



Bay Area Chinese Bible Church Constitution and By-Laws

(REVISED AFTER JANUARY 2018 BUSINESS MEETING)

Article I - Name

We, trusting in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and being led by the Holy Spirit, have banded together as a body of believers in Him and shall be called the Bay Area Chinese Bible Church (hereafter referred to as "the church").

Article II - Mission Statement

Bay Area Chinese Bible Church (BACBC) reaches people and grows them into passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

Article III - Membership

Section 1. - Purpose of Membership

"Now all who believed were together, and had all things In common, . . .So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart," (Acts 2:44, 46 NKJV)

The New Testament presents a picture of definable groups of people who, once committed to the Lord, identified themselves with and committed themselves to a particular local body for the purpose of maintaining steadfastness in the faith, encouraging the believers unto love and good works, and edifying one another.

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:23-25 NKJV)

Membership is a commitment to uphold one's personal responsibilities towards God and one's fellow believers.

Section 2. - Membership Covenant

Membership in the body of Christ requires submission to Christ; a desire to bring one's life under His Lordship. Membership therefore involves obedience to the Scriptural principles of commitment and accountability to the body of Christ, as summarized below:

- A. Each member is uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of edifying the body. Therefore, each believer should seek to identify, develop and use his spiritual gifts and abilities in a place of service within the body of believers. (Romans 14:7-8, Rom. 12:4-6)

- B. Each member shall maintain a life of purity from worldly and ungodly practices, habits, amusements, and associations as commanded in the Word of God.
- C. Each member shall annually renew his membership covenant, including pledge of personal purity, commitment of financial support, and promise of service.
- D. Each member shall attend business meetings unless providentially hindered.
- E. Each member shall, as much as the Lord permits, regularly attend scheduled worship services and partake of the Lord's Supper. (Hebrews 10:24)
- F. Each member is to be of one mind -- the mind of Christ -- in assisting the forward progress of the church. There is no place for any member to engage in or foster gossip or dissension in any form. (Phil. 2: 1-3)
- G. Each member is responsible for maintaining the testimony of the church as God's instrument in ministering to an unsaved world. A member shall not undermine the work of Christ or the local church through: back biting; divulging the confidences of church business; usurping authority; or betraying a trust or commitment to the Lord, the local church, or fellow members. (Matt 5:16)

Section 3. - Qualifications

- A. The applicant must be born again through personal acceptance and confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior
- B. The applicant must be baptized by immersion as a public testimony of faith except those applicants who are too weak or infirm, who could only be baptized by pouring or sprinkling, and except those applicants who were baptized as believers at another church of like faith and practice. (amended 03/13/11)
- C. The applicant shall present himself publicly before the congregation, expressing his desire to unite with this church as a member.
- D. The applicant must complete the entire membership procedure as outlined in Section 4 below.

Section 4. - Uniting with the Church

- A. The prospective member must complete a membership application, including a written personal testimony of salvation and a statement of reasons for wanting to join the church.
- B. The prospective member will be interviewed by the deacons or other designee.
- C. The prospective member will attend and complete the Membership class prior to being voted on in a business meeting.
- D. In conjunction to all the points in this section, the prospective member may present a letter of Christian commendation from a church of like faith to the Church Council.

- E. A candidate for membership must be unanimously recommended to the church body by the Church Council.
- F. A candidate must receive a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at any business meeting to confirm membership.

Section 5. - Classification

- A. Active Members shall be those who (1) regularly attend church services and partake of the Lord's Supper regularly unless providentially hindered, (2) attend the business meetings during the church fiscal year, and (3) annually renew their membership covenant.
- B. Inactive Members shall be those who cease to fulfill the conditions and responsibilities of active members as stated in Section 5(A). Such members shall be recommended to be placed on the inactive membership list by the deacons. If for any reason an active member requests to be placed on the inactive membership list, this shall happen automatically.

Members are to be notified in writing by the Corporate Church Secretary when their names are placed on the inactive roll. When they have remained on the inactive roll for one year, they shall be automatically dropped from church membership and shall be notified of such in writing. Those who are temporarily away from the area but desire to remain on inactive status may do so by annual statement of intent. Individuals sent out by the church may remain indefinitely on inactive status. Anyone who joins another church as a member will be considered as having forfeited membership.

- C. Reinstatement: Inactive Members who wish to return to active status must be interviewed by the deacons. After evidence of a changed life or renewed interest in the work of the church, such members may be reinstated, subject to a unanimous decision by the Church Council to reinstate such person.

Section 6 - Voting

Only active members who are eighteen (18) years and over are permitted to vote in the business meetings.

Section 7 - Discipline

All cases of discipline involving a scriptural offense shall be conducted in the spirit of, and according to, New Testament teachings (Matthew 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1). The responsibility of discipline in all cases of a scriptural offense shall rest with the Church Council. All cases of private grievance or offense between people shall be dealt with according to Matthew 18, and no public complaint shall be preferred until this course has been pursued. Charges, when made, shall be submitted to the Senior Pastor for such action as is deemed proper.

If any minister, or staff member that is called by this church, is accused of gross sin, sins of an immoral nature, or apostasy, and departs from the qualifications listed in Article IX Section 1 and 2, it shall be the power of this church to discipline such a one in accordance with I Tim. 5:19-21, Matt. 18:15-17, and Gal. 6:1. It shall be required of the Board of Deacons to conduct an impartial

investigation or to call upon outside Pastors of churches of like faith and practice to assist the church in this matter. Such an impartial investigation shall be conducted in the spirit of I Corinthians 13.

Ongoing sin in the life of a believer obstructs his walk with the Lord, threatens the unity and fellowship within the body, and ultimately weakens the witness of the church among non-believers. (I John 1:7; II Cor. 6:3). Scripture, therefore, encourages believers to be concerned with each other's spiritual well-being, and teaches them to confront in love where there is evidence of sin. As a church, we acknowledge the following Biblical procedure for such confrontations: (II Cor. 11:29; Lk. 17:3; Gal. 6:1)

- A. If one has knowledge of ongoing sin or an offense in the life of a fellow believer, he should go promptly and confront the individual in private and in the spirit of love. (Matt. 18:15)
- B. If there is no expression of repentance, he should reprove the individual in the presence of two or three witnesses. (Matt. 18:16)
- C. If there is still no repentance, scripture teaches that the matter should be brought before the church. In the structure of this church, the matter should at this point be brought before the Church Council as representatives of this church. (Matt. 18:17)
- D. If there is no evidence of genuine repentance after confrontation by the Church Council, the Church Council shall bring the matter before the church membership. (Matt. 18:17)
- E. If there is still no evidence of repentance, Scripture teaches that the individual should be removed from the Body, and believers should break fellowship with such an individual until there is evidence of genuine repentance. (II Thess. 3:14; I Cor. 5:11; Tit. 3:10,11; II Thess. 3:6)

In addition to the above procedures, Scripture teaches that confrontation should be approached and carried out with an attitude of love, concern, and humility, and should be motivated by a sincere desire to see repentance and restoration of fellowship. Reflecting Christ's grace and forgiveness, believers are taught to be quick to forgive when there is the genuine expression of repentance on the part of the fellow believer. (Gal. 6:1; Matt. 18:21; Eph. 4:32; Lk. 17:3)

Section 8. - Letters of Transfer

Any member in good and regular standing who desires a letter of transfer and recommendation to another church may request such letter from the deacons. The name of the church to which membership is to be transferred must be indicated in the request, and the letter requested shall be sent to the pastor or secretary of that church. The letter shall be valid as a recommendation for only six months from its date, unless renewed, and this restriction shall be stated in the letter.

Article IV- Church Officers and Staff

Section 1. Staff and Officers

- A. The Pastoral staff shall consist of those who are called by the church. Both the term "staff member or church staff" shall refer to the Pastoral staff and to called and non-called staff.

- B. Church officers shall consist of the Deacons *and* Board of Governors of Coastline Christian Schools. [Effective January 14, 2018]
- C. The Church Council shall consist of the Senior Pastor, the lead pastors of the respective English, Cantonese, and Mandarin congregations, and the daughter church(es); and the Board of Deacons.

Section 2. Qualifications

- A. All officers and staff shall be members of this church in good standing and shall be exemplary in their lifestyle and abstain from all worldliness, especially things that will hurt their influence and thereby hinder the work of God. (Acts 6:3) No one who has been divorced and has remarried (except in the case of a departure of an unbelieving spouse, or adultery, or sexual immorality against the offended one) shall become or remain an officer or staff member of this church while any former spouse is living. (I Tim. 3:2,12; Titus 1:5,6; Matt. 5:32; Matt. 19:9; I Cor. 7:12-15)
- B. Each Pastoral Staff member and Deacon shall also meet the respective qualifications listed in I Tim. 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9.
- C. Each officer and staff member shall also promise to fulfill the duties of their particular office to the best of their ability and to the glory of God. Each officer and staff member shall read and sign the leadership covenant of this church (before assuming office or position) once a year.

Section 3. Duties and Responsibilities of Staff

- A. Senior Pastor: The Senior Pastor is the leader in all spiritual activities of the church and shall advance the interests of the church and congregation. As Pastor, he must have a definite call to the ministry and to this church. The Pastor's primary responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, preaching and teaching God's Word, preparing God's people for works of service, leading the church in its evangelistic efforts in reaching the unsaved multitudes at home and abroad, and supervising the Pastoral staff. He shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees. He must take the position of separation from worldliness and apostasy and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. (Jude 3)

The calling of the Senior Pastor shall be for an indefinite term, which calling shall be by three-fourths majority vote of the voting members present at a properly called business meeting. The relation may be dissolved after one month's notice by the Senior Pastor or by mutual consent. The call or dismissal of the Pastor may come before the church at a regularly or specially called business meeting, such meeting and its purpose having been announced from the pulpit for the previous two Sundays.

