

# BYLAWS

## OF

### BLACKFOOT CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

### AN IDAHO, NOT FOR PROFIT, CORPORATION

#### SECTION 1 – AUTHORITY AND FAITH

1. Blackfoot Christian Fellowship of Blackfoot, Idaho, also referred to as the Church, shall be committed to the historic orthodoxy of Christian faith. This faith includes the full and final authority of the Bible, the doctrine of the Trinity, the deity of Jesus Christ, the substitutionary and sacrificial nature of Jesus Christ's life, death and resurrection, and the gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone. This faith affirms the dignity of all human life and the need of every person to experience forgiveness of sin through a new birth through faith in Jesus Christ into the family of God. Additional exposition of Christian teaching shall be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor.

#### **Statement of Faith:**

**About God:** We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — equal in power and glory; that this triune God created all, upholds all, and governs all. We give to them the same faith and worship.

**The Father:** We believe God the Father the holy and loving Creator of all things and is unlimited in time, space, knowledge, and power. He is perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe he concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of people; that He hears and answers prayer; and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

**Jesus Christ:** We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He became man, without ceasing to be God, and was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary in order to redeem sinful humanity. We believe He satisfied God's holy and just demands by dying as our substitute on the cross and He assured our redemption by His resurrection from the dead. We believe Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is exalted at the right hand of the Father and that as High Priest for His people, He serves as our Intercessor and Advocate. We also believe in his personal visible return to the earth for His Church.

**The Holy Spirit:** We believe the Holy Spirit is present in the world today to make people aware of their sin and need for a savior. We believe He regenerates and sanctifies all who believe in Jesus Christ and His atoning work. He provides every Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, guidance in doing what is right, and imparts on every believer spiritual gifts for works of ministry. He is an abiding Helper, Teacher, and Guide. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit and in the exercise of all the Biblical gifts of the Spirit. As follower of Jesus, we seek to live under His guidance.

**About the Bible:** We believe the Bible to be the inspired revelation of God. We believe that the Bible is completely without error in the original manuscript. We believe that human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit wrote the Bible. We believe that the Bible is our final and absolute authority on all Christian living, beliefs and practice.

**About Salvation:** We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and therefore, are under condemnation. We believe that everyone who puts their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and who accept his atoning work upon the cross will be saved forever.

**About the Church:** We believe the church is where God's wisdom is displayed, where people who were formerly alienated from God are now reconciled and united for the purpose of declaring the gospel and glory of Jesus throughout the world. We believe it is where the Holy Spirit is at work remaking and rebuilding human lives, where people learn to love one another, to bear one another's burdens and sorrows, to weep together and rejoice together, and to hold one another accountable.

**About Ordinances:** We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ committed two ordinances to the Church: (1) Baptism; and (2) the Lord's Supper. We believe in baptism by immersion and communion open to all believers.

**About the Future:** We believe in the personal return of Christ to rapture his Church; in his visible second coming to the earth and the establishment of His Kingdom. We also believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment and eternal blessing of the righteous and endless suffering of the wicked.

## **SECTION 2 – MISSION OF THE CHURCH**

1. Our mission is summarized in Jesus' Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40): "Love God, love each other, and love our world."
2. The Church shall be committed to worship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In accordance with the Great Commission recorded in Mathew 28:18-20, the mission of Blackfoot Christian Fellowship is to help people follow Jesus.
3. Additionally, the Church will be committed to ministries of outreach, evangelism and discipleship as commissioned by Jesus Christ in Matthew 25:31-46.
4. Therefore this Church shall be committed to an outward focus by placing the needs of those who are not yet followers of Christ as a priority of the Church, while not neglecting the care of members and regular attenders.

## **SECTION 3 – ASSOCIATION**

1. Blackfoot Christian Fellowship, shall be a cooperating member of the American Baptist Churches of the Northwest (ABCNW).

## **SECTION 4 – ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

1. It is the purpose of these bylaws to provide a stable and effective organizational structure to aid this Church in accomplishing its mission. The sections that follow specify a model that keeps the roles of Senior Pastor (also referred to simply as the Pastor), Board, Staff, and Congregation distinct, clear and effective for Church health, growth, and multiplication.
  - a. The primary role of the Membership is to serve as the ministers of the Church.
  - b. The role of the Board is to govern through establishing Guiding Principles for the Pastor's leadership along with providing wise counsel and prayer support for the Pastor.
  - c. The role of the Pastor is to lead and equip the Church to accomplish its mission.
  - d. The role of the Staff is to manage the ministries of the Church directed by the Pastor.

