

# **Shepherd Bible Church**

## **Constitution and Bylaws**

Adopted as Revised  
October 15, 2000

## **BYLAWS AND CONSTITUTION**

### **SHEPHERD BAPTIST/BIBLE CHURCH OF SHEPHERD, MONTANA, INC.**

[REVISED OCTOBER 15, 2000]

#### **ARTICLE I** Name

This non-profit corporation shall be known as the Shepherd Baptist/Bible Church of Shepherd, Montana, Inc.

#### **ARTICLE II** Declaration

This church shall be an independent, autonomous, Baptist congregation.

#### **ARTICLE III** Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be to establish a local church for this community (Matt. 16:18), providing a circle of fellowship for those of faith and practice as defined in our doctrinal statement, giving opportunity for its members to worship together encouraging one another in the faith, teaching the youth, and witnessing to the lost both here and unto the uttermost parts of the world.

#### **ARTICLE IV** Membership

##### Section 1. Reception of Members.

- A. Born-again persons, professing personal faith in Jesus Christ alone as Savior:
  - 1. Who give satisfactory evidence of a regenerate life.
  - 2. Who publicly acknowledge their desire for membership.
  - 3. Who accept without mental reservation our Declaration of Faith.
  - 4. Who are recommended by the Pastor and Deacons.
  - 5. After baptism by immersion may be received into membership.
- B. Others who meet the preceding requirements may be added as follows:
  - 1. By transfer of letter of membership from another church of like faith and practice.
  - 2. By statement of previous experience.
  - 3. By restoration (section 6).
- C. Procedure for Reception:
  - 1. Candidates for membership shall notify the Pastor of their desire to join the church.
  - 2. After personal interview with the Pastor, they shall meet with the Deacons to testify of their

Christian experience and discuss the privileges and responsibilities of membership in Shepherd Bible Church. Careful attention shall be given to each applicant concerning their personal experience with Christ followed by believer's baptism, and their agreement with and willingness to cooperate with this church under the terms of its statement of faith, covenant, and practices, supporting its ministry and sharing in its services.

3. Upon recommendation of Pastor and Deacons, they shall give testimony to the church during business session at a service or meeting and be accepted or rejected by majority vote of the members present.
4. In case an applicant has not yet obeyed the ordinance of believer's baptism by immersion, reception into membership shall be contingent upon believer's baptism at the earliest possible opportunity (Section A. 5), preferably the same day.

#### Section 2. Inactive Members.

- A. A member in good health who has not attended any regular service for a period of three months. will:
  1. Automatically be placed on the inactive list.
  2. Not have the privilege to vote in church business.
- B. Restoration of an inactive member:
  1. Must notify the Pastor or Deacons of their intentions.
  2. Must attend at least one service per week for a one-month period.

#### Section 3. Dismissal of Members:

Membership may be severed by:

1. Letter: Members in good standing may be granted a letter of transfer to another church of like faith and practice.
2. Discipline (exclusion) in accordance with the provisions of Section 5.
3. Death.

#### Section 4. Duties of Members.

Every member shall consider the responsibilities and obligations placed upon him by the Word of God and the church. He shall in all things conduct himself as a Christian. He shall be considerate of his fellow members by work and example and encourage them to brotherly love and good deeds. He shall endeavor to attend all regular meetings of the church, and shall seek to discipline himself to Biblical systematic giving. He shall endeavor to find and to function in his spiritual gift, thus becoming a functioning part of the church.

#### Section 5. Discipline of Members.

- A. The membership roll shall be reviewed annually by the Pastor and Deacons. All members not meeting or making an effort to meet the requirements of Section 2 of Article IV, shall be disciplined from the membership after proper notification and an effort to restore them to fellowship.

Allowance will be made for the infirm, extended illness, the aged, and students away at school. This disciplinary action is to take place on the recommendation of the Pastor and Deacons and by vote of the church. (Matt. 18:15-17).

B. The New Testament requires the local church to maintain appropriate discipline within its membership (Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1,2; 1 Cor. 5:4,5; 2 Cor. 2:6-8; Titus 3:10,11; 2 Thess. 3 14,15)

The church shall fulfill its scriptural responsibility to maintain appropriate self-discipline with two objectives: the spiritual health and testimony of the church, and corrective restoration of members who fail to live according to its doctrinal and covenantal standards. The New Testament prescribes discipline for offenses in the areas of immorality, unresolved conflict between brethren, divisiveness, and false teaching. Matthew 18:15-17 prescribes steps to be taken: private reproof, reproof before two or three witnesses, reproof before the church, and finally, disfellowship. The process is arrested at any point upon repentance and resolution. The Deacons, assisted by the Pastor(s), are agents of the church for discipline. Pastor and Deacons shall acquaint applicants for membership with the discipline policy of the church, making sure applicants understand and agree with the Church covenant which is part of its Constitution and Bylaws.

