

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

FAIRVIEW COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH of TROWBRIDGE, CALIFORNIA

AMENDED JULY 2011

ARTICLE I - NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION A – NAME – The name of this organization shall be the Fairview Community Christian Church of Trowbridge, California, hither to known as FCCC a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California.

SECTION B – PURPOSE - The purpose of this church shall be as revealed in the New Testament, to win people to faith in Jesus Christ and commit them actively to the church, to help them grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ that increasingly they may know and do His will, and to work for the unity of all Christians and engage in the task of building the Kingdom of God. This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law)

ARTICLE II – STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the following Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members.

SECTION A – DOCTRINE - We believe in the unchanging orthodox positions of Christianity taught in the holy scriptures including:

SUBSECTION 1 – FAITH

- The inspiration and infallibility of God's written word in content and meaning as found in the bible. (2 Timothy 3:16)
- The authority of God's written word to speak to every day issues our world faces. (2 Peter 1:16-21)
- The deity of Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 1:1-3)
- The doctrine of the Trinity. (Matthew 28: 19)
- The sinfulness and fallen state of all mankind. (Romans 3:23; 6:17)
- The need for a sacrificial atonement by Jesus Christ the Son of God for the sins of the world. (Hebrews 9:24-28)
- The existence of an eternal hell for those who refuse the grace of God expressed in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God's Son. (2 Thessalonians 1: 6-9)
- The virgin birth of the savior, Jesus Christ. (Matthew 1:18)
- Biblically authentic marriage between a man and a woman. (Genesis 2:24; Hebrews 13:4)
- The creation of human life begins at the moment of conception. (Psalm 139: 13-16)
- The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. (1 Corinthians 15: 1-58)
- The imminent return of Jesus Christ to receive those who belong to Him. (Matthew 24:44)

While there are many more markers and some would argue that more markers should be included and or, others excluded, these listed above are found in the majority of conservative, evangelical churches whose sole constitution is the Holy Bible.

SUBSECTION 2 – SALVATION - We believe that the primary directive of the church is the preaching of the gospel for salvation and that the principles that bring someone to life in Jesus Christ are of first importance. (Luke 19:10) The mission of God was to seek and save that which was lost. (Matthew 18:11) There is no higher calling given to the church than this calling expressed by Jesus Christ to his disciples in what is known as “The Great Commission.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

We believe that faith in Jesus Christ is the saving response of an individual to God’s overwhelming act of love in the sending His Son to die for their sin.

According to the many conversions in the book of Acts, it appears that this complete response of repentance, confession, baptism, and obedience was done in a timely and immediate manner. That will be the desire of our church as well.

- **Repentance**— (2 Corinthians 7:10; Acts 3:19; Luke 13:3)

- **Confession**—(Romans 10: 9-10; Matthew 10:32)

- **Baptism**— (Romans 6:3-4; Acts 22:16; Colossians 2:12; Acts 2:38 Matt. 28: 18-20)

- **Obedience**—(1 Timothy 3:1-5; Hebrews 13;1-17; James 1:22)

SECTION B – PRACTICE

SUBSECTION 1 – TEACHERS - All members of our church who are in positions of teaching, at every grade level, and those who represent our teaching ministry in the field will teach our core beliefs as convictions.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION A – REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP Members of FCCC are those who have united with Christ's church having renounced and repented of their sin; made a public confession of their faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son and Savior to all who acknowledge Him as Lord; have followed Him in baptism by immersion as a symbol of complete surrender and reenactment of his death, burial and resurrection; and have publicly acknowledged their desire to serve with this body of believers, submitting themselves to the authority of the church as set forth in the New Testament.

SECTION B – TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding 11 months. Upon good cause being shown to the Elders (e.g. occupation, education, health etc...), this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the pastor.

ARTICLE IV – ORGANIZATION

SECTION A – CHURCH LEADERSHIP - Congregational oversight shall be vested in the Elders of the church. Should the number of Elders fall below three (3), a group shall hereafter known as Temporary Provisional Leadership will be formed. This Temporary Provisional Leadership shall have the authority to act as the Eldership giving time to develop new eldership candidates to lead the church.

SUBSECTION 1 – QUALIFICATION AND SELECTION OF ELDERS

- A. Each man will go through a study of Biblical references (1st and 2nd Timothy; Titus) regarding leadership and examine the responsibilities of an Elder within this congregation. Each man will be interviewed to determine his desire and readiness for leadership ministry in the church, and his willingness to lead the church in a servant role.

- A. The Eldership (including the Temporary Provisional Leadership) will be responsible for nominating candidates for the Eldership.

- A. The names of men considered for leadership will be given to the congregation, and they will be given a 2-week period for questions and issues concerning the man's commitment and integrity.

- A. If a favorable affirmation vote of 75% by the congregation is given for the candidate, the candidate will then return to the Eldership for the final approval requiring a unanimous vote.

SUBSECTION 2 –TERM OF SERVICE FOR ELDERS

- A. Leadership, after the completion of two consecutive terms of 3-years will be required a 7th year, a sabbatical year for the purpose of personal renewal and refocusing, and a time to receive. The price of leadership ministry is great, and the demands on a man are many, requiring much sacrifice. The purpose of a sabbatical is so that the man can refocus his life and redirect his priorities to be most effective in leadership.

