

**BYLAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF
BUTTE COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
BUTTE, MONTANA**

Updated and Revised – February 2, 2025

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Qualifications

This Church shall receive as members those of any age who have accepted Christ as their Savior; in their lives are manifesting the fruits of true faith in God; subscribe wholeheartedly to our statement of faith; and are willing, according to ability, to support the ministry of this Church (1 Corinthians 1:10).

Section 2: Admission

Admission to membership in the church shall be made in the following order:

A. Application for membership shall be made verbally to the Senior Pastor or another Elder. The applicant shall be given a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church and be instructed in a membership class in Church doctrine and policy.

B. Following such instruction, applicants shall give personal testimony to church leadership of their salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and evidence of their understanding of and agreement with the Statement of Faith and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church.

C. Before the applicants are recommended for membership at a business meeting, a list of their names shall be placed in the Church bulletin for two Sundays. If any member has a valid reason for objection to the receiving of any member into the Church, that member shall appear before the Board of Elders and give Scriptural reasons for the objection. The validity of this objection shall be considered by the Board of Elders.

D. The Board of Elders shall bring their recommendation concerning applicants before the Church to vote on the application. Applicants may be present in the meeting when their applications are being considered. A two-thirds majority of present, active members shall be required for acceptance.

E. Pastors and their wives automatically become members upon their installation.

Section 3: Absence

A. Members that are absent for a long duration due to illness, military service, college, relocation or any other reason that is not the consequence of church contention may be placed on an Inactive Member status. This status will be solely for the purpose of achieving a quorum at church Business Meetings of those available for active service. Inactive Members will not need to be considered in the determination of a quorum. Active Members will become Inactive

Members upon recommendation by the Board of Elders. Inactive Members may be returned to Active status at any time upon recommendation by the Board of Elders.

B. Any person absent from regular services for six months or more, and from whom no communication has been received, may be removed from the membership by a two-thirds majority vote of the Church at any business meeting after a formal inquiry and recommendation by the Board of Elders.

Section 4: Withdrawal

Any member who wishes to withdraw from the Church shall receive a letter of withdrawal from the Church with the approval of the Board of Elders, providing such a request is presented in writing.

Section 5: Discipline

A. If any member of the Church begins to live or teach contrary to the Word of God or the Statement of Faith of this Church and does not show evidence of repentance, he shall be counseled by the Pastors and/or the Board of Elders after the manner clearly indicated in Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1-2. In these counseling sessions, repentance and restoration shall be the primary purposes, with love for both the individual and the Lord the motivating force. (1 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11)

B. If, however, the member should choose to continue in his or her unrepentant condition, he or she shall be removed from membership. Removal can only be done by the Church upon recommendation of the Board of Elders and by a two-thirds majority approval at any business meeting of the Church. Such vote must be taken by secret ballot.

C. Matters of discipline of pastors shall also be governed by Article V, Section 2.

Section 6: Property Rights

A. Any member who has withdrawn or who has been removed from membership loses all rights of Church membership. He or she shall return all church property and keys within seven days.

B. The private property of the individual members of this Church shall be exempt from corporate debt.

C. No member shall have right or title to any church property.

ARTICLE II - GOVERNMENT

Under God, the congregation is the ultimate authority of this church. All duties and privileges listed below are delegated by the members to the officers. The leaders of this church shall be the pastoral staff, the Board of Elders, and the Deacon Team. The election of the Elders or Deacons/Deaconesses may be done at any meeting. With the exception of the office of Pastor, all offices shall be filled by active lay members of the church. No member, except the prospective pastor, shall be considered for an elective office until having been a member for six months.

Section 1: Pastors

A. Pastors shall be men of sound doctrine, able to preach and teach the Word of God, and given to daily study of the Word and prayer. They shall meet qualifications as set forth in Scripture; for example 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 2 Timothy 4:1-5 and 1 Peter 5:1-4. They shall profess agreement with and willingness to adhere to the Statement of Faith, Constitution, and Bylaws of this church. Pastors are commissioned upon being hired. Unless qualified men are unavailable, Pastors should not serve as officers of the church. The Senior Pastor shall not serve as Treasurer.

