

# ST PAUL'S ENGLISH-SPEAKING CHURCH AT TERVUREN

January 1994

## CONSTITUTION AND RULES

*(As Approved by St Paul's ESC extraordinary meeting of 6th December 1993)*

### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Chaplaincy of St Paul's English-speaking Church had its origins in an initiative, conducted by Holy Trinity, Brussels to establish whether or not there would be a demand for church services in the English-speaking expatriate community resident in the area of Tervuren. The initiative took the form of a special Christmas service on Christmas Day 1988 in the medieval Roman Catholic church of Sint Paulus in Vossem. The building was packed and provided more than enough evidence of a substantial, unfulfilled need for an English-speaking church in the area. Accordingly, the decision was reached to offer regular Sunday morning services. Thanks to the generous and co-operative spirit of the local Catholic priest and with the agreement of the Bishop of Mechelen, these services continued to be held in Sint Paulus — hence adoption of the title "St Paul's English-speaking Church".
- 1.2 Holy Trinity assigned responsibility for the new fellowship to their Associate Chaplain, the Reverend Stephen Seamer. Under his charge, St Paul's attracted a growing congregation, consisting mainly of families with young children. These children were soon to have their own Sunday Club in the nearby British Primary School, generously made available by the owner and headmistress. The fellowship continued to expand in numbers and maturity until, in 1993, the decision was taken that St Paul's should apply for independent chaplaincy status. This decision resulted in the establishment of the chaplaincy of St Paul's English-speaking Church, Vossem—Tervuren on ... 1994.
- 1.3 This document contains the formal Constitution of the chaplaincy of St Paul's English-speaking Church (hereinafter referred to as St Paul's ESC), together with Rules and Procedures associated therewith. In so far as the Constitution is expected to remain relatively stable as the chaplaincy evolves, whereas Rules and Procedures may require changes to accommodate future developments, this document is arranged in two parts. The first part incorporates the clauses of the Constitution and the second part contains Rules and Procedures pertaining to the clauses of the Constitution. Notwithstanding this, the Constitution includes clauses governing changes to the Constitution itself and to the associated Rules and Procedures.

### 2. Statement of Mission

- 2.1 Consistent with its motto "Making disciples among all nations", (Matt. 28:19) and recognising the diversity of denominational and cultural backgrounds in the English-speaking expatriate community centred on Tervuren, the mission of St Paul's ESC is:
  - a) to offer varied opportunities for worship of the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
  - b) to preach the good news of salvation in God's Son, Jesus Christ, so that individuals should come to a personal faith and trust in Him;
  - c) to care for members of the church family;
  - d) to encourage the exercise of lay ministries, in recognition of the priesthood of all believers and the gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit;
  - e) to provide Bible-based teaching and training, as needed to promote and sustain spiritual growth.

### **3. Affiliations**

- 3.1 St Paul's ESC is established under the patronage of the Intercontinental Church Society (ICS) and is a member church of the Anglican Archdeaconry of north-west Europe in the Diocese of Gibraltar—in-Europe.

### **4. Church Council**

- 4.1 In the chaplaincy of St Paul's ESC, Tervuren a Church Council (CC) shall be elected to administer the affairs of the church.

### **5. Electoral Roll**

- 5.1 An electoral roll shall be kept and only those whose names are on the roll, herein called constituent members, shall be entitled to vote at an Annual Church or extraordinary meeting.
- 5.2 A person shall be entitled to have his/her name entered on the roll if he/she:
- a) is a baptised member of the Church of England, or of a church in communion with the Church of England or is a member of any other church who accepts the statement of Mission of St Paul's; and,
  - b) is a regular worshipper at St Paul's ESC and has been resident in the area for not less than three months; and,
  - c) is of sixteen years or upwards; and,
  - d) has completed and signed an application form for entry on the electoral roll.
- 5.3 The electoral roll shall be displayed on the church notice board for at least two consecutive Sundays prior to holding either an Annual Church Meeting (ACM) or extraordinary meeting.
- 5.4 The electoral roll shall be reviewed annually. The name of a constituent member shall be removed from the roll if:
- a) requested by the member in writing; or
  - b) it is known that a member has not attended worship in the church for the preceding twelve months; or
  - c) it is known that the member is no longer resident in Belgium.