## **SECTION 5 – CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

1. The Congregation of Blackfoot Christian Fellowship for purposes of these bylaws shall consist of people who meet the qualifications as stated in the Membership policy as established by the Board. See Appendix A.

## **SECTION 6 – CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP ROLE**

1. The primary role of the Member shall be to serve as ministers of the Church reaching out to unchurched people first and also caring for the needs of one another within the Church. The following decisions of the Church after meeting the quorum requirement as stated in the church membership policy (see Appendix A) shall require the approval of the Congregation by super majority (60%) of those Members present and voting.

- a. Calling or dismissing the Senior Pastor.
- b. Amending the Bylaws.
- c. Purchasing or selling Church real property.
- d. Changing denominational association.
- e. Dissolving the Corporation.

2. The Congregation shall be given a minimum of thirteen days notice of any Congregational vote by announcement at a regular Sunday Worship. The purpose of the Congregation meeting shall be declared in the announcement. Once a quorum is established, votes may be cast by verbal, visual or written sign at the discretion of the moderator of the Congregational meeting. No abstentions or votes by proxy shall be counted.

## **SECTION 7 – QUORUM**

1. A quorum shall be the number of members in good standing that are present.

## **SECTION 8 - CHURCH BOARD SELECTION**

1. Members of the Board shall demonstrate the qualities of spiritual maturity, high integrity, vibrant walk with Christ and an excellent reputation within the Congregation and community according to the qualities listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. They shall be committed to the mission, vision, and values of the Church. They shall give unqualified written assent to the statement of faith listed in section one.

- a. The Pastor, the Board or a member in good standing may bring someone forward for consideration.
- b. The candidate will fill out a Board application.
- c. The Board will review the application and vet the candidate against the Biblical qualifications and the church statement of faith listed in section one.
- d. The candidate/s will be introduced to the Congregation and for a period of two weeks the Board will receive written and signed challenges or affirmations. If a challenge is presented, the Board will investigate it.
- e. New Board members will be recognized during the next Worship service.

## **SECTION 9 – CHURCH BOARD ROLE**

1. The Board shall provide accountability and support for the Pastor by:
  - a. Sharing in the leadership of the church by providing the direction and vision of the church as well as stewarding the church's people, property, finances, and other resources (1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:1-2).
  - b. Policies to be created and maintained by the board are to include but not limited to Membership, Finance, and Staffing.
  - c. Providing accountability for the pastor through regular times of prayer together, scripture study, and checking on his emotional, spiritual, and physical well being. In addition the Board will evaluate his performance against the church's mission and vision.
  - d. Protecting the church from false teaching. Board members are responsible for having enough biblical knowledge to refute any false doctrine, and they are responsible for giving the church's official stance on any issue that might come up (Acts 15:6; Titus 1:5, 9).
  - e. Helping teach and disciple the church. Board members will use the Bible, to encourage and exhort others in sound biblical doctrine. Though not every Board member will have preaching responsibilities, every Board member must be able to teach the full counsel of God in the Bible whether in small groups, Sunday school classes, or special seminars.
  - f. Helping to care for church members. Board members are responsible for meeting practical needs of the church by providing pastoral care to members (James 5:14; Acts 20:35). These responsibilities include things like hospital and home bound visits, providing counseling for a wide variety of issues, and anything else that relates to the inner life of church members.
2. The Board shall determine the compensation of the Senior Pastor. The Board shall influence all other operating and financial decisions. The Board shall leave the leadership of the Church to the Pastor and shall leave the management of the Church to the Staff under the direction of the Pastor. Action of the Board shall be by simple majority of all Board Members present and voting.
3. The Board shall consult with the Pastor to determine compensation for Church Staff.

## **SECTION 10 – SENIOR PASTOR CALL AND DISMISSAL**

1. Upon departure of the Lead/Senior Pastor the Board shall appoint a Search Team to guide the process of selecting a pastoral candidate for the Congregation's consideration.
2. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor, the Board Chairperson may invite the ABCNW to guide the Board in the process of finding and calling a new Senior Pastor who has demonstrated the ability to lead this Church to the next level of effectiveness in the achievement of its mission. The Board may hire an interim Pastor, recommended by the ABCNW to fulfill the role of the Senior Pastor until a permanent Pastor is in place.
3. Calling a new Senior Pastor shall require a vote by the Board to propose the candidate, and approval by the Congregation to call the candidate.
4. Dismissing a Senior Pastor shall require:
  - a. A vote by the Board to propose the action.
  - b. A non-binding consultation with the ABCNW.
  - c. Board proposal of the action to the Congregation.
  - d. A vote for final approval by the Congregation.

