

Church Constitution and Bylaws

Burnaby North Baptist Church

Revision: February 15, 2021

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1 CONSTITUTION

1.1 Name

The name of this local church is BURNABY NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH.

1.2 Purpose

The Purpose of Burnaby North Baptist Church, hereinafter referred to as “the Church”):

1. To preach, teach and advance the teachings of the Christian faith and religious tenets, doctrines and observances associated with the Christian faith.
2. To establish, maintain and support a house of worship with services conducted in accordance with the tenets and doctrines of the Christian faith.
3. To contribute to, cooperate with, and support registered Canadian charitable organizations locally, nationally and internationally, which carry out activities that are consistent with the purposes of the Church.

2 BY-LAWS

2.1 Interpretation

In these bylaws, unless the context otherwise requires:

"Societies Act" means the Societies Act of the Province of British Columbia from time to time in force and all amendments to it;

"Society" means the society known as Burnaby North Baptist Church;

"Council" means the Board of Directors of the society;

"Council members" means the elected members of the Church who for all purposes serve as the directors (as defined and required by the Societies Act) of the Church;

"Member" means a person who meets the membership requirements outlined in bylaw 2.8.

"AGM" means Annual General Meeting of the membership.

"Business meeting/Special business meeting" means an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting according to the Societies Act to deal with special resolutions.

The definitions in the Societies Act on the date these bylaws become effective apply to these bylaws.

2.2 Doctrines

We affirm wholeheartedly the revelation of God as given in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and confess the faith therein set forth. We here explicitly assert the doctrines which we regard as crucial to the understanding and proclamation of the Gospel and to practical Christian living:

- The sovereignty, love, and grace of God, the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit in creation, providence, revelation, redemption and final judgment.
- The divine inspiration of Holy Scripture and its entire trustworthiness and supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- The value of each human being as created by God. The universal sinfulness of humankind since the fall, which alienates all from God and subjects all to condemnation.

- The full deity and humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, whose substitutionary sacrifice is the sole ground of redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin.
- The justification of the sinner by the grace of God through faith alone in Christ crucified and risen from the dead.
- The illuminating, regenerating, indwelling and sanctifying work of God, the Holy Spirit, in the believer.
- The church as set forth in the New Testament and understood historically by the Baptist community.
- The expectation of the personal, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ, our participation in the resurrection, and the hope of eternal life.

2.3 Denominational Affiliation

In keeping with Baptist emphasis on autonomy of the local church and affiliation with other bodies, this church is in association with, and agrees to cooperate with the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada as well as with the larger fellowship of churches in the Canadian Baptist Federation and the Baptist World Alliance or their legal successors, and to support the world-wide work of their missionary and service agencies.

2.4 Operations

The operations of this church are to be carried on primarily at 3977 Albert Street, Burnaby, BC, V5C 2E2.

This congregation may hold property and other assets for the purpose of facilitating the main purpose for which it has been constituted.

This church practices believer's baptism by immersion as taught in the New Testament. Through this practice, individuals may take their place in our congregation that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit is governed according to democratic principles.

2.5 Method of Support

The expenses of this church are defrayed by the voluntary tithes and offerings of each member and adherent. Regular offerings will be received for both current expenditures and missionary purposes. Special offerings may be taken for charitable purposes any time upon approval by the council.

2.6 Non-Profit Cause

The society called Burnaby North Baptist Church shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other gains to the society called Burnaby North Baptist Church shall be used in promoting its objectives.

2.7 Dissolution

In the event of winding up and dissolution, the assets remaining after the retirement of all debts shall be transferred and delivered to the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada or charitable organization(s) which share the church's doctrines (the doctrines are previously unalterable).

The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the membership, or when the church has not held an annual general meeting (AGM) for three years, or when fewer than ten members remain.

2.8 Membership

Membership gives positive expression to the wonder of our faith that, "If anyone is in Christ there is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17). Consequently, "we who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members of one another" (Rom. 12:15). Membership primarily expresses our new identity and new lifestyle of mutual interdependence and care for each other where each living member lives in covenant with God and with one another.

While we encourage membership, the opportunity of joining in worship, service, witness, instruction, and fellowship is offered to all regardless of whether they formally join the church. All who confess Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord are invited to participate in the Lord's Supper.

