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1. This Charter

- a. **Purpose:** The purpose of this Elders and Pastors Charter is to establish a framework for the governance, leadership, and spiritual oversight provided by the EB to its flock known as Every Nation Auckland City (also known as “ENAC”– which includes all locations). This charter serves as a foundational document to clarify and define our form of governance, key principles, expectations, purpose, operations, policies and positions of the EB for the benefit of the health of the people and expansion of the gospel.
- b. **Background:** ENAC has enjoyed many years of fruitful ministry since its inception in 2014 however, during the last few years of challenge and change, it became evident that a Charter would be very helpful to provide clarity and security, particularly as we anticipate growth and expansion in the future.
- c. **Acknowledgement:** While a number of resources have been used in the creation of this charter, the primary resource is *The Church in the New Testament* by Kevin J. Conner
The Church in the New Testament (PDF Version).pdf [internal link disabled]
- d. **NB:** This charter is NOT intended to be an in-depth study of ecclesiology (the church).

2. ENAC’s government

- a. **Introduction:** One of the most controversial and divisive areas throughout church history has been the subject of church government. All recognise the need for some form of government, but what form it should take has been a point of contention.

The word *governance* can be defined as ‘*The exercise of authority and system of ruling*’ over an organisation, institution, people, territory or nation. We at ENAC recognise that the church as God’s house, city and kingdom needs government (Psalm. 127:1, Isaiah. 2:1-4, Joel 2:25-28, Acts 2:17). Without good government, lawlessness and anarchy prevail – as seen during dark periods of Israel’s history (Judges 18:1; 17:6; 19:1; 21:25). During these periods “*there was no king in Israel and every man did that which was right in his own eyes*”.

It has widely been accepted that there are three major forms of church government – Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregation (*Refer Appendices A*) and it is useful to compare and contrast these with a biblical pattern (*Refer Appendices B*).

- b. **ENAC’s form of government:** To a lesser or greater degree the elders have been unofficially operating under the below form of government. The intention of this charter is to officially recognise this.

c. **Senior Pastor proposes to officially approve and enact:**

- (i) A “three-fold cord” form of government. We believe that the divine intention is to have, what Kevin Conner calls a “*three-fold cord*” (Ecclesiastes. 4:12) approach to the governing of our church (ENAC). This includes three intertwined cords namely (1) the chief elder, and (2) multiple eldership and (3) the congregation all working together in the Spirit of Christ. Conner asserts that this includes important biblical elements of the Episcopal (Chief elder or bishop), Presbyterian (council of elders) and Congregational (democratic) forms of government. This “three-fold cord” acknowledges of the unique calling of a man and gives room for his leadership gifts while utilising the wisdom of multiple elders and having the safety of checks and balances for the health and welfare of the congregation.
- (ii) That the Senior Pastor is the ‘chief elder’ and, what is widely known as, the *‘first among equals’*. As Conner says, *“God’s form of government is theocratic in character. That is to say, God chooses, calls and equips certain persons to be leaders and rulers over His people, investing and delegating them with degrees of authority according to His will. These persons are most commonly called “Elders”, and in any given group of Elders, God generally places the mantle of leadership upon one Elder. This does not exalt this Elder above the other Elders but sets him in responsibility as “First among equals”.*

- d. **Headship:** Every government has a head – whether it is the governance of the individual, the home, the nation or the church. While ENAC has a Senior Pastor, scripture is clear that Christ is ultimately the head of the church, including local churches. God has given Christ to be the head over all things pertaining to the church (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; 5:23-27 Colossians 1:18).

Specifically, Christ is the ultimate head of ENAC and we unequivocally acknowledge his lordship, rulership, authority, government and kingship. Additionally, we acknowledge that God has ordained and delegated some of his authority to our Senior Pastor who should be supported by godly and wise Elders who provide the necessary checks and balances to the Senior Pastor.