### **6. Calling Annual Church and Extraordinary Meetings**

- 6.1 The AM shall be held as early as possible in each calendar, year and not later than 31st May. Thirty days notice of an ACM and extraordinary meeting shall be advertised prominently.
- 6.2 The agenda will be displayed on the church notice board on a Sunday not less than seven days nor more than 15 days preceding the ACM or extraordinary meeting.
- 6.3 An extraordinary meeting must be called by the CC on the written request of one of the following:
- a) the Chaplain;
  - b) the two churchwardens;
  - c) not less than one—third of the constituent members.

### **7. Setting the Agenda**

- 7.1 The agenda of the ACM shall be set by the CC. A constituent member may submit in writing a matter for prior consideration by the CC for inclusion in the agenda. Such submissions shall be handed to the Chaplain, churchwardens or honorary secretary.
- 7.2 The item for consideration at an extraordinary meeting shall be detailed as part of the calling of notice of that meeting.

### **8. Competence of ACM**

- 8.1 The ACM shall be competent to:
- a) elect constituent members to form a CC;
  - b) elect the people's churchwarden;
  - c) accept the chaplain's nominated churchwarden;
  - d) elect representatives to the Archdeaconry Synod;

- e) review and approve the church's audited balance sheet and balance of accounts for the previous year;
- f) appoint auditors for the current year who will not be members of the CC;
- g) agree the church's recommended budget for the current year;
- h) transact any other business that has been agreed for discussion;
- i) amend or repeal the church's constitution in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.

## **9. Procedures at ACM**

- 9.1 The chaplain shall preside at church meetings. In his unavoidable absence a chairman appointed by the Chaplain or the Bishop may preside.
- 9.2 A record of the meeting will be kept by the honorary secretary of the CC which will be available for reading in the church office within two weeks of the meeting and will be presented for formal approval at the next ACM.
- 9.3 Subject to there being a two-thirds majority of constituent members present in favour of waiving both the 30 day requirement and CC agreement, a matter, other than amendment proposals to the constitution of St Paul's ESC, may be introduced at the meeting.
- 9.4 Elections at church meetings will be by non—attributable ballot.

## **10. Procedures at Extraordinary Meetings**

- 10.1 The same procedures for chairing and recording an ACM shall be used at an extraordinary meeting.
- 10.2 Only that item submitted to end agreed by the CC shall be considered at the meeting.

## **11. Church Council**

- 11.1 The CC shall comprise:
  - a) The Chaplain;
  - b) All other clergy licensed to the Chaplaincy;
  - c) Any Deaconess or lay reader licensed to the Chaplaincy
  - d) the churchwardens;
  - e) representative(s) to Archdeaconry Synod;
  - f) elected constituent members of the congregation.
- 11.2 The Chaplain shall be chairman of the CC. A lay member of the CC shall be elected as vice—chairman. During an interregnum or when the chairman is incapacitated by any cause or when the chaplain invites him to do so, the vice—chairman of the Council shall act as chairman and have all the powers vested in the chairman.
- 11.3 At its first meeting after the AM the CC shall appoint from its numbers an honorary secretary and an honorary treasurer. Should it not be possible to appoint an honorary treasurer from within the members of the CC then a constituent member may be co—opted to perform that role. A co—opted member of the CC may not vote at CC meetings.
- 11.4 The CC may appoint a Standing Committee (SC).
- 11.5 The CC shall have the power to fill, if so desired, all vacancies that are caused by the resignation or premature departure of any of its members, pending the next ACM.
- 11.6 The chairman may at any time convene a meeting of the CC. If he refuses or neglects to do so within seven days after receiving a request signed by not less than one-third of the members of the Council, those members may forthwith convene a meeting.
- 11.7 The CC shall meet as frequently as required to fulfil its responsibilities subject to a minimum of four meetings each year.

- 11.8 Minutes of all CC meetings will be taken and circulated to all members prior to the next meeting at which time they will be subject to approval as a true record of the previous proceedings. Approved minutes will be available to constituent members.

## **12. Competence of Church Council**

12.1 The CC shall be competent to:

- a) promote the church's mission, in co-operation with the Chaplain;
- b) appoint the Chaplain, in consultation with the Intercontinental Church Society, subject to the granting of a licence by the Diocesan Bishop;
- c) support the Chaplain in identification and appointment of lay
- d) persons to areas of ministry at St Paul's ESC;
- e) consider and make known its views on matters concerning the Church of England or any other matters of religious or public interest;
- f) administer the financial affairs of the Chaplaincy including the collection and administration of all funds raised for purposes of the Chaplaincy;
- g) care for, maintain and preserve, the fabric and the goods of the church;
- h) offer advice to the Bishop's Council and Intercontinental Church Society;
- i) deal generally with all matters referred to it. Standing Committee

## **13. Standing Committee**

13.1 If the CC appoints a SC it shall comprise:

- a) Chaplain;
- b) vice—chairman of the CC;
- c) churchwardens;
- d) honorary secretary;
- e) honorary treasurer.

