



St Andrew's

United Reformed Church, Cheam

To know Christ and to make Christ known

St Andrew's Manual

June 2014

1 Introduction

St Andrew's United Reformed Church is a local church of the United Reformed Church (the URC) in Cheam, Surrey. It is organised and governed generally according to the Basis of Union and subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly of the URC as published in *The Manual* and elsewhere, and these take precedence over anything written here.

This manual describes the governance and administrative structures of St Andrew's. It does not seek to cover matters of doctrine or belief.

2 Membership

2.1 Full membership

Any person may be admitted to full membership of St Andrew's by public profession or reaffirmation of faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Prospective full members will normally have been baptised, or will be baptised immediately prior to being admitted to membership.

Candidates for membership must satisfy the minister as to their faith and knowledge of the Bible following appropriate instruction. On the recommendation of the minister, membership will be approved by the Elders' Meeting by delegation of authority from Church Meeting. Candidates will usually be admitted to membership at a service of worship (normally a communion service) at which they profess, or in the case of those transferring membership from other recognised Christian churches, reaffirm their faith before the congregation.

Members may resign from membership at any time, and on request and where appropriate they will be given a letter of transfer introducing them to another congregation as members in good standing of St Andrew's.

The Elders' Meeting reviews the membership roll annually. Members who are without good reason no longer fulfilling the promises they made on admission are invited to reconsider their membership. The Elders' Meeting has the authority by delegation from Church Meeting to remove from the roll after due consideration any members who do not respond to such an invitation.

Only full members are entitled to vote at Church Meeting.

2.2 Children and young people

The church provides for the care and instruction of children and young people in the Bible and in the Christian faith and seeks to integrate them where appropriate in all its activities. This includes giving them the opportunity from time to time to attend and, if they and their parents or guardians wish, to take a full part in Holy Communion.

Young people are invited, when they and the minister feel they are ready, to enter full membership of St Andrew's.

2.3 Adherents

People who worship regularly at St Andrew's but feel unable or not yet able to enter full membership are invited to become adherents. Adherents are not asked to make any declaration of faith.

Any adherent may request that their name be removed from the roll, and the Elders' Meeting may remove names from the adherents' roll as it sees fit.

2.4 Friends

Others having an interest in St Andrew's, such as former members, may request that their names be entered into the roll of friends. Friends may be active members of other churches or congregations.

Arrangements are made to keep friends informed of the activities of the church.

Any friend may request that their name be removed from the roll, and the Elders' Meeting may remove names from the friends' roll as it sees fit.

3 Church Meeting

3.1 Purpose

Church Meeting is the governing body of St Andrew's. In Church Meeting members, through discussion, prayer, responsible decision-making and care for one another strengthen each other's faith and foster the life, work and mission of the church.

Church Meeting delegates the exercise of its functions as described in this *Manual* and as illustrated in the chart on the final page. In case of doubt, the text takes precedence over the chart.

3.2 Meetings

Ordinary meetings are held at least once a quarter, with a meeting normally held in March being the annual general meeting.

Special meetings may be called by resolution of the Elders' Meeting or by a petition to the Church Secretary signed by at least 20% of the full members.

Unless the urgency of the business prevents it, notice of all Church Meetings shall be given at morning worship on the two preceding Sundays.

Church Meeting is normally chaired by the minister (the moderator), but at his/her request or in the minister's absence the meeting may agree a moderator from those present.

The quorum for Church Meeting is 10% of the full members. Adherents, friends and others may attend and may speak with the moderator's permission, but may not vote. Any decision made by vote shall require a simple majority of those present and voting, except where provided otherwise in this manual. Voting at Church Meeting may be by show of hands or by secret ballot at the discretion of the moderator.

3.3 Functions

The functions of Church Meeting are:

- to further the church's mission in the locality,
- to develop local ecumenical relationships,
- to further the church's compassionate ministry in the locality and the world,
- to consider and support the wider work of the church at home and abroad,
- to consider public questions in relation to the Christian faith,
- to bring concerns for consideration by the Elders' Meeting and wider councils of the church,
- when a vacancy arises, to call a minister with the agreement of relevant councils of the URC,
- to elect elders, office bearers, members of the Management Committee and representatives on other bodies,
- to maintain standards of membership,
- to consider, on advice from the Elders' Meeting, any application for recognition as a candidate for the ministry and to transmit it, if approved, to the relevant council of the URC,
- to receive financial reports, and approve budgets and expenditure,
- to choose the beneficiaries of the Charitable Fund for the next year, and
- to receive reports and proposals from the Elders' Meeting and other bodies within and beyond St Andrew's and to authorise appropriate action.

