

**THE CONSTITUTION**

**OF**

**THE TSIMSHATSUI SWATOW CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

**25 PRAT AVENUE, KOWLOON**

**HONG KONG.**

# **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE TSIMSHATSUI SWATOW CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

## **Chapter I Nature and Objects**

1. The name of the Church is “The Tsimshatsui Swatow Christian Church” (hereinafter called “the Church”).
2. The registered office of the Church is situated at No. 25 Prat Avenue, Kowloon, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.
3. The Objects, Rights and Obligations:

### 3.1 Objects

The Nature and Objects for which the Church is established are –

3.1.1 the exaltation of Christ, the preaching of the Gospel of Christ with a view to lead people to Christ, and to unit all Christians for mutual edification and upbuilding of Christian life and to provide for the performance of divine worship;

3.1.2 to set up and manage medical, educational, welfare and/or charitable operations in order to attain the objectives stated in Clause 3.1.1 of this Constitution; and

3.1.3 to operate a non-profitable organization.

### 3.2 Rights and Obligations

3.2.1 To purchase, take on lease or take in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any movable or immovable property which may be deemed necessary or convenient for any of the purposes of the Church;

3.2.2 To construct, maintain, develop or alter any houses, buildings or works necessary or convenient for the purposes of the Church;

3.2.3 To take any gift of property, whether subject to any special trust or not, for one or more of the objects of the Church;

3.2.4 To collect print and publish newspapers, periodicals, books, or leaflets, or other printed matters that the Church may think desirable for the promotion of its objects;

3.2.5 To sell, manage, lease, mortgage or dispose of, or otherwise deal with all or any part of the property of the Church in accordance with the objects of the Church;

3.2.6 To borrow and raise money in such manner as the Church may think fit;

3.2.7 To make appropriate investments of any moneys of the Church not immediately required for any of its objects such as depositing them in a bank or investing them in bonds, etc;

3.2.8 To subscribe to any local or other charities, and to grant donations for any public purpose, and to provide retirement benefits for the employees of the Church or otherwise to assist any such employees, their widows and children;

3.2.9 To do anything within the law to attain the aforesaid objects; and

3.2.10 All income, assets and money raised or received by or under the name of the Church, regardless of their source, must only be used in attaining the objectives of the Church. None of the said income, assets and money shall be directly or indirectly paid or transferred to any member of the Church whether in the form of a dividend, bonus or in any other way, except that the Church shall not be forbidden to pay such reasonable and appropriate amount of money to any pastor, preacher, employee or worker of the Church as a token of appreciation, or to any church member for services rendered to the Church. Furthermore, the

Church shall not be forbidden to pay interests to any member of the Church on any loan made by him to the Church, provided that the interest rate payable does not exceed the then prevailing Savings Account Interest Rate offered by the bank. Incumbent Church Committee members must not be appointed to any post receiving remuneration from the Church, or be engaged in any position entitled to any payment by the Church. The Church shall not pay any remuneration, money or benefits-in-kind to incumbent Church Committee members, except for reimbursement of any payment made by the member on behalf of the Church.

## **Chapter II Christian Faith**

4. Christian Faith – The Holy Bible, i.e. The Old and New Testaments, being the Word of God, are, through inspiration, accepted as the Highest Authority and as the model of our daily and social life, and shall be the basic faith and government of the Church. The Church also accepts as the summary of their faith the Apostles' Creed summarized as follows:

“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Church of Christ, the Communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins; the Resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.”

## **Chapter III Members**

5. Organization

The organization of the Church is formed by the whole body of Responsible Members (hereinafter referred to as “Members”) whose names, sex, nationality, addresses, occupations, mode of baptism and dates of admission are recorded in the Register of Members.

## 6. Members

### 6.1 Admission

6.1.1 Aspirants whose belief is in conformity with the teachings of the Church and having satisfied the Church Committee and the Pastor of the Church after investigation, are eligible for membership, after they have been baptized.

6.1.2 Members of other churches who have received Baptism and the Holy Communion and whose faith is also in conformity with that of the Church and have completed application to due effect, and are willing to comply with and abide by this constitution may also be admitted as Members on the recommendation of the Pastors, Preachers, Elders and Deacons of the Church after investigation and being approved by the Church Committee.