This church practices believer's baptism by immersion as taught in the New Testament.

A believer may be admitted to the membership of the congregation upon application to the church council in one of the following ways:

- By confession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and Lord upon baptism by immersion.
- Baptism by another mode is recognized as acceptable for a person who cannot be baptized by immersion for medical reasons. In such a situation, however, there shall be clear presentation of the circumstances and the applicant shall give witness to salvation through Jesus Christ.

- By letter of transfer from another church that is in association with the Baptist World Alliance, when, after giving witness of faith, he or she becomes a member of the church through being received at a public service of worship.
- If previously baptized whether by immersion or not, he or she becomes a member of the church following approval of the church council.
- The council may deal with other requests for membership as they arise.
- Minimum age for membership is 15.

A copy of the constitution and by-laws shall be offered to each member before admission to membership or at a membership class.

Members have full rights in participating in the decisions of the church and of serving in elected offices. Each member shall have one vote.

Membership may be terminated by the church council in one of the following ways:

- When the church council receives a letter of resignation, a request for transfer of membership to a sister church, or on receiving evidence that the member has already joined another church.
- If that church member hasn't been in the church for two years, a phone call from the pastor or from the church council is recommended.
- For disciplinary reasons (see 2.9.2.5.3). Termination only applies when all other avenues or restoration have been exhausted.

The congregation may or may not be informed whatever the council decides.

2.9 Officers

All church officers shall be members of the church in good standing. The officers of the church are as follows:

- The Pastor and Pastoral Staff
- Elected Officers
 - Moderator
 - Treasurer
 - Councillors
 - Clerk
 - Envelope Secretary

2.9.1 The Pastor

The pastor under the Lordship of Jesus Christ is the servant leader of the congregation. The pastor's major tasks are to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ,

pray, minister to the spiritual needs of the congregation¹ and to assist in training members and encouraging them to use the spiritual gifts God has given them "for the work of ministry" in the world².

The church may call and appoint one or more associate pastors who shall share in ministerial duties as agreed under the church council's guidance.

Each pastor shall be a non-voting member of all church bodies and committees where appropriate to their job description.

Each pastor on appointment shall have a written contract agreed to which includes the conditions of employment, the salary and benefits, and other stipulations of mutual interest to the pastor and the congregation.

It is expected that a pastor resigning from the pastoral position will give at least thirty days but preferably three months' notice and that a congregation wishing to discharge the pastor will also give at least thirty days but preferably three months' notice of that action.

2.9.2 Elected Officers

2.9.2.1 The Moderator

The membership will elect the moderator. The moderator will preside at all meetings of the church and of the church council and have a vote; though in the absence of the moderator at a properly called meeting, another council member shall preside over that specific meeting.

2.9.2.2 The Church Clerk

The membership will elect the church clerk for an indefinite term, or until the church clerk's successor is elected. The church clerk will have a vote on council.

The church clerk will be responsible for:

- the keeping of the official copy of the constitution and by-laws, the minutes of the council, and minutes of all regular and special meetings of the church
- correspondence involving the business of the church
- membership roll
- the preservation of church records
- the filing of annual reports as required

¹ II Timothy 4: 1-5 and Titus 1 :5-9

² Ephesians 4:11-12

2.9.2.3 The Treasurer

The membership will elect the treasurer for an indefinite term, or until the treasurer's successor is elected. The treasurer will report to council but will not have a vote on council.

The treasurer's responsibilities are:

- keeping accurate and adequate accounts of the church's financial business, including banking, and report thereon regularly to business meetings of the church
- under the direction of the church council, he/she will regularly arrange for payment of authorized accounts rendered to the church within its budget, or beyond budget, but only if sanctioned by the church or the church council
- completing the required information requested from Revenue Canada and other information pertinent to the operations of a charitable organization, and shall prepare the tax forms for employed staff
- keep records of every asset and liability of the church and annually prepare a financial statement

In the event that no member can be found for the role of treasurer, then provision may be made that a non-member fill the role. The role should be further split to a professional book-keeper, and treasurer, filled by non-member/s, if necessary, with the treasurer reporting to the council.

2.9.2.4 The Envelope Secretary

The membership will elect the envelope secretary for an indefinite term, or until the envelope secretary's successor is elected. The envelope secretary will not have a vote on council.

