

# **OXFORD INTER-COLLEGIATE CHRISTIAN UNION CONSTITUTION**

*May 2010*

## **1. OF THE NAME**

That the Union be called the Oxford Inter-Collegiate Christian Union, commonly known as the OICCU, or such other name as the Executive Committee and Standing Committee shall decide.

## **2. OF THE AIMS**

That the aims of the Union shall be the advancement of the Christian religion as revealed in the Bible by:

- (i) Presenting the claims of Jesus Christ to members of the university.
- (ii) Uniting in fellowship those who desire to witness for Christ and to deepen their spiritual lives.
- (iii) Promoting involvement in God's work world-wide.

## **3. OF AFFILIATION**

That the Union be affiliated with the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship of Evangelical Unions (UCCF).

## **4. OF THE BASIS OF FAITH**

- (i) That the Basis of Faith upon which the activities of the Union shall be conducted shall be the central truths of Christianity as revealed in Holy Scripture, including those formulated in the Doctrinal Basis of the UCCF as set out below:-
  - (a) There is one God in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
  - (b) God is sovereign in creation, revelation, redemption and final judgement.
  - (c) The Bible, as originally given, is the inspired and infallible Word of God. It is the supreme authority in all matters of belief and behaviour.
  - (d) Since the fall, the whole of humankind is sinful and guilty, so that everyone is subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
  - (e) The Lord Jesus Christ, God's incarnate Son, is fully God; he was born of a virgin; his humanity is real and sinless; he died on the cross, was raised bodily from death and is now reigning over heaven and earth.
  - (f) Sinful human beings are redeemed from the guilt, penalty and power of sin only through the sacrificial death once and for all time of their representative and substitute, Jesus Christ, the only mediator between them and God.
  - (g) Those who believe in Christ are pardoned all their sins and accepted in God's sight only because of the righteousness of Christ credited to them; this

justification is God's act of undeserved mercy, received solely by trust in him and not by their own efforts.

- (h) The Holy Spirit alone makes the work of Christ effective to individual sinners, enabling them to turn to God from their sin and to trust in Jesus Christ.
  - (i) The Holy Spirit lives in all those he has regenerated. He makes them increasingly Christ-like in character and behaviour and gives them power for their witness in the world.
  - (j) The one holy universal church is the Body of Christ, to which all true believers belong.
  - (k) The Lord Jesus Christ will return in person, to judge everyone, to execute God's just condemnation on those who have not repented and to receive the redeemed to eternal glory.
- (ii) That all speakers who come to preach or teach at any meeting arranged in the name of the Union or any of its college, faculty or associated groups shall declare their agreement with the Basis of Faith each time they are invited; but this shall not be required from any speaker more than once in any period of twelve months.
  - (iii) That any questions which arise about the interpretation of the Basis of Faith shall be referred to the Standing Committee and if necessary to UCCF.
  - (iv) That on his or her election each member of the Executive Committee or of the Standing Committee or a sub-committee of the Executive Committee and each college representative, associated group representative, college link appointed to assist the college group, and others as decided by the Executive Committee shall declare his or her agreement with the Basis of Faith of the Union, and promise to uphold it during his or her term of office.

## **5. OF THE BASIS OF MEMBERSHIP**

That the Basis of Membership shall be: -

“I desire in joining this Union to declare my faith in Jesus Christ as my Saviour, my Lord and my God. I also declare my intention to support God's work in the Union as expressed in the three aims by praying, giving, and participation in its activities and witness at every level.”

## **6. OF MEMBERSHIP**

- (i) That full membership shall be open to all junior members of the University in residence who have signed acceptance of the Basis of Membership.
- (ii) That associate membership shall be open to all senior students of the university and to all non-University members who attend further educational establishments in Oxford who have signed acceptance of the Basis of Membership provided that such associate membership shall be open only to a number that is no more than one fifth of the total membership.

- (iii) That on becoming a member there should be no subscription but that each member should carefully consider his or her regular contribution to the financial needs of the Union as declared in the Basis of Membership.

## **7. OF LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

- (i) That, after they have gone down, all former members of the Union may become life members of the Union upon application to the Secretary of the Union. The application must include acceptance of the Basis of Membership.
- (ii) That life members may attend and speak at but not vote at General Meetings.