To assist them in this understanding and so lessen the need for disciplinary action, the church shall establish an Individual Membership Covenant as part of a Church Policy Manual designed to detail practical aspects of its life and ministry."

#### Section 6. Restoration.

- A. Any person under discipline may request to be restored to fellowship and/or membership by expressing his desire to the Pastor or Deacons privately or at one of the regular Deacons meetings.
- B. Anyone under discipline of the church after recommendation by the Pastor and Deacons will make a public expression of their repentance and desire for restoration to the church body.
- C. For restoration of Inactive Members, see Article IV. Section 2.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Officers**

#### Section 1. Church Officers.

Church officers shall have the following titles:

- A. The Pastor (Elder, Bishop).
- B. Associate Pastor(s), (Elders), if any.
- C. Deacons.

There shall be three Deacons for the first one hundred members and one additional Deacon for each fifty members thereafter.

#### Section 2. Administrative Officers.

The following Administrative Officers shall be appointed by the Deacons and elected by the membership annually:

- A. Church Treasurer.
- B. Church Clerk.
- C. Head Usher.
- D. Sunday School Superintendent.
- E. Financial Secretary.

Section 3. Assistants to Administrative Officers.

Assistants and/or helpers to the preceding administrative officers will be approved by the Deacons.

Section 4. Social Chairman and Good Will Chairman.

The Social Chairman and Good Will Chairman will be elected in the same manner as the Administrative Officers.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**Qualifications of Officers**

- A. The Pastor and Deacons shall be members of this church in good standing, who qualify by the New Testament standard for spiritual leadership. Those standards for pastors are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 2:7,8; 1 Peter 5:1-4, and those for Deacons in 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6:2,3; Titus 2:2,6. They shall be in whole hearted agreement with the Declaration of Faith and shall have been a member of the church for one year (with the exceptions of the Pastor or associates) before election to their office.
- B. All Bible teachers and workers shall be selected from the regular attenders of the church in good standing (Article IV, Section 4).
- C. All officers and Bible teachers and workers shall agree to high Christians standards before they are elected or appointed.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**Election of Officers**

Section 1. The Call of a Pastor or Associates.

- A. When it is judged necessary by the church that a Pastor or Associate should be called to serve in the church, the Deacons shall be the Pulpit Committee to decide on suitable candidates. However, the Deacons shall not bear the responsibilities of the Pulpit Committee by themselves; additional members shall be added by election as the church membership deems appropriate.
- B. When a qualified candidate (one meeting the Scriptural standards is found), he shall be presented to the church in at least two (2) announced public meetings. The Pastor or Chairman of the Deacons shall call for a decision on the candidate by posting on the bulletin board a notification at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the business meeting and by announcing the meeting in at least two (2) public services of the church.
- C. The term of the office of Pastor shall be unlimited but may be terminated by the Pastor or by vote of the church with a thirty (30) day notice, or by mutual consent at anytime. In case the church finds it necessary to declare the pulpit vacant because of some unusual case which demands such drastic action by the church, the Pastor shall be relieved of his duties immediately, but shall receive severance pay for at least thirty days.
- D. The terms of office of Associates shall be unlimited, but may be terminated by the decision of the Pastor or by vote of the church, or both, or by the associate in question. A thirty (30) day notice shall be given or by mutual consent at any time.

Section 2. Time of Election.

The annual election of the church offices shall be held in the month of January each year and shall be by ballot. There shall be a dedication service installing the new officers the last Sunday in January. The church year shall be from January 1 through December 31.

Section 3. Election Procedure.

- A. The Deacons shall be the nominating committee. They shall put in nomination one or more persons for each office of the church. This report shall be presented to the church the first Sunday in December.
- B. Each church member in good standing shall have the privilege of putting in nomination the name of any qualified person by writing the name on the list provided by the Deacons during the month of December, provided that the nominee shall be willing to serve and the one nominating sign his or her name. (There will be no nominations from the floor at the election of officers.)
- C. All nominees for Deacons and other offices shall meet with the Pastor who shall instruct them as to the standards and responsibilities of church officers, and they shall decide then if they will run for the office.
- D. The church may elect Deacons who meet the Biblical standard (I Tim. 3).

Section 4 Term of Office.

- A. Deacons will be elected for a two (2) year term of office. They may be re-elected at the end of their term.
- B. All other officers shall be elected for a term of one year.

Section 5. Vacancies.

Any vacancy of an elected position shall be filled by appointment of the Deacons for the unexpired term. in event of a vacancy in the office of Pastor,, the Deacons shall determine who shall temporarily fill the pulpit.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**Duties of Officers**

Section 1. Pastor.

- A. The duties of the Pastor shall be to preach the whole counsel of God as led by the Spirit, from the Word of God. He is to administer the ordinances and is the president of the assembly in all matters of business.
- B. He is to perform all duties incumbent upon his office. The Pastor shall be an *ex-officio* member of all departments and committees. He shall have the general oversight of the entire work of the church.