## **SECTION 11 – SENIOR PASTOR ROLE**

1. The role of the Senior Pastor is to lead the Congregation, the Board and the Staff.
  - a. The Senior Pastor shall lead the Congregation by:
    1. Teaching biblical truth.
    2. Casting vision.
    3. Advancing the mission.
  - b. The Senior Pastor shall lead and disciple the Board by guiding the discussion of mission and policies.
  - c. The Senior Pastor shall lead the Staff by directing them in their management of all Church operations.
  - d. The Senior Pastor shall, at his discretion, hire, direct and remove from service, any and all Church Staff, paid or unpaid. All Church Staff shall be hired or appointed "at will". Nothing in these bylaws or any other Church publications shall be construed as any form of employment contract for any Church Staff.

## **SECTION 12 – CHURCH STAFF**

1. A Staff person appointed by the Senior Pastor shall manage each area of the Church operation, including property and finance. The term "Staff" shall apply to all ministry leaders appointed for this management purpose, whether they are unpaid, part-time, or full-time with regard to compensation.
2. Among these appointments shall be a Treasurer for disbursement and a Financial Secretary for receipts.

## **SECTION 13 – MINISTRY TEAMS**

1. Purpose: Ministry Teams shall be formed as required to implement the varied ministries of the church.
2. Establishment: Ministry Teams shall be established by the Pastor and/or Staff to implement specific ministries.
3. Duties: The duties of Ministry Teams shall be to:
  - a. Meet as required to plan and execute specific mission and ministry objectives.
  - b. Agree to receive training by Pastor and/or Staff.
  - c. Recruit and train ministry personnel.
  - d. Define and provide the necessary materials and budget information required for ministry.
  - e. Report as requested to the Pastor and/or Staff.
4. Leadership: The leader of a Ministry Team shall be approved or appointed by the Pastor and/or Staff. The team leader will serve as liaison to the Pastor and/or Staff to provide reports and information when requested. Ministry Team members may be selected by the Ministry Team leader. If a team leader or member causes conflict, fails to carry out his or her responsibility to the team, or otherwise hampers the work of the team, every effort should be made to rectify the issue in a positive redemptive manner. However, if the problem persists, a team member may be removed by the Pastor and/or Staff.

## **SECTION 14 – LIMITATION OF LIABILITY**

1. Board members shall not be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or other obligation of the Church. The Church shall indemnify and hold harmless any Board member who is proceeded against civilly due to any lawful action of the Board member in furtherance of his/her duties as a Board member of this Church.

2. The Board may adopt a policy in the Guiding Principles authorizing the purchase of liability insurance on behalf of any agent of the Church.

## **SECTION 15 – INCORPORATION PROVISIONS FOR DISPOSAL OF ASSETS IN THE EVENT OF DISSOLUTION**

1. No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons except that this corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered.

2. No substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and this corporation shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

3. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, this corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on:

- a. By a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), or
- b. By a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

4. Should conditions arise where, for any reason, this church cannot continue to exist and operate and upon the dissolution of this corporation, the Board shall, after making provisions for the payment of all of the liabilities of this corporation, dispose of all of the non-real property assets of this corporation exclusively for the corporation in such manner, or to such organizations, consistent with the articles in this document and with Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

5. In the event of a division of the church membership, the church property shall belong to those members of this church who abide by the constitution and bylaws of this church and its original intent of fellowship with the American Baptist Churches of the Northwest and the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A even if they consist of a minority of members. Should conditions arise where, for any reason, this church cannot continue to exist and operate, this property shall be transferred to the American Baptist Churches of the Northwest Region.

**SECTION 16 – AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS AND ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

1. The Bylaws of the Articles of Incorporation may be amended in whole or in part if the following requirements are met:

- a. The amendment is proposed by the Senior Pastor, the Church Board, or a petition signed by one-third of the active Members of the Congregation. See Appendix A.
- b. The Congregation is given at least thirteen days notice of the vote by announcement at regular worship services.
- c. The Congregation votes to approve the amendment in accordance with normal voting procedures described in Section 6 of the Bylaws.

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**WRITTEN CONSENT OF BOARD MEMBERS ADOPTING BYLAWS**

We, the undersigned, are all of the persons elected as the Board of Blackfoot Christian Fellowship, an Idaho not for Profit Corporation and, pursuant to the authority granted to the Board by these Bylaws to take action by unanimous written consent hereby, adopt the foregoing Bylaws, consisting of 16 Sections as the Bylaws of this corporation.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, Board Member

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Approved and adopted by the Congregation \_\_\_\_\_ (date)