

# **THE CHURCHES' FELLOWSHIP FOR PSYCHICAL AND SPIRITUAL STUDIES**

## **CONSTITUTION [revised September 2017]**

### **NAME**

- 1 The Organisation shall be called The Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies (hereinafter called 'The Fellowship').

### **HEADQUARTERS**

- 2 The administrative headquarters and address shall be at such a place in the United Kingdom as the Council shall from time to time determine.

### **OBJECTS**

- 3 (i) The objects of the Fellowship are to encourage the study, within the Christian Churches, of spiritual or paranormal or psychological and other scientific phenomena and to try to assess their validity and their relevance to the Christian faith.
- (ii) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Fellowship may organise or take part in conferences and meetings and may publish literature and organise and support research and study meetings and shall with circumspection encourage the fostering by individuals of spiritual and paranormal gifts. Other than the common Christian faith, which is of its essence, the Fellowship holds no corporate views and it may at the discretion of the Council co-operate with and affiliated to other bodies in pursuit of the Fellowship's objects and shall endeavour to co-operate and work with the Christian Churches which belong to or are affiliated to the World Council of Churches.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

- 4 (i) Inasmuch as the Fellowship is a Christian Fellowship, membership shall be open to those who satisfy the Council that they are members of a recognised Christian denomination, or that they are sympathetic to the Christian faith and are willing to accept this pre-eminent ethos of the Fellowship.
- (ii) The Council shall have the right to refuse membership without assigning any reason.

- 5 Application for membership shall be on a form approved by the Council and shall be transmitted to the General Secretary and no election shall be effective until the first yearly donation or such part thereof as the Council may determine shall have been received by the General Secretary.
- 6 (i) If any member shall fail to pay the minimum annual donation within six months of its falling due, the Council may without notice declare such membership to have lapsed but may subsequently restore such membership.
- (ii) If in the opinion of at least two-thirds of the members of the Council present and voting, the interests of the Fellowship require it, the Council may terminate the membership of any member, but only after considering any representation made by such a member and only if such member's current or life donation be returned to him/her.
- 7 (i) The minimum annual donation for membership shall be such as a General Meeting shall from time to time determine; but the Council shall have the power to reduce such sum in special cases (such as hardship or age or as the Council sees fit) to such sum, if any, as to the Council seems appropriate to the case.
- (ii) The minimum Life donation shall be such as a General Meeting shall from time to time determine.
- 8 All members shall be entitled to receive notice of any General Meeting of the Fellowship and to attend thereat, to take part and to vote.

#### **OFFICERS and STAFF**

- 9 (i) The Officers of the Fellowship shall be a President, a Chairman and an Honorary Treasurer, and may also include not more than three [3] Vice Presidents and not more than two [2] Vice Chairmen.
- (ii) The **President** shall be elected for a period of five [5] years, and, while eligible for re-election, shall hold office until such re-election or the election of a successor. A casual vacancy in the office of President, whether due to death or resignation, shall be filled by the Council for a period terminating by an election to be declared at the next Annual General Meeting.

- (iii) **Vice Presidents** may be elected for a period of three [3] years but only on the nomination of the Council, and while eligible for re-election, shall hold office until the Annual General Meeting three [3] years after their election.
- (iv) The **Chairman** and the **Honorary Treasurer** shall each be elected for a period of three [3] years, and, while eligible for re-election, shall hold office until such re-election or the election of a successor. A casual vacancy in either office, whether due to death or resignation, shall be filled by the Council for a period terminating by an election to be declared at the next Annual General Meeting.
- (v) Any **Vice Chairman** shall be elected for a period of three [3] years, and, while eligible for re-election, shall hold office until the Annual General Meeting following the expiration of three [3] years from his election. A casual vacancy, whether due to death or resignation, may be filled by the Council for a period terminating by an election to be declared at the next Annual General Meeting.
- (vi) The Council shall appoint a **General Secretary**, and may appoint such other members of staff as it sees fit, in all cases at such remuneration and for such periods as the Council may, from time to time, determine, and shall assign to each member *(of)* staff his duties.
- (vii) The President, if present and willing, or failing the President, the senior Vice President present and willing, or failing such Vice President, the Chairman, if present and willing, or failing him(*her*) the Senior Vice Chairman if present and willing, shall preside at all General Meetings and Meetings of the Council and at any Committee of the Council. Failing all the aforesaid the Meeting shall elect a Chairman for the occasion. The Chairman of any meeting shall rule on all points of order and procedure and this ruling shall not, without his/her leave, be challenged except at a subsequent meeting. In the case of an equality of voting the Chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

## MANAGEMENT

10 (i) Subject to these Rules and to any direction given by a General Meeting, the affairs of the Fellowship shall be managed by the Council and the Council shall have power to delegate to a Committee or Committees of the Council's choosing any or all of its powers, and the Council shall always appoint from among its members an **Executive Committee** for the day-to-day management of the affairs of the Fellowship with such power to act as the Council may from time to time determine.

Members of the Executive Committee, other than the Officers of the Fellowship shall serve for a period of three [3] years, or such time as the Council shall, from time to time, determine. They shall be eligible for re-election.

