

**THE BYLAWS  
OF  
NASHVILLE CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH  
Nashville, Tennessee**

The Bylaws of the **NASHVILLE CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH** were adopted by the congregation on April 30, 1995. This edition includes amendments adopted in 2003 and 2014.

**ARTICLE I  
NAME**

This church shall be known as the **NASHVILLE CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH (NCBC)**.

**ARTICLE II  
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

**NASHVILLE CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH** exists to glorify God, to proclaim the Gospel, and to gather Christians with one heart in worshipping God.

**ARTICLE III  
STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We believe the Bible, which consisted of sixty-six books, is inspired by God, the absolute truth, and the infallible word of God. It is the final authority of Christian faith and life. It includes that,

1. We believe in the everlasting, the only and the trinity of God existing in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is the creator and the sustainer of creation.
2. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is conceived by the Holy Spirit, the incarnation, and was born of the Virgin Mary. He is fully human and fully God. He is the mediator between God and mankind. He was crucified on the cross for the sins of all mankind and His blood was shed to fulfill the promises of God. He was physically resurrected from death in three days and ascended to Heaven. At the end of the world, He will return to judge the living and the dead. There will be resurrection of the dead. Whoever believes in God will have eternal life. Whoever disbelieves in God will experience eternal condemnation.
3. The Holy Spirit reveals the truth of Christ to mankind. The Holy Spirit is the comforter, who comforts, helps, and teaches mankind.
4. Salvation is solely by the death of Jesus Christ as the atonement, which completed once for all, for sinners. This is the forever foundation of salvation.
5. The church is called and established by God. It enables Christians to worship, observe ordinances and share the Gospel. The church is God governing, independent and autonomous spiritual group. Thus, pastor, deacons and church members are all equal and subject to the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **ARTICLES IV ORDINANCES**

### **1. BAPTISM**

This church practices immersion baptism in order to identify with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. If a person is incapacitated and cannot receive immersion baptism (such as sickness, etc.), adaptation of baptism will be consulted and decided by the pastor and the Deacon Committee.

### **2. THE LORD'S SUPPER**

This church observes the Lord's Supper once a month (any special situation will be consulted and decided by the pastor and the Deacon Committee). We observe the Lord's Supper in remembrance of our Lord, Jesus Christ who died for our sins (1 Corinthians 11:20-26). We welcome every baptized Christian to partake the Lord's Supper.

### **3. MARRIAGES**

Based on the biblical teachings, this church only conducts marriage ceremonies between a man and a woman. The marriage family of a man and a woman is God's will and God-ordained system (Genesis 2:10-25; Ephesians 5:22-33). For any practice that is not line with the biblical teachings, this church reserves the right not to conduct ceremonies, provide services, or lend facilities.

## **ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP**

Any person who accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as personal savior, being born-again, adopts the faith statement and the bylaws of this church, and is approved by the Membership Committee, which is comprised of the pastor and the Deacon Committee, may apply for membership.

### **1. QUALIFICATIONS**

- 1) A believer who received baptism (either by immersion or sprinkle) in this church.
- 2) A believer who received baptism (either by immersion or sprinkle) from other protestant or evangelical churches and he or she has attended the Sunday worship service of this church for more than 3 months.
- 3) Must apply for membership and approved by the Membership Committee.

### **2. PROCEDURES**

- 1) All applicants will fill out the membership application form.
- 2) Each applicant must understand and accept the faith statement and bylaws of this church.

- 3) Each applicant will be reviewed and approved by the Membership Committee (comprise of the pastor and the Deacon Committee).
- 4) Applicants will become members of this church upon the approval of the congregation.

### **3. TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**

Any member who desires to join another protestant or evangelical church is encouraged to inform this church. This church will provide a letter of transfer upon request.

### **4. MANAGEMENT OF MEMBERSHIP**

- 1) Any member who has not attended the Sunday worship service for more than one year will temporary lose his or her membership. The membership will resume automatically after contact is reestablished between the member and this church.
- 2) Any member who follows and practices heresy, disregards the truth of the Bible or commits criminal acts without showing any evidence of repentance, his or her membership may be suspended upon the investigation of the Membership Committee and the approval of the congregation. The member may rejoin this church if the member shows evidence of repentance and with the approval of the congregation.

### **5. PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES**

- 1) Attending Sunday services and church meetings regularly and partaking the Lord's Supper.
- 2) Willing to financial offering, supporting and participating in church activities and ministries, and spreading the Gospel.
- 3) Attending congregational meetings.
- 4) All members have to exercise their voting privilege in person. No absentee vote is allowed.

### **6. VOTING PRIVILEGE AND ELIGIBILITY TO BE ELECTED**

- 1) All members who are eighteen years old or older are eligible to vote.
- 2) All members who are eighteen years old or older and have attended the Sunday worship service for over one year are eligible to be elected.
- 3) Any member who has resumed membership and attended Sunday worship service for at least three months in the last six months is eligible to vote.