6.1.3 Registered Children when applying for membership shall be required to undergo basic Biblical training, unless exception made by the Church Committee. After due examination of faith, and approval granted by the Church Committee, and a sacrament of Baptism or Recognition of Faith, as the case may be, is administered by a pastor, they shall be admitted as Members (Those who received Baptism in childhood shall be accepted by Recognition of Faith and those consecrated in childhood shall be baptized).

### 6.2 Responsibility

6.2.1 Members shall have their manner of life worthy of the Gospel of Christ. (Phil. 1:27)

6.2.2 Members shall attend various meetings and services of the Church regularly. (Heb. 10:25)

6.2.3 Members shall give offerings with a passionate heart in support of the expenses of the Church and the development of its ministries. (Mal. 3:10)

6.2.4 Members shall give freely and cheerfully in contribution to the support of the poor and to do charity (Heb. 13:16).

6.2.5 Members shall assist in all Church works voluntarily and to preach the Gospel for the prosperity of the household of God with united efforts (Rom. 12:5-8; Matt. 28:19-20).

### 6.3 Privilege

6.3.1 Members who are 18 years old or above, shall have the right to vote at the General Meetings of Members.

6.3.2 Members who possess the qualifications as stipulated in Chapter IV are eligible for election as Elders and/or Deacons of the Church Committee, provided he does not fall within any one of the following exceptions:

6.3.2.1 he has contravened Clause 29 of this Constitution;

6.3.2.2 his place of residence is outside Hong Kong; or

6.3.2.3 he has been admitted as a Full Member for less than 3 years (1Tim. 3:6, 10)

6.3.3 Members shall have the right to enjoy all the privileges of the Church.

## 7. Transfer of Membership

Any Member who intends to transfer his church membership to another church must make an application in writing. When his application is

approved by the Church Committee, the Senior Pastor shall issue a letter of referral for his transfer.

8. Dismissal of Membership

In accordance with Clause 29 of this Constitution, any Member who contravenes the teachings of the Holy Scripture, thereby bringing disgrace to God and dishonour to the Church, and who refuses to repent and reform after having been reprimanded thrice by the Church, may by a vote of the Church Committee, be dismissed from membership.

9. Reinstatement of Membership

Any person whose church membership has been dismissed, may apply in writing for reinstatement of membership if he shows evidence of his truthful repentance. His membership shall be reinstated when his application is approved by the Church Committee.

10. Withdrawal from Membership

Any person whose church membership is terminated due to withdrawal, dismissal or any other reason, shall have his rights and benefits as a member automatically forfeited.

11. Registered Children

11.1 Children under the age of 12 years old who have been registered by either one of their parents or guardians, who are Members, for Baptism or Consecration may be accepted by the Church Committee as Registered Children of the Church.

11.2 Children of members of other churches having been admitted as Members of the Church, and who have been baptized and consecrated to Christ in the other churches, may become Registered Children after being registered by either one of their parents or guardians and being approved by the Church Committee.

11.3 The registration of Registered Children shall be void at the age of 18. Thereafter, Registered Children may apply to be Members in accordance with Clause 6.1.3 of this Constitution.

## 12. Aspirants

Persons inspired by the Holy Spirit having made decision to accept Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and Lord desiring to attend divine worship having faith in the Christian teachings and Doctrines and willing to join the Aspirant Class to seek the truth, are called Aspirants of the Church.

## 13. General Meeting of Members

### 13.1 Annual General Meeting

A “Church Year” commences from 1<sup>st</sup> January of each calendar year and ends on 31<sup>st</sup> December of the same calendar year. A General Meeting shall be held not exceeding 15 months after the previous Annual General Meeting in every Church Year. The time and venue of the Annual General Meeting shall be decided by the Church Committee and made known to the Members before the meeting.

### 13.2 Matters to be dealt with at the Annual General Meeting

13.2.1 To receive reports of the previous year from the Church Committee

13.2.2 To approve the audited Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account of the Church

13.2.3 To appoint an auditor for the ensuing year

### 13.3 Notice of Annual General Meeting of Members

Notice of an Annual General Meeting stating the date, time and venue of the meeting must be issued 21 days prior to the date of the meeting. Any special item to be discussed at the meeting shall also be stated in the notice.