SUBSECTION 3 –CHURCH OFFICERS - The Elders shall select from among their members during a regular meeting of the Elders a chairman, a vice-chairman, a secretary, and a treasurer. An Elder may hold more than one (1) position but no more than two (2) positions.

- A. **CHAIRMAN:** He shall preside at all meetings of the Eldership and all business meetings of the congregation.
- B. **VICE-CHAIRMAN:** He shall carry out all the responsibilities of the Chairman should the Chairman be unavailable at any of the meetings of the Elder board or business meeting of the congregation
- C. **SECRETARY:** He shall be responsible for keeping the minutes of all business meetings of the Eldership and the congregation, carrying on correspondence of the Eldership as the chairman may direct, and giving official notice of all meetings of the Eldership and congregation.
- D. **TREASURER:** The treasurer shall receive and disburse all funds of the church as directed by the Elders. He shall serve as a member of the finance committee, provide oversight to staff on financial matters, and make regular reports to the Elders and congregational business meetings if necessary. He will provide oversight of two financial secretaries: one to assist in the collection of funds, the other to assist in the disbursement of funds.

SUBSECTION 4 – TRUSTEES The functional office of Trustee shall be appointed by the Elders to serve an indeterminate term. Final approval of the individual shall not be made by the Elders until after the individual has been presented to the congregation as a candidate under consideration during the regular Sunday services. The Elders shall follow the same procedure as set forth in the selection of Elders to invite, consider and resolve any comments or concerns from the congregation concerning the candidate before final approval is made. If a favorable affirmation vote of 75% by the congregation is given for the candidate, the candidate will then return to the Eldership for final approval requiring a unanimous vote.

- A. The Trustees shall act as the legal agents of the church in all business matters under the direction of the Elders, and perform such duties as are required by the law of the State of California.

- B. The number of Trustees shall not be less than three (3). The Trustees shall be the legal representatives of the church and, as directed by the Elders, they shall execute legal documents of record. The signature of a least two Trustees shall be required to render said documents valid.

SUBSECTION 5 – DEACONS AND DEACONESSES

- A. **THE SERVICE OF DEACON/DEACONESS:** The role of Deacon/Deaconess is one of a ministering servant of the church. They shall be identified by their calling to minister and selected by the Eldership from the members of the congregation to meet various services in ministry needs. The scriptural qualifications, as found in 1Timothy 3:8-10 & 12, shall be the first consideration in the calling of any Deacon/Deaconess.

- B. **THE SELECTION OF A DEACON/DEACONESS:** Once the Elders have secured the members approval they shall present him/her to the congregation as a candidate for Deacon/Deaconess. The congregation will have a period of two weeks to bring any scriptural complaints to the attention of the Eldership as to why the person should not be set apart as a Deacon/Deaconess of the church. The Elders shall examine and resolve any scriptural complaints

brought by the congregation before the candidate may be set apart by unanimous agreement of the Elders.

- C. THE TERM OF A DEACON/DEACONESS: The Deacon/ Deaconess should be retained in the position so long as the position or ministry is needed, effective, or otherwise desired.

ARTICLE V – SENIOR MINISTER

SECTION A – DUTIES – The Senior Minister shall meet all the qualifications of an Elder and perform the duties described in I Timothy 5:17. The Senior Minister shall be an ex-officio member of all organized groups, committees, and departments.

SECTION B – SELECTION – The Senior Minister shall be chosen by the congregation as follows:

1. The Chairman of the Elders shall appoint Elders as a Pulpit Committee together with a minimum of one Deacon/Deaconess, and a minimum of two laypersons from the congregation and they shall be responsible for recommending a prospective minister to the Elders.
2. The Elders shall consider the recommendation of the Pulpit Committee and, if unanimously approved, then recommend the prospective minister to the congregation. It shall be the policy of the church to consider only one prospective minister at a time.
3. If a favorable affirmation vote of 75%, or above, by the congregation is given for the candidate, the candidate will then return to the Eldership for final approval before a call may be extended.

4. The term of his ministry shall be for an indefinite period of time and may be terminated by either party upon thirty (30) days notice. A written contract setting forth salary to be paid and other conditions of the call shall be made in duplicate, one copy for the minister and one copy for the church.

SECTION C – REMOVAL FROM THE PULPIT AND OTHER DUTIES - By unanimous vote of the Elders the minister may immediately be relieved of his duties upon a determination that the minister has engaged in conduct scripturally proscribed and/or grossly immoral conduct or employment contract violation(s). No action shall be taken by the Elders without thorough discussion and examination of the conduct and verification that such conduct occurred.

ARTICLE VI -- ASSOCIATE MINISTERS AND MINISTRY DIRECTORS

SECTION A – EMPLOYMENT

Procedures for selecting and employing Associate Ministers shall require the designation of a search by the Elders. The Chairman of the Elders shall appoint Elders as a search committee together with a minimum of one Deacon/Deaconess, and a minimum of two laypersons from the congregation and they shall be responsible for recommending the prospective Associate Minister or Ministry Director to the Elders.

1. Employment shall be offered by unanimous approval of the Elders after reviewing recommendations of the Search Committee.
2. Employment of Associate Ministers will have a written statement including job description and terms of employment and/or contract. This contract shall be included in the minutes of the Elder's meeting, and a copy shall be provided to the staff members.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

SECTION A – CONGREGATION – The congregation shall meