

# FAITH COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

## CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

### ARTICLE I

#### I. NAME OF THIS LOCAL CHURCH

The name of this local church is Faith Community Bible Church, Inc.

### ARTICLE II

#### II. PURPOSE OF FAITH COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

- A. To Glorify God by pointing the affections of all peoples to the all-satisfying person of Jesus Christ
  - 1. To Obey God by doing ministry according to God's Word, relying on God's resources, for God's glory
  - 2. To Edify believers by teaching and shepherding them with the whole counsel of God in love, so that they can live and minister in the likeness of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16).
  - 3. To Evangelize the lost by proclaiming the Gospel of Christ both privately and publicly, in all the world (II Cor. 5:18; II Tim. 4:5).

### ARTICLE III

#### III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

- A. We believe the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, Word of God, sufficient and authoritative for all matters of faith, life, and godliness.
- B. We believe there is one God, eternally existing in three distinct persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- C. We believe Jesus Christ is fully man and fully God, lived a perfect life, died a substitutionary death on the cross for the sins of the world, was buried and after three days rose from the dead, conquering death, and is now seated at the right hand of God.
- D. We believe all men are sinners, falling short of the glory of God, and are in need of salvation from sin and its consequences.
- E. We believe that salvation is by God's grace, mercy, and faith alone, through the preaching of the gospel, repentance, and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.
- F. We believe every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and is able and expected to walk in the newness of the Spirit by obeying God and growing in Christ-likeness.
- G. We believe that salvation includes regeneration which produces increasing obedience and transformation into the image of Christ.
- H. We believe in the future resurrection of those who have died, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to eternal punishment.
- I. We believe in the universal church whereby all true believers are united through faith in Christ

according to the truth of God's Word.

- J. We believe in the second bodily coming of Jesus Christ to set up a kingdom on earth and will be followed by the eternal state and the new heavens and earth.

## ARTICLE IV

### IV. MEMBERSHIP

#### A. Definition of Membership

While no formal process is used to confirm it, members of FCBC are those who confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, who have been baptized, who are committed to the care for one another according to 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, and who regularly attend Faith Community Bible Church. Those desiring to be part of this local fellowship shall seek to exercise their spiritual gifts for the mutual benefit of all the church body while they submit to the shepherding leadership of the Elders. Those who meet these qualifications hereafter will be referred to as the members of Faith Community Bible Church.

#### B. Importance of Having a Church Home

The New Testament teaches that all believers are to place themselves under the authority of local church leadership. Whenever the New Testament speaks of believers it addresses them as part of and in the context of the local church. Being part of a local church body is important because it is a commitment of both the individual believer to the local church and the local church to the individual believer.

#### C. Duties Required of Members of Faith Community Bible Church

The duties listed below are expected of all members. They are not comprehensive but representative.

1. To strive to obey the Word of God in all areas regarding personal sanctification
2. To faithfully participate in corporate worship through singing, giving, prayer, and being instructed by the preaching of the Word of God
3. To faithfully serve by ministering to others with their spiritual gifts
4. To submit to the leadership of Faith Community Bible Church
5. To hold themselves accountable to members of Faith Community Bible Church
6. To witness to others the gospel of Jesus Christ
8. To participate in baptism, communion, and the process of Church discipline

9. To agree not to teach contrary to the statement of faith

**D. Church discipline in the body of Faith Community Bible Church**

1. Definition of Church discipline

Church discipline is the process of trying to restore a professing believer, caught in a state of sin, to a state of obedience to God.

2. Purpose of Church discipline

There are five reasons God asks the church to discipline professing believers who live in unrepentant sin.

- a. To restore the sinning member

The primary goal of Church discipline is to restore a person caught in a sin to obedience to God.

- b. To maintain the church's witness

The church is called to be holy and to be separate from the world in respect to sin and wickedness. When a professing believer is living in unrepentant sin, they mar the witness of the church in the sight of the world bringing reproach upon the name of Christ. Church discipline helps maintain a strong witness to the world.

- c. To maintain purity in the body

The Church is to be characterized by holiness. Believers are called "saints" which means "holy ones." Salvation is deliverance from the power of sin and enables the believer to walk in holiness before God. An unrepentant professing believer lives in a state of "unholiness." The Scriptures teach that those living in wickedness should be removed from the body so that the church will not be infected by their bad example.

- d. To make others fearful of sinning

The Bible teaches that one of the reasons for Church discipline is to create fear in other believers so as to deter them from falling into unrepentant sin. When the body of believers sees those who are in unrepentant sin dealt with according to the Scriptures, it produces in them a holy fear of sin, and is therefore a deterrent to keep them from sinning.

- e. To obey the commands of God

Church discipline is to be performed because we must obey and practice the

whole counsel of the Word of God.

3. Procedure of Church discipline (Matt. 18:15-20)

In accordance with the Word of God, if a member is found to be in sin by a brother or sister in Christ, the sinning member is to be confronted by that brother or sister, and in a spirit of love, reproved by him/her in private. If the member chooses not to repent, two or three members are to go together to confront the sinning person and call them back to repentance again. If he/she is still unwilling to repent, the elders will be contacted, and the elders will conduct an examination. If the member is still not willing to repent, then by the decision of the elders, the member's name and sin will be announced from the pulpit by one of the elders to the congregation. The congregation will be asked to pray for the individual and to encourage him/her to repent. If there is still no repentance, the person will be removed from membership and the fellowship of the local body of Faith Community Bible Church. The local body will be encouraged to implore the sinning person to repent. If the disciplined person repents and asks to be restored, he/she must contact the leadership of the church for a personal meeting. If the elders determine the person in question has demonstrated genuine godly sorrow that has led to repentance, (2 Cor. 7:10), he/she will be restored to full fellowship.

**F. Removal of member from membership**

1. Member initiated removal

a. Member in good standing

Any member in good standing can freely remove themselves from membership by notifying the elders by letter.

b. Member under church discipline

Members under the process of church discipline cannot remove themselves from membership. If they refuse to repent, they will be removed at the recommendation of the elders.

**ARTICLE V**

**V. CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

**A. Elders of Faith Community Bible Church**

1. Duties and Responsibilities of an Elder

The term elder is used interchangeably with overseer, shepherd and pastor (Acts 20:17,28). While there may be a difference between elders in the areas of giftedness,

spiritual maturity, training, and Bible knowledge, all elders are to function as co-equals. Scripture teaches that elders are responsible to God for the souls of those in the church (Heb. 13:17) and are called to oversee, shepherd (I Pet. 5:1-3), teach, exhort in sound doctrine, and refute those who contradict (Titus 1:9). They are to equip the saints for the work of the ministry through teaching and preaching the Word of God, modeling godly piety in every area of their lives (Eph. 4:11-13; II Tim. 4:1-2; I Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7).

2. Qualification of elders

Elders must meet the character qualifications of an elder as mentioned in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, actively using their spiritual gifts, desire the work, and be able and willing to commit the time necessary to function as an elder. They must have the desire and the ability to shepherd God's flock through feeding truth and protect from error (I Pet. 5:1-3; Titus 1:9).

3. Authority of elders

The elders are the highest governing entity within the church. All elders will have co-equal authority. The authority of the elders is that which is given to them by the Word of God. Elders have no authority to do anything or ask anyone to do anything contrary to the Scriptures. God gives them authority to shepherd and love His people by creating, modifying or dissolving ministries or programs within the local church. God requires the church, including individual elders, to submit and obey the leadership (Heb. 13:17).