In addition Church Meeting may do any other things it judges necessary in support of its responsibility for the welfare of St Andrew's

4 Pastorate

4.1 Minister

The Minister is the spiritual and pastoral leader of the church. He/she:

- leads and/or preaches at regular services of worship,
- conducts baptisms, weddings and funerals,
- presides at Holy Communion,
- chairs Church Meeting and the Elders' Meeting,
- prepares prospective new members for admission to membership, and
- encourages and inspires spiritual growth in the congregation.

If the Minister is absent, arrangements for a visiting minister or lay preacher or a member of St Andrew's will be made to undertake essential duties.

4.2 Pastoral and mission assistants

From time to time the Elders' Meeting may recommend the appointment of pastoral and mission assistants. These may include associate or assistant ministers, non-stipendiary ministers, youth workers, lay preachers or others.

In each case notice of such a recommendation is given with the notice of a Church Meeting. Church Meeting decides on the procedure to be adopted for the appointment of the pastoral or mission assistant, which must conform to any requirements of the URC, and a resolution to appoint must be carried by at least 80% of those present and voting.

4.3 Vacancy in the ministry

When the position of minister falls vacant an interim moderator is appointed by the URC. The Interim Moderator (or his or her nominee) performs certain roles and functions of the minister until a new permanent arrangement is made.

Southern Synod will determine whether a minister shall be appointed solely to serve St Andrew's. In the event that their decision is that St Andrew's will form part of a shared ministry, a new process will have to be devised in consultation with Synod and agreed by Church Meeting.

If St Andrew's is appointing its own minister, the Church Secretary will call a Church Meeting to decide on the process to be adopted for appointment of a new minister. This process must adhere to the following principles:

- The process must conform to the requirements of the URC and Southern Synod.
- Church Meeting will prepare and agree a Pastorate Profile, which will include a statement of necessary and desirable characteristics for the future minister.
- The Elders' Meeting bring to Church Meeting for its approval a list of members who will form the Pastorate Call Group. In doing so the Elders' Meeting will strive to include representation of all sections of the congregation.
- The candidate will preach ('with a view') at a morning service, after notice is given at each of the two preceding Sundays' morning services. An opportunity will be given for the members (including the young people) to meet the candidate and ask him or her questions.
- A further Church Meeting will be called at which the full members will vote for or against the calling of the candidate to be minister of St Andrew's. The candidate will be

called on the concurrence of at least 80% of those present and voting, or such other percentage as is decided at a Church Meeting prior to the candidate preaching with a view.

5 Office bearers

5.1 Offices and election

The following offices may only be held by full members of the church:

- Church Secretary
- Youth and Children's Work Elder
- Treasurer
- Pastoral Coordinator
- Convenor of the Management Committee

The Elders' Meeting may from time to time add to this list assistants for any of the above offices. Any of these offices may be held by two persons acting jointly.

Those holding the office of Church Secretary, Youth and Children's Work Elder, Pastoral Coordinator and Convenor of Management Committee must be serving elders.

When any of the offices listed above falls vacant the Elders' Meeting will make a nomination to fill the vacancy to be considered at a general or special Church Meeting. In making their nomination the elders may invite suggestions and volunteers, and will obtain the consent of their nominee.

At Church Meeting a vote will be held for each office to be filled, and the candidate will be elected if supported by at least 50% of those present and voting. Should any candidate not be elected the Elders' Meeting will make a further nomination for consideration at a subsequent Church Meeting.

Office bearers elected at the Annual General Meeting will serve until the annual general meeting three years subsequently. Office bearers elected at other Church Meetings will serve a term of between two and three years, ending at an Annual General Meeting. Any person may serve in any one office for two consecutive terms, but will then stand down from that office for at least one year. For this purpose the assistant to any office is considered as a separate office (that is, a person may serve two terms as assistant immediately followed by two terms in the full office, but must then stand down for a year).

In exceptional circumstances (for example during a vacancy) the Elders' Meeting may recommend to Church Meeting that an officer who has already served six consecutive years may have their term extended for a further one year, for a maximum of seven consecutive years.

The offices to be filled and the names of the nominees will be included in the notice for the Church Meeting at which their election takes place.

5.2 Functions

The office bearers act with the authority of Church Meeting, and will report to Church Meeting and to Elders' Meeting as and when they require.

The **Church Secretary** is the senior lay officer of the church. He or she (or his or her assistants) sends or receives correspondence on behalf of the Church and Elders' Meetings, oversees arrangements for regular and special worship including Communion, makes arrangements for and gives notice of the holding of Church and Elders' Meetings, manages the development and implementation of the church's strategic plans, maintains the church roll and brings such matters before those meetings as may be necessary or appropriate.

