

**BIERTON STRICT AND
PARTICULAR BAPTISTS
AND THE
ASSOCIATION OF GRACE
BAPTISTS CHURCHES
LIMITED**

**By David Clarke
September 3rd , 2004**

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Reason for the Solemn Declaration

As a lawful honourable member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist Church whose Chapel is Aylesbury Road, Bierton, Buckinghamshire, I am lawfully entitled to take over the Bierton Church land, chapel and property upon the death of all the other Church members. The Chapel was closed for worship on 22nd December 2002, due to the decease of its members.

The Lawful Trustees cannot sell the Chapel or give the Title deeds to another body of men that have not been elected or chosen by the Church. This Declaration is the basis for my Claim to recover our Churches property in order to continue the work of preaching the Gospel and the Worship of God according to our Articles of Religion dated 1831, Church practice and Custom.

Solemn Declaration Of Fact and Belief

1. I, David Clarke, church member, and sent minister of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist Society meeting formerly at the Bierton Chapel and now residing at, 11 Hayling Close, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 3AE, do solemnly and sincerely declare, that this declaration is true, and that the enclosed Indenture, is a copy of the original document for the Bierton Chapel, dated signed and witnessed 1831. My own hand took this transcript when I made a personal copy in the presence of Bertha Ellis, at 175 Aylesbury Road, Bierton. The term Church refers to the Society of Strict and Particular Baptists, described in the enclosed Indenture.

Bierton Articles of Religion 1831

2. In 1976 I requested to inspect the Articles of Religion of the Bierton Church, with a view to becoming a member. I was presented with a set of religious tenets that were not the same as those in the original Bierton Articles of Religion, as set out in the Indenture 1831 enclosed below.

3. There were two articles of religion that I could not subscribe to, in this spurious set of religious tenets. These sets of religious tenets were spurious to the original articles, as we could find no record, as to their adoption, in the church minutes. I agreed to the articles of religion expressed in the Trust Deed, date 1831.

Accepted as a Member of the Bierton Church 1976

4. After serious discussion with the church chairman Mr Hill, it was agreed that I could be accepted as a church member of the Bierton communion by subscribing to the original articles of religion dated 1831, witnessed and

signed by John Warburton Jr. 1831. This took place at the church meeting on 8th January 1976. The chairman being Mr James Hill, minister of the Gospel, Ebenezer Strict Baptist Church, Luton, this being 6 years since my call by grace on, the 16th January 1970.

Appointment of New Trustees 1976

5. At the church meeting, on the 2nd July, 1976, the following men were chosen, in accordance to the expressed terms of our trust deed 1831, to be the new trustees: Mr. A. King (Bierton), Mr. Hill, (Luton), Mr. T. Martin (Blunham), Mr. Baumber (Bedford), Mr. Heather (High Wycombe), Mr. Janes (Eaton Bray), Mr. F. Hill, Mr. D. White, Mr. P. Gurney and Mr. Foster. A total of 11 trustees.

Irene Mary Clarke Accepted As Member 1980

6. On October 9th, 1979, Irene Clarke made application for church membership, however the problem regarding, which articles of religions to present to her for subscription too, was unresolved. As a result her application for membership was withdrawn, as the church were unable to decide. This occurred at the meeting dated 9th January 1980. She was later accepted as a Church member upon her confession to the original Church articles of religion dated 1831.

Bierton A Gospel Standard Cause

7. On the 16th January 1981 the Bierton Church, unanimously agreed to seek association with the Gospel Standard group of Strict Baptists. This was the proposal of Mr A King. I was not present at the meeting but was informed by Mrs. Evered who was the Secretary. The Church subscribe to the Gospel Standard Articles of religion without a problem and we were accepted and enlisted as a Gospel Standard cause on 3rd April 1981. We adopted the rules of conduct for church order and practice.

Strict and Traditional Rules Relating To Church Membership

8. These rules of conduct clearly supported the traditional view of our church that a member cannot resign. One is either an honourable or dishonourable member. An honourable transfer must be to a church of the same faith and order or by termination by the church it self. The member alone cannot effect it.

Bierton Church not connected With Grace Baptists Churches

9. The Bierton Church did not accept the articles of religions of the London Baptists 1689 confession, nor did they have associations with the Limes Avenue Grace Baptist Church, in Aylesbury. The Bierton Church were a

distinctive Strict and Particular Baptist Society, historically associated, with the 1644 First London Confession, and would have been labelled historically, by opponents; namely Fullerite Baptists, such as the Grace Churches, as Gillite's or Huntingtonian's. The matters were fully recorded and outlined in, "The Berton Crisis 1984".