## **ARTICLE VI THE CONGREGATION**

The congregation of this church has the final organizational power and authority. The church members constitute the congregation. The congregational meetings include the annual meeting, regular business meetings, and special meetings. The pastor will

preside at the congregational meetings. In case of the absence of the pastor, the chair of the Deacon Committee or a temporary elected moderator will assume this responsibility.

### **1. ANNUAL MEETING**

The annual meeting is held once a year. The purposes of this meeting are to review the annual report and approve the church plan, and budget for the coming year. This meeting is planned by both the outgoing and incoming members of the Deacon Committee.

### **2. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING**

The regular business meeting is held quarterly. The purposes of this meeting include reviewing church business and proposals presented by the Deacon Committee. In the event of any difficulty in reaching a decision on any topic, the moderator of the meeting reserves the right to table the discussion and bring it back to the next meeting.

### **3. SPECIAL MEETING**

Under special circumstances, a special meeting may be called by the Deacon Committee. The quorum of such a meeting is one-half of the total membership.

### **4. MAJOR RESOLUTION**

Major resolutions (include purchasing or building new building; planting a new church; merging with another church; dissolving the church; changing the bylaws; call or termination of pastor; termination of deacon; dismissal of the Board of Directors; termination of membership) must publicly notice at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Approval of any major resolution must be by an affirmative vote of at least two-third vote of the church members present at a congregational meeting. The quorum of such a meeting is one-half of the total membership.

5. In any case of a member is absent from a congregational meeting, he or she is obliged to any decision that is reached in the congregational meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII CHURCH ADMINISTRATION**

### **SECTION A PASTOR**

The pastor is a servant of God and shepherd of this church. Although the title and the call of a pastor are lifelong, the duration of the service of a pastor in this church is contractual and not tenured.

## **1. CALL OF PASTOR**

To call a pastor, every member must earnestly pray and seek the will of God. To be the pastor of this church, a person must be a baptized Christian who has a strong sense of calling and commitment to Christian ministry. The pastor must have theological training or previous experience in church administration.

## **2. PROCEDURE**

- 1) The congregation will elect several deacons, co-workers, and church members to form a search committee. According to biblical teachings (I Timothy 3:1-7), the search committee will examine and interview candidates.
- 2) The candidates must provide the search committee with information including a spiritual autobiography, statement of faith, resume, three recommendation letters, seminary training, ministry background and their philosophy of shepherding a church.
- 3) The search committee will present one candidate to the congregation for approval.

## **3. PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1) To preach and teach the congregation according to the Bible. (II Timothy 2:15)
- 2) To minister and nurture members' spiritual needs.
- 3) To visit and care for church members and perform outreach in the local community.
- 4) To preside over the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- 5) To lead and administrate all church ministries.
- 6) To be a member of every committee with a voting privilege.
- 7) To present an annual report and a work plan to the congregation at the end of each year.
- 8) To present a progress report every six months.

## **4. RESIGNATION**

If the pastor intends to resign from the post, he must provide a written statement to the Deacon Committee three months in advance.

## **5. TERMINATION OF PASTOR**

To terminate the pastor's service of this church, the congregation needs to seek the will of God and prayerful consideration. This church will terminate the contract with the pastor when the following circumstances occur:

- 1) When the pastor distorts the Bible, does not preach according to the Bible, follows and practices heresy.
- 2) When the pastor has committed a crime.

## **6. PROCEDURE OF TERMINATION**

- 1) A petition must be signed by at least fifty percent of the total membership. The petition needs to be presented to the Deacon Committee and co-workers. A petition may also be presented by the Deacon Committee and co-workers.
- 2) The petition must be voted and approved by the congregation.

## **7. DURATION OF TERM**

- 1) The pastor and this church will enter a contractual relationship for one year.
- 2) Upon completion of the first contract, an evaluation will be given to the pastor by the congregation as criteria for contract renewal.
- 3) The contract is renewable for duration of two to five years.
- 4) The renewal term will be proposed by the Deacon Committee and approved by the congregation.

## **8. SALARY AND BENEFITS**

- 1) The pastor's salary and benefit package will be proposed by the Deacon Committee with the agreement of the pastor. It will be presented to the congregation for approval.
- 2) The pastor will receive:
  - two weeks of annual vacation, including two Sundays.
  - four weeks of annual vacation, including four Sundays after five years of service.
- 3) Any unused vacation can only be deferred to the following year.
- 4) Upon the completion of the seventh year of service, the pastor will receive six months of sabbatical for the purpose of continuing education, mission trips or lectures. (Must present a plan and provide a report.)
- 5) The pastor can attend the North America Chinese Baptist Pastoral Retreat or any similar retreat in the United States once a year. All conference related expenses will be paid by this church but the amount may not exceed the budgeted amount.

## **SECTION B MINISTERS**

Refer to Article VII Section 1.

## **SECTION C THE DEACON COMMITTEE AND DEACONS**

The Deacon Committee is composed of elected deacons. The duration of their term is one year. Each deacon may be elected for additional terms but not exceed three consecutive terms (the incumbent will automatically be on the candidate list for the next term). The chair of the Deacon Committee is elected by both outgoing and incoming deacons to serve a one-year term. He or she may serve additional terms as the chair, when elected. The Deacon Committee's meeting will be held monthly. All members are welcomed to attend the monthly meeting. In certain circumstances, attending members may be asked to step away from the meeting.