B. Pastors shall preach and teach the Word of God, lead the public services of the church, participate in visitation, administer the ordinances, and lead the members in a practical Christian life.

C. In addition to being a voting member of the Board of Elders, the Senior Pastor shall be an ex officio member of all other boards and committees. His attendance at these other meetings is not mandatory. The Senior Pastor shall be made aware of the activities and decisions of each board and committee by minutes or some other convenient method.

D. The first six months of a pastor's tenure shall be considered probationary.

Section 2: Elders

A. Qualifications: The Board of Elders shall consist of men who are spiritually mature and meet the requirements outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

B. Organization: The Board of Elders shall consist of the Pastoral staff and those men elected by the church membership; Pastoral staff may become Elders upon being hired. Each Elder will have one vote when decisions are made. The members of the board shall choose a chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer and secretary of the church at their first meeting of the year. These specific officers shall be installed by a ballot vote of the membership at the Annual Business Meeting. The chairman shall preside over the meetings of the Board of Elders, which shall meet as needed. In the absence of the Pastor, the chairman shall have charge of the devotional and worship services of the Church, and shall, with the consent of the Board of Elders, secure pulpit supply when needed. He shall be responsible for leadership of the business meetings of the church and shall also serve as the President of the corporation in all legal matters.

C. Duties: The Board of Elders shall watch over all aspects of the Church, and care for its individual members. They shall be ready to give spiritual assistance at every opportunity, especially to those who seek salvation. They shall assist the Pastors with visitation, the Lord's Supper, baptism services, and any other activities requested by the Pastoral staff. The Board of Elders shall be ultimately responsible for the physical and monetary aspects of the Church. This includes building maintenance/repair and other expenditures. Any non-budgeted expenditures that exceed 10% of the annual operating budget must be approved by the congregation.

D. Term of Office: Customarily, Elders shall be elected at the Annual business meeting. Term of office shall be for two years, and may be reelected without term limits.

E. At least two people authorized by the Board of Elders shall count all offerings, make an accurate record of them, and turn the funds over to the Financial Secretary.

Section 3: Deacons & Deaconesses

- A. Qualifications: Those who serve on the Deacon Team must be men or women who are members of the church and meet the character qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Men who are on the Board of Elders are not eligible to also serve on the Deacon Team.
- B. Organization: The Deacon Team shall choose a chairman and a vice chairman. The Chairman shall preside over the meetings of the Deacon Team or the Vice Chairman in his or her absence.
- C. Duties: The Deacon Team shall be responsible for meeting the physical needs of the church corporate or individual members within the church body. A deacon or deaconess shall be someone the Elders can call upon to help in a time or crisis or ongoing need.
- D. Budget: The Deacon Team shall have an annual budget to be determined at the annual business meeting. Benevolence funds of the church shall be used primarily at the direction of the Deacon Team.
- E. Term of Office: Deacons or deaconesses shall be nominated by the Board of Elders and installed by a ballot vote of the membership. Term of office shall be for two years and may be re-elected without term limits

Section 4: Specific Officers

Following are Church officers with specific responsibilities. The church officers shall perform such duties as are required of corporate officers by the statutes of the State of Montana concerning religious corporations.

CHURCH CHAIRMAN

The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall be the Church Chairman. He shall preside at all business meetings of the Church or appoint someone to preside. He has authority to call meetings of the Church after consultation with the Senior Pastor.

VICE CHAIRMAN

The Vice Chairman shall preside at all regular business meetings of the Church in the absence of the Church Chairman.

SECRETARY

The Church Secretary shall keep accurate records of all business meetings of the Church, with such records to be approved at the regular Elder Board and Church business meetings. He or she shall preserve Church records, legal papers, and insurance policies in a secure location. He or she shall see that the membership shall be notified of business meetings and shall keep the membership records of the Church. He or she shall serve as Secretary of the corporation in all legal matters.