13.2 The CC may appoint a further member to the SC, if desired.

13.3 Summary records of all SC meetings and actions will be circulated to members of the CC.

## **14. Competence of Standing Committee**

14.1 The SC shall be responsible to the CC and shall be competent to act within the scope of responsibility given by the CC to:

- a) conduct the business of the CC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the CC;
- b) undertake a specific task/action following a request by the CC;
- c) implement contingent action on behalf of the CC, including expending church funds where circumstances do not permit prior approval of the CC;

14.2 Without referral to constituent members, the CC shall specify the limit of financial authority of the SC.

## **15. Churchwardens**

15.1 The Chaplaincy shall have two churchwardens:

- a) a "Chaplain's" warden, nominated by the Chaplain and elected by the constituent members;
- b) a "People's" warden, nominated and elected by the constituent members.

15.2 A nominee for the office of churchwarden must be a lay person who is:

- a) a constituent member of the church;
- b) of twenty—one years or over.

15.3 No person shall be appointed as churchwarden unless he/she has consented to serve.

15.4 The churchwardens shall be appointed at the ACM of the Chaplaincy.

15.5 A churchwarden may, with the consent of the Chaplain, resign the office by giving written notice to the Diocesan Bishop. If the Bishop accepts, the resignation shall take immediate effect.

- 15.6 The casual vacancy created by a resignation in accordance with paragraph 15.5 may, as directed by the CC, be filled by a qualified person either:
- a) by election of the CC; or
  - b) by election of the church at an extraordinary meeting.

## **16. Responsibility of Churchwardens**

- 16.1 The churchwardens are jointly responsible for:
- a) upholding the constitution;
  - b) representing, or ensuring representation of, the church in the selection of clergy licensed to the Chaplaincy;
  - c) fostering the mission of St Paul's ESC;
  - d) assisting the Chaplain in his ministry to the church;
  - e) the maintenance of order in the church;
  - f) the continued ministry of St Paul's ESC in the absence of a Chaplain and with the approval of the Bishop;
  - g) the collection and safe custody of offerings;
  - h) adequate and appropriate insurance cover.

## **17. Honorary Secretary**

- 17.1 The honorary secretary shall be responsible to the CC for:
- a) the recording of minutes of all formal church meetings and the maintenance of all documents relating to current business of the CC;
  - b) recording all resolutions passed by the CC;
  - c) the maintenance of the church's electoral roll; the ACM may choose to delegate this responsibility by appointing an electoral roll officer in which case the honorary secretary shall be absolved of this responsibility;
  - d) ensuring that the rules and procedures for calling, advertising and conducting church meetings, including CC meetings, are observed;
  - e) keeping the secretaries of the Diocesan and Archdeaconry synods informed as to his/her name and address.

## **18. Honorary Treasurer**

- 18.1 The honorary treasurer shall be responsible to the CC for:
- a) the proper accounting of church funds, including all offerings, revenue and donations to St Paul's ESC;
  - b) submitting the church's accounts for annual audit and advising the CC of the resultant findings;
  - c) preparation and presentation to the ACM of the recommended church budget;
  - d) advice on all matters pertaining to their fiscal responsibilities.

## **19. Amendment of Constitution**

- 19.1 The constitution of St Paul's ESC may only be amended or repealed at an AM provided that written notice of a proposed amendment or motion to repeal has been advertised in accordance with the Rules thirty days prior to the meeting.
- 19.2 An amendment may be proposed by either the CC or by at least ten constituent members of the church.
- 19.3 All proposed amendments will be handed to the Chaplain or, in his absence, to one of the churchwardens. Moreover, they will be sent to the Bishop and the ICS and will only be put to an ACM with written consent of both the Bishop and the Secretary General ICS.
- 19.4 An amendment to the constitution will become effective at the ACM following the ACM at which it was approved.

- 19.5 The Constitution of St Paul's ESC may be amended or repealed only where two—thirds of constituent members on the current electoral roll vote in favour of the proposal.
- 19.6 The Supplementary Rules and Procedures applying to the Constitution may be amended by the CC, subject to there being not less than a two—thirds majority of the Council in favour, and put into immediate effect.

