# ALDWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

# EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

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**Reviewed and Approved in March 2025**

aldwickbaptistchurch

Loving God, Loving Each Other, Loving the Community

# 1. RECRUITMENT POLICY

## 1.1 Purpose

This policy establishes the guidelines by which Aldwick Baptist Church recruits its staff and also identifies which posts should be held by Christians. The reason for identifying such posts is to clearly indicate those roles which the Trustees believe need to be filled by Christians in order to undertake activities which seek to preserve and develop its innate Christian ethos and align with its Constitution.

## 1.2. Persons Affected

The policy applies to both staff and members of the Trustees.

## 1.3 Policy

Aldwick Baptist Church seeks to recruit staff who will maintain and promote its intrinsic Christian ethos whilst at the same time ensuring that the principle of Equal Opportunities is assiduously practiced.

- **Christian Ethos:** Aldwick Baptist Church was established with a Constitution which makes clear the intrinsic Christian principles which guide the church and with which it operates. Accordingly, those in roles that are assessed as promoting the organisation's Christian ethos and enabling people to experience, explore and express the faith-based motivation of its work, must be recruited against an “Occupational Requirement” (OR). This means that candidates for these roles are required to demonstrate an active personal commitment to the Christian faith and be in agreement with and committed to respecting and upholding Aldwick Baptist Church’s Christian faith-based ethos and constitution.For all other roles we welcome people of all faiths and none.

- **Equal Opportunities:** (For further detail see Aldwick Baptist Church Equal Opportunities Policy) Aldwick Baptist Church believes that no person or group should be treated less favourably in employment because of his or her race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or illness. ABC will seek to recruit staff from all sections of the community. However, all staff must be DBS checked and be prepared to carry out their work in a manner which authenticates the Christian faith in accordance with the Constitution and statement of Faith and aligns with the Safeguarding Policy. Staff appointments will be monitored to ensure no positive or negative discrimination occurs at the point of selection.

ABC recognises that apart from job related qualifications and experience, other knowledge and experience may be equally valid in the appointment of a worker, being particularly relevant in the case of people from groups, which experience discrimination. A list of current posts that have been identified as needing a committed Christian as an OR are available for review. ABC will review any OR for a post as it becomes vacant or a new post is created. The list of posts with ORs will be updated should there be any changes.

## 1.4. Responsibilities

The ABC leadership team is required to agree its organisational structure and Job Descriptions with the appointed Pay & Reward Group (where there are employees other than the Minister) and/or Church members meeting and identify which posts have a need to be defined as having an OR. The

MInister (or nominated leadership representative in the absence of a minister) acts as principle staff leader and is also responsible for reviewing all positions as they become vacant or are created to test whether there is an OR and agree any role changes as above. Once the structure is agreed The Minister is responsible for ensuring, for any role that is to be filled by a Christian, that those recruited to the post can demonstrate a clear and active commitment to the Christian faith through a verbal affirmation and a good reference from within the church or another local church. It is also the Minister's responsibility to ensure that for all permanent roles there is appropriate advertising and independent panel selection to ensure there is a fair recruitment of candidates who have demonstrated that they have the best skills and experience match for the post. For all roles the selection criteria must be based upon the Equal Opportunities policy. "Casual" or temporary staff should be subject to this policy with the exception that recruitment is at the discretion of the Minister and subject to a three month limit for conversion to permanency only through the enactment of this policy.

## 2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

### 2.1. Scope

This policy applies to all members of Aldwick Baptist Church's staff.

### 2.2. Context

Adwick Baptist Church recognises the value of equal opportunities and seeks, wherever possible, to follow the guidelines drawn up by the relevant statutory body. However it is also committed to the Biblical principle of equality: *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus". (Galatians 3:28)*

### 2.3. Purpose

To provide information concerning equal opportunities and to provide guidelines for staff on good practice.

### 2. 4. Definitions

Discrimination = any unlawful discrimination
Although there may be circumstances justifying different treatment, which are not unlawful (for example to comply with an Occupational Requirement (OR) for a position), Aldwick Baptist Church will not tolerate unlawful discrimination and/or harassment on the grounds of an individual's sex, race, marital status, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, religious belief, union membership, union activities, or employment status. Any reference to discrimination in this policy includes all such possible grounds.

### 2.5. Policy

In relation to matters of religion and belief, Aldwick Baptist Church reserves the right to appoint staff who are loyal to the Christian ethos of the organisation to preserve its distinctiveness in accordance with the Employment Equality Regulations 2003. Aldwick Baptist Church is a Christian organisation which seeks to operate in and for the name of Christ and those who work in the organisation must be in sympathy with the evangelical Christian beliefs as set out in the Statement of Faith and their promotion. For some posts within ABC, more than a loyalty to the Christian ethos of the organisation is required and these posts are recognised as having Occupational Requirements. (ORs) See Aldwick Baptist Church's Recruitment Policy for further details. ABC

recognises that the UK has a rich diversity of cultures from around the world and seeks to bring Christian witness equally to all cultures. Accordingly, ABC is committed to equal opportunity, and it is its policy to treat job applicants, employees and suppliers in the same way, subject to requiring employees to adhere to ABC's ethos statement and staff code of conduct.