### 13.4 Failure to Issue Notice

Failing to send notices of an Annual General Meeting of Members to some Members by oversight, and/or some Members failing to receive notices shall not affect the validity of the General Meeting and the effectiveness of the resolutions passed.

### 13.5 Quorum

Quorum shall consist of not less than 200 Members for the time being of the Church. Resolutions shall be passed by more than fifty percent of the Members present and voting by ballot or other forms of voting at the Meeting.

### 13.6 Adjournment of Annual General Meeting

If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the designated time of the meeting, the meeting shall stand adjourned to a date within one month at the same time and venue. At the adjourned meeting, a quorum is always formed irrespective of the number of Members present.

### 13.7 Chairman of the Annual General Meeting

The meeting shall be chaired by the Church Committee Chairman.

### 13.8 Resolution of the Annual General Meeting

A resolution shall be passed by more than fifty percent of the Members present and having a voting right at the General Meeting. Resolutions passed at General Meeting shall be executed by the Church Committee.

### 13.9 Voting Method

Issues at an Annual General Meeting shall be decided by a show of hands except where more than five Full Members present at the General Meeting jointly request for a change of the voting method and such request is approved at the General Meeting, then the issue concerned must be decided by the voting method approved.

### 13.10 Casting Vote

The Chairman of the General Meeting, in addition to his entitlement of a vote as a Member, shall have a casting vote to decide an issue when the number of votes for and against a resolution stands deadlock notwithstanding whether the vote is conducted by a show of hands or otherwise.

#### 13.11 Extraordinary General Meeting

13.11.1 Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by the Church Committee if and when necessary.

13.11.2 An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened by the Church Committee every three years to elect Elders and Deacons of the Church.

### **Chapter IV Sacred Duty**

#### 14. Pastors

##### 14.1 Ordination of a Preacher of the Church

###### 14.1.1 Qualification for Ordination

Persons who have been preachers in the Church of long-standing and more than two-third of the members of the Church Committee present to vote for the ordination.

###### 14.1.2 Ordination

The ordinand shall be ordained pastor by a team of three or more pastors who are approved and invited by the Church Committee.

##### 14.2 Employment

When a need arises, the Church Committee shall have the right to employ pastor(s) if two-third of the member of the Church Committee present to vote for the employment.

## 15. Preachers

When a need arises, the Church Committee shall have the right to employ preacher(s) if two-third of the members of the Church Committee present to vote for the employment.

## 16. Elders and Deacons

The election of Elders and/or Deacons shall be by votes and/or other forms of voting and their sacred office is honorary, and shall jointly assume the responsibility of carrying out the duties of the Church Committee.

### 16.1 Elders

16.1.1 Qualification – Members who are 40 years old or above and have been deacons in the Church for at least 7 years, leading their life in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scripture, holding fast the faithful word as taught, apt to teach, kind and hospitable to fellow Christians, good example to the Members and willing to be guided by the Scriptural verses (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Tim. 3:2-7 and 1 Pet. 5:1-4) shall be eligible for election as Elders of the Church.

16.1.2 Election – The number of Elders to be elected, nomination, and the date of election shall be determined by the Church Committee and notice thereof shall be given to the congregation one month in advance. The election of Elders shall be by votes by all Members present and voting at the General Meeting of Members and the candidates having half of the votes cast shall be elected as Elders.

16.1.3 Official Recognition Ceremony – The names of elected Elders shall be announced forthwith after the election.

16.1.4 If any objection to the election of any Elder on the ground that such Elder elect is unfit for office shall be made in writing signed by not less than three (1 Tim. 5:19) of the Members of the Church and presented to the Church Committee within one month after the date of election, the Church Committee shall investigate the matter and shall

report on their investigations within four months from the date of election to an Extraordinary General Meeting of members summoned by the Church Committee for this purpose and such meeting shall either confirm or revoke the election of such Elder and if necessary another Elder shall be elected to take his place and (subject to any objection to such newly elected Elder) a special service shall be arranged for his recognition. If the grounds for objection be found by the Church Committee to be untrue the Church Committee shall certify the same in writing and special service shall be arranged for the recognition of such Elder elect. If no such objection as aforesaid shall be presented to the Church Committee within such time, the Church Committee shall arrange a special service for the Official Recognition Ceremony and Inauguration Ceremony of the Elders so elected.