In the event the office of Senior Pastor is vacated or the Senior Pastor is no longer able to serve, the Board of Deacons shall recommend to the church membership at a specially-called business meeting that an Interim Pastor is to be called until a new Senior Pastor is

called by the membership. Until an Interim and/or Senior Pastor is called by the membership, the order of succession shall be determined by the Deacons.

- B. Other Called and Non-Called Staff: The titles and duties of other called and non-called staff members shall be determined in consultation with the Senior Pastor and the Board of Deacons and shall be described in the staff manual. The term of office shall be indefinite. The hiring and dismissal of any called staff member shall be by a three-fourths majority vote of the voting members present at a properly called business meeting.

Section 4. Duties and Responsibilities of Church Officers

- A. Deacons: The Deacons shall work with the Senior Pastor in all activities of the church, including but not limited to the overseeing, administration and function of all spiritual, temporal, legal, and financial matters. In conjunction with the Pastoral staff, the Deacons shall jealously guard the spiritual interests of the church and its ministries. The Deacons shall be responsible for the oversight of the church staff, including confirmation of staff selection, and dismissal when necessary. Staff salaries and compensation shall be determined annually by the Board of Deacons and approved by the membership as part of the overall budget.

The Deacons shall also assist with the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, attend to the necessities of the needy and the sick, and aid the Senior Pastor in his visitations.

All property of the church shall be vested in the name of the Bay Area Chinese Bible Church. No real property of the church shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise disposed of without the same having first been recommended by a vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership in attendance at a regular or specially-called business meeting for the consideration of the proposal. The corporate President and corporate Secretary shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized and recommended by a vote of the church. Such certificate shall be deemed conclusive evidence thereof. (amended 7/20/97)

- D. Coastline Christian Schools Board of Governors: [Effective January 14, 2018]

1. The Board shall be comprised of elected members to provide general oversight and guidance concerning the operational and administrative policies and procedures of the school.
 - a. The Senior Pastor or a designee, and one member of the Deacon Board shall be ex-officio nonvoting members of the school board.

- E. Selection of Chairperson: The Chairperson for the Board of Deacons and CCS Board of Governors shall be appointed annually by the Senior Pastor, with the consent of the other members of the respective boards by simple majority vote in a closed ballot process.

- F. Corporate Officers: The directors of this corporation shall be the Church Council. The President of the corporation shall be the Head Deacon. The Treasurer and the Secretary of the corporation shall be selected from among the deacons by the deacons. (added 7/20/97)

Article V. - Auxiliary Organizations and Other Officers

Section 1 - Coastline Christian Schools [Effective January 14, 2018]

- A. Coastline Christian Schools is an integral and inseparable educational ministry of the Bay Area Chinese Bible Church in all aspects. It shall be subject to the Church Council and under its authority in all things. [Effective January 14, 2018]
- B. All persons teaching in Coastline Christian Schools shall be active members in good standing with the Bay Area Chinese Bible Church or a church of like faith and shall meet the prior approval of the Board of Governors. (amended 1/18/98) [Effective January 14, 2018]

Section 2 - All Other Organizations, Ministries, Committees, and Positions

All organizations, ministries, committees, and positions within the Bay Area Chinese Bible Church shall be governed by established guidelines and oversight of the Church Council. Policies and practices, including leadership selection and participation, within these organizations must be consistent with the guidelines and be subject to review by the governing body, person in charge, and the Church Council. The Church Council will be the final authority in cases where a resolution is not reached.

Article VI - Government

Section 1 - Meetings

- A. Annual Meetings: The fiscal year of the church shall begin on the first of July, and the fiscal year shall end on the thirtieth of June of each year. The annual meeting shall be held on the third Sunday of August unless otherwise posted. The purpose of the meeting shall be to elect officers, hear reports from officers and committees, review financial reports, approve a new budget, and to transact any other needed business.
- B. Semi-annual Meetings: These are to be held on the third Sunday of February unless otherwise posted.
- C. Special Meetings: A special meeting may be called by the Church Council with a two-week prior notice.
- D. Emergency Meetings: An emergency meeting may be called by the Church Council at any time with a general notification of the business to be discussed.
- E. Posting of Agenda: Whenever possible, a tentative agenda for each business meeting will be posted two weeks in advance and updated as necessary.

- F. Quorum: A hundred active voting members shall be present to constitute a quorum. (amended 1/18/98)
- G. Voting: With regards to the calling or dismissal of the Senior Pastor or a called staff member, a three-fourths majority vote of the voting members present shall be decisive.