Sobering caution: As Kevin Conner says, *“...it is the Lord’s desire that we aim towards the Divine ideal. But, even then, it is possible to have all the right form of government, as to the mechanics of it, and lack the life of the Spirit! It is possible to have the organisation and structure without the organism, without life. Organisation without organism makes all decent and in order – and dead! With all our striving after the ideal, it is imperative that the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of grace, love and humility be manifested in every believer’s attitude. The government, after all, must be upon HIS shoulder (Isaiah 9:6-9)”*

3. Key Principles

- a. **Introduction:** The following key principles are highly valued by the elders of ENAC, and they are woven throughout and infused in the framework, policies and processes of this charter AND the functioning of the Elders' Board.
- (i) **Relational Unity:** Undoubtedly one of the most common areas that the Enemy attacks the local church is relational unity that is built upon love, trust and a spirit of humility. By eroding relational unity, the power of the church is dissipated. This is extremely important - not just for the sake of personal wellbeing but also for the sake of the health and wellbeing of the church and its mission.
 - (ii) **Functional Diversity:** As a church we embrace diversity of many kinds including age, culture, ethnicity, socio-economic status, marital status and perspectives on many matters. This includes a diverse range of spiritual gifts, skills and personalities which we also welcome to the Elders' Board (subsequent to all other qualifications as mentioned below). In other words, we believe that the church is served best when we do NOT have elders who are a cookie cutter of the Senior Pastor and may be described as "yes-men" (or women).
 - (iii) **Biblical Adherence:** We are a spiritual organisation and organism that will continue to uphold and value the Word of God as our highest measure and final authority on all matters (Isaiah 40:8, 1 Peter 1:25, Psalm 119:89-176). Consequently, we seek to align all matters with the oversight and running of ENAC as best we can according to scripture.
 - (iv) **Faith:** While we will endeavour to provide sound and secure leadership and stewardship of our people, programs and resources, we are also a church with an apostolic calling to trust God and go beyond what is always safe and predictable to take the gospel to our nation. Being followers of Jesus means that we are to be a people of strong faith and generosity, believing that our God is a miracle worker.

4. Elders' Board: Purpose

- a. **Introduction:** The Elders' Board is the highest authority (under Jesus) in our church. It covers, protects, serves and generally provides oversight (*def: watchful and responsible care*) for the members of the church in all locations (One church, many locations). The three major responsibilities of the Elders' Board are:
- (i) **Spiritual Leadership:** The Elders' Board shall provide spiritual leadership to ENAC and support to the pastoral team in their ministry. This is demonstrated:

- By each member personally maintaining a lifestyle of consecration and sanctification through the consistent exercise of spiritual disciplines, thereby *walking in the spirit* (Gal. 5:16, Col. 1:10-11, Eph. 5:18, Joh. 15:4)
 - By each member being generally perceived by the congregation to be spiritually strong and mature and thereby providing a godly and respect-worthy example to them (1 Tim. 3:1-7, Tit. 1:5-9, 1 Pet. 5:1-3). This would firstly be observed in the leadership of an elder's family life (if they are married and have children under their care). If spiritual leadership is inadequate in the home, it will also be in the church.
 - By each member providing covering through (a) praying for the flock, (b) caring for the flock, (c) preserving our statement of faith, doctrinal purity and safeguarding against false teaching, and (d) generally being attentive and spiritually watchful for spiritual attacks in the church.
- (ii) **Security and Accountability:** The Elders' Board will attend to the below forms of accountability. These areas of accountability are intended to provide security and foster organisational and spiritual health as well as provide a foundation for the church's ministry to grow and expand.
- Provide overall accountability to the Senior Pastor
 - Provide accountability of each elder on the board (including prospective elders)
 - Be accountable to church members by way of demonstrating exemplary (not perfect) character and adhering to high biblical/ethical standards
 - Provide accountability to the finance board (Refer: ENAC Financial Charter)
 - Provide a safe and accountable process to escalate and resolve conflicts (Refer: ENAC Process on Escalation Management).
- (iii) **Oversee vision and values:** The Elders' Board shall generally ensure that our core values are upheld and that we stay true to the vision that God has entrusted to us. This includes raising concerns if any activities, initiatives or the general direction as set by the Senior Pastor is deviating from this.