## 2.6. Implementation

2.6.1 Aldwick Baptist Church is an equal opportunity employer. Equal opportunity is about ensuring good employment practices and efficient use of ABC's most valuable resources, its employees. Every Leader and employee has personal responsibility for implementing the policy. Any instance of doubt about the application of this policy, or other questions, should be directed to the Pay & Reward Group.

2.6.2 This policy applies to the advertisement of jobs, recruitment and selection, training, conditions of work, pay and to every other aspect of employment. (Staff involved in recruitment should request training if they have any doubt about the application of this policy.)

2.6.3 Any member of staff may use the grievance procedure to complain about discriminatory conduct. If the matter relates to unlawful harassment then the grievance may be raised directly with The Minister or Church Secretary. Aldwick Baptist Church is concerned to ensure that staff feel able to raise such grievances and no individual will be penalised for raising such a grievance unless it is untrue and made in bad faith.

2.6.4 The policy also applies equally to the treatment of church members, visitors, suppliers or members of the community. Any concern related to the unequal treatment of any of the above should be directed to the Minister or Church Secretary.

2.6.5 Discipline - any employee who unlawfully harasses any other employee during their employment will be subject to the organisation's disciplinary procedure. In serious cases, such behaviour will be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and, as such, will result in summary dismissal in the absence of mitigating circumstances.

## 2.7 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

This equal opportunities statement and equal opportunities policy reflects both the mission and purpose of Aldwick Baptist Church and the spirit and intentions of legislation which outlaws discrimination.

"ABC will not unlawfully discriminate or subject any individual (job applicant or staff member) to less favourable treatment. ABC aims to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal opportunity to enter employment. In so doing, it will fully consider making reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises to ensure that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability. In addition, when staff members become disabled in the course of their employment, every effort will be made through reasonable adjustment, retraining or redeployment to enable them to remain in the employment of ABC.

After taking into account any Occupational Requirement, entry into employment and promotion or change of post within ABC is determined by personal merit and ability, relevant to the mission and purpose of ABC. It is the responsibility of every individual, both staff and volunteer, to eliminate discrimination by ensuring the practical application of the equal opportunities policy and reporting concerns about any possible breach of this policy to an appropriate church leader as appropriate. All allegations of discrimination (including harassment) will be treated seriously. Any unlawful discrimination is totally unacceptable to ABC and perpetrators will face disciplinary action.

# 3 PAY & REWARD POLICY

## 3.1 Policy statement

As the Church's effectiveness relies on the talent and contribution of all staff, we will value and reward all of our staff for what they contribute and achieve.

Our Pay and Rewards policy and procedures aim to support the Church in meeting it's vision and goals focused on "Loving God, Loving Each Other and Loving Lost People" by recruiting, paying and rewarding it's staff who are committed to that vision and through applying key themes of Excellence in performance, Equal Opportunities, Inclusiveness and Sustainability.

## 3.2 Scope

This policy applies to all Aldwick Baptist Church employees.

## 3.3 Aims

The aim of the Pay & Reward Policy is to enable the Church to attract, recruit, retain and engage the staff that the Church needs.

## 3.4 Principles

Our Pay & Rewards policy and procedures will reflect the aspirations of our Church Vision and Objectives and our Approach to Pay & Reward will be informed by the following principles:

- We aim to be clear about what people are paid for and why and to be consistent, systematic and transparent in applying our reward policies. We aim to reward people for their knowledge, skills and contribution in the roles they are performing. An annual appraisal will be undertaken to assess past performance against Job Description, goals and competencies. It will also assess training and mentoring needs and set goals for the coming year. A half year review will be held whenever possible to check progress.
- Our reward policies and practices will focus on enabling us to recruit, engage and retain the right people at all levels (locally and nationally). We recognise that the ability to offer a total package of reward that can be tailored to meet organisational and individual needs is important in attracting, retaining and motivating high calibre staff.
- The need for effective financial management of the Church's total pay bill will inform all of our reward policies and approach and will make the most effective use of resources.
- Our reward policies will uphold the principles of equity and comply with all legal and fiscal requirements. They will aim to be as simple as possible and to minimise levels of bureaucracy. They will endeavor to benchmark pay with comparable jobs outside the organization

### 3.5 Responsibilities

| Role | Accountable for |
|---|---|
| Pay & Rewards Gro | Leading the Reward and Recognition activities within the Church and for monitc that the principles of our Pay and Rewards' Policy are upheld. (where applicable |
| Minister or Nominated Leader | Agreeing appropriate action to be taken if any principles or processes are upheld.<br>Providing clarity for individuals by translation into contracts of employment. (wh applicable) |
| Leadership T and Church Meeting | Endorsing and upholding the principles of the Pay & Rewards Policy. |

### 3.6 Glossary of terms

**Reward**

All aspects of an employee's remuneration package – includes pay, benefits, recognition awards and other intangible benefits such as working environment and career development.