16.1.4.1 An Official Recognition Ceremony as well as an Inauguration Ceremony is to be held for all Elders who are elected to the office the first time. For re-elected Elders, an Inauguration Ceremony shall be in order.

16.1.4.2 The revocation of the election of an Elder pursuant to the above provision shall not invalidate all or any of the resolutions acts or decisions of the Church Committee while such Elder was a member thereof.

16.1.5 Term of Office – Elders shall hold office for a term of three years and thereafter be eligible for re-election for further terms of three years.

## 16.2 Deacons

16.2.1 Qualification – Longstanding Christians who have been a Member of the Church for no less than 3 years, who are at least 25 years of age, who conduct himself appropriately, who are temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, righteous, pure in heart, trustworthy, faithful and holding fast to the teachings of the Holy Scripture (Acts 6:3 and 1 Tim. 3:5-12) are eligible for election as Deacons.

16.2.2 Election – The number of the Deacons to be elected, the maximum number of existing Deacons that can be re-elected, nomination, and the date of election shall be determined by the Church Committee, and the notice thereof shall be given to the congregation one month in advance. The election of Deacons shall be by votes by all Members present and voting at the General Meeting of Members and the candidates having one-third of the votes cast shall be elected as Deacons.

16.2.2.1 Nomination: Candidates can either be nominated by their respective Department or by the joint recommendation of ten Members. The list of candidature is subject to the examination, revision and approval by the Church Committee.

16.2.3 Official Recognition Ceremony – The names of elected Deacons shall be announced forthwith after the election. If any objection to the election of any Deacon on the ground that such Deacon-elect is unfit for office shall be made in writing signed by not less than three (1 Tim. 5:19) Members of the Church and presented to the Church Committee within one month after the date of election, the Church Committee shall investigate the matter and shall report on their investigation within four months from the date of election to an Extraordinary General Meeting of Members summoned by the Church Committee for this purpose and such meeting shall either confirm or revoke the election of such Deacon and if necessary another Deacon shall be elected to take his place and (Subject to any objection to such newly elected Deacon) a special service shall be arranged for his recognition. If the grounds for objection are found by the Church Committee to be untrue the Church Committee shall certify the same in writing and a special service shall be arranged for the recognition of such Deacon elect. If no such objection as aforesaid shall be presented to the Church Committee within such time, Church Committee shall arrange a special service for the Official Recognition Ceremony of the Deacons so elected.

16.2.3.1 For Deacons elected to office the first time, an Official Recognition Ceremony and an Inauguration Ceremony are to be held. For re-elected Deacons, an Inauguration Ceremony is in order.

16.2.3.2 The revocation of the election of a Deacon pursuant to the above provisions shall not invalidate all or any of the resolutions acts or decisions of the Church Committee while such Deacon was a member thereof.

16.2.4 Terms of Office – Deacons shall hold office for a term of three years. A re-election shall be held at an appropriate time before the expiry of each term; Deacons re-elected may serve but for another term of office only; any Deacon who has served for two consecutive terms shall step down for one term before he can be nominated for election again. To ensure smooth transition, half of the incumbent Deacons shall be re-elected to office and the re-election of incumbent Deacons are to be decided in a General Meeting of Members.

16.2.5 Subject to Clause 16.2.2, with effect from the election of Deacons for the 20<sup>th</sup> term in 2009, all candidates shall be ranked according to the number of votes obtained by them from the highest to the lowest. Those candidates whose rank are among the number of Deacons designated for that term shall be elected but subject to both of the following provisos:

PROVISO: First, no more than half of the total number of the existing Deacons may be re-elected; and

Secondly, no Deacon may serve more than two consecutive terms.

16.2.6 Candidates may be nominated either by a Service Department or jointly by ten Members. The Church Committee may examine the suitability of the candidates and decide by majority vote the final list of candidates eligible to be elected as Deacons.

## **Chapter V      Official Duty**

### 17. Official Duty

17.1 Elders – The Elders shall protect the Christian belief and supervise the Church affairs, assist the pastor to perform his official duties, accept new converts, reproach, censure and/or discharge offenders, and under special circumstances by the appointment of the Church Committee, officiate Baptism and Holy Communion.