Section 2. Associate Pastors (if any).

- A. The Associate Pastor will perform the duties that are delegated to him by the Pastor and is responsible to the Pastor. He will be an *ex-officio* member of all committees.

Section 3. Deacons.

- A. The Deacons shall assist in the general oversight of the church and all of its activities under the Pastor and under the general direction of the church.
- B. They shall be active in caring for the needs of the poor, sick, widows and orphans in the membership, and shall be concerned with the spiritual or physical needs of all members.
- C. They shall be faithful in visitation and witnessing. They shall be in charge of the Benevolent Fund
- D. They shall assist in, or in the absence of the Pastor, care for sustaining of all public services; interview candidates for membership; administer the ordinances; restore the erring. They shall perform such duties as the church or Pastor may delegate to them.
- E. The Deacons shall care for the church properties. both real and personal and their repair and maintenance. The Deacons shall serve as the Trustees of this Corporation. They are duly authorized to care for emergency repair of the building or equipment necessary to the operation of the regular services and functions of the church. They shall appoint and direct the responsibilities of any janitors.
- F. The Deacons shall have responsibility for the financial program, the education program, the activity program. and shall have responsibility for all records and official papers of the church.

Section 4. Officers.

- A. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep accurate records of all receipts and disbursements. Disbursements must be items covered by the church budget or approved by the church. Payment of bills shall be issued by him. Financial reports will be provided quarterly.
- B. Church Clerk. The Clerk shall keep record of the transaction of all business meetings and keep a correct roll of the membership of the church. He shall forward letters of dismissal or certificates of membership and shall report to a person dismissed from the membership the fact of his or her dismissal.
- C. Head Usher. The Head Usher is responsible to see that he and those under him extend a friendly welcome to all who attend the services and care for all details that would be conducive to the comfort of the congregation and general welfare of the service.
- D. Sunday School Superintendent. The Sunday School Superintendent shall be elected annually and with the Pastor shall appoint the Sunday School teachers and administrate the Sunday School.
- E. Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary shall record and deposit all offerings and money received by the church and deliver income statements with reasonable promptness to the Treasurer of the church. He shall keep accurate records of contributions including names of donors, dates, and amounts. He shall issue receipts of contributions annually or when requested.

Section 5. Social Functions.

- A. Social Chairman. The Social Chairman shall be in charge of all activities (except weekly youth meetings) requiring the use of the kitchen facilities. She shall make sure that the necessary supplies are in the kitchen at all times.
- B. Good Will Chairman. The Good Will Chairman shall be in charge of benevolent services for members who are ill.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Meetings**

#### **Section 1. Regular Meetings.**

The meetings of this church shall be for preaching of the Bible, evangelism, teaching, worship, fellowship and service. The regular meeting shall be at times specified by the action of the Church.

#### **Section 2. Business Meetings.**

Business of the church may be considered and voted upon at any regular meeting of the church as long as a quorum is present. There shall be no business meetings without the Pastor or the knowledge of the Pastor of the meeting and the agenda.

Quarterly business meetings will be held in April, July, and October. The annual business meeting of the church will be held in January, at which time the annual budget shall be presented and adopted and church officers elected. At this time an auditing committee to audit the church books shall be elected from the body and shall consist of three (3) persons.

#### **Section 3. Special Meetings.**

Special business meetings may be called at any time by the Pastor, Or by request of a majority of Deacons. Members may be received or dismissed. and messengers to meetings may be appointed at any meeting of the church.

#### **Section 4. Voting Constituency and Quorum.**

The voting constituency shall be those members of the church who are at least sixteen (16) years old. and twenty percent (20%) of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

#### **Section 5. Fiscal Year.**

The fiscal year of the church shall commence on the first day of January and end on the last day of December of each year.

#### **Section 6. Roberts Rules of Order.**

The Roberts Rules of Order shall be the standard of deciding questions on parliamentary procedure, except where contrary to the Scripture or to these By-laws and Constitution.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Amendments**

The Articles of Incorporation may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any meeting of the church, provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented at a business meeting of the church, posted on the bulletin board at least two (2) weeks and announced at least two (2) public services preceding the meeting for such action. The Bylaws and Constitution may be amended at any business meeting of the church.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**Dissolution**

If for any reason this church should be dissolved, its assets shall be assigned, by vote of the church, only to a fundamental, Bible believing Baptist Church, not for profit, or educational institution, the faith and practice of which is in keeping with the Declaration of Faith and Purpose of these Bylaws and Constitution (Article III).

**ARTICLE XII**  
**Political Activities**

No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall participate in any political campaign of any candidate for public office.

**ARTICLE XIII**  
**Affiliations**

As independent and autonomous, this church retains the right to make or terminate affiliation with whatever church fellowships it deems appropriate.

**ARTICLE XIV**  
**Articles of Faith**

[See Separate Document]