The **Treasurer** makes arrangements for the safe custody of the church's money and is responsible for operating bank accounts in the church's name. He or she receives any income, makes arrangements for it to be banked, makes disbursements as authorised by Church Meeting, makes financial reports as may be requested, and prepares an annual statement of financial activities in a form meeting the requirements of the law, the URC and Church Meeting.

The **Youth and Children's Work Elder** oversees the activities of the youth and children, seeking to lead them in greater commitment to Jesus Christ and to taking part in the full life of the church, and to add to their numbers.

The **Pastoral Coordinator** supports the Minister in the provision of spiritual guidance and appropriate care for every member, adherent and potential member and their families. He or she coordinates the pastoral visitors who regularly visit and communicate with the families in their districts bringing to the attention of the minister any who are in need or would benefit from additional ministry.

The **Convenor of the Management Committee** chairs this committee, to which is delegated the oversight and management of all matters relating to buildings, property, finance and administration, always acting within the bounds and limits set by Church Meeting and by the Elders' Meeting acting as trustees of St Andrew's Cheam United Reformed Church Charity.

6 Elders and the Elders' Meeting

6.1 Elders

Elders are full members ordained to serve the URC. A number of elders, known as serving elders, are elected by the congregation to serve at the Elders' Meeting for a period of time.

Elders ordained in other congregations of the URC who become full members of St Andrew's are recognised as such and are eligible for election to serve at the Elders' Meeting.

Members of the congregation may propose to the Minister or Church Secretary people to be considered by Elders' Meeting for nomination as an elder, but should not tell the individual of this action. The Elders' Meeting will discuss and consider prayerfully the suggested name(s), and if thought fit will approach the individual(s) to see if they are willing to be nominated to Church Meeting as elder(s).

6.2 The Elders' Meeting

The Elders' Meeting comprises the following members:

- The Minister, who normally chairs its meetings
- Any Associate or Assistant Ministers
- The Church Secretary

- The Pastoral Coordinator
- The Youth and Children's Work Elder
- Convenor of the Management Committee
- Further elders may be appointed, provided that the total number of serving elders does not exceed 12 in total at any one time. The Minister and any Associate or Assistant Ministers are not part of the 12

6.3 Ordination and election

Certain of the elders as listed above serve by virtue of their positions as office bearers, and are elected and serve for a term as described above.

The remaining elders are elected in the same manner as officers, and their term of service is the same. These elders are expected to undertake specific activities or duties as requested by Elders' Meeting.

Ordained elders not currently serving at Elders' Meeting may assist in serving the elements at Communion services.

6.4 Meetings

Elders' Meetings are held:

- monthly with the exceptions of August and December
- at such other times as necessary.

Minutes of all Elders' Meetings will be taken.

Notice of Elders' Meetings is given in the church calendar where practical. The calendar may be seen on the church website.

The quorum for an Elders' Meeting is one third of the number of serving elders.

Full members of St Andrew's may attend the Elders' Meeting and others may attend by invitation. They may speak with the permission of the moderator, but may not vote.

From time to time the Elders' Meeting may conduct a confidential session, when for example the remuneration or conduct of an individual is to be discussed. During such sessions it may ask visitors, or those of its number who may be affected by the discussion, to withdraw.

6.5 Functions

The functions of the Elders' Meeting are:

- to foster in the congregation concern for witness and service to the community, evangelism at home and abroad, Christian education, ecumenical action, local inter-church relations and the wider responsibilities of the whole church,
- to see that public worship is regularly offered and the sacraments are duly administered, and generally to promote the welfare of the congregation,

- to ensure pastoral care of the congregation, in which the Minister and Pastoral Co-ordinator work with Pastoral Visitors who have responsibility for particular groups of members and adherents,
- to nominate office bearers and elders to be elected by Church Meeting as described above,
- to arrange for pulpit supply when the Minister is absent and in a vacancy,
- to keep the roll of full members and (to assist in the congregation's pastoral and evangelistic responsibility) lists of names of adherents, friends, children and young people attached to the congregation,
- in consultation with Church Meeting to maintain standards of membership and to advise on the admission of members on profession of faith and by transfer and on the removal of names from the roll,
- to be responsible for the institution and oversight of work among children and young people and of all organisations within the congregation,
- to consider the suitability of any applicant for recognition as a candidate for the ministry and to advise Church Meeting of its recommendation to the wider councils of the URC,
- to receive reports, requests and recommendations from the Management Committee and other bodies associated with the church and to pass any matters it feels of sufficient importance to Church Meeting for its consideration,
- to act upon matters referred to it by Church Meeting,
- to have general oversight of the Management Committee and ensure that the legal responsibilities of St Andrew's are met,
- to act on behalf of the Church Meeting and bring concerns to the wider councils of the URC,
- to appoint representatives of St Andrew's to other bodies,
- to oversee Jelly Beans Preschool,
- to oversee St Andrew's Benevolent Fund, a separate charity,
- to oversee any trusts for which the church has responsibility or appoints trustees, and
- to fulfil its responsibility for the welfare of St Andrew's.