17.2 Deacons – The Deacons in addition to managing all Church affairs shall assist the Pastor and the Elders in their obligations for the development of the Church.

17.3 Pastors – Pastors shall officiate their holy duties in the edification and pastoral care of the Church Members, the administration of the Holy Sacraments, the preaching of Gospel, the promotion of spiritual activities and the planning of the affairs for the betterment of the Church.

17.4 Preachers – The Preachers shall undertake the preaching of Gospel, the personal care of members and the training of Aspirants, and assist the Pastor for the development of the Church.

17.5 Other Workers – The Church Committee shall, when necessary, appoint other Church Workers and assign them their works.

17.6 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman – The Church Committee shall elect by ballot from among its members at the first meeting after the election of Elders and/or Deacons, the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, the Treasurer and the Vice Treasurer of the Church Committee respectively.

17.6.1 The Chairman shall be the representative of the Church in external affairs, the heading of the activities and administration of the Church, the directing of all meetings and safe keeping of the seal.

17.6.2 The Vice-Chairman shall assist the Chairman in the administration of the Church and shall deputize the Chairman in his absence.

17.7 The Secretary – The Secretary shall be responsible for the recording of the minutes of meetings, registering members, safe keeping of all the books, papers and records of the Church.

17.8 The Treasurer – The Treasurer shall be responsible for the receipts and payments of the Church and the raising of funds. He shall also prepare the Annual Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet in accordance with Clause 13 of this Constitution and shall present such account to the General Meeting after it has been checked and audited and shall distribute printed copies thereof to the Members. He shall also prepare the budgets for the forthcoming fiscal year and report them to the Members.

17.8.1 The Treasurer shall be responsible for cash control and all banking transactions.

17.8.2 The Vice-Treasurer shall be responsible for book-keeping of the Church accounts.

## **Chapter VI Church Government**

### **18. Church Committee**

The Church Committee whose members consist of the elected Elders and/or Deacons for the time being shall be formed to carry out the general oversight and control of financial affairs, management of all Church works, appointment of Pastors, Preachers, Clerks and other Workers of the Church and shall hold one ordinary meeting each month and shall have power to hold extraordinary meetings at any time when convened by the Chairman. The quorum at any meeting shall be over 50% of the members of the Church committee and resolutions shall only be passed when resolved by over 50% of the members present and voting.

18.1 Should there occur at any time any vacancy in the Church Committee, the Church Committee may act notwithstanding any such vacancy and shall have power to appoint any member of the Church Committee to any office falling vacant as result of such vacancy.

18.2 Should any vacancy or vacancies occur in the members of the Church Committee, the Church Committee shall be empowered to act notwithstanding such vacancy or vacancies and the Church Committee shall as soon as convenient summon an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Members to elect a new Elder and/or Deacon according to the Vacancy or Vacancies which have occurred. Such member shall forthwith take their place upon the Church Committee.

18.3 Pastors and Preachers shall attend and observe at the meetings of the Church Committee.

## 19. Service Departments

The Church Committee may set up various Service Departments for the development of church ministries and from time to time create, discontinue or reinstate any Service Department to meet the needs of the Church. The function of each Service Department shall be clearly stated in the minutes of Church Committee meeting. The Church Committee shall, at its first meeting at the beginning of its new term of office, elect from among its members one chairman and one vice-chairman to be in charge of each Service Department for a term of three years. The chairman of the each Service Department may, for the purpose of carrying out the functions of his Service Department, invite a suitable number of Members to participate in the Departmental Committee where he shall chair all its meetings.

## 20. Executive Committee

There shall be Executive Committee which shall consist of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Secretary, the Treasurer of the Church Committee, two Elders and three other elected chairmen of Service Departments. They shall be responsible for the mapping out of development plans for church

ministries, execution of such of the ordinary affairs of the Church and contingent matters as shall be delegated to it by the Church Committee and for keeping the Church Committee fully informed of the doings.