All major resolutions proposed by the Deacon Committee are subjected to the approval of congregation prior to execution. The Deacon Committee may call a special meeting when situation warranted. The congregation must pray and seek Gods' guidance in electing deacons.

## **1. PROCEDURE OF DEACON ELECTION**

- 1) The pastor, deacons, and co-workers will form a nominating committee. Members can also jointly nominate a candidate. Such nomination must have the support of twenty percent of the total membership.
- 2) The candidates will be nominated according to the teachings of the Bible (I Timothy 3:8-13). Candidates must have zeal to serve God and regularly attend Sunday service and other meetings such as prayer meeting, fellowship meeting, Sunday School and others.
- 3) The candidates must have been baptized and actively involved in this church for at least one year. They must be at least eighteen years old (refer to Article 5 Section 6).
- 4) The nominating committee will consult with the candidates regarding their commitments to serve.
- 5) The nominating committee will present the candidates to the congregation.
- 6) Candidates are confirmed by a one-half vote of the church members present at a congregational meeting.
- 7) When a deacon leaves this church before the completion of his or her term, a candidate will be named by the nominating committee and confirmed by the congregation to fill the vacancy.

## **2. TERMINATION OF DEACON**

To terminate a deacon, the congregation needs to seek the will of God and prayerful consideration. This church will terminate a deacon when the following circumstances occur:

- 1) When a deacon follows and practices heresy, goes against the teachings of the Bible.
- 2) When a deacon has committed a crime.

## **3. PROCEDURE OF TERMINATION**

- 1) A petition must be signed by at least fifty percent of the total membership. The petition needs to be presented to the Deacon Committee and co-workers. A petition may also be presented by the Deacon Committee and co-workers.
- 2) The petition must be voted and approved by the congregation.

## **4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEACON**

- 1) To assist the pastor in church administration and ministries.

- 2) To prepare the annual budget, manage church finances (such as bookkeeping, expenditure, deposit, loan, investment, etc.) and church properties, evaluate and monitor any purchases.
- 3) To call congregational meetings.
- 4) To present work reports to the congregation.

## **5. DIVISION OF DUTY**

According to the needs of this church each deacon will be in charge of a different area of ministry, for example: treasure, education, spiritual devotion, etc. (The number of ministries will increase or decrease according to the needs of the church.)

## **6. EXPENDITURE AUTHORIZATION**

- 1) Sub-Category Budget Item:

Expenditure of a sub-category budget item that exceeds within thirty percent of the approved budget must be approved by the deacon in charged. Expenditure that exceeds by thirty percent of the approved budget must be approved by the deacon committee.

- 2) Main Budget Item:

Expenditure of a main budget item that exceeds within ten percent of the approved budget must be approved by the deacon in charged. Expenditure that exceeds by ten percent of the approved budget must be approved by the deacon committee.

- 3) Overall:

The congregation approval is required when the overall expenditure is exceeding the approved annual budget.

## **SECTION D CO-WORKERS**

Co-workers are the chairpersons of church fellowships. They are responsible for the ministry of each fellowship.

- 1) Every fellowship must be listed in the ministry handbook.
- 2) Chairperson of each fellowship must provide work report to the Deacon Committee.
- 3) Chairperson of every fellowship is elected by each fellowship.

## **SECTION E BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Board of Directors is formed according to the policy of the Board of Directors. Upon the approval of the congregation, the Board of Directors is authorized to handle all the assets of the church when dissolving the church. Board members will not be liable for the debts or any liability of the church. Board members are not responsible for the handling of the debts or any liability. (See Appendix I)

## **SECTION F MISSIONS**

This church is committed to fulfilling the Great Commission (Acts 1:8). The Deacon Committee will establish a missions committee to work in cooperation with the Deacon Committee in order to carry out the responsibility of spreading the Gospel and promoting missions related ministries. The establishment of the Missions Committee serves the purpose of spreading the vision for missions, helping to carry out missions related ministries identified by the church, and encouraging and assisting members who have a heart for missions to serve. Furthermore, the Missions Committee will participate in the work of the Great Commission with missionaries and missionary agencies through financial support and prayer. (See Appendix II)

## **ARTICLE VIII DISSOLUTION**

If **NASHVILLE CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH** should be brought to conclude in dissolution, all of its assets will go toward paying off any of its financial obligations and the remaining, being approved by the congregation will go toward either churches or Christian organizations. None of its assets will benefit any members, pastor, and staff of the church.

## **ARTICLE IX AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

- 1) The congregation has the right to amend these bylaws. A written petition must be signed by at least twenty five percent of the total membership. The Deacon Committee will draft the amendment and present it to the congregation for the congregational approval.
- 2) Other policies, such as Appendix I and II, must not violate this Constitution and Bylaws.

***Note: When the English version of these bylaws is unclear, the Chinese version will be the final authority.***