My Call To Preach The Gospel and Being Sent By The Church 1982

10. In 1982, Mr. Hope (Reading) and Mr. Hill (Luton) made recommendations to the Church to support my call to the ministry. The Church duly sanctioned my call to preach, after a special meeting was set-aside for that purpose.

Controversy Over General Redemption Hymns

11. In 1983, a controversy arose in the church, over Mr. King's doctrinal error, as he taught the Sunday school children General Redemption, by using hymns, at their anniversary meeting, which were contradictory to our articles of religion and as a Gospel Standard Cause.

Concern Over General Redemption Hymns Confirmed By Others

12 a. In 1982, Mr Jane, a member of the Gospel Standard church meeting at Eaton Bray (and one of our trustees, and Mr Ramsbottom (Editor of the Gospel Standard Magazine), supported my request for help and confirmed that the teaching of General Redemption by using hymns that expressed this was wrong. To do so, and for the church to allow Mr king to do so, was contrary too our Articles of Religion, as set out in our trust deed, and or association with the Gospel Standard causes.

Mr King Resigns

12 b. On the 15th June 1983 Mr. A. King left (resigned) the Berton Church. See the whole controversy published in, "The Berton Crisis 1984".

13. Due to lack of church discipline, and order, we asked Mr. Paul Crane, a visiting minister, to act as our overseer.

Mr Craine Appointed As our Overseer

14. On the 18th February 1984 Mr. Paul Crane, of 25 Roughlands, Lakenheath, was appointed as the overseer of the church at Berton.

No Disciplinary Action Against Mr. King 1984

15. The Church did not take any disciplinary steps against Mr. King, due to his withdrawal from the communion, as we hoped he would return and resolve the differences that had occurred. According to our rules he remained in church membership.

My Secession 1984

16. In July 1984, I resigned as Church Secretary, and seceded from membership of the Church over matters of conscience. I withdrew from the church communion and left the Church, to the care of God and in the charge of Mr. Crane. See, “The Berton Crisis 1984”, in which I write a full account of my actions. They were carried out in the name and fear of the Lord. According to our rules I remained in membership because the church did not terminate my membership, they wanted me to return.

Trustees Informed of The Reasons For My secession

The trustees were fully informed over these issues. No disciplinary action was taken against me, in the similar way to Mr. King, and I was informed that it was hoped ‘I would return’. I, left the matter to the Lord. I, to remained a member of the church as no disciplinary action was taken against me to terminate my membership.

Church Members Die

17. Between the years 1984 and November 1995 the following Church members died: Mrs. G Evered, Miss. Ruth Ellis, Mrs. C. Gurney, Miss Gwen Ellis, and Miss Bertha Ellis.

18. There is no record of Mr. King’s return to the church, or any acknowledgment of his former doctrinal errors being retracted.

Trustee’s Withdraw From Gospel Standard

19. The Church at Eaton Bray, of which Mr. Janes was a deacon, and also one of the Berton Chapel trustees, withdrew from the Gospel Standard Association, over doctrinal differences and they adopted the London Baptist 1689 confession that was at variance with to the Gospel Standard distinctive tenets of truth.

My Call to Mission Work in The Philippines

20. In August 2001, I was called on mission work to the Philippines, in order to preach the gospel according to my calling and sending, by the Berton Church, in 1982.

Trustees, Mr. Craine Mr. Ramsbottom Informed of Our Mission Work 2002

21. In December 2002, I wrote to Mr Ramsbottom, the Editor of the Gospel Standard, in the UK, seeking the communication address of Mr. Crane, and Mr Hope and the church at Albert Street, Oxford, in order to

communicate with Mr. Crane and Mr Jane as I wished to share and inform them of the work being done in the Philippines, and inform them of our return to the UK, with certain Strict Baptist pastors from the Philippines, in July, 2003.

Mr Craine Gives A Reference For Missionary Application 2003

22. In January, 2003 I wrote to Mr. Crane asking him for a reference to support my application for a visa, to work as a missionary in the Philippines.

Mr King Asks To Resign From Being Trustee 2002

23. During the year 2002, Mr King, aged 81 asked Mr. Jane and the other trustees to take over the running of the chapel.

My Work In the Philippines Prospers 2003

24. In January 2003, as the result of my mission work in the Philippines, where I baptised no less than 22 souls in Baguio City Jail, and 8 souls in Benguet City Jail which gave proof of my continued ministry, as a sent preacher from the Berton church, in 1982. See document marked, Baptism Certificate.