## **8. OF COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES**

- (i) That the duties of the College Representative shall include:-
  - (a) To make known the aims and work of the Union
  - (b) To organise, lead and encourage a College group in fulfilling the aims of the Union.
  - (c) To arrange in college meetings for prayer, Bible study and evangelism.
  - (d) To maintain a close liaison with a member of the Executive Committee and to attend the meetings of the Representative Committee as regularly as he or she is able.
  - (e) To invite into membership of the Union those in agreement with the Basis of Membership and with the aims of the Union.
- (ii) That before accepting office, and during their term of office, each person invited to be a College Representative must:-
  - (a) Be a full member of the Union.
  - (b) Express his or her agreement with the Basis of Faith and with the aims of the Union.
  - (c) Agree to abide by the Constitution of the Union.
- (iii) That a College Representative, prior to relinquishing his or her post, shall inform the Executive Committee and the group and consult suitable older Union members in the group. The approval of the Executive Committee shall be obtained before his or her successor is approached or appointed.
- (iv) That no joint public activities with any other body shall be arranged in the name of the Union or any of its college groups without the approval of the Executive Committee.

## **9. OF THE REPRESENTATIVES' COMMITTEE**

- (i) That the Representatives' Committee shall be composed of the members of the Executive Committee and the representatives of each college.
- (ii) That the Representatives' Committee shall meet at least once a term under the Chairmanship of the President or in his absence a Vice-President to advise, or make any recommendation to the Executive Committee.
- (iii) That the agenda of any meeting shall be drawn up by the Executive Committee, in consultation with the College Representatives, and be sent to all present members of the Executive Committee and to all present College Representatives at least seven days beforehand. The Executive Committee shall, on request to the Secretary, circulate with the minutes of each meeting, a response to any recommendations made at the meeting.

## **10. OF MISSIONARY WORK AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

- (i) That the administration of International work shall be in the hands of the International Secretary, assisted by the International Team made up of at least two members; subject to the overall control of the Executive Committee.
- (ii) That those assisting in the administration of the International work shall be elected by the Executive Committee at their discretion, for such time as they shall be willing to hold office or the Executive Committee shall think fit.
- (iii) That each of those assisting the administration of International work must:-
  - (a) Be a full or associate member of the Union.
  - (b) Express his or her agreement with the Basis of Faith and with the aims of the Union.
  - (c) Agree to abide by the constitution of the Union.

## **11. OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- (i) That the administration of the Union shall be in the hands of the Executive Committee which shall consist of a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, an Outreach Secretary, an International Secretary, a Prayer Secretary, a Treasurer and a College Groups Secretary and a senior member to serve as an ex officio member, to be appointed as under article 12(i). One Vice-President shall be male, the other female, but none of the roles are gender specific. At least two of these officers shall be men and at least two shall be women.
- (ii) That only full members shall serve on the Executive Committee.
- (iii)
  - (a) That the President, and any other officer of the next Executive Committee who are to serve on the incumbent committee in the Hilary Term, shall be elected

annually by the retiring Committee, subject to the approval of the Union at a General Meeting, called before the end of Michaelmas Full Term.