**Benefits**

Core and Voluntary benefits available to all employees – concerning pensions, annual leave, sick pay and maternity/paternity arrangements

### 3.7 Approval

This policy has been approved by the Church Pay & Rewards Group and Leadership Team

### 3.8 Monitoring and review of policy

Since the Rewards' Policy is effectively a number of fundamental principles in our approach to Reward, it is not anticipated that the policy will be subject to change. However, it will be monitored and reviewed in line with the process for all policies.

### 3.9 Objective setting, Competences and Appraisals

The approach to the setting objectives, defining competency requirements, the carrying out of staff appraisals and the pay criteria is outlined in the separate Appraisal Policy.

### 3.10 Review by date

This policy will be reviewed as and when considered necessary.

## 4.0 DISCIPLINARY AND DISMISSAL POLICY

### 4.1 Purpose and Scope

This procedure is designed to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. It applies to all employees and aims to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all.

### 4.2 Principles

a. The procedure is designed to establish the facts quickly and to deal consistently with disciplinary issues. No disciplinary action will be taken until the case has been fully investigated, with the exception of suspension on full pay during an investigation of gross misconduct.

b. At every stage in the procedure, the employee will be advised, in writing, of the nature of the complaint against her or him, and will be given a full opportunity to state her or his case before any decision is made.

c. At all stages the employee will have the right to be accompanied at any meetings by a work colleague or trade union representative.

d. An employee will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary penalty imposed.

e. Nothing in this procedure shall prejudice an employee's statutory rights.

### 4.3 Reasons for Disciplinary Action

ABC ensures that all employees have detailed and regular supervision meetings where issues of performance, attendance and conduct are discussed. As a result of these discussions, action plans may be generated in order to ensure that any failure to maintain the required standards of the organisation and the post are achieved and maintained. An employee may face disciplinary action as a result of one or more of the following, which is neither exhaustive nor exclusive:

a. Failure to achieve the goals established at a supervision meeting.

b. Gross misconduct

c. Behaviour likely to cause injury to self or other or contrary to Health and Safety legislation

d. Refusal to obey reasonable instructions and gross insubordination

e. Unfitness to work because of intoxication / drugs

f. Causing physical violence or bullying

g. Fraud, theft or damage to property.

### 4.4 The Procedure

#### 4.4.1Step One

If conduct or performance does not meet acceptable standards, the employee will be given a **verbal warning**. The employee will be advised of the reason for the warning and that this warning is the first stage of the disciplinary procedure. A brief note of the oral warning will be kept on the employees file but will be removed and destroyed after six months subject to satisfactory conduct and performance.

#### 4.4.2 Step Two

If the Minister or Church Secretary considers that disciplinary action is necessary, he will inform the employee of this in writing and invite them to a meeting to discuss the issues of concern; the meeting would normally be on Church premises and within 5 working days of the date of the letter raising the issues of concern. (If the Minister was the subject of the disciplinary issue then two of the existing church leadership team would act, make the decision and carry the following steps through). The meeting would include at least one of the following:

- Minister or Church Secretary
- Another member of the Church leadership or trustees

After the meeting, the Minister (or Church Secretary) will decide whether or not the issues warrant further action, which would be either dismissal or an action plan, which must be complied with to avoid dismissal.

The decision of the Minister (or Church Secretary) will be relayed to the employee in writing within 5 working days and notification will be given in this letter of the right to appeal.

#### 4.4.3 Step Three

If the employee wishes to appeal against the decision of the disciplinary meeting, they must notify the Chair of the Trustee Board – and within 5 working days of the receipt of the decision letter. The Chair of the Trustee Board will convene a meeting, normally within 5 days of the receipt of the appeal letter to discuss the appeal. The meeting would consist of 3 suitable members of the Board of Trustees and/or the Church Leadership Team (unless the Minister is the employee subject to the disciplinary proceedings). The appeal meeting will normally be held on Church property and will normally be by way of rehearing but any additional material that was not available at the time of the disciplinary hearing may be introduced. The Chair of the Trustee Board will communicate the decision of the appeals panel to the employee, normally within 2 working days. No further right of appeal will be available to the employee within the organisation. Where the appeals panel exonerates the employee, all references to the matter shall be removed from the employee's disciplinary record and the employee notified accordingly.

### 4.5 Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct is regarded as misconduct of such a nature that it fundamentally breaches the contract relationship between the employee and the employer and justifies management no longer accepting the continued presence of the employee at work. The following list provides examples of offences which are normally regarded as gross misconduct:

- Theft, fraud, deliberate falsification of records and/or qualifications;
- Fighting or assault;

- Serious harassment (can be one event or a series of events);
- Deliberate damage to or misuse of church property;
- Refusal to obey reasonable instructions;
- Timekeeping and absenteeism;
- Criminal activity at work or outside work;
- Being incapable due to drinking or using drugs during working hours;
- Breach of safety rules.
- Abuse of the internet

This list is neither exhaustive nor exclusive and is meant to be used as a guide.If an employee is accused of an act of gross misconduct, she or he may be suspended from work on full pay, normally for no more than five working days, while the Minister or Church Secretary investigates the alleged offence. If, on completion of the investigation, the Minister or Church Secretary is satisfied that gross misconduct took place, they can dismiss the employee without notice. Any criminal offences will be reported to the police.