In all other business matters, a majority vote of the voting members present shall be decisive, except the following, which shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present:

1. Confirmation of membership;
2. The amending or suspending of the Church Constitution;
3. The sale or purchase of church real property and related indebtedness; and
4. Ordination to the Gospel ministry.

Section 2 - Elections

- A. All officers of the church shall be elected by a majority vote, on closed ballot, of the voting members present at the annual business meeting.
- B. The Church Council shall appoint the nominating committee four months before the annual business meeting of the church. The nominating committee shall consist of least eight (8) members in number, two (2) which shall be of the Deacons, and six (6) from the church membership. Those appointed to serve on the nominating committee shall be active church members who are held in high spiritual standing.
- C. Nominations for open positions shall consist of nominations from the Church Council, the nomination committee, and the church membership.
- D. The nomination committee shall review the qualifications and capabilities of every person under consideration for an office. Upon its completion of the review of each nominee, the final nominee list is then submitted to the Church Council for review. The list of nominees shall then return to the nominations committee in order to contact nominees. The list of candidates shall be posted two weeks before the annual church business meeting.
- E. All officers shall be elected for a one-year term of office and shall have no more than four consecutive terms for the same office. Candidates are eligible again for the same office after one year off.

Section 3 - Discretionary Authority

The Church Council shall have final and sole discretionary authority in the implementation, interpretation, and enforcement of the church Articles of Faith and Constitution. All rules, regulations, and policies promulgated by the Church, or any of its ministries, shall be construed in light of the church Articles of Faith and Constitution. If any rule, regulation, or policy is inconsistent with the church's Articles of Faith or Constitution, as determined by the Church

Council, the church's Articles of Faith and Constitution shall prevail and the inconsistent rule, regulation, or policy shall be void.

Article VII - Church Finances

The church, as a faith-based ministry, shall be supported by the tithes, gifts and free will offerings of its members and the congregation. This does not preclude the church from accepting gifts from outside sources.

Article VIII - Amendments to the Constitution

The church constitution may be amended only by a two-third's vote of the active voting members present at any called business meeting of the church, notice and posting of such amendment(s) having been given in all regular church services and made available for review at the church office at least two weeks before the business meeting.

Article IX - Ordinations

Section 1 - Qualifications for Candidates for Ordination to the Ministry

- A. He must be a born again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. He must have been baptized in water by immersion.
- C. He must not be a novice, but having proved his calling by actual ministry for at least one year.
- D. He must be able to give a clear testimony of his being called to full-time service.
- E. His life must be blameless before the world, free from worldly habits, sins, immorality, and illegal activities.
- F. He must accept and agree to the Articles of Faith of this church.
- G. He must be an example to believers by word and by deed.
- H. He must be in accord with I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1: 5-9.

Section 2 - Ordination and Licensing

- A. A candidate who meets the above qualifications may be ordained to the Gospel ministry, consent being given by two-thirds vote of the voting members present at any called business meeting of the church, provided that the members of the Church Council are of the unanimous opinion that the candidate fulfills the required qualifications as previously listed.
- B. A called staff member may elect to be appointed as a licensed minister. Upon receiving the request, the Church Council must be of the unanimous opinion that such individual fulfills

the required qualifications to fulfill the sacerdotal functions of a minister of the Gospel. Upon a unanimous approval of the Church Council of the individual for licensing, the individual will be recommended to the church membership for approval. Upon a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at any called business meeting, the individual shall be deemed a licensed minister of the Gospel with all benefits thereof. Any and all sacerdotal functions of such individual shall only apply with respect to this church and its related ministries. Such licensing shall be reviewed by the Church Council for renewal every two years from the date of its original approval by the church membership.

Section 3 - Discipline or Revocation

In the event any ordained or licensed minister of this church should fall into gross sin, sins of immorality, or apostasy and depart from the qualifications previously listed, it shall be within the power of this church to discipline such a one, even to the revocation of his ordination or licensing. Such a revocation should be preceded by an impartial investigation conducted either by the Church Council or at its discretion, by outside Pastors of churches of like faith and practice. Such investigation shall be conducted in the spirit of I Corinthians 13 and according to Article III, Section Seven (7) of this constitution.

Updated and revised 7/20/97 (Church property, Corporate officers)

Updated and revised 1/22/98 (CCS teachers, Quorum)

Approved by membership 01/19/03, updated and revised. (Church officers)

Approved changes by membership 07/18/04

Approved changes by membership 02/04/07(changed Mission Statement)

Approved changes by membership 03/13/11 (Baptism exceptions)

Approved changes by membership 08/17/14 (Church Council composition, Church officers)

Approved changes by membership 01/14/18 (Changed Chinese Christian to Coastline Christian)