CHURCH TREASURER

The Church Treasurer shall make all disbursements and pay all bills as directed by the Board of Elders. He or she shall give a written report at each regular Church business meeting of all funds handled. He or she shall prepare the annual budget and present it to the Elder Board for approval. It will then be presented to the Church at the Annual Business Meeting for final approval.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary shall receive all funds, make a careful record of all contributors and designations, and deposit them in the bank regularly. He or she shall make an accurate and prompt account of each offering and deposit. The Financial Secretary shall submit an annual statement of giving to all persons who have made financial contributions to the Church. He or she shall ensure that such statements reflect current IRS rulings. The Financial Secretary shall not be a member of the Elder Board.

Section 5: Committees

Upon recommendation of the Board of Elders, the Church may establish, at any business meeting, committees to perform specific functions. The responsibilities, duration, and number of members shall be set at the time the committee is established. Unless otherwise specified, each committee shall organize itself at its first meeting, and shall meet as often as necessary to accomplish the function(s) assigned. Changes in number of members and duties may be made at any business meeting. Each committee chairman will report to the Board of Elders.

Section 6: Organizations

No organization shall be formed or considered a part of the Church activities before the sponsors have submitted their plans to the Board of Elders and received approval.

All organizations operating in the name of the Church shall be subject to the authority of the Church, and shall submit a written report of their activities and finances to the chairman of the Board of Elders for approval prior to reporting at the Annual Business Meeting.

All leaders of organizations functioning under the name of the Church must be members of the Church or be approved by the Board of Elders.

All organizations shall keep minutes of all meetings where decisions or regulations are made. No decision or regulation shall take effect until it is recorded in the minutes of the meeting in which it was made and submitted to the Board of Elders and received approval.

Any organization not affiliated with this church which desires to use church facilities must be approved by the Board of Elders. They must adhere to all applicable church policies.

ARTICLE III - TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS

Section 1: Private Inurement

No part of the net earnings of the Church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, officers, or other private persons, except that the Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and

distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II of the Constitution of this Church.

Section 2: Political Involvement

The church shall reserve the right to recognize scriptural distinctions of character and righteousness and act accordingly.

Section 3: Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the Church, the Board of Elders shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all liabilities of the Church, dispose of all of the assets of the Church to such organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organizations or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Elders and remaining members shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to organizations which agree with the Church's Statement of Faith.

Section 4: Designated Contributions

From time to time the Church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various designated funds to accomplish specific goals. The establishment of all designated funds shall be approved by both the Board of Elders and the Church members at a qualified business meeting. All contributions made to established designated funds shall remain subject to the exclusive control of the Board of Elders. The utilization of designated funds shall be included in the annual Church budget and included in all financial reporting. The diversion of any established designated funds to another fund shall require approval by both the Board of Elders and the Church members at a qualified business meeting.

ARTICLE IV - BUSINESS MEETINGS

Section 1: Frequency

A. The Annual Business Meeting of the Church shall be held in the first quarter of each year, when the transaction of such business as concerns the work for the year shall take place. The fiscal year shall close December 31. However, the officers elected at the annual meeting shall assume their duties immediately following the meeting. The annual meeting shall be the final authority, under God, in all matters pertaining to the Church.

B. Special meetings may be called either by the Pastor, the Board of Elders, or 20% of the active members. These meetings may be called at any time after oral notice is given during at least two regular services prior to the special meeting. This notice shall state the purpose of the meeting. At special meetings, only the business that was announced may be voted upon.

Section 2: Quorum

For all Church business meetings, a quorum shall consist of one-third of the active members of the Church. For any Board or Committee meeting, a quorum shall consist of one-half of the Board or Committee members.

Section 3: Voting

All active members 18 years of age or older are eligible to vote in all matters unless State laws set other restrictions. All matters shall be decided by majority vote of those active members present and voting except where otherwise specified.

When deemed necessary by the Board of Elders, voting may be conducted by email rather than during a business meeting. All email votes shall require two-thirds approval by active members for passage; email votes may not be used for approval of the annual budget, for hiring of a Senior Pastor, for purchase or sale of real estate, or changes in the constitution.

Section 4: Election of Officers

Election of all officers of the Church shall normally take place at the Annual Business Meeting. There shall be no nominations from the floor. Agreement to serve in an office must be obtained by the Board of Elders prior to nominating an individual. Voting shall be by secret ballot and a majority of votes cast shall determine who is elected to each office.