If, following an investigation into alleged gross misconduct, the Minister or Church Secretary finds that the employee did commit an act of gross misconduct, the employee will be notified of their dismissal in writing and notification will be given in this letter of the employee's right to appeal. If the employee wishes to appeal they must follow the appeal procedures outlined at Step Two of the disciplinary procedure.

## 5.0 GRIEVANCE POLICY

### 5.1 Introduction & Purpose

5.1.1 Occasionally employees experience problems or concerns with their work, working environment or working relationships that they wish to raise and try to resolve. The purpose of this grievance procedure is to provide Aldwick Baptist Church (ABC) with a robust mechanism to deal with these issues quickly, consistently and fairly.

51.2 It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of the types of concerns from which a grievance could arise though the list below provides some of the more common reasons:

- terms and conditions of employment
- health and safety
- relationships at work
- new working practices
- organisational change
- equal opportunities
- working environment

## 5.2 Scope

5.2.1 This procedure forms part of the contract of employment and applies to all employees within ABC.

5.2.2 The Employment Act 2002 (Dispute Resolution) Regulations 2004, gave new rights to employees in the event that a grievance is raised, and ACAS have compiled a new code of practice. Issued under Section 199 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, the Code came into effect from 6th April 2009 and replaces the Code issued in 2004.

5.2.3 ABC expects that grievances will be raised as soon as practically possible after the occurrence that led to the grievance, and without unreasonable delay (i.e. normally within 20 working days).

5.2.4The Church has expected standards of behaviour based upon Biblical principles and provides practical guidance for employees during day-to-day work activities.

5.2.5 On rare occasions an allegation may be of a malicious nature, disciplinary action may be instigated in these circumstances.

## 5.3. Exclusions

Matters that are excluded from being dealt with under this procedure:

- Raising a grievance that was heard under this procedure within the preceding six months
- Matters over which ABC has no control, e.g. Health & Safety legislation
- Salary and grading applications
- If the employee raises a concern as a “protected disclosure” in compliance with the public interest disclosure provisions of the 1996 Act, “whistle-blowing” policy.
- If ABC has reasonable grounds to believe that pursuing the grievance will expose a member of staff to a significant threat

## 5.4. Procedure

### 5.4.1 Informal Discussion

If possible, in the first instance the employee should try and resolve the concern or issue informally through their line manager. However, if this is not possible because the grievance is with the line manager, then the employee should approach the Minister or Church Secretary. The person approached will discuss the concerns in confidence, make discreet investigations, and attempt to resolve the matter. Dealing with grievances in this way can often lead to the quickest and most effective resolution. Both the manager and employee may find it helpful to keep a note of this discussion. A colleague can also be called upon in these instances to help to resolve the matter at this stage.

### 5.4.2 Formal Procedure: Stage 1

**ACAS Requirement: Let the Employer Know the Nature of the Grievance -** There must therefore be a Grievance Statement

5.4.2.1 If the issue continues, or it is not appropriate to resolve informally, the employee should raise the concern through the formal grievance procedure by placing their grievance in writing on the Grievance form (GR1) without unreasonable delay. This written grievance should be given to the employee's immediate line manager, with a copy also provided to the Church Secretary. This form (GR1) is designed to enable the employee to set out the nature of their grievance and to avoid any delays in the process, it is important to complete the GR1 form in full.

5.4.2.2 In the circumstances where the employee's complaint is against their immediate line manager, the employee should provide the written grievance (GR1 form) to the Church Secretary or one of the other leaders (who should hold the paperwork and provide impartial oversight)

5.4.2.3 Should an employee require support in compiling the grievance statement, the employee may wish to seek support from a work colleague, or other church member on a confidential basis.

5.4.2.4 If due to disability or special circumstances an employee is not able to place his/her grievance in writing on the Grievance form, he/she should raise this immediately with his/her manager or The Church Secretary.

5.4.2.5 If the employee is a member of a Trade Union, he/she should contact their local representative at this stage, if they have not already done so.

**The Grievance Meeting**

5.4.2.6 As soon as practically possible or within 10 working days of the manager receiving the written grievance, the employee will be invited to a grievance meeting.

5.4.2.7 The employee has a legal right to bring along a companion to this meeting, and any further such meetings (see section 6 - Right to be Accompanied below). This companion can be a work colleague, other church member or even a trade union representative.

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5.4.2.8 Both the employee and management involved will have an opportunity to present their case at the meeting. Both parties should also consider options for resolving the grievance.

5.4.2.9 The Grievance Panel will consist of the employee's line manager (as appropriate), and the Minister or Church Secretary as long as not previously involved in any aspect of the issue raised.

**After the Grievance Meeting**

**ACAS Requirement: Decide on Appropriate Action**

5.4.2.10 Once the grievance meeting has been concluded and a decision reached, the employee will be notified in writing of this decision as soon as practically possible or within 10 working days from the date the meeting was held.

**5.4.3 Formal Procedure: Stage 2**

5.4.3.1 If the employee does not feel that the grievance was resolved at stage 1, the employee should raise the matter with the Church Secretary.