(ii) The **Council shall consist** of the Officers and one Representative for each Region. **Regional Representatives** may be elected for a period of three [3] years but only on the nomination of the Council, and while eligible for re-election, shall hold office until the Annual General Meeting three [3] years after their election. If any region is not represented, the Council may co-opt a member from that Region to serve for the unexpired portion of the term and casual vacancies among Representatives may be filled by the Council, so far as appears to the Council to be practicable, and shall endeavour to give effect to what it believes to be the wishes of the Region.

(iii) **The Council shall further consist** of up to six [6] members, each of whom shall be elected for a period of three [3] years. They will be eligible for re-election. Casual vacancies among such members, whether due to death or resignation, shall be filled by the Council and persons so appointed shall hold office until such time as the persons whom they replace would have held office.

(iv) The Council may further **co-opt** not more than three [3] members who, while eligible for election, shall hold office until the next election.

(v) The members of the Council are for the purpose of these rules also **Trustees** of the Fellowship.

- (vi) **The Council shall meet** not less than three [3] times in the year and Minutes shall be kept of all proceedings and such Minutes shall be open for inspection by any member by arrangement with the General Secretary at any convenient normal office hours: provided always that it shall be open to the Council to declare that a Minute be a confidential Minute, and any Minute so declared shall be kept separately by the General Secretary and, without any order from the Council, shall not be open to inspection by anyone other than a member of Council.
- (vii) The Council shall regulate its own proceedings and **seven** [7] members of the Council shall form a **quorum** and decisions of the Council shall be by a second or casting vote in the case of an equality in the voting.

#### **GENERAL MEETINGS**

- 11 (i) A General Meeting of the Fellowship shall be summoned by the General Secretary on the direction of the Council or of any two Officers or within two months of a requisition in writing signed by no less than thirty [30] members.
- (ii) There shall be an **Annual General Meeting** in or near the month of September at such place and time as the Council may direct.
- (iii) At least twenty-eight [28] days' notice of a General Meeting shall be given to each member, specifying the time and place of the meeting and giving sufficient indication of the nature of the business to be transacted thereat. The Chairman of the meeting shall decide whether any item of business has been sufficiently indicated. Notice shall be deemed to have been given to every member to whom notice was sent addressed to any address in the United Kingdom given by that member to the General Secretary and no member without such an address shall be entitled to notice. Publication of notice in any journal of the Fellowship shall suffice, provided such journal was sent addressed to any address in the United Kingdom as aforesaid.
- (iv) A General meeting may adjourn from time to time and, unless the Chairman of the meeting so directs, no fresh notice of such adjourned meeting need be given, but if, in the opinion of the Chairman, the business to be transacted at such adjourned meeting has not been sufficiently indicated, the Chairman shall direct that notice be given in accordance with sub-cause (iii) of this Rule.

## REGIONS and BRANCHES

- 12 (i) So far as appears to the Council to be practicable, the Fellowship shall be divided into Regions as from time to time the Council may direct, and the Regions shall in like manner be divided into Branches as the Council may direct, and the members be assigned purely for administrative purposes to Regions and Branches as the Council may direct.
- (ii) Subject to these rules and to any directions which the Council may from time to time give, each Region and each Branch shall elect its own officers and manage its own affairs.

## ELECTIONS

- 13 (i) In or near the month of March each year, the General Secretary (or, failing the General Secretary, an Officer) shall, when giving notice of the Annual General Meeting, also by notice **invite nominations for any office** (including that of an elected member of the Council) **about to fall vacant**.
- (ii) Nominations shall be on the form provided from time to time by the Council. Every nomination shall be proposed and seconded by at least two [2] members and shall contain a statement by the person nominated of his/her willingness, if elected, to serve in the office for which he/she is nominated.
- (iii) The invitation to nominate shall state the last day on which and the address at which nomination to be valid must be received, and *at* least twenty-eight [28] days shall be given to members in which to make nominations.
- (iv) **In or near the month of June, the General Secretary (or, failing the General Secretary, an Officer) shall give notice to every member of the persons nominated for any offices and shall provide ballot papers on which members may send their vote or votes** and shall indicate the last day on which and the address at which such ballot papers to be valid must be received, and at least fourteen [14] days shall be given to members in which to return their ballot papers.
- (v) At the Annual General Meeting the secretary of the meeting shall declare the results of the elections and shall call on the newly elected persons to assume their respective offices.

- (vi) If any irregularity in an election be alleged, the matter shall be referred to the President or, failing the President, one of the Vice Presidents, whose decision thereon shall be final and who, in his/her discretion, may, whether or not the irregularity be proved, direct that a fresh election be or not be held.

#### **ACCOUNTS**

- 14 (i) The Council shall cause proper books of account to be kept which shall be examined annually by a qualified accountant appointed by the Annual General Meeting and the accounts, so examined, shall be open to inspection by any members and shall be presented at the Annual General Meeting.
- (ii) The Council shall appoint three [3] of their number and the property and assets of the Fellowship (other than cash which shall be under the control of the Treasurer) shall be vested in them. They shall deal with the property of the Fellowship as directed by resolution of the Council (of which an entry in the Minute Book shall be conclusive evidence) and they shall be indemnified against the risk and expense out of the Fellowship's property.

#### **GIFTS**

- 15 The Council shall have power on behalf of the Fellowship to accept legacies, bequests and other gifts.