4. Appointment and confirmation of elders

Periodically the current elders will collect through various means the names of men they believe meet the qualifications of an elder and have shown faithfulness in serving the body through teaching and shepherding. The potential elders will undergo an examination process to affirm they are qualified and functioning as elders.

a. It is the responsibility of the currently serving elders to prayerfully oversee the examination process to determine if the potential elder:

- Aspires to the office (I Tim. 3:1)
- Is above reproach in all areas of his life (I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9)
- Demonstrates the heart and ability to shepherd the flock (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:1-3)

b. The examination process overseen by the elders might involve:

- Giving his testimony
- Demonstrating his understanding of the word and agreement with the doctrinal statement of the church. This may take place through answering a questionnaire, being interviewed, and/or filling out an application
- Being interviewed by the currently serving elders and deacons
- Having his family members interviewed

- Having his supervisor and/or coworkers fill out an evaluation attesting to his character (I Tim. 3:7)
  - Being evaluated by the congregation
- c. Any concerns from members of the congregation, elders or deacons regarding function or qualification of the potential elder will be carefully considered. The final determination of whether he is qualified to serve as an elder is the responsibility of the currently serving elders. The current elders will publicly ordain him to the congregation through prayer and the laying on of hands (I Tim. 4:14, 5:22).
- d. Each currently serving elder will also undergo an examination by the other currently serving elders, deacons, and congregation at this time to ensure they continue to meet the function and qualification as listed above.

5. Term of office of elders

Elders may serve as long as they 1) desire to serve as an elder, 2) continue to meet the qualifications of an elder, and 3) continue to function as an elder according to the Word of God. Each year, when it is time to confirm new elders, the elders will evaluate their life and ministry and be given the opportunity to remove themselves from serving as elders. Elders will be encouraged to take sabbaticals from serving as they feel the need or at the recommendation of the other elders. Elders who elect to take a sabbatical shall return to service as an elder at the discretion of the elders.

6. Elder decision making

a. Unity in decisions

The elders will practice unity in decision making. If unity is not achieved, decisions will be dropped, postponed, reevaluated or modified. Unity will be defined as, "mutual agreement to support a decision."

b. Majority participation

In the process of making decisions, there must be majority (more than half) participation.

7. Elder removal from office and sabbaticals

a. Self initiated

An elder may remove himself from serving as an elder at his discretion for a period of time or permanently after notifying the elders.

b. Eldership initiated

The elders will reserve the right to remove any elder from office or request that an

elder take a temporary leave of absence. If an accusation is brought by at least 2 witnesses (I Tim. 5:19-22), it is the responsibility of the elders to objectively investigate and determine the veracity of the accusation(s). If the accusation is determined to be true, the elder is disqualified. That elder will be asked to step down and the congregation will be notified. The disqualified elder will place himself under the leadership for the purpose of restoration, if determined to be applicable.

## **B. Deacons**

### 1. Definition and qualification of deacon

A deacon is any godly man appointed and recognized as one who meets the qualifications of a deacon in I Tim. 3:8-13. Deacons are servants in the local church who are appointed to specific tasks.

### 2. Appointment of deacons

The selection and examination of deacons will follow the same process as outlined for elders in the section on Elders.

### 3. Term of office for deacons

Deacons will continue to serve as long as they desire to serve, meet the Biblical qualifications.

### 5. Removal of a deacon from office

#### a. Self initiated

- Any deacon can choose to step down from serving as a deacon in the church at his discretion by contacting the elders.

#### b. Eldership initiated

- The elders may ask to remove a deacon from office if he is found to no longer be qualified or is not functioning as a deacon.

## **C. Committees**

At times the elders may choose to appoint committees to serve the church in specific areas. Committees will function as the elders direct and will be dissolved after they complete their specific task.

## **D. Teachers**

Teachers at Faith Community Bible Church will be required to be members in good standing and who agree not to teach against the doctrinal statement of Faith Community Bible Church.

**E. Worship Leaders**

Those involved in leading the congregation in worship, (through prayer, praise, communion, announcements, Scripture reading, etc.), must be members in good standing. At times the leadership may deem it appropriate to allow non-members to lead the congregation in worship e.g., visiting choirs, musicians, and preachers.