5. Elders' Board: Operations

- a. **Introduction:** Now that we have established the purpose of this charter, our form of government, some key principles and the purpose of the Elders' Board we will now move onto more practical matters concerning the operation of the board.
- b. **Roles and Responsibilities:** For the effective operation of our Elders' Board the following is a brief look at the basic roles and responsibilities:

<i>Board title</i>	<i>Church title</i>	<i>Basic practical responsibilities</i>	<i>Paid role?</i>
Chairman	Senior Pastor	Lead the board. Call and preside over meetings and all matters pertaining to the function of the board. Speak on behalf of the Elders' Board.	Yes
Vice-chairman	Associate Pastor or nominated elder	Temporarily assume the function of the chairman if he is unable to. Lead projects, portfolios or tasks as set by the Chairman.	No
Secretary (Administrator)	General Manager	Create, distribute and store agendas, minutes, audio recordings and all associated administrative functions to the running of the board.	As determined
Member (voting)	Elder	Fulfil the practical implications of all that is set out in this charter. Attend, participate and make decisions either in board meetings or via email or the elder's group chat.	No
Member (non-voting)	Prospective Elder	Fulfil the practical implications of all that is set out in this charter. Attend, participate and assist the members (elders) to make decisions either in board meetings or via email or the elder's group chat.	No
Consultant	Consultant	Serve the board as a subject-matter expert (SME)	No

- c. **Composition and Terms:** Further to the practical operations of the board we believe that the following parameters will help the functioning of the board – provided that they are biblically qualified.
- (i) The board will consist of a minimum of five (5) voting members
 - (ii) The board prefers to have around six (6) to eight (8) voting members
 - (iii) Each member will serve a term of 5 years with a maximum of 2 terms. The exception to this policy is the Senior Pastor.
 - (iv) The board will endeavour to have 50% of the board not serving on the staff of ENAC

- (v) The board will endeavour to consist of multiple cultures or ethnicities
 - (vi) The board will endeavour to consist of multiple generations
 - (vii) The board will endeavour to consist of representation from all locations
 - (viii) A member may, for exceptional reasons, step down from serving on the board
 - (ix) A member may be subject to removal at any time if they cease to qualify under the original qualifications
- d. **Sabbatical:** For various reasons it may be wise and helpful for an elder to have a sabbatical from serving on the Elders’ Board. The appropriateness, timing and communication of this would be a matter for the elders to work through.
- e. **Making Decisions:** A core function of the Elders’ Board is to help make decisions with matters pertaining to the purpose, scope and effective operation of the Elders’ Board. The heart behind the below parameters is to provide sensible and safe checks and balances while not stalling or unnecessarily preventing the need to move forward and make decisions.
- (i) When a vote is needed the chairman will clarify the matter and present a motion
 - (ii) Each voting member will vote in response. The voting options are either yes, no or abstain (decline to vote yes or no)
 - (iii) If a vote directly involves a board member, that board member may be asked to (a) abstain from the vote and/or (b) vacate the room while voting proceeds. This is primarily to protect relationships.
 - (iv) The results of the vote and decision are recorded in the minutes
 - (v) A quorum is reached when at least 75% are in agreement – refer to chart

# of voters	To accept a motion
5	4 or more
6	5 or more
7	6 or more
8	6 or more
9	7 or more
10	8 or more

- f. **Advice to the Senior Pastor:** In addition to fulfilling the core purpose of the Elders’ Board (detailed above), the Senior Pastor may seek advice and counsel from the Elders’ Board to benefit from their collective wisdom and insight for the purposes of helping him make a decision that is operational in nature.

- g. **Appointing New Elders:** All details pertaining to the appointing of new elders are found in our policy documents called '*Prospective Leaders Policy and Process*' **[internal link disabled]**
- h. **Ordination of Elders:** After serving for a season as prospective elders the voting elders and prospective elders will pray, discuss and decide if it's time to induct them into becoming a fully-fledged elder (Acts 14:23, Tit. 1:5). If so, a recommendation is made to the Oceania Regional director. The Oceania Regional director may elect to conduct an interview with the prospective elder to give an endorsement.

Once we are all in agreement as to this appointment, an ordination service will be planned. This will be communicated to the church in advance. The ordination service may involve several relevant segments in the service, but it will include having the Elders' Board and the Oceania Regional Director lay hands upon them; to pray over them (Acts 14:23) and present them to the congregation. A special certificate will be given to the new elder to commemorate the special occasion.

Ordination means "*the public setting apart of a man (or woman) to the ministry, or the solemn induction by the Church into the pastoral office the one chosen to be the pastor*" (H. A. Kent).

