

Battle Baptist Church – Contingency plan (updated August 2021)

Purpose of document

- 1) This document sets out the plans to be followed by the Church leaders (Life with Hope Trustees, Elders and Deacons) in the event of a major disaster or other sizeable occurrence, for example if one or more of the following events happened:
 - a) loss of Church premises (para 3);
 - b) loss of data (para 4);
 - c) loss of congregation (para 5);
 - d) loss of finances (para 6);
 - e) loss of Pastor and/or Leaders (para 7);
 - f) loss of Staff (para 8);
 - g) severe weather (para 9);
 - h) any emergency that arises between a Friday and the following Sunday (para 10).
 - i) declaration by the World Health Organisation and UK Government of a pandemic that causes widespread illness, closure of schools and the cessation of gatherings of groups of people such as Sunday Services. (para 11).

- 2) The Pastor/Team Leader will appoint and lead a “Contingencies Team” of at least four people from within the church leadership to put this plan in to effect.

- 3) **Loss of Church premises**

The Church leaders will take a combination of the following actions:

 - a) follow the *Loss of data* actions set out in para 4 below;
 - b) seek, and consider acting upon, advice from the Baptist Union;
 - c) initially base the Church Office in the Church Administrator’s home;
 - d) look into renting office space in Battle, or consider using the Manse (if available) as the Church Office;
 - e) communicate the loss and the actions below, via all possible means
 - f) negotiate with the Ministers of St Mary’s Church, the Catholic Church, and the Methodist Emmanuel Centre to consider the use of one or more of their buildings for a Saturday evening service, and/or Sunday afternoon or evening service;
 - g) look into hiring Claverham Community College, the Memorial Hall, the Guide Hall, Battle and Langton School and/or Youth Centre for services and/or young people’s activities;
 - h) encourage all church members and regular attendees to be part of a LIFEgroup and continue to give tithes and offerings to the Church;
 - i) relocate any LIFEgroups that met in the Church premises;
 - j) decide which of the activities in the regular weekly Church programme should continue and when and where they should take place (priority will need to be given to Caterpillar Pre-school due to the nature of its business, number of staff employed, immediate impact of loss etc);
 - k) buy any new equipment necessary using current Church funds and/or money from the insurance claim;
 - l) if part of the Church premises is available, decide which activities can continue by being relocated elsewhere in the buildings.

- 4) **Loss of data**

All files on the two main PCs in the general office are backed up onto portable hard drives. In

addition to this, the staff team may choose to save key documents on to a USB memory stick which will be kept away from the premises. Membership data is stored in ChurchSuite, and this software is backed up daily by provider (see document attached).

5) Loss of congregation

In the event of the loss of a sizeable number of the congregation (eg due to disunity and division) the Church leaders will:

- a) meet to decide whether the regular Church programme can continue (Sunday services; LIFEgroups and prayer meetings; other weekly activities);
- b) identify changes in the Church programme and consult the Church in line with the Church rules before implementing any of the changes;
- c) follow the *Loss of finances* actions set out in para 6 below.

6) Loss of finances

Considering the Church's financial position as set out by the Treasurer, Church leaders will identify cutbacks in non-staff expenditure and the regular Church programme to ensure the staff budget for the year can be met. This may also lead to changes in staff duties and job descriptions, so activity is focussed on key ministry priorities. Church leaders will also consult members before implementing any cutbacks or changes identified as being necessary, in line with the LWHT Memorandum and Articles of Association.

If there is insufficient money to pay for staff wages, LWH Trustees will review staffing levels in accordance with advice from the Baptist Union and the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).

7) Loss of Pastor and/or Leaders

If the Church suffers a loss of the Pastor and/or a number of church leaders at the same time (eg due to a road accident), the remaining Church leaders will give pastoral support to the families and take a combination of the following actions:

- a) identify and appoint new leaders consulting the Church in accordance with the LWHT Memorandum and Articles of Association;
- b) consult the Baptist Union Regional Minister and consider appointing an outside moderator *before* thinking about appointing a temporary Leader who could act as Pastor/Team Leader to chair the leadership team meetings and provide necessary direction;
- c) rely on existing staff to be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Church;
- d) follow the *Loss of staff* actions set out in para 8 below to recruit new staff, including new ministers;
- e) meet to decide whether the regular Church programme can continue;
- f) identify changes in the Church programme and consult the Church in line with the LWHT Memorandum and Articles of Association before implementing any of the changes.

8) Loss of Staff

If the Church suffers a loss of two or more staff at the same time (eg due to a road accident), the Church leaders will give pastoral support to the families and:

- a) decide which of the activities in the regular weekly Church programme can continue without staff support;
- b) review the duties of the remaining staff to cover some of the key tasks carried out by the lost staff;

- c) secure volunteer help from church members, who have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience, to cover the key tasks carried out by the lost staff;
- d) recruit new staff to fill the vacancies.

9) **Severe weather**

The staff team will make reasonable efforts to come to work, taking account of advice from local authorities etc. They will work from home as necessary, maintaining communication with each other digitally and electronically. The Church Administrator will keep church members and the wider community informed of what is happening via email, social media and the church website.

10) **Emergencies arising between Fridays and Sundays**

Emergencies which impact on the Sunday service may arise between Friday evening and Sunday morning while the Church Office is closed. If such emergency arises, the Pastor will decide whether the Sunday service will go ahead and, together with the staff team, will let church members know by all available communication methods.

11) **Pandemics and other reasons for governmental closure of schools and church gatherings.**

It is possible that in the event of a COVID pandemic or other such emergency the World Health Organisation or UK Government will close schools and recommend that larger gatherings such as church services should cease. We need to be especially mindful of vulnerable elderly people and those with disabilities who may need additional support.

In the event of a local outbreak the Pastor will convene a "Contingencies Team". Any decisions made by this group will be circulated to all LWH Trustees, Elders and Deacons as soon as practicable. The Trustees, Elders and Deacons will be fully consulted to consider what the programme of the church should be during any prolonged period of disruption.

The Church Administrator will let church members know what is happening by all available communication methods. Any changes to the normal programme will be publicised via the website, social media, and by email.

Jo Reeves
Church Administrator
9th November 2021

Appendix A for BBC Contingency Plan

Church Insurance

Broker: Onsite Insurance
(Berkley Applegate Webb and Co Ltd)
1 Bilston Street, Sedgley DY3 1JA
01902 324194
customerservice@onsiteinsurance.co.uk

Policy: RCO1300115/03
Congregational

Manse Insurance

Policy: PO/ 5202649X
AGEAS INSURANCE

Church:

Electricity Supplier: a) British Gas Business
Account no: 601155768
b) SSE 0345 7252526 www.ssebusinessenergy.co.uk
Customer acc no: 5825124517

Gas Supplier: SSE 0345 7252526 www.ssebusinessenergy.co.uk
Site ref: 331860665

Telephone: Unicom
Universal House Longley Lane Manchester M22 4SY

Numbers: 01424 774825 (line 1 digital phone)
01424 775875 (line 2 digital phone and fax)
01424 775973 (emergency lift / broadband)
01424 774997 (Caterpillar Pre-School)

Broadband: Unicom provided on the 01424 775973 (lift shaft line)

Web host: Fasthosts. Account: n68212 xtreme pin 5427
User: office@battlebaptistchurch.org.uk
Password: southam1066