**ARTICLE VI**

**VI. CHURCH EMPLOYEES**

**A. Paid Elders**

1. Definition of Paid Elders

Paid elders are defined as those that are compensated in part or in full for performing work of the ministry, as defined by the current elders, for Faith Community Bible Church

2. Finding new Paid Elders

It is the responsibility of the elders to find new paid elders as needed. They may choose to delegate this responsibility while maintaining oversight.

3. Qualifications of Paid Elders

A man hired as a paid elder must meet the qualifications of elder as defined in the section on Elders.

4. Length of service of Paid Elders

The paid elders will have no set term of service. They will continue to serve as the elders direct.

5. Duties of Paid Elders

Paid elders shall fulfill those duties for which they were hired by the elders. After being hired, the elders may ask a paid elder to change ministry emphasis.

6. Personnel matters and Compensation of Paid Elders

Personnel matters and compensation of the paid elders will be discussed and decided by the non-paid elders. Paid elders may be asked to dismiss themselves from these

discussions.

7. Resignation or Removal of Paid Elders

Will follow the procedure outlined in the Elder section

**B. Support Staff**

1. Definition of Support Staff

Any one hired by the church to support the ministries of the church.

2. Qualifications of Support Staff

Support staff are required to be members of the church and remain in good standing.

3. Finding new Support Staff

The elders will be required to find new support staff. They may choose to delegate this responsibility while maintaining oversight.

4. Length of service of Support Staff

Support staff will continue to serve as long as needed.

5. Duties of Support Staff

Support staff will be hired to perform duties as directed by the elders. The elders may reassign support staff to new duties as needs change.

6. Compensation of Support Staff

The compensation of Support staff will be discussed and agreed upon by the non-paid elders.

7. Removal of Support Staff

a. Self initiated

Support staff will be allowed to terminate their employment with Faith Community Bible Church at their discretion after discussing their resignation with their immediate supervisor.

b. Elder initiated

Support staff may have their employment terminated at the discretion of the

elders in accordance with applicable law. The elders will furnish the support staff person with written reasons for termination of employment if requested.

## ARTICLE VII

### VII. CORPORATE STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### A. Board of Directors

The elders function as the board of directors for Faith Community Bible Church, Inc., and are responsible for the leadership decisions made for the organization. The elders as part of their shepherding responsibility will make every effort to communicate decisions to the body of Faith Community Bible Church as outlined in section C below.

#### B. Chairman of the Board

The chairman of the elders will function as president. Periodically a new chairman of the elders will be elected by the elders to serve for a designated period of time. The chairman will be responsible to organize the elder meetings and see that all decision making is done in a biblical and orderly fashion. The chairman will have signature authority in all matters for Faith Community Bible Church, subject to approval of the elders.

#### C. Congregational meetings

The elders will hold regular congregational meetings to discuss issues, present information, and/or conduct business matters related to Faith Community Bible Church. The intended frequency will be to hold a congregational meeting no less than twice per year.

## ARTICLE VIII

### VIII. CHURCH DISSOLUTION

#### A. Resources

Dissolution of Faith Community Bible Church, Inc. shall follow all applicable laws of the United States of America and the State of Idaho. Resources and assets remaining at the dissolution of Faith Community Bible Church will be used at the discretion of the elders to provide for the payment of liabilities of the Corporation; liabilities to individuals will be paid proportionately in the event that insufficient funds are available; all remaining assets shall be distributed in the following order, a) for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code (or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code), b) or shall be distributed to the federal government, c) or to state or local government, for a public purpose.

## ARTICLE IX

### IX. AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

The constitution should be reviewed on an annual basis by the currently serving elders. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws will be announced to the congregation. The congregation will be given thirty days to give feed back to the elders concerning the proposed amendments. After thirty days the elders will discuss the feedback from the congregation. Then, any amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws shall be made by the decision of the elders.