- i. **Ordination of Pastors:** Even though scripture uses the same or similar words interchangeably for elder, overseer, shepherd or pastor, the elders of ENAC believe that it is helpful to distinguish between ordained elders and ordained pastors. That is to say, we acknowledge that a church can be served well by having elders who are not called to be pastors or pastors who are not called to be elders or pastors who are also called to be elders. A clear distinction should be made be communicated at the ordination service at the same time.
- The process of ordaining pastors is the same as ordaining elders, except that pastors are expected to complete Every Nations' Leadership 215 course (Every Nations' minimum global theological standard for ordained pastors and ministers)
- a. We acknowledge that God's *calling* on a pastor may be related too, but separate from, the *funding* and *function* of a pastor
 - b. That is to say that a pastor may be a lay, bi-vocational or vocational.
 - Lay pastor = pastor who is a volunteer and not remunerated by the church
 - Bi-vocational pastor = pastor who receive some remuneration alongside that of other employment
 - Vocational pastor = pastor whose employment is only with the church.
 - A Bi-vocational or Vocational pastor may be funded through a salary from the church or through the MPD programme.
 - c. That is to say that at the ordination of a pastor they are ordained "to the ministry with Every Nation". They are not ordained to a specific role i.e. youth pastor, associate pastor, children's pastor. This avoids the need to re-ordain someone if their role within the same church changes

6. Individual Elders

- a. **Introduction:** So far we have defined our model of government, articulated some key principles, identified the purpose of the Elders' Board and worked through the practical functioning of the Elders' Board. Now we will focus on key aspects of the individual elders.
- b. **If a pastor is not an elder:** Where a pastor is not functioning as an elder, the pastor will be expected to uphold the same standards to that of an elder as listed below.
- c. **Expectations:** The below expectations are designed to honour God, preserve a godly reputation of the board and maintain a high level of trust and confidence from our church members.
 - (i) Spiritual maturity and growth: Each elder is expected to pursue personal spiritual growth and development and be continually refilled with the Holy Spirit.
 - (ii) Confidentiality: Maintain strict confidentiality regarding sensitive matters discussed in board meetings and on other communication platforms.
 - (iii) Availability: Be available for regular board meetings, key church events and all meetings pertaining to leadership of ENAC. The elders are also expected to be available for prayer ministry to the congregation.
 - (iv) Integrity: Conduct themselves with the highest level of integrity, humility, and Christian character in both their private life and public life.
 - (v) Pastoral oversight: Be alert, aware and spiritually discerning as to the condition of the flock.
 - (vi) Accountability: Elders need to be capable and willing to fulfil the purpose of the Elders' Board as described above.
- d. **Qualifications:** What makes an elder an elder over the people of ENAC?
 - (i) Overarching biblical qualifications: Refer to 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-3. These qualifications cover spiritual qualifications, character qualifications, domestic qualifications and ministry qualifications.
 - (ii) Additional qualifications: Additionally, an elder must be called by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:17, 28) and be able to shepherd the flock of God (Acts 20:28)
- e. **Accusations:**
 - (i) Introduction: Although Elders are not perfect, they are God's established authorities over His people. Elders have responsibilities to the people (and the people have responsibilities to the Elders). If an accusation is received regarding an elder's behaviour, the Elders' Board will assess the concerns and determine the best course of action. The heart of any discipline is not to

'sweep issues under the carpet' but maintain confidence in church members towards the elders, provide support to all parties involved and help the offending elder to learn, grow and hopefully be restored.

(ii) Scriptural Guidance: A particularly helpful scripture is 1 Timothy 5:19-21

1 Tim. 5:19-21 (NKJV) *Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear. I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.*

(iii) Conclusions:

- Paul is trying to get a balance between believing and acting on every bit of gossip that comes along about a leader in the church and ignoring serious sin in a leader's life. Either extreme is wrong.
- While we should *listen* to an accusation about an elder, we should not automatically *accept* an accusation against an elder without witnesses (not just an accuser).
- According to 1 Tim. 5:20, some accusations are sinful in nature and some are not.
- We should play no favourites as per 1 Tim. 5:21
- Once an accusation has been received, the accusation should be carefully verified by two or three witnesses (not just two or three others who also heard the gossip).