## **20. Dissolution**

- 20.1 In the event of a unanimous decision by an ACM to dissolve the St Paul's ESC, all assets of the church shall be transferred to the custody of the ICS.

# **ANNEX to CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

## **Notice of Church Meetings**

- A1.1 Notice of intent to hold a church meeting shall be advertised on the portable notice board, in a prominent place in the church office and, when appropriate, in the monthly church newsletter (NETWORK). Constituent members will be reminded of their right to submit a matter for the AM under paragraph 7.1
- A1.2 Oral reminders will be given to the congregation on two consecutive Sunday services immediately prior to the meeting. Reference to the display of the current church electoral roll shall be made at the same time.
- A1.3 During the Sunday service immediately prior to the meeting, attention will be drawn to the agenda displayed on the portable notice board.
- A1.4 Notice of a proposed amendment to or repeal of the constitution of St Paul's ESC shall be advertised, as specified in A1.1, 30 days prior to the ACM.

## **Time and Place.**

- A2.1 Church meetings will be held at a time and place agreed by the CC.

## **Quorum for Church Meetings**

- A3.1 A quorum for ACM or Extraordinary church meetings shall be not less than one—third of the electoral roll.

## **Voting at Meetings**

- A4.1 With the exception of amendments to the church's constitution (the voting procedure for which is set out in paragraph 19.5), normally, decisions will be taken at all church and CC meetings by a simple majority vote. On an exceptional basis, a meeting may agree to use an alternative voting criterion to reach decisions.
- A4.2 Votes to amend the church's constitution may be cast by proxy by constituent members provided that a signed paper explicitly stating the proxy voter's wishes is presented at the meeting.
- A4.3 The chairman of church meetings and CC meetings shall have only one vote.
- A4.4 CC decisions shall be reached by voting, normally by show of hands. In selected circumstances, decisions may be reached by ballot, provided that a majority so agree.

## **Nominations**

- A5.1 All nominations for lay people to be considered for election as People's churchwarden, representatives to Archdeaconry Synod or to the CC shall be made in writing and handed to either the Chaplain or a churchwarden. A constituent member may not propose more than one person for each office or for CC. The names of candidates will be made known to the church on the Sunday before the ACM after which no further nominations will be accepted. Nominations shall be in writing and signed by two proposers and the nominee.

## **Tenure of Office**

- A6.1 Churchwardens' tenure of office shall be for an initial period of three years with the option of a second term of three years, subject to confirmation by the ACM immediately prior to commencing the second period in office. A retiring churchwarden may not seek re—election or re—appointment until at least two years have elapsed since standing down.

- A6.2 The tenure of office of a Church Councillor shall be for two consecutive periods each of two years, subject to seeking re—election at midterm. A retiring member of the CC may not seek re—election to the CC until at least one year has elapsed since standing down.
- A6.3 The tenure of office of church representatives to the Archdeaconry Synod shall normally be three years. Extension of offices may be agreed following proposal and consent at a church meeting.

## **Church Council and Meetings**

- A7.1 Normally the CC shall have ten elected constituent members.
- A7.2 The honorary secretary shall be responsible for preparing the agenda of a meeting convened by the chairman and circulating it in good time to the members of the CC.
- A7.3 A quorum for a CC meeting shall be nine members subject to there being a majority of elected members.
- A7.4 Substantive issues placed on the agenda will normally be addressed in a note or written report distributed to members of the CC. Such written information will normally be distributed with the agenda of the meeting at which the issue is to be considered.
- A7.5 A constituent member who is not a member of the CC may be invited, subject to prior approval of the CC, to attend a CC meeting. Such a person will not have the right to vote.
- A7.6 The normal means of making available information from CC meetings will be through the newsletter (NETWORK) and through announcements in church, although approved minutes of CC will be available in the church office during working hours.

## **Rules and Procedures for Standing Committee Meetings**

- A8.1 Standing Committee meetings may be called without written notice. Where, however, the purpose is to deliberate further on an issue referred to it by the CC, the honorary secretary shall ensure that the relevant CC minutes, notes and records are available to all SC members.
- A8.2 A quorum for a SC meeting shall be three members, one of whom shall be an elected member of the CC.
- A8.3 As at January 1994, the SC authority to expend church funds on one transaction is limited to BF. 25,000.

## **Church Budget**

- A9.1 The CC shall publish a draft church budget in January of the current year. Comments from constituent members will be considered by the CC prior to making its formal recommendation at the ACM.