21. Trustees of the Church

21.1 The Trustees of the Church shall be seven in number consisting of the Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer of the Church Committee and four other persons to be elected by a show of hands or by ballot at a meeting of members of the Church Committee and all Elders and/or Deacons (other than those who are already Trustees) shall be eligible for election. The four Trustees shall be elected within one month after the election of the Elders and/or Deacons, for a period of three years. Trustees shall be eligible for re-election after expiration of their term of office. If the office of the Chairman or the Secretary or the Treasurer of the Church Committee shall for any reason become vacant then the person elected by the Church Committee to succeed to any such office shall automatically be a Trustee.

21.2 If the office of a Trustee shall become vacant through expulsion as hereinafter mentioned, or through death resignation or otherwise then another Trustee shall be elected by members of the Church Committee in his stead as herein provided.

21.3 Should the majority of the members of the Church Committee at any time be of the opinion that the interests of the Tsimshatsui Swatow Christian Church so require they shall by letter invite any Trustee to resign from the office of Trustee within a time specified in such letter, and in default of such resignation they shall submit the question of his expulsion to a special general meeting of the Church Committee to be held within six weeks after the date of such letter. At such meeting the Trustee whose expulsion is under consideration shall be allowed to offer an explanation of his conduct verbally or in writing and if thereupon two-thirds of the Church Committee shall vote for his expulsion he shall thereupon cease to be a Trustee, provided that the voting at any such special general meeting shall be by ballot if not less than five Trustees present thereat shall so demand. Upon the petition signed by

not less than one-tenth of the Responsible Members of the Church, petitioning for expulsion of a Trustee, an Extraordinary General Meeting of members shall be convened by the Church Committee with due dispatch to consider the said petition. Should the petition for expulsion of a Trustee be approved and accepted in the meeting another member of the Church Committee shall be elected to take his place as Trustee for the remainder of the term of three years. The Trustee be advised in writing if the petition for expulsion has been dismissed within one week after the meeting.

21.4 A Trustee may resign his office by giving to the Church Committee one month's notice in writing.

21.5 The Chairman of the Church Committee shall be the Chairman of the Trustees and may convene a meeting of the Trustees but if there shall be no Chairman of the Church Committee or if he shall refuse or be unwilling to convene a meeting then any two Trustees may convene a meeting of the Trustees.

21.6 All leasehold properties and all estate rights titles and interests in land belonging to or held in trust for the Tsimshatsui Swatow Christian Church shall be vested in the Trustees who shall hold the same upon trust for the Church.

21.7 All deeds and other documents requiring the seal of the Trustees shall be sealed with such seal in the presence of three of the members of the Trustees (two of them must be the Chairman and the Secretary). These three persons jointly shall sign every instrument to which the seal is so affixed. Provided that the seal shall not be affixed except by the authority of a resolution of the Church Committee. The Common Seal shall be in the custody of the Chairman of the Trustees.

21.8 Any change of Trustees shall be notified to the Registrar of Companies within twenty-eight days after the occurrence thereof.

## 22. School Management Committee and Supervisor

The Church Committee may appoint Managers and Supervisors to the School Management Committee for schools founded or operated by the

Church and shall have absolute discretion in the number of such Managers and Supervisors and their term of office provided that such appointment is exercised in accordance with the Education Ordinance of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

## **Chapter VII Funding**

23. All Members are requested to subscribe of their free will to: -
  - 23.1 the Annual Subscription on dates fixed;
  - 23.2 the Sunday Subscription on Sundays;
  - 23.3 the Thanksgiving Subscriptions;
  - 23.4 the Welfare Subscriptions on dates fixed or at any time when needed;
  - 23.5 Special Subscriptions at special meeting or at any time.

## **Chapter VIII The Sacraments**

### 24. Baptisms

Aspirants having qualified themselves in examinations and investigations of basic faith of the Church for baptism shall themselves choose freely to be baptised either by sprinkling or immersion.

### 25. The Holy Communion

The Pastors and the Church Committee shall in consultation determine the number of occasions when the Holy Communion shall be administered in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scripture.

### 26. Children's Sacred Ceremonies

The consecration or baptism of children of Members shall be voluntary on the part of their respective parents.

## **Chapter IX     Matrimony and Funeral**

### 27. Matrimony

Holy Matrimony is instituted of God. Members shall hold marriage in honour among all, and shall not take it lightly. (Heb. 13:4).