(iv) Process: The following is our process to validate an accusation.

- Escalate: If an accusation is received against an elder, immediately escalate this accusation to the Senior Pastor. If the accusation involves the Senior Pastor, then the accusation should go to another pastor or elder.
- Verify the accusation: An assessment will be conducted to determine an appropriate response. The following questions may help - What is the nature of the accusation? What is the elder's perspective? What is the spirit or attitude of the elder? Is the accusation true or false? Is this the first occurrence? Is a mediation meeting needed? Are there other witnesses? Is the accuser a member in good standing? Is the accusation a legal matter i.e. financial impropriety, sexual or physical abuse etc? Has the accuser spoken to others about this? Is the accuser happy to leave this information in confidence with the elders to address? (There are likely many more questions to ask and answer)
- Determine an action plan: Record what the appropriate response and action plan should be. Decide if the whole Elders' Board needs to be involved?
- Execute the plan: Record the appropriate details, store in a secure facility (ENAC SharePoint) and follow through on the action plan.
- Urgency: In order to maintain confidence in the eldership and health over the church, accusations should be investigated and attended to as soon as practicably possible.

- **Open discipline:** In a situation where it has been confirmed that an elder is guilty of sinful behaviour:
 - If the elder is repentant we will follow a similar pattern found on Matthew 18:15-20. This principle attempts to correct sin privately and gets larger if the sin is not corrected.
 - If the elder is unrepentant, the elder will be publicly rebuked as per the biblical precedent in 1 Tim. 5:20.

7. Policies and Positions

- a. **Introduction:** Various matters have on occasion come before the Elders’ Board requiring discussion and a collective determination as to how scripture and practical wisdom are best applied to a particular matter. The result of these is the production of a document that records our current position (and may include processes). These are intended to be living documents and should be assessed and, if necessary, amended. They are stored in this folder: Policies (unless another folder is specified below) **[internal links disabled]**

Subject	Document Name
Women Elders	Women in Leadership (Elders, Pastors)
Prospective Elders	Prospective Elders Policy and Process - 28 August 2023.docx
Escalation and resolution of conflict	Office/Executive/ENAC Processes/Submitted: Escalation Management
New disciples who live together yet are unmarried	New Disciples who are not married but living together - Guidelines.docx
Sabbatical leave	Policy ENAC Sabbatical Leave for Pastors.docx
Matters of national significance	- <i>Abortion Legislation Bill</i> - <i>Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill</i> - <i>Covid-19 Vaccination Mandates</i>
Response to ‘Terumah’	Terumah.docx
Filtering Feedback	Office/Eldership/Policies/ Filtering Feedback - Guidelines.docx
Purpose of Sunday Sermons	Office/Eldership/Policies/ Purpose of Sunday Sermons.docx

8. Review and Amendments

- a. **Amendment:** This charter may be amended with a majority vote of the Board of Elders.
- b. **Regular Review:** The Board shall review this charter at least once a year and make any necessary revisions.

9. Elder's Acknowledgement

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10. Appendices A: An Overview of Church Polities by Kevin D. Gardner

EPISCOPALIANISM

Episcopalianism is defined by rule by bishops. In this view, a distinction is made between the bishop and the elder (who is also often called priest or pastor). It is a hierarchical polity that gives bishops greater authority than elders.

A bishop rules over a given geographical area and has authority over the churches and clergy within that area. Sometimes that bishop is subject to a bishop at a higher level (who may be called an archbishop or metropolitan), and sometimes, as in the case of the pope in Roman Catholicism, there is one bishop who rules over them all.

Episcopalianism is especially associated with the Roman Catholic Church. But it also exists in various manifestations in Eastern Orthodoxy, Anglicanism, Methodism, and Lutheranism.

In practice, many modern multisite churches approximate an episcopal form of government. They have a strong head pastor who has authority over the various sites and the other pastors.

PRESBYTERIANISM

In a presbyterian form of government, authority is vested in elders who are elected by the congregation; these elders are then seated in graded councils or courts.