5.4.3.2 In the first instance, the employee should place the reasons why they do not believe their grievance has been resolved in writing, together with the original complaint (GR1 form), and pass to the Church Secretary within 10 working days or as soon as practically possible of receiving the decision from Stage 1 of the process.

5.4.3.3 The Church Secretary will investigate and arrange a grievance meeting with a specially convened Grievance panel to discuss the grievance as soon as practically possible or within 10 working days of receiving the written grievance.

5.4.3.4 Again, both the employee and management involved will have an opportunity to present their case to a Grievance panel.

**After the Grievance Meeting**

5.4.3.5 The Church Secretary will write to the employee in order to provide a response to the grievance as soon as practically possible or within 10 working days of the second grievance meeting.

**5.5 Final Right of Appeal**

5.5.1 Where an employee feels that a grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, the employee may appeal against this decision. If the employee wishes to appeal, he or she must inform the Church Secretary in writing within a reasonable time period; 10 working days is used as guidance, stating the reasons for the appeal and enclosing a copy of the original complaint.

5.5.2 The Church Secretary will appoint an independent Appeal Chair to hear the grievance with the leadership team (other than the line manager if the grievance concerns them) who will form the Appeals Panel.

5.5.3 The appeal meeting will be held within 10 working days following receipt of the appeal. Again, the employee has a right to be accompanied at this meeting.

5.5.4 Following the appeal meeting, the Appeal Chair will provide the employee with a written decision as soon as practically possible or within 10 working days.

5.5.5 This is the final stage of the grievance procedure. The decision of the Appeals Chair is final.

**5.6 Right to be Accompanied**

5.6.1 Under sections 10-15 of the Employment Relations Act employees have a statutory right to be accompanied at their reasonable request, by a 'companion' throughout the process.

5.6.1.1 The term 'companion' is defined as a work colleague or trade union official. However, if an employee (who is a member of a trade union) wishes to bring both a local trade union official and work colleague, this will be permitted provided that the work colleague attends all grievance meetings as a silent observer.

5.6.1.2 A reasonable request for a companion would not include a work colleague or trade union official who for example, had a conflict of interests or whose presence may prejudice the meeting.

5.6.2 Where the employee's chosen companion(s) is/are not able to attend the date agreed for the grievance meeting, an alternative date should be proposed by the employee and will usually be within 5 days from the date the grievance meeting date was confirmed. As far as reasonably possible, the location and timing of any meeting will be both convenient to employee, companion(s) and the grievance panel.

5.6.3 The main role of the companion is to provide support to the employee. In addition, the main companion (trade union representative if two companions attend) will be able to confer with the

employee, sum up the employees case, ask questions and participate fully in the meeting.

5.6.3.1 The companion does not have a statutory right to answer questions on the employee's behalf.

**5.7 Timescales**

5.7.1 If it is not possible to hold the grievance meeting and respond within the set time frame, the employee will be given a response detailing the reason for the delay and when a response can be expected. This should usually be within an additional 5 working days.

5.7.2 There may be occasions when ABC and the employee agree that the time limits should be extended.

**5.8 Overlapping Grievance and Disciplinary cases**

Where an employee raises a grievance during a disciplinary process, the disciplinary process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and disciplinary cases are related, it may be appropriate to deal with both cases concurrently.

**5.9 Records**

5.9.1 It is important to keep written records during each part of the grievance process. These records will include:

- the nature of the grievance raised
- a copy of the written grievance
- ABC's response
- action taken
- reasons for action taken
- details of the appeal and the outcome reached

5.9.2 All records will be kept confidential and retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Copies of any meeting records will be available to appropriate employees, unless there are exceptional and agreed circumstances where it is necessary to withhold information, for example, to protect a witness.

5**.10 Former Employees**

5.10.1 Each employee leaving ABC has the opportunity to raise any issue through an exit procedure questionnaire and/or exit interview. If the employee feels unable to raise their grievance through this procedure, the expectation is that the employee will raise their grievance within three months of leaving ABC.

5.10.2 Such former employees should put their complaint in writing and send it to the Church Secretary within this time frame.

**5.11 Review**

5.11.1 ABC reserves the right to periodically review this policy. Any amendment to the policy will be subject to consultation with the staff and Church Secretary.

**Grievance Form (GR1)**

Employee Name: ……

Date: ……

Manager's name: ……

Details of Issue:
……
……
……
……
……
……

(Please continue on a separate continuation sheet if required)

Have you informally discussed this with your manager (or his/her supervisor)? Yes/No

Have you discussed the issue with anyone else? Yes/No

If yes, please state who the issue was discussed with and when:
……
……
……

How do you think that this situation may be resolved?
……
……
……
……
……
……

(Please continue on a separate continuation sheet if required)

Signed: ……

## 6.0 BUDGET SETTING POLICY

6.1. Aldwick Baptist Church (ABC) believes that because its income is dependent largely on Christian giving, it is essential to provide:

- a clear church strategy
- the objectives necessary to achieve it.
- the resources necessary to achieve it (manpower and money)
- clear visibility to the church of where there gifts have been used

6.2 In order to create the appropriate spiritual stimulus, the above items need to be addressed by the church leadership team culminating in an annual church budget which is developed through a process of discussing and agreeing a clear brief for each activity within the church (to focus thinking on what it is that the Lord would have them do and how the Church should respond to that).