Missionary Visa Awarded 2003

25. In March, 2003 I was awarded a permanent missionary visa to work throughout the whole of the Philippines, as a Particular Baptist minister, sent from the Berton Church, in 1982.

Registration of Our Mission SEC

26. In March, 2003, with the aid of a Particular Baptist minister, in Muntinlupa City, My brother Michael Clarke and I registered our ministry with the Security Exchange Commission (SEC), in the Philippines. I am the founding Director. Our registration name and number being Trojan Horse International (TULIP) Phils. Incorporated. CN 200306347.

27. In March 2003, I wrote to Mr Jane, one of our trustees at Berton, informing him of our mission work and connections with the Strict and Particular Baptists in the Philippines and requested his help.

Mr Janes Trustee Cannot Help

28. Mr. Jane replied to my letter but he never informed me of the closure of the chapel and expressed, after consultation with his pastor Mr Rimes, he was not able to offer any help.

My Return To the UK July 2003

29. In July, 2003, on my return to the United Kingdom, I contacted Mr. Crane and was informed that all the church members at Bierton had died. He informed me that the Bierton chapel had closed down and the Association of Grace Churches Limited offered it for sale.

Encouraged to Reopen The Chapel 2003

30. Mr. Crane suggested that I return and reopen the chapel, as he still considered me a member of the church, according to our tradition.

Informed of The Association Of Grace Baptists Churches

31. In July, 2003, I wrote to the Association of Grace Baptist Churches limited and was informed that they were the lawful trustees.

Association Of Grace Baptists Not Elected By the Church

32. I had no idea how these new trustees had been elected by the church according, to our rules of conduct, and so I requested that I re-open the chapel to continue the work already begun at Bierton.

I am Refused Permission To Use Our Chapel

33. The Association of Grace Baptist Churches Limited, Mr. David Whitmarsh being the Secretary and David Coleman, the assistant, refused to allow me to use our chapel, but rather offered it to me for sale, at a price of £ 150,000. This was based on the assumption that planning permission had been granted for it to be converted to a two-occupation domestic dwelling.

Ancient Opposition To Bierton Being A Gospel Standard Cause

34. Mr. David Coleman knew about the issues of the Bierton Church Becoming a Gospel Standard cause, as he was a member of the Dunstable Church, in 1981. His Pastor was Mr. Kenneth Dix, who aggressively opposed the Bierton Chapel becoming a listed Gospel Standard Church. See The Bierton Crisis 1984

Association Denies We Were A Gospel Standard Cause

35 a. The Association of Grace Churches limited denied we were a Gospel Standard Church or governed by its rules and so rejected my claim to lawful church membership, despite my many representations.

Work Prospers In The Philippines

35 b. In April 2003, I returned to the Philippines and baptised Dolores A. Nava and Alan Nielson, upon confession of their faith in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. So the Lord added to church, such as should be saved.

Our Ministry Recognised By The Bureau Of Corrections

36. In April 2003, our Ministry Trojan Horse International (TULIP) Phils Incorporated was officially recognized by the Bureau of Corrections, as an official work in New Bilibid Prison and Pst. Arnel Gonzales, a particular Baptist minister for Muntinlupa City was appointed as our Religious Volunteer (RVO).

Mr. King To Old To Continue As Trustees

37. In July 2004, I visited Mr Jane at his home in Eddlesbrough, and Mr King at his home in Bierton. Mr Janes informed me he was now 83 years old and Mr King informed me he was 84 years old.

Mr. Janes, Mr Baumber and Mr. Tim Martin Take Over

38. Mr Jane informed me that in the year 2002, Mr King had asked him along with Mr. Baumber and Mr. Tim Martin, to take over the responsibility of the chapel as he was now too old and in-firmed, to carry on.

Mr Janes, Mr. Baumber and Mr. Tim Martin Resign As Trustees

40. Mr Jane informed me that he too was to old and it was also in practical for the other trustees to run the chapel so they resigned and approached the Association of Grace Churches to manage its affairs.

Bierton Trust Deed Given To The Association Of Grace Baptists

41. Mr. Jane informed me that the Trust Deed of the Bierton Church had been discovered to be with the Solicitor of Miss Gwen Ellis, and these were given to the Association Secretary alone, with all the church records and financial accounts.

Association Refuse Permission For Us to Use The Chapel

42. Despite my many representations, to the Association of Grace Baptist Churches, along that of with Irene Clarke (now Holloway), Alan Nielson, Michael J. Clarke, Mrs. Dolores Clarke and others, I was refused permission to re-open the chapel, for our lawful use.