The lowest court—called the session or kirk session in presbyterian denominations and the consistory in Dutch Reformed denominations—is usually elected by the congregation. All the ministers and elders then sit on a regional body called a presbytery or classis, which deals with appeals from lower courts and matters that concern the regional body. Finally, there is a group that oversees the denomination as a whole called a general assembly or synod.

These courts have the same nature and the same kinds of powers—being made up of elders—but different duties as appropriate to their jurisdiction, whether local (e.g., receiving new members), regional (e.g., ordaining ministers), or national (e.g., amending the book of church order). When matters are elevated from a lower to a higher court, settling the issue thus involves bringing in more elders rather than higher elders. As an

example of this playing out, Presbyterians point to Acts 15, wherein the issue of the inclusion of gentiles was brought before the Jerusalem church and decided by a group of elders beyond the inquiring church. Some presbyterian denominations recognize two offices—elder and deacon—and distinguish between the classes of ruling elders and teaching elders. There is one office of elder, and all are called to rule, but some—also called pastors or ministers—are tasked with the additional duties of teaching and preaching. Other presbyterian denominations see ruling elders and teaching elders as distinct offices and so hold to a three-office view.

CONGREGATIONALISM

Congregationalism is defined by the independence and autonomy of each local church. Each congregation is its own entity, accountable only to God. Congregationalism is therefore explicitly anti-connectional, in contrast to episcopalianism and presbyterianism. There is no higher earthly body or authority to which a congregation answers.

Congregational churches often associate with one another in bodies that carry out ministries such as education and missions. But such bodies have no binding authority or power to dictate matters to the local church.

There are two offices in congregationalism: pastor (i.e., elder) and deacon. Some churches are led by a single pastor or elder while others hold to a plurality of elders. The single-elder form may actually include other pastors, but there is a single primary pastor with greater prominence or responsibility. In the plural-elder form, the various elders are not distinguished between ruling elders and teaching elders; they are all considered elders and pastors.

Sometimes congregationalism also encompasses the idea of democracy, wherein decisions are made by the congregation as a whole. In some churches, the authority of the congregation is ultimate. Other churches see the elders as having explicit biblical authority that does not derive from the congregation.

<https://tabletalkmagazine.com/article/2023/04/an-overview-of-church-polities/> **[hyperlink disabled]**

11. Appendices B: Church Government: Denominational or Biblical

EPISCOPAL	BIBLICAL
1. The Elder becomes a priest or a clergyman. The — Bishop becomes the ruler of the Elder.	1. The Elder and the Bishop are identical.
2. One Church with one Elder.	2. One Church with several Elders.
3. Pope, Cardinals, Archbishops etc., lead the whole church.	3. The Five Ministries oversee the whole Church.
4. The Pope or Monarch, becomes the Head of the Church.	4. The Lord Jesus Christ is Head of the Church.
5. The Elder is ordained by the Bishop.	5. The Elders are ordained by the Presbytery.
6. Human system of government.	6. Divine order.

PRESBYTERIAL	BIBLICAL
1. Bishop and Elder identical.	1. Same.
2. Ordination by Presbytery.	2. Same.
3. Plurality of Elders.	3. Same.
4. Appointment from below.	4. Appointment from above.
5. Popular elections.	5. No popular elections.
6. Democratic	6. Theocratic.
7. Distinction between ruling and teaching Elders.	7. No distinction: all Elders rule and teach.
8. Highest Court: appeal to man — General Assembly.	8. Highest Court: appeal to God.
9. General Assembly oversees the whole Church, i.e., that denomination.	9. The Five Ministries oversee the whole Church; no denomination.
10. Aaronic-style Priesthood.	10. Melchizedek priesthood.
11. Human system of government.	11. Divine order.

CONGREGATIONAL	BIBLICAL
1. Bishop and Elder the same.	1. Same.
2. One man leadership	2. Multiple leadership.
3. Popular elections.	3. Eldership appoints.
4. Democratic.	4. Theocratic.
5. Ordination not required.	5. Presbytery ordains.
6. No outside interference permitted, as the Board has the final decision.	6. Open to Five Ministries for correction when necessary.
7. Each congregation sets its own doctrine, practices and standards.	7. Each congregation aligns itself to the heavenly pattern.
8. Human institution.	8. Divine order.

The Church in the New Testament (PDF Version).pdf [[internal link disabled](#)]