### 28. Funeral

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth (Rev. 14:13). Christians shall not over-grieve over the death of their dear ones (1 Thess. 4:13) but shall bury their dead properly according to the words of the Holy Scripture, without any touch of superstitious practices.

## **Chapter X     Disciplines**

29. All Members of the Church are forbidden to worship idols, to indulge in gambling, to commit adultery, to take concubines or be concubines, to be addicted to opium smoking or any other form of poisons, to act or to do any action contrary to the teachings of the Holy Scripture, thereby staining the good name of the Church and the glory of Christ. Members who (after having had an opportunity of being heard or of making representations in their own defence) are found by the Church Committee to be guilty of any of such offences may (at the determination of the Church Committee) either be warned or debarred from partaking in Holy Communion. In cases which the Church Committee in their discretion consider to be serious, the members shall be dismissed from membership and such dismissal may in addition be announced in the Church.

## **Chapter XI     Branch Church**

### 30. Establishment

The Church may set up branch churches at suitable time and at suitable locations for evangelization, pastoring members and expanding the work of the Church. The Church shall be referred to as “Mother Church” in all clauses describing its relationship with the Branch Church.

### 31. Organization

31.1 During the initial stage, all Branch Church affairs and finance shall be managed by the Mother Church.

31.2 The Church Committee shall resolve to elect a certain number of Deacons of the Branch Church to assist the management of the church affairs at a suitable time. The Deacons of the Branch Church shall also be members of the Church Committee.

31.3 The Branch Church shall set up a Branch Affairs Committee for managing the Branch Church affairs when necessary. Deacons of the Branch Church shall be the basic members of the Branch Affairs Committee. The Committee shall have the right to invite a certain number of Members to join the Committee. The Chairman of the Branch Affairs Committee shall be appointed by the Church Committee.

### 32. Self-governing

32.1 The Church Committee shall have the obligation to encourage a Branch Church to become self-governing if the Branch Church has attained the following standards:

32.1.1 Founded for five years or more.

32.1.2 Has one hundred or more Members.

#### 32.2 Procedure of self-governing

32.2.1 Registration of Members of the Branch Church.

32.2.2 A General Meeting of Members of the Branch Church shall be held to elect deacons of the Branch Church and to set up a Branch Church

Committee. The organization and the constitution of the Branch Church shall be identical to that of the Mother Church.

32.2.3 The Branch Church Committee shall manage her own Church affairs, finance and employ her own staff.

### 32.3 Relationship between the Branch Church and the Mother Church

32.3.1 All members of the Branch Church shall be regarded as members of the Mother Church. They shall have the same privilege as the members of the Mother Church except that their voting rights are limited within the Branch Church.

32.3.2 The deeds and documents of the properties of the Branch Church shall be under the custody of the Trustees of the Mother Church.

32.3.3 The Branch Church Committee shall assign three representatives (the Chairman shall be one of the representatives) to attend the Church Committee Meeting quarterly to report the affairs and financial situation of the Branch Church.

32.3.4 Under special circumstances, the deacons of the Mother Church and the deacons of the Branch Church shall hold a joint Church Committee meeting to solve any problem arising from the Branch Church.

## 33. Independence

The Branch Church shall within seven years of self-governance proceed to register with the relevant religious or government authorities as an independent church and an independent legal entity provided that the Branch Church has satisfied the following criteria :-

33.1 An ordinary resolution has been passed at a General Meeting to approve the independence of the Branch Church and to approve the composition of the members of a Committee of the Branch Church that shall collectively deal with any matters relating to its own registered office premises after independence; and

33.2 The Branch Church is capable of becoming the sole beneficial and legal owner of its own registered office premises by whatever means within one year after independence.

## **Chapter XII Appendix**

### 34. Appendix

34.1 Matters not embodied in the Regulations aforementioned shall be dealt with in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scripture and the traditional customs of the Christian Churches and/or at the discretion of the Church Committee.

34.2 Any addition and alteration to and/or deletion from these Regulations shall be put to the General Meeting of Members by the Church Committee for adoption, provided always that no additions, alterations or deletions shall be made to or in these Regulations unless the same shall have been previously submitted to and approved by the Registrar of Companies. These Regulations shall be enforced after they have been announced and passed by the Church Committee and adopted at the General Meeting of Church Members.