- (b) That the remaining officers of the Executive Committee, including the Senior Member, shall be elected annually by the retiring Committee at the end of Hilary Term subject to the approval of the Union at the Annual General Meeting.
- (iv) That prior to the electing and submitting for approval any officer of the next Executive Committee the incumbent Committee shall ask for nominations to posts from members of the Union and shall take these into consideration in reaching their decisions.
- (v) That on his or her election each member of the Executive Committee and throughout his or her term of office shall in addition to declaring his or her agreement with the Basis of Faith of the Union, promise to uphold the aims of the Union, to abide by the Constitution of the Union and not to receive any benefit in money or kind from the Union throughout his or her term of office.
- (vi) That in the event of any member of the Executive Committee being obliged to leave Oxford temporarily, he or she may retain his or her position on the Committee until the end of his or her term of office, and the Committee shall have the power to elect a full member of the Union to take on the role of the absent member, subject to the approval of the Union at a General Meeting.
- (vii) That, in the event of any member of the Executive Committee having to relinquish his or her position prior to the end of his or her term of office, the Committee shall have the power to appoint a full member of the Union to the vacant post, subject to the approval of the Union at a General Meeting.
- (viii) That the Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to two other full members of the Union to fulfil any specific functions that are deemed necessary, but that these co-opted members shall not be eligible to hold any of the offices outlined in article 11 (i). The Union shall be informed at the earliest opportunity of any such co-options.
- (ix) That a quorum of the Committee shall consist of five members not including co-opted members.
- (x) That the President, or in his or her absence a Vice-President, shall act as Chairman and shall have a casting vote.
- (xi) That the Executive Committee shall normally meet once a week during Full Term.
- (xii) That in addition to the powers listed above the Executive Committee may exercise the following powers in furtherance of the Union's aims:-
  - (a) The power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from those interested in the work of the Union, provided that the Union shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities.
  - (b) The power to buy, take on lease or in exchange, any property, and to maintain and equip it for use.

- (c) The power to sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of, all or any part of the charity's property.
  - (d) The power to donate money to groups with similar aims.
  - (e) The power to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.
- (xiii) That the Executive Committee shall control the working of the Union and shall be able to consult the Standing Committee (see Article 16).

## **12. OF OTHER OFFICERS**

- (i) That a senior member who must necessarily be a member of Congregation shall be appointed by the Executive Committee after consultation with the outgoing Senior Member.
- (ii) That other officers shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to positions as the need arises after consultation with the outgoing officers.

## **13. OF FACULTY GROUPS**

- (i) That the Executive Committee shall seek to support and encourage faculty groups where their aims are in line with those of the Union, and that, where appropriate, the Executive Committee shall seek to appoint representatives in faculties to extend the work of the Union.
- (ii) That the duties of the faculty representative shall include:
  - (a) To arrange faculties meetings in line with the aims of the Union.
  - (b) To maintain a close liaison with a member of the Executive Committee.
- (iii) That before accepting office and during their term of office, each person invited to be a Faculty Representative must:
  - (a) Be a full member of the Union.
  - (b) Express his or her agreement with the Basis of Faith and with the aims of the Union.
  - (c) Agree to abide by the Constitution of the Union.
- (iv) That a Faculty Representative, prior to relinquishing his or her post, shall inform the Executive Committee. The approval of the Executive Committee shall be obtained before his or her successor is approached or appointed.
- (v) That no joint public activities with any other body shall be arranged in the name of the faculty groups without the approval of the Executive Committee.
- (vi) That all speakers who come to preach or teach at any meeting of a faculty group shall declare their agreement with the Basis of Faith.

#### **14. OF ASSOCIATED GROUPS**

- (i) That the Executive Committee may invite groups with similar aims to become associated groups.
- (ii) That representatives of associated groups shall express their agreement with the Basis of Faith.
- (iii) That all speakers who come to preach or teach at any meeting of an associated group shall declare their agreement with the Basis of Faith.
- (iv) That the representatives of associated groups shall maintain a close liaison with a member of the Executive Committee.
- (v) That the association of any groups shall be reviewed annually.

#### **15. OF GENERAL MEETINGS**

- (i) That the Annual General Meeting shall be held at the end of each Hilary Term to transact such business as is brought before it, which shall include:-
  - (a) Submission of a report from the President.
  - (b) Submission of a report from the International Secretary.
  - (c) Submission of a report from the Treasurer, and receipt of the accounts of the Union for the preceding financial year.
  - (d) Appointment of the Independent Examiner for the ensuing year.
  - (e) Approval of the election of the Executive Committee for the ensuing year.
  - (f) Any resolution submitted to the Executive Committee not less than 21 days before the meeting by two or more members of the Union.
- (ii) That the President, or in his or her absence a Vice-President, shall be Chairman.
- (iii) That other General Meetings may be summoned by the Executive Committee.
- (iv) That an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be summoned by the Executive Committee at the request in writing of not less than a quarter of the Union.
- (v) That notice of any General Meetings, together with the agenda, shall be published at least seven days beforehand and that the agenda of the Annual General Meeting shall specify the names of those elected by the retiring Committee to the Executive Committee for the ensuing year with their offices.
- (vi) That only members and life members are entitled to attend General Meetings.
- (vii) That only members present may vote at General Meetings.
- (viii) That a resolution shall be carried if it obtains a two-thirds majority of those voting for which purpose abstentions shall not count as votes.