6.3 The budget (which will be agreed at the last church meeting before the start of the year to which it applies) will act as a guideline for church giving and the income will provide the level to which expenditure will be made against that budget. This written budget avoids purely subjective reactions and a basis for commentary on alignment of the resources with the strategy. So here are the key elements in the ABC Budget setting policy

- The Strategy for the year being budgeted will be clearly communicated with measurable objectives which can be prayed for and contributed towards – both financially and via resource
- An annual budget will be written down after appropriate consultation and submitted to the church meeting for approval before the year commences
- The budget should be apportioned in a way which encourages sensible expenditure by members of the church groups.
- Any major changes in income or expenditure will be recorded and reported back to the church at regular intervals and the corresponding additional or reduced initiatives
- As a principle, expenditure should not exceed income unless adequate cover is in place
- The budget should always ensure that the church has a financial “cushion” which will cover its legal obligations should it ever cease to operate.
- The expenditure on Salaries and Wages as a percentage of church income should be in line with external benchmarks
- The level of giving to third party organisations supported by ABC will never be less than a tithe.
- All receipts and payments will be processed through the central finance computer system
- The final accounts for a year will be checked externally and submitted to The Charities Commission and Baptist Union no later than 10 months after the year end
- ABC’s year end is 31st March.

## 7.0 EXPENSES POLICY

7.1 The Aldwick Baptist Church Expenses Policy has been developed to avoid any misunderstandings with claims. It is particularly important for a church to demonstrate transparency in an environment where there has been a poor example by many MPs demonstrating that in some cases it is possible to be within the rules but still make unacceptable claims. It is emphasised this

document has not been produced as a result of those revelations, neither is there any suggestion that any unacceptable claims have been made in the past. This document is to give clarity, information and a clear trail for those responsible for church finance and audit.

7.2 Expenses – to paraphrase Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs – should be wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the course of performance of duties on behalf of ABC. However it is emphasised that it is also the wish of ABC that all such expenses should be reimbursed even if they do exceed original budget. However where budget is exceeded prior notice should be given and a fuller explanation may be required. In exceptional circumstances the possible overspend may need the approval of the Church leadership team or Church Meeting so it is as well to get likely expenditure in the original budget.

7.3 The following cover the major items and explains the church procedure. The basis for claiming expenses is:

- Are they allowed for in a Budget?
- Is the expense necessary for the performance of the duties in question
- Is there a receipt for the expenditure?
- Has it been authorized by the line manager/team leader?

7.4 Expenses of a recurring nature should be claimed monthly or quarterly, irregular expenses as they arise. Forms for expense claims are attached.

7.5 Budgets for the following financial year are agreed at the Autumn Church Meeting on the recommendation of the Leadership Team.

7.6 The various church activity leaders will be asked to submit requests in January for what should be included in their next year's budget for the projects within their remit.

7.7 Receipts where possible are required for expenditure and should be sent to the Church Treasurer with a paper copy of the expenses claim.

7.8 To speed up the payment of claims, budget holders may submit claims electronically to their Line Manager/team leader. The Line Manager/team leader may then send an email to the Treasurer approving in whole or in part the claim. The Treasurer will then endeavour to settle the claim within two weeks of receipt.

7.9 The Church Team who do not have Line Managers will submit their claims to the Treasurer who will pay if within budget and refer any queries to the Treasurer.

7.10 Treatment of usual expense claim categories are shown below:

**7.10.1 Mileage in privately owned cars*** can be claimed at 45p for journeys on the Church's behalf for the first 10000 miles in a tax year and 25p per mile thereafter.
Cycle journeys are reimbursed at 20p per mile. If the claim is for a long train journey, every effort should be made to obtain the cheapest rate available. Taxi fares may be claimed between a claimant's station and home if their homeward journey starts after 9pm.

NB cars must be comprehensively insured including recognition that it may be used on church business and regularly maintained. A claim for mileage must include details of the purpose and miles travelled

**7.10.2 Telephone etc.** If the budget holder has a land line used exclusively for Church purposes, it should be in the name of the Church to avoid taxation issues. Bills can either be paid by the individual and included on the monthly claim or sent promptly to the Treasurer.

The cost of church calls on a mobile can be reclaimed provided acceptable documentation is provided. For Pay As You Go users, a claim for occasional top ups is acceptable.

Where Internet access is deemed necessary the package should be in the name of the Church.

A claim can be considered for the cost of telephone calls from private lines or mobiles and also for a contribution towards consumables for a computer but records need to be kept and receipts provided where possible.

**7.10.3 Entertaining and Subsistence**
Claims for the cost of entertaining should be fully documented including the purpose. Subsistence can be claimed by staff usually based at home or by volunteers who are engaged on Church business on production of receipts.

