DOCUMENT ONE

CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CHURCHES

The following sections are taken from the main Constitution of the Elim Pentecostal Church and apply to all churches.

GENERAL RULES PART II

XIV CHURCH SESSIONS

1. In each Church there shall be constituted a Church Session consisting of the Pastor or Pastors and any duly recognised Assistant Pastor, together with the Elders and Deacons. The Church Session shall have the oversight of the Church and all its departments subject to these Rules and the Working Arrangements of the Alliance.

2. The appointment of Elders and Deacons is made by the local church in such manner as has been decided by the local church. The provisions governing such appointments are set out in documents lodged at Headquarters and/or with the Title Deeds of the church. The recommended qualifications and other Working Arrangements of the Church Session are set out in the Working Arrangements of the Alliance.

3. An Elder or a Deacon shall vacate office if he ceases to be a member of the Church in which he holds such office. An Elder or Deacon may be dismissed or suspended from his office or from Church Membership by a simple majority of all the members of the Church Session. An appeal against any such decision of the Church Session may be made to the Regional Leader who shall sit with two Ministers of his choice within the Region to hear such an appeal and if necessary thereafter to the National Leadership Team whose decision shall be final. The General Superintendent or the Regional Leader shall have the power to stand down or suspend any member of the Church Session if in his opinion the continued presence of such member or members would be detrimental to the Church as a whole. An appeal against any such decision by the Regional Leader or the General Superintendent may be made to the National Leadership Team whose decision shall be final.

XV STATIONING OF MINISTERS

The appointment of Ministers to Churches shall be by the National Leadership Team and the relevant Regional Leader who shall consult with the Minister and the Church Session. The procedures for Stationing are set out in Working Arrangements, Section B and D.

WORKING ARRANGEMENTS - SECTION B

THE LOCAL CHURCH

CHURCH SESSION

1. Church Oversight

The Church Session has the oversight of the Church and all its departments (subject in Local Trustee Churches to Section VIII of these Working Arrangements) but the Minister is

responsible for the services. A Church Session may decide to delegate all or any of its powers to a sub-committee thereof. Such delegation shall be recorded in a minute book.

2. Meetings

A meeting of the Church Session shall be held at least once a quarter. Seven days notice at least shall be given of a meeting of the Church Session to all its members unless a majority of them consider the matter sufficiently urgent when a meeting may be called on three days notice. A meeting may be held at any time without notice provided that all the members of the Church Session are present. Meetings of any sub-committee of the Church Session are subject to the same provisions regulating notice as set out herein for meetings of the Church Session.

3. Chairman

At every meeting of the Church Session, or sub-committee thereof, the Minister (if any) shall preside. If there be no Minister then the Session or sub-committee will elect a Chairman from among its number.

4. Voting

All questions shall be decided by a majority of votes and in the case of any equality of votes the chairman shall be entitled to a second and casting vote.

5. Quorum

The quorum for any meeting of the Church Session or sub-committee thereof, shall be the Minister (if any) and one half of the other members.

6. Minutes

The minutes of every meeting of the Church Session or sub-committee shall be kept by the Church Secretary in a Minute Book. Loose-leaf books must not be used for this purpose. At every meeting the Minutes of the previous meeting shall be read and signed by the Chairman.

7. Constitution and Rules

It is understood that every member of the Church Session accepting office does so under the Constitution Rules and Working Arrangements for the time being in force or as amended from time to time.

8. Foundational Truths and Example

Members of the Church Session must accept the Foundational Truths of the Alliance. The Elim Pentecostal Church will not tolerate any adverse life or character changing addictions, dependencies or lifestyle from its Church Session members which would be detrimental to their Christian witness or example.

9. Children and Young People

Each Church Session and all other Elim associated Youth activities shall adopt as a minimum requirement the Elim national policy document relating to safeguards in respect of the care of children and young people and the employment of youth workers.

APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS

1. Appointment

A Church requiring a Minister should consult with the Regional Leader. Following this consultation the request will be registered with the General Superintendent who will maintain a list of Ministers available for appointment. Churches may make contact with a Minister whose name is on the registered list through the Regional Leader. Thereafter the church and Minister may make direct contact to negotiate for the appointment to the church.

The Church Session may not negotiate with more than one Minister at a time and at no time may a Minister contact a Church Session to offer himself for appointment. Where a Church Session is seeking to effect a change of ministry no approach may be made for the appointment of a new Minister without the approval of a meeting of the Church Session convened in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 2 hereafter.

2. Termination of Appointment

A Minister is appointed to a church for an indefinite period and his appointment may be terminated by the Church Session following a decision thereof taken at a meeting specifically convened for the purpose and at which the Minister and the Regional Leader will be present but who may not vote on the resolution. Any two members of the Session may call such a meeting. In the event of a proposition for a change of Minister being lost the matter cannot be tabled again for a period of one year. Where, in the judgement of the Regional Leader, the opinion of the members of the church should be consulted, he shall have the right to call a meeting of the membership to ascertain their views. The meeting shall be deemed to be an Extraordinary Meeting of the membership and be called in accordance with the provisions for Church Meetings in Working Arrangements, Section C, sub-section V paragraph 8. It will be the responsibility of the Regional Leader to ensure that all relevant information is accurately reported to the meeting. A ballot vote of the membership will be taken and the Regional Leader will arrange for the vote to be counted. The result will not be divulged to the members or to the Church Session until the Regional Leader has conferred with the Minister. Should a Minister decide to seek another appointment after this consultation, it will not be permissible for the results of the vote to be divulged without the prior consent of the Minister.