The envelope secretary's responsibilities are:

- keeping accurate but strictly confidential records of all envelope donations and the issuance of tax receipts. The envelope secretary shall consult with the treasurer on a regular basis to ensure accuracy of records
- supply and distribution of all offering envelopes

2.9.2.5 Church Council

The church council shall be composed of the pastor(s) and the following member-elected officers: the moderator and clerk, plus no fewer than five spiritually mature members of the church.

Should there be any mid-term vacancies, a temporary replacement member will be appointed by the church council until a permanent replacement is elected at the following annual general meeting.

Each member of the church council shall generally fulfill the biblical qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9. (The church may establish a roll of adherents who are believers that regularly attend the church and support it. The church may determine the adherents' rights and privileges which cannot however extend to holding a position on the council).

Members of the church council shall serve in a leadership capacity in the church as teachers and counselors to prepare God's people for works of service so the Body of Christ may be built up (Ephesians 4:12). Where possible, they shall also serve to facilitate the ministries done in the name of the church by members of the congregation.

The areas of responsibilities of the church council are listed below.

2.9.2.5.1 Membership

- Interview and recommend candidates for baptism and church membership
- Periodically review the attendance of the church members of the congregation so that the membership roll consists of those who are deemed active
- Upon request, grant letters of transfer to allow members to unite with another church

2.9.2.5.2 Church services

- Oversee the worship services
- Administer ordinances: assist the pastor(s) in administration of the ordinances of Believer's Baptism and Lord's Supper as the pastor directs
- Maintain ushers at all times for the service of worship and other special occasions

2.9.2.5.3 Spiritual health of congregation

- Coordinate and arrange for the provision of pastoral ministries, alongside the pastor(s) and pastoral staff
- Nurture spiritual health of members by encouraging each member to join cell groups that regularly meet together and study the Bible and care for each other
- Encourage and coordinate prayer groups
- Arrange for visitation of the congregation
- Care for the pastor and pastoral staff
- Help pastor and pastoral staff deal with problems that may affect the corporate life of the church
- Assist the pastors in meeting spiritual concerns within the community

- Examine and discipline members, including pastoral staff, officers and members of the council, in a manner appropriate to Matthew 18:15-17 where it is alleged that the individual has been involved in conduct inconsistent with Biblical standards for a believer and/or the Burnaby North Baptist Church Covenant
 - After the individual in question has been given the opportunity to be heard, the council may remove the individual for cause or remove the member from the membership roll for cause, but subsequently report this to the congregation for their ratification at a special business meeting.

2.9.2.5.4 Church property

- Responsible for the use of church property and shall be required to maintain it for the use of the members with the funds that have been allocated in the annual budget

2.9.2.5.5 Finance and Administration

- Prepare a budget for the AGM
- Annually report on the financial condition of the church through an annual report that shall also contain a financial statement
- Annually at its first meeting of each year appoint the signing officers for the church
- May appoint an auditor from time to time

2.9.2.5.6 Committees

- At least one member of the church council must be named by the council to represent it on each committee of the church for the purpose of liaison. They shall be voting members of the committee to which they are appointed.

2.9.2.5.7 Business Meetings

- Meetings of the church council shall be held regularly to conduct church business and the minutes of all meetings, except those in camera, shall be open to church members

2.9.2.5.8 Manual of Policies and Procedures

- Since the church is a living organism that must be flexible in dealing with change and the gifts that the Lord sends through those who enter into membership, the council is encouraged to establish a manual of policies and procedures to assist in the conduct of the routine business of the congregation and the use of the church building
- Periodically review the bylaws, articles of beliefs, and ministry of purpose that the congregation has adopted and shall propose any modifications to the congregation at a regular meeting

2.10 Committees

2.10.1 Nominating Committee

A nominating committee shall be formed annually.

- AGM's:
 - The church shall elect a nominating committee consisting of three to seven members or adherents, including one named as chair, the pastor(s) as an ex-officio voting member(s), and a representative of the church council as a voting member.
 - The nominating committee shall take office following the AGM.
 - The nominating committee shall prepare a slate of nominations for all officers to be posted within the church two weeks before the AGM.
 - Should there be any mid-term vacancies, a temporary replacement member will be appointed by the church council until a permanent replacement is elected in the following AGM.
- It shall be a policy of the nominating committee to nominate people to positions according to their spiritual gifts and abilities.