7 Committees

7.1 Authority

The Management Committee is responsible for:

- ensuring the continued effective functioning of St Andrew's as defined by their Terms of Reference as agreed and amended by Church Meeting from time to time,
- taking initiatives or making improvements, which may involve requests or recommendations to Elders' Meeting,
- acting upon matters referred to them by Church Meeting or Elders' Meeting, and
- reporting to Elders' Meeting or Church Meeting as required.

The Convenor of the Management Committee has authority to conduct the committee in the way that will be most effective for achieving their goals. This will normally be by delegating parts of the responsibilities to action groups or individuals, either on a continuing basis or for a specific task.

8 Finance

8.1 Responsibilities

The serving elders as trustees of St Andrew's Cheam United Reformed Church Charity have ultimate responsibility for the proper handling of the assets and finances of the church. The elders will be guided in doing so by the decisions of Church Meeting insofar as these decisions are compatible with the church's charitable status, legislation and the obligations placed on the church by the wider councils of the URC.

In matters involving finance or the assets of the church, Church Meeting may act on its own initiative or on recommendations from the Elders' Meeting which will normally take advice from the Management Committee.

The Treasurer is a member of the Management Committee. He/she will present a budget to the Elders' Meeting for adoption and then to the first Church Meeting of the New Year. Church Meeting will decide whether to adopt or amend the budget for the year. Any significant deviation must be reported to both Elders' Meeting and Church Meeting at the earliest possible opportunity.

The church's financial year runs from 1 January to 31 December and the Management Committee will present the Statement of Financial Activities of the church for the preceding year to the Elders' Meeting for adoption as soon as practicable. Once adopted the Statement will be presented at the next appropriate Church Meeting.

The Statement of Financial Activities is subject to audit or independent examination as provided by law. The auditor or examiner for the current year's accounts will be appointed at the Annual General Meeting, taking into account any recommendation from the Treasurer. The finalised statement of Financial Activities including the auditor's or examiner's report will be made available to members once it is complete.

8.2 Charitable trustees

Subject to any legislative restriction the serving elders are the charitable trustees of St Andrew's assets and funds, except that any elder may request that they not serve as a trustee for all or part of their term of office, or may be excused service by virtue of any conflict of interest.

The trustees have collective and personal responsibility for ensuring that the legal requirements for a charity are met. Even if it contravenes decisions of the Church Meeting they have the authority:

- to veto any action, including a decision to spend money, which in their view is not consistent with the aims of the charity,
- to take any action, including a decision to spend money, which in their view is required by law or is required to protect the church's charitable status,
- to veto any decision which appears to be inconsistent with the Charity Commission's or HM Revenue and Customs' view of the proper handling of charitable funds, and
- to reject or amend the Statement of Financial Activities if in their view it does not meet the relevant legislative requirements.

8.3 Limits of authority

The Management Committee may incur expenditure within approved budgets without further approval unless the Church Meeting specifically decides otherwise.

Unspecified expenditure within contingency of sums up to £500 may be approved by the Treasurer or the Convenor of the Management Committee without recourse to the full Management Committee. Sums of unspecified expenditure within contingency between £500 and £2000 may be approved by the full Management Committee, provided they are satisfied that funds are available and the expenditure is uncontroversial. Unspecified figures over £500 must be reported to the next Elders' Meeting and then to the Church Meeting. Unspecified expenditure in excess of £2000 must be approved in advance by both the Elders' Meeting and Church Meeting.

In an emergency larger sums may be paid out provided that the appropriate approver(s) is informed as soon as practicable.

One signature, normally the Treasurer's, is required for payments from the church's current bank account. Withdrawals from longer-term deposit accounts require two signatures of which one is normally the Treasurer's. Other signatories may be proposed by the Management Committee for approval by the Elders' Meeting.

9 Amendment of the manual

This manual may be amended by Church Meeting. Notice of the proposed amendment must be given with the notice of the meeting. The amendment must be voted upon at the meeting and takes effect only if approved by at least 70% of those present and voting.

The Church Secretary maintains an up-to-date copy of the manual, ensures that is available for consultation at each Church Meeting and Elders' Meeting, and supplies a copy to any full member on request. A copy is also available in the members' area of the website.



St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Cheam