Association Miss Represents the Use Of the Bierton Chapel

43. In August, 2004, a further application was made by the Association of Grace Baptist Churches Limited, to the Aylesbury District Council, to convert the chapel into a single residential dwelling, and to convert the grave yard (10 church members, being buried there), into off road parking for the dwelling. This was on the pretext that the chapel was redundant to use and that the affluent Limes Avenue Church being a Grace Baptist

church, could take care of any of the Bierton community who still wished to join or attend church.

Mr. Janes And The Eaton Bray Church Withdraws From Gospel Standard and Adopts the London Baptists Confession 1689

44. On the 28th July, 2004, I visited Mr Jane who then informed me that the Eaton Bray Church had withdrawn from their association with the Gospel Standard Churches and now subscribed to the 1689 confession of Faith. He expressed his objection to the Bierton Church being a Gospel Standard listed Church, and did not wish to give any assistance to rectify the mistake made by the former trustees, and the current attempts of the Association of Grace Baptist Churches LTD from selling the chapel and the distribution of the funds raised from its sale. Mr Jane informed me of the addresses of the Mr Baumber and Mr Martin. He also informed me that he felt it inconsiderate to involve Mr King in any connection relating to these matters, as he was old and seriously ill.

Mr King To ill To Resolve Difficulties

45. In the 29th July, Mr King informed me that he did not wish to be involved with the Bierton issues, due to his ill health and advise from his doctor.

Bierton Chapel falls into Dereliction

46. I visited the chapel in Bierton regularly during the period July 2003 and August 2004. During this time it fell into dereliction. The graveyard was not kept and the interior had been stripped of its furniture. I tended to the graveyard personally on the 26th August.

I Seek to Register the Chapel with the Land Registry Informing that the Deeds had been taken by misappropriation

47. In August 2004, it was decided to seek first registration of the Bierton Chapel in my sole name, I being the sole person in law, able to do so, apart from Mr. King and Irene Clarke (now Holloway) as it was unregistered land, and the deeds had been taken, by Mr. Whitmarsh, through miss appropriation.

48. In September, 2004, I wrote to The Association of Grace Baptists Churches limited, with my findings, and requested they return the Trust Deeds into the safe keeping of my Solicitor Battrick Clark, 155 White ladies Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 2RA.

49. I have informed the former trustees, Mr Jane, Mr Martin and Baumber and all interested parties, of the mistake, which had taken place and my desire to take over the lawful responsibility of the chapel for its use according to the terms of our original Article of religion expressed in the enclosed Indenture, dated 1831. This communication includes the Charities Commission and submission of this sworn declaration to the Land Registry.

Opposition To Bierton As A Gospel Standard Cause

50. It is believed that the opposition to the Bierton Church, and her association with the Gospel Standard Baptists, along with Mr Kings declared doctrinal and practical errors, and Mr. Jane's new allegiance to the 1689 confession, are the cause of the current animosity and refusal to return the Bierton Church Trust Deed, that are withheld from its lawful owners. Also the fact that the proceeds of any sale of the chapel assets will go to those churches associated only with the Grace Association, namely Limes Avenue and Eaton Bray, and presumably other local churches as Albert Street Strict Baptist, Tring.

Association Claims to Be The Lawful Trustees

51. On the 3rd September, 2004 I was informed by the Association of Grace Baptist Churches limited that the Charities Commission had made certain investigations and they were satisfied they were the lawful trustees.

52. It is believed that no such Official enquires had been made.

Aylesbury Vale Give Permission to convert the Chapel to A Domestic Dwelling

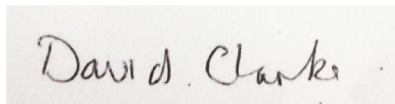
53. On The 3rd September, 2004 Aylesbury Vale District Council Informed me that the Association of Grace Churches had permission to convert the chapel to a single dwelling.

This Declaration was sent with my application, and is an amendment to the first submission, to the Land Registry in support of my first registration of the Bierton Baptist Chapel, of date 29th July 2004. Submission number BM293716.

The property is clearly marked in the previously enclosed map and outlined in red.

And I make, this solemn declaration, conscientiously, believing the same to be true, by virtue of the Statuary Declarations Act 1835.

Signature of Declaration:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Clarke".

David Clarke

Declared at: 12 High Street, Fareham, Hampshire, and this day 3rd September 2004.

Before me

Signature:

Address: Churches Solicitors, 12 High Street, Fareham Hampshire, PO16 7BQ. Qualified Solicitor.