2.10.2 The Pastoral Search Committee

When the need arises for the calling of a pastor, a pastoral search committee shall be appointed by the church council.

Before approaching possible candidates for any pastoral position, the pastoral search committee will first consult with the area minister of the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada as to the process and the guidelines recommended by the denomination.

2.10.3 Other departments and/or committees

The council may establish other departments and/or committees, task forces, and working groups to undertake specific functions. The council should empower them by writing the terms of reference and the method of reporting back.

2.11 Church Meetings

The congregation shall meet regularly each Sunday for worship, prayer, Bible study and fellowship purposes. They shall normally observe the Lord's Supper at least once a month or more frequently at the discretion of the church council, and they shall gather at other times as the church may decide.

2.12 Church Business Meetings

Recognizing Christ as the head of the church, the membership will, in carrying out the business of the church, prayerfully determine His will through the democratic process.

The word "member" as used in these by-laws shall be interpreted as any member currently on the church roll; voting age will be fifteen years old.

2.12.1 Annual General Meeting

The church year shall end on the thirty-first day of December in each calendar year, and the Annual General Meeting of the church shall be held no later than 60 days after year end for the purpose of recognizing those involved in the growth and life of the church; for receiving annual reports, projected goals and planning of committees; and for the transacting of appropriate business.

2.12.2 Business Meetings of the Congregation

Special meetings of the congregation of the transaction of business dealing with specific issues, may be called at any time by the church council, or written request signed by not fewer than ten members of the church and given to the church clerk.

2.12.3 Meeting Procedures

Roberts Rules of Order shall be the guidelines for the conduct of all business meetings of the congregation. A quorum for the AGM or special general meeting is defined as 15% of the voting members. A quorum for any other council or committee meeting is defined as 3. Proxy voting will not be permitted.

Notice of Annual General Meetings and any Business Meetings of the congregation shall be given on the two Sundays preceding the meeting by the Minister or one of the officers of the church, specifying the purpose, date, time and location of such meeting. In addition, at least two weeks before the meeting, a written notice of the purpose, date, time and location of such meetings shall be sent to the members and a notice placed on the church website.

2.13 Property

This church shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold real property as is deemed necessary to fulfill the purpose and to carry out the

business of the church; it shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, deed or otherwise.

The directors shall have the power to receive, purchase, acquire, sell, lease, convey, mortgage, deed or otherwise transfer property of the church, but only after having been duly authorized by the church at a regularly called business meeting at which the matter is approved by two-thirds of the members present and voting.

2.14 Borrowing

The Council will have authority to borrow up to a maximum of 10% of the annual church budget, and if more is required, or a mortgage or debenture is to be issued to secure the indebtedness, a special business meeting will be held for sanction with 75% majority approval.

2.15 Delegates

Delegates shall be appointed by the church council through consultation with the congregation to represent the church area and union assemblies of the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada. Delegates shall normally be briefed on matters to be transacted at assembly and report back to the church.

2.16 Housing

Pastoral Housing Acquisition Assistance: The church shall provide financial assistance by means of a loan which is to be repaid in full with no interest at the pastor's convenience before leaving the employ of the congregation.

2.17 Amendments

No alterations shall be made to the constitution or these bylaws except by special resolution at a business meeting of the congregation. All recommended changes and amendments shall be presented to the council for prior discussion and resolution/s given to the membership in writing at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Amendments will require for passage a two-thirds majority vote of those members present.

3 Appendix

The Covenant

As believers in Jesus Christ, we solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We do promise, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and grace; to promote its growth and its spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, disciplines, and doctrines; to support the work of the pastors; to contribute regularly to the expenses of the church, the relief of the unfortunate, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also promise to maintain family and private devotions; to educate our children in the knowledge of God and His will; to seek the salvation of our family and friends; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our commitments and an example in our way of living; and to be passionate in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Saviour.

We further promise to watch over one another in Christian love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian compassion in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offence and always ready to seek reconciliation.

We also promise that, when we move from this place, we will seek another church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.