A Church Session requesting a Minister to move is required to make adequate financial arrangements for the Minister and his family and to give adequate time for a new appointment to be found. In the event of children and schooling being involved it will be necessary for the arrangements to take into consideration the education of the children.

3. The National Leadership Team or the Regional Leader may approach a Minister to move at any time. In the event of disciplinary procedures being necessary the National Leadership Team or the Regional Leader may terminate an appointment without reference to the foregoing regulations.

This section represents the procedures to be adopted by the church whose name is on this document.

ELDERS

1. Qualifications

Any person appointed as an Elder in an Elim Pentecostal Church must conform to the scriptural qualifications for Elders as set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 and the qualities set out in Acts 6:3.

LOCAL CHURCH OFFICERS

1. List of Officers

The List of Local Church Officers in each Church should include: Secretary or Administrator and Treasurer.

2. Limitation of Appointments

It is not recommended that one person should hold more than one office. In no case may one person or a husband and wife hold any of the following two offices:

a) Secretary and Treasurer.

3. Members of Church

Every Local Church Officer should be a member of the local church and should regularly attend the meetings.

4. Method of Appointment

The Secretary and Treasurer of the Church shall be nominated from among the members of the Church Session by the Minister and appointed by the Church Session. On ceasing to be a member of the Church Session a Secretary or Treasurer ceases to hold such office. (In Local Trustee Churches, the Treasurer will not be appointed by the Church Session, but the Trustees Treasurer, who appointed by the Trustees, becomes the Church Treasurer. **Where no member of the Church Session is able to be Church Treasurer, the Church Session may appoint a Church Member to the office on the nomination of the Minister. The Treasurer may be invited to the meeting of the Church Session, but may not vote.)**

5. Duties

Every local Church Officer agrees to carry out the working arrangements relating to his particular appointment under the supervision of the Minister.

6. Foundational Truths and Example

Members of the Church Session must accept the Foundational Truths of the Alliance. The Elim Pentecostal Church will not tolerate any adverse life or character changing addictions, dependencies or lifestyle from its Church Session members which would be detrimental to their Christian witness or example.

7. Resignation

Should a Local Church Officer resign or be called upon by the Church Session to resign, he will immediately deliver to the Minister all books, documents, cash, etc. in connection with his office.

8. Names and Addresses

The Secretary should furnish the Administrator with the names and addresses of all Local Church Officers and all members of the Church Session, on their appointment. Any changes of address should similarly be notified.

REGULATIONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT AND FUNCTIONS OF THE CHURCH SESSION IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. Elders

1.1 **Duties.** Elders oversee the flock of God, feed, counsel, guard, shepherd and care for them as individuals and the fellowship, with labour and love.

1.2 **Appointments of Elders.** The following procedures are to be adopted for the appointment of Elders.

1.2.1 A person being nominated as an Elder will have been a member of **a Local Elim Pentecostal Church for the preceding two (2) years or the Elim Pentecostal Church for the preceding two (2) years. [Please note it may be possible for the nominating body to determine other qualifications for the person being nominated as an Elder. These would need the approval of the National Leadership Team when submitted.]**

OR

1.2.1 A person being nominated as an Elder will have been a member of an Elim Pentecostal Church for the preceding four (4) years. **[Please note it may be possible for the nominating body to determine other qualifications for the person being nominated as an Elder. These would need the approval of the National Leadership Team when submitted.]**

1.2.2 Nomination for Eldership shall be made by the Pastor(s) and existing Elders.

1.2.3 The name of the person or persons nominated for Eldership shall be announced to the Church and an opportunity will be given to Church Members to raise objections to the names nominated. A period of not less than 21 days will be allowed during which such objections can be made by Church Members, such objections must be made in writing. If an objection is made to any nomination that is not considered by the Church Session to be spiritually valid, the objection shall not stand.

1.2.4 The Church will be requested to express its recognition and acceptance of the person nominated for Eldership at a meeting specially convened for that purpose. The Church will express its desire by a ballot vote. A majority of at least two thirds of the total votes cast will be required to confirm the appointment for an Elder.

1.2.5 The continuance of an Elder in office will be confirmed at intervals of not more than five (5) years, as determined by the local Church Session, by the Church by an expression of confirmation to be conducted in like manner as the expression of recognition and acceptance set out in clause 1.2.4. hereof.

2. Deacons and Church Officers

2.1 **Duties.** Deacons are the servants of the Church. They are appointed by the Pastor(s) and Elders to carry out such duties as are demanded by the programme of the Church.

2.2 **List of Church Officers:**

The following: Church Secretary or Administrator
Church Treasurer

Such other offices as are considered by the Pastor(s) and Elders as being necessary from time to time.

The holders of the offices of Church Secretary and Church Treasurer shall be Deacons by virtue of their office. On the creation of offices the Pastor(s) and Elders shall decide if the office holder is to be designated a Deacon.

2.3 **Limitation of Appointments.** In no case may one person or a husband and wife hold the offices of Secretary and Treasurer of the Church or any department of the Church.

2.4 **Method of Appointment**. Church Officers will be appointed by the Pastor(s) and Elders, who will confirm the appointment of Deacons and Church Officers at intervals not exceeding four or five years.