- (ix) That the quorum of the meeting shall consist of one-tenth of the current membership or forty-two members whichever is greater.
- (x) That the Secretary shall take the minutes of the meeting, to be available for members upon request.

## **16. OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE**

- (i) That the Standing Committee shall be composed of not less than five and not more than ten members of whom at least half shall live no more than twelve miles from Carfax.
- (ii) That the senior member may attend and speak but not vote at the meetings.
- (iii) That the President and Vice-Presidents and the Regional Staff Workers shall be entitled to attend and speak but not vote at meetings of the Committee unless the Committee resolves otherwise on a specific occasion.
- (iv) That the continuing agreement of each member of the Standing Committee to uphold the Basis of Faith of the Union shall be expressed in writing once a year to the Executive Committee.
- (v) That the Standing Committee shall meet at least once a term and shall maintain close contact with the Union.
- (vi) That the Standing Committee shall act as a body of referees in matters affecting:-
  - (a) The Basis of Faith of the Union.
  - (b) Co-operation with other bodies not having the UCCF Doctrinal Basis (or its equivalent) and that the Executive Committee shall notify the Standing Committee when such matters are under consideration.
- (vii) That the Standing Committee shall have power to co-opt up to two members for terms of one year, to fulfil any specific functions that are deemed necessary, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.
- (viii) That the Executive Committee after consultation with the Standing Committee shall have power to elect any vacancy that occurs in the Standing Committee subject to the Standing Committee having power by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to reject any such election.
- (ix) That at each termly meeting those members of the Standing Committee whose term of office since their last election will exceed five years before the subsequent termly meeting shall be required to resign. They shall be eligible for re-election at the subsequent termly meeting in accordance with the previous sub-clauses.

## **17. OF FINANCE**

- (i) That the Treasurer shall be responsible for the setting up and changing of bank accounts and shall inform the Executive Committee of any changes in them.

- (ii) That the President, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Secretary shall have the authority to sign cheques, with two signatories required for amounts over £50.
- (iii) That the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer must sit on the Mission Subcommittee; and they as well as the President, the Secretary and one other member of the Mission Subcommittee shall have the authority to sign cheques on the Mission Account. Two signatories shall be required for amounts of £50 or more.
- (iv) That the Treasurer shall be responsible for the keeping of the accounts of the Union.
- (v) That all accounts shall be independently examined annually by the independent examiner appointed at the AGM.
- (vi) That the Treasurer shall prepare annual statements of account to be approved by the Executive Committee and sent to the Proctors.

## **18. OF DISSOLUTION**

That if the Executive Committee and Standing Committee unanimously decide that that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Union, they shall call a General Meeting of which not less than 21 days notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed) shall be given. If the proposal is confirmed, as outlined in article 15(viii), the Executive Committee shall have the power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the Union. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having aims similar to the aims of the Union as the Executive Committee deems appropriate. Failing that, they shall be applied for some other charitable purpose.

## **19. OF THE PROCTORS**

- (i) That the Union shall be administered in accordance with the regulations for University Clubs set out in the Proctors' and Assessor's Memorandum.
- (ii) That the activities of the Union will at all times be conducted in accordance with the following University policies and codes of practice in force from time to time: Integrated Equality Policy, Code of Practice on Harassment and Bullying, and Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech.

## **20. OF AMENDMENT**

- (i) That an unanimous vote of the Executive Committee and Standing Committee and a two-thirds majority of the General Meeting shall be required for any change in articles 2, 3, 4, 5, 18, 19 or 20 of the Constitution.
- (ii) That a two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee, Standing Committee and of the General Meeting shall be required for changes to the other articles of the Constitution.
- (iii) That no amendment may be made which has the effect of the Union ceasing to be a charity at law.

- (iv) That the Executive Committee must:
  - (a) Promptly send to the Proctors a copy of any amendment made.
  - (b) Keep a copy of any such amendment with this constitution.

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