eccles 7:20; Rom 3:23; 1 John 1:8]. 'In Adam' we are spiritually dead and alienated from God [Rom 5:12-14; 1 Cor 15:22]. This renders all people subject to God's wrath and condemnation [Rom 1:18; 3:19; 5:16-19].
17. We believe that redemption and forgiveness from the guilt, penalty, and power of sin is solely by God's grace, through faith in Christ and his substitutionary sacrifice, death, and resurrection [John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom 5:1; 1 Tim 2:5-6; Heb 9:14; 1 Pet 1:18-19; Rev 13:8]. At the cross, he bore the wrath of God our sins deserve [Is 53:5-6; John 1:29; Gal 3:13; 1 Pet 3:18]. Our sin was counted to him, and his righteousness is counted to us [2 Cor 5:21; Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 2:24]. Through his resurrection he was vindicated as the Son of God and we are justified [Rom 1:4; 4:24-25].
18. We believe that when a person repents of sin, trusts Christ as their personal Saviour, and submits to him as Lord, that person has been born again and saved by grace [John 3:3-8; Rom 5:1; Eph 2:4-5]. We believe that this salvation is a wonderful gift of God's grace - leaving us with nothing to boast in [Rom 11:36]. By his Spirit he draws us to Jesus [John 6:44]. While we are still dead in our sins, he makes us alive [Eph 2:4-5], giving us the faith to trust Christ [Eph 2:8-9], and adopting us into his family [Rom 8:15-17].
19. We believe that God desires for all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth [1 Tim 2:3-4]. To this end, Christ has commanded his church to proclaim the gospel to all nations, in the power of his Spirit [Matt 28:19-20; Acts 1:8], calling people to repentance and faith in him [Luke 24:45-47, 2 Peter 3:9], and to be reconciled to God [2 Cor 5:20].

We believe that each individual is personally responsible for how they respond to the gospel, and that whoever confesses with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and believes in their heart that God raised him from the dead, will be saved [Rom 10:9-10; Heb 3:15].

We believe that we can and should proclaim the gospel boldly and with confidence because it is the power of God for salvation to all who believe [Rom 1:16], that all who have been appointed to eternal life will believe [Acts 13:48, 18:9-10], and that all authority has been given to Christ, who promises to be with us as we do so [Matt 28:18,20].

20. We believe that God created man and woman in his image, as two distinct but complementary sexes, of equal dignity and worth (Gen 1:26-27; 2:18, 23).

We believe that marriage is the life-long exclusive union of a biological man and a biological woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 5:31-32; 19:3-9), as recognised by the state (Rom 13:1-4; 1 Pet 2:13-16). All along, marriage was designed by God to image Christ's relationship with his church (Eph 5:31-32).

We believe all sexual activity outside of monogamous heterosexual marriage to be sinful. (Lev 18:1-23; 20:10-21; Matt 5:27-28; Rom 1:24-28; Gal 5:19; 1 Thess 4:3-8; 1 Tim 1:8-11; Jude 7; Rev 22:15.)

21. While divorce may at times be permissible, it is never mandated (Matt 19:5-6), and was never God's design, but a concession to the reality of sin and hardness of hearts (Matt 19:8).

We believe that there are two situations in which an offended spouse is clearly permitted, biblically, to seek divorce: adultery (Matt 5:31-32; 19:9) and abandonment by a non-Christian spouse (1 Cor 7:15). However, we also believe that abuse that puts the spouse, or dependent children at risk may make divorce a permissible option (Eph 5:25-28; 1 Peter 3:7).

When someone has been the offended spouse, and divorced for biblically permissible reasons, they may remarry (Matt 19:9; 1 Cor 7:15). An offending spouse may not remarry (Matt 19:9; 1 Cor 7:10-11). However, based on experience, even when remarriage is biblically permissible, we may still advise the person concerned not to remarry, and may decline to participate in such a wedding.

We also believe that Christian conversion represents a radical (and gracious) break with the past. The old self is dead and the Christian is a new creation (Rom 6:3-8; 2 Cor 5:17). Given this, we believe that for those who have divorced prior to conversion, their record has been wiped clean (Col 2:14), and remarriage to a believing spouse may be possible.

We also acknowledge that life can be very complex, is rarely black and white, and the discerning of fault can be very hard. Given this, we believe that elders should exercise much wisdom and grace in how they care for and advise those facing separation, divorce, or the possibility of remarriage.

22. As stated above, we believe God has created male and female as two distinct sexes. We believe that men have the God-given potential to create and foster life outside of themselves, and that women have the God-given potential to gestate new life within themselves.

We do not believe that it is possible to 'change sex'. Sex is not 'assigned' at birth - it is a God-given biological reality that is - and should be - recognised [Gen 1:27]. Neither surgical nor hormonal treatment, nor the manner of dress, nor societal acceptance can change the God-given nature and reality of sex.

In a fallen and broken world, we recognise that biological disorders of sexual differentiation, and gender dysphoria, exist. People for whom these are realities of life deserve our compassion and care. The good news of Christ is for all, and it tells us that all such brokenness will one day be healed [Rev 21:3-4].

Regarding the Church

23. We believe in:

- The unity of the one universal church, the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:12-13), founded upon the apostolic doctrine (Matt 16:18; Eph 2:20), of which Christ is the cornerstone (Eph 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-7) and head (Eph 1:22-23, 4:15, 5:23; Col 1:18).
- The priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9; Rom 15:16; Rev 1:6, 5:10). While elders and pastors are appointed to lead the local church they are no more priests than any other believer.
- The importance of being actively engaged in a local church (Heb 10:24-25).
- The need to extend love and grace to other members when we differ on secondary/tertiary issues, always seeking to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 4:2-3; Phil 3:15; Col 3:12-15).
- The believers' common objective to live a Christ-centred life and to grow in maturity, holiness and Christ-likeness (Eph 4:13-15; Heb 5:11-6:1; 2 Cor 3:18).

24. We believe that Jesus committed two ordinances to the church:

- a. Baptism
- b. The Lord's Supper.

We believe in baptism by immersion (Matt. 28:18-20).

While we recognise that children can, and do, have genuine saving faith, we think it wise to delay baptism until such an age when the individual concerned can demonstrate evidence of repentance, conversion, the making of independent decisions and choices, and to have some appreciation of the cost of following Jesus. This level of maturity should be evident to the parents and those who interview the candidate, but it should also be credible when presented to the church. While we do not wish to impose a minimum age limit we believe this level of maturity is unlikely to be reached before 11-

13yrs of age.

We believe in communion open to all believers (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

25. We believe that in response to all that God has done for us in Christ, the church will gladly seek to live out the Greatest Commandment and the Great Commission – to love and worship God with all our hearts, and to share the good news of Christ's death and resurrection to the world, making disciples, baptizing believers, and teaching them to observe sound doctrine and to live a holy life (Matt. 26:35-28; 28:19-20; Rom. 12:1-2).