No two elective offices shall be held by the same person at one time.

ARTICLE V - CALLING OR DISMISSAL OF A PASTOR

Section 1: Calling a Pastor

A. When it becomes necessary to search for a Senior Pastor, the Board of Elders shall, with other members as added by the Church, serve as the Search Committee. These other members are selected by the congregation at any business meeting.

B. The decision on whether to issue a call to a candidate to serve as Senior Pastor may take place at any Business Meeting. The final vote must be by secret ballot and a three-quarters majority approval necessary for a call to a candidate to be issued.

C. Only one pastoral candidate may be considered at a time.

D. The Senior Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time with a three-month notice to be given by him or the Church in case of a resignation or dismissal. The three month notice may be waived if agreed upon by the Senior Pastor and the congregation.

E. The first six months of a pastor's tenure shall be considered probationary. Pastors may be dismissed within that six months by a simple majority vote.

Section 2: Dismissal of a Pastor

Following the probationary period, a two-thirds majority of all active members of the Church will be necessary in order to dismiss a Pastor when that issue is being considered.

ARTICLE VI - ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS OF BELIEF AND CONDUCT

This church believes a proper interpretation of the Scriptures should lead to the following conclusions:

1. Abortion, infanticide and euthanasia all constitute the taking of human life and are sin.
2. Homosexuality is a sin.
3. Marriage is defined as the legal union between one man and one woman under the authority of God.
4. The believer is saved by God's grace alone and kept secure by God's grace alone. No true believer can ever "lose his salvation."
5. All spiritual gifts are meant to edify the church, not divide it. No spiritual gifts are to lead to disorderly worship.

POLICY ON MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

Added to the by-laws January 27, 2019

Introduction

This is a policy statement on the beliefs of Butte Community Bible Church regarding religious beliefs concerning marriage and human sexuality and our policies based upon the necessary application of our faith to life and practice.

What We Believe About Marriage and Human Sexuality

We believe, based on the teaching of the Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments, that marriage is an institution ordained by God from the foundation of the world, and intended as a lifelong union of one man and one woman. This idea is supported by the account of creation in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. Genesis 1:26-28 provides that God created man in His own image, both male and female. The passage implies that a unity of one man and one woman is in some way necessary to fully represent the image of God in mankind.

Genesis chapter 2 provides a more detailed account in which God created the first man, Adam, and decided that it was not good for him to be alone. (Genesis 2:18). God indicated that He would make "a suitable helper for him." God brought all of the animals to Adam, but none of them was a suitable helper for him, so God then created Eve, the first woman, from part of Adam himself. God did not create a second man to be Adam's helpmate, or an assortment of multiple women, but rather one woman. Together they were man and wife and had "no shame" or sin in their union with each other. (Genesis 2:15-25).

Jesus Christ reaffirmed the teaching of the Old Testament when He said, as recorded in Matthew 19:4-6, "Haven't you read, he replied, that at the beginning the creator made them male and female and said for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

The Apostle Paul states in Ephesians 5:22-32 that marriage is not merely a human institution, but is a special divine metaphor that is supposed to illustrate the union of Christ and the church. For this reason also, only a union between a man and a woman can be a proper marriage because a union between two men, two women, or one man and multiple women or any collection of people could not properly illustrate the relationship between Christ and His church.

I Corinthians 6:9-11 condemns a variety of lifestyles including those associated with adultery, prostitution, and homosexuality. The Bible condemns all forms of sexual immorality and encourages Christians to flee from it because of its destructive effects, and because the body of the Christian is the temple of the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 3:16 & 6:12-20).

Romans 1:18-32 makes it clear that it is not only sinful to engage in homosexual unions, but also to approve of such sins in others or encourage their practice. As a result, in order to maintain our consistent Christian witness, we cannot sanction, approve, or promote in any way adultery, fornication (a sexual relationship between an unmarried man and woman; i.e. "living together"), pornography, pedophilia, polyamory, polygamy, bestiality, or homosexual unions. This is made clear also by countless other verses throughout the Old Testament as well as by these and other passages in the New Testament.