**7.10.4 Stationery, postage etc** – where receipts are not available an explanation should be given i.e. 4 x 2nd class stamps, 10 sheets of photocopying at 5p done at local church etc

**7.10. 5. Subscriptions** – must be for membership of a relevant organisation directly related to the employee's job and can be claimed against a receipt. A limit of two subscriptions per employee will be reimbursed.

aldwickbaptistchurch
Loving, Reaching, Building Jesus: God's Answer for our Community

# Church Expenses Claim Form

| Requested By | | Date | |
|---|---|---|---|

**Ministry Team Budget being Used to Fund Expenditure** (tick box)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
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| Date | Description (e.g. item bought or details of journey) | Miles Claimed | Amount £:00 | Nominal Code (Finance Use Only) |
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**Requestor Signature**

| Signature | | **Date** | |
|---|---|---|---|

| Please Tick | Please give me, the requestor, the cheque | | Please post to me at my home address | |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Ministry Head Authorisation**

| Authorised By | | Date | |
|---|---|---|---|

**Payment Confirmation**

| Paid By | | Date | | Cheque No | *Signature of Recipient* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**Mileage Rates: 45 pence per mile for the first 10000 miles in a tax year and 25 pence per mile thereafter**
**Please supply a receipt for all expense items, wherever possible.**

**Instructions for Use**

**ONLY USE THIS FORM IF YOU HAVE PAID FOR THE GOODS OR SERVICES YOURSELF. IF YOU WOULD LIKE A SUPPLIER PAID DIRECTLY BY CHEQUE, PLEASE USE THE CHEQUE REQUISITION FORM.**

1) Please fill out the section headed 'Requestor & Payment Details' with your name and date of the request.
2) Tick the Ministry Team budget this activity is being paid from.
3) Complete the expenses details: date incurred, description, miles travelled and amount.
4) Please attach receipts and bills where appropriate.

## 8 HOLIDAYS & SICKNESS

1. **Payment for holidays** - is laid down in each employees contract of employment

2. **Payment for Sickness**

### 8.1. Principles

- The purpose of this policy is to set out what treatment employess can expect from the Church if they suffer sickness or injury or if they are absent from work for other reasons.
- Employee attendance is important to the Church and is monitored. This policy identifies points at which the Church will take action if employee sickness absence reaches unacceptable levels.
- The overriding aim is to ensure a healthy, productive work environment, not to punish employees for being unwell. However, the Church cannot ignore the effects on the services and on other employees of lateness or absence from duty, whatever the cause.
- NB The church and its employees should be aware of the health and safety implications in the event of an accident at work. For more information contact the Health and Safety Executive's Info line on 0845 345 0055.

### 8.2. Statutory Sick Pay

Employees are entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) when they are absent from work due to sickness.

NB They can only do this if they have done some work for the employer. More information on qualifying for SSP is available from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs http://www.hmrc.gov.uk or via the employer's helpline on 08457 143143.

The main features of the scheme are:

- The first three days of incapacity are unpaid (called 'waiting days')

- Further sickness is paid at the rate of £116.75 a week (2023 figure) revised annually in April) for up to 28 weeks.

- Once SSP is exhausted, an employee normally transfers onto benefits, paid directly by the DWP.

- If two periods of sickness are separated by less than eight weeks (56 days) then they are linked and the employee need not serve the waiting days again.

### 8.3. Sickness whilst on holiday

- If an employee is sick whilst on holiday the Church will consider any requests to change arrangements. However, the Church reserves the right to insist that the employee still takes the previously-booked annual leave and to pay holiday pay accordingly. Sick pay will not be paid for periods where they are receiving holiday pay.

- If the employee wishes to cancel any booked leave and use the entitlement at another time then they should inform their line manager as soon as possible. The Church will then decide whether to allow the change and will inform the employee as soon as possible.

NB If an employee is sick during a period of annual leave (or if a period of annual leave falls whilst an employee is off sick) he or she cannot receive both sick pay and holiday pay for the same period of time. The Church will allow employees to cancel their leave and take it at another time.

### 8.4. Church sick pay

The church currently works to the SSP Scheme as a minimum but may consider a more favourable approach in the future.

### 8.5. Short-term absence

The manager will formally review the employee's absence record if in any three month period there are three separate periods of absence (whether these are certificated or not), or if there is an unacceptable pattern of absence, for example, regular time off on Mondays or Fridays.

### 8.6. Long-term absence

'Long-term absence' is a period of sickness which lasts longer than two calendar weeks.

The Church takes a sympathetic view about genuine ill-health problems and will provide a supportive approach to all employees in such circumstances.

The line manager will monitor the employee's absence and will counsel them through a period of sickness absence. If, after discussion, it appears that they are likely to be away from work for more than four weeks, the manager will telephone them every fortnight and visit their home every month. These arrangements may be varied by agreement. Home visits will not be made without the employee's consent.

(Home visits should always be made by the manager and another Church representative. Where the employee is female one of the Church representatives should also be female.)

The Church will make contact to find out the reason for the employee's sickness (including requesting medical information where appropriate), the likely duration of their sickness and if there are any steps that the Church or they can take to speed the return to work.

Possible options could include:

- Lighter duties
- Altered hours
- Purchase of specialised equipment
- Alternative work
- Flexible working.