Our church follows what the Bible reveals as the "sure foundation" of the teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles (Matthew 7:24-29 and I Corinthians 14:37). The church is called to teach and practice these teachings and is not at liberty to depart from them for a different authority if it is to authentically bear the name "Christian." Though we strive to live peaceably with all people and to obey legitimate government authority, in instances involving matters as foundational as marriage we must ultimately obey God rather than man if the two come into conflict (Acts 4:18-22).

Sexual activities outside of marriage, including but not limited to fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality, pedophilia, polyamory and bestiality are inconsistent with the teachings of the Bible and the church. Lewd conduct, transgender behavior, and the creation or distribution or viewing of pornography are incompatible with God's intention.

Our Faith Based Policy on Marriage and Human Sexuality

As a result of these above described religious beliefs and our belief in the need for a practice of fidelity to these beliefs, it is our policy that the facilities of this church may not be used for any ceremony that in any way approves of, solemnizes, supports or allows a same-sex union or a polygamist or any union which, in the judgment of the Board of Elders, in some way constitutes child abuse. It is also the policy of the church that no pastor or member of the church staff shall officiate at any ceremony designed to solemnize, promote, create, or approve of such a union. Nor may any member of the church enter into such a union without being subject to church discipline.

A civil government's sanction of a union will be recognized as a legitimate marriage by the church only to the extent that it is consistent with the definition of marriage found in this Policy Statement.

BUTTE COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH POLICY REGARDING SEXUALITY
(November 2018)

Recognizing that we all struggle with sin, Butte Community Bible Church will provide an environment that welcomes people who struggle with sexual sin. We will seek to love all people in Jesus' name, pointing them towards Christ's power to forgive and heal. While the Bible teaches that those who engage in sexual sin, sin against their own body we also recognize that sexual sin is not characterized in Scripture as being more severe than other forms of sin. We will seek God to discern ways that we can directly and indirectly minister and share God's love with those who struggle with every kind of sin. We also recognize that there is a difference between temptation and behavior and while temptation is sometimes unavoidable we are responsible for our behavior.

Church Practices Derived from This Policy

Clergy

1. Ordained clergy or licensed ministers¹ employed by the church shall affirm the statement of faith on marriage and human sexuality adopted by this church.
2. Only ordained or duly licensed clergy approved by this church shall officiate at marriage ceremonies conducted on church property.
3. Clergy employed by the church shall be subject to dismissal and/or loss of ordination for violating this statement of faith on marriage and human sexuality or by officiating at a marriage ceremony that violates the letter or the spirit of this policy.

Applicants for weddings performed by church staff:

1. Applicants wishing to have a ceremony performed by a member of the clergy employed or clergy or judiciary approved by the church or to use the church facilities for their wedding shall affirm the statement of faith regarding marriage and human sexuality and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. Applicants shall participate in premarital counseling by clergy or counselors employed by this church or other persons who, in the sole opinion of the pastoral staff of the church have the appropriate training, experience, and spiritual understanding to provide such counseling. All pastoral staff, counselors or other persons providing premarital counseling shall affirm the statement of faith of this church on marriage and human sexuality.

Use of Facilities:

1. Any marriage performed on church premises shall be officiated by an ordained or duly licensed member of the clergy. Any officiant not employed by the Butte Community Bible Church shall serve at the discretion of the pastor or Board of Elders.
2. Clergy officiating marriage ceremonies on church premises, whether or not employed by the church, shall affirm their agreement with the statement of faith on marriage and human sexuality adopted by this church and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.

¹ Clergy as used in this document means ordained clergy and licensed ministers.

3. Clergy and staff assigned by the church to implement the procedures contained in this Marriage Policy may, in his or her discretion, decline to provide church facilities for, and/or decline to officiate at a ceremony when in his or her judgment, there are significant concerns that one or both of the applicants may not be qualified to enter into the sacred bond of marriage for theological, doctrinal, moral or legal reasons.

Membership, Leadership and Staff:

1. Every minister, board member, or employee, hired by the church shall affirm their agreement with Butte Community Bible Church's statement on marriage and human sexuality and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. The Board of Elders will be asked to affirm their agreement with this policy on marriage and human sexuality and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
3. Church leaders, teachers and members are expected to teach and live in a manner that is consistent with this policy.