Ultimately, if absence does reach problematic levels then the Church may have no choice but to dismiss the employee. The point at which this action may be taken will depend on the nature of the employee's work and the difficulty caused to the Church by their continued absence. Dismissal will be regarded as a last resort and the Church will try to ensure that the following criteria are fulfilled:

- Relevant medical information is sought and considered.
- Options for alternative duties or working arrangements are examined.
- The employee views will be taken into account.

Before any dismissal the Church will comply with any applicable statutory dismissal procedure.

**8.7. Return to work interviews**

When the employee returns to work from any absence (excluding holidays) their line manager will interview them on the first day they return or as soon as reasonably practicable after that. They will check that the employee is fit to return, update them on any important matters they have missed and may discuss their absence record if appropriate.

**8.8. Medical information**

If employee absences reach excessive levels, the Church may require medical information about their condition from their GP and/or a specialist practitioner of the Church's choosing.

If the Church requires information from a specialist practitioner, the Church will pay for the examination and for any expenses that the employee incurs.

If the Church needs a report from the employee's GP, the Church will comply with the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988, which requires that:

- The Church obtains the employee's written consent before it contacts the GP.

- The employee is given prior access to the report and can refuse the Church access to it if they wish.

- They can ask their GP to alter the contents of the report if they feel it is inaccurate. If their GP does not wish changes to be made, the employee can ask their GP to attach a statement of their views to the report.

However, employees should be aware that if they refuse to supply relevant medical information the Church may have no choice but to make decisions about their likely return to work based on the information that is available.

Therefore, it is in their best interests to disclose medical information.

### 8.9. Promoting a healthy workforce

The Church will give employees the opportunity to attend regular health screenings. This can help pinpoint medical conditions early on and encourage them to lead a healthy life style.

The Church may also be able to arrange for discounts for employees at local health clubs.

## 9.0 MATERNITY & PATERNITY

Because employees pay Class 1 national insurance contributions, they are normally eligible to receive paid leave if they have a baby or adopt a child.

Aldwick Baptist Church Policy is that employees are entitled to maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave for the same periods and subject to the same conditions as apply in the case of an employee under the Employment Rights Act 1996, or any regulations made under that Act that have effect at the time when the Directions came into force on 1 January 2011. This includes additional paternity leave (APL) and additional statutory paternity pay (ASPP).

When contemplating taking parental leave employees need to remember to liaise with their line manager about the particular policy in question.

### 9.1 Types of Payment

There are four types of payment available:

.9.1.1. Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

SMP is payable to expectant mothers to help them take time off work around the time of birth. It lasts for up to 39 weeks. If they are expecting a baby, they must obtain a Maternity Certificate (MAT B1 or equivalent) from their doctor or midwife. They must then send this Certificate to their Church line manager together with a note of the date when they wish to stop working.

9.1.2 Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)

SAP is payable to an individual, or one member of a couple, adopting a child to enable him or her to take time off work around the time the child is placed. It lasts for up to 39 weeks.

If they are adopting a child and wish to claim SAP, they must obtain a Matching Certificate (or equivalent) from the adoption agency. They must send this Certificate to their Church line manager, together with a note of the date when they wish to stop working.

9.1.3. Ordinary Statutory Paternity Pay (OSPP)

OSPP is payable to the father of a newly-born baby, to enable him to support the mother in the first few weeks after the birth. It is also payable to the second member of a couple adopting a child. It lasts for one or two consecutive weeks and must be taken any time up to eight weeks after the date of birth or the child is placed with the adopter. To make a claim for OSPP use one of the following forms which are obtainable from HMRC web site:

- Form SC3 - Becoming a parent
- Form SC4 - Becoming an adoptive parent

9.1.4. Additional Statutory Paternity Pay (ASPP)

ASPP was introduced for qualifying parents for babies due to be born on or after 3 April 2011 and for children matched for adoption on or after 3 April 2011 when their spouse or partner has had a baby or they and their spouse or they and their partner are jointly adopting a child.

ASPP is given to eligible fathers where there is entitlement to SMP, SAP or Maternity Allowance (MA) and that payment has been brought to an end by the mother or adopter returning to work.

The earliest start date for ASPP is 20 weeks after the child's birth or 20 weeks after the child was placed with the adopter. There must be at least 2 weeks SMP, MA or SAP remaining.

To make a claim for ASPP one of the following forms obtained from HMRC web site must be used:

- Form SC7 - Additional Statutory Paternity Pay/Additional Paternity Leave - becoming a parent
- Form SC8 - Additional Statutory Paternity Pay/Additional Paternity Leave - becoming an adoptive parent
- Form SC9 - Additional Statutory Paternity Pay/Additional Paternity Leave - adopting a child from abroad
- Form SC10 - Additional Statutory Paternity Pay/Additional Paternity Leave - death of the mother/adopter

9.2. Administering the claim

As soon as The Church receive the claim, they will check the employee's eligibility and notify them of their entitlement. If for any reason they do not qualify, The Church will advise them what other help may be available.

NB **SMP**, **SAP, OSPP** and **ASPP** represent the statutory minimum entitlement to pay while the employee is not working. The church may consider a more generous policy in the future. In all cases, if the employee's spouse is employed, the appropriate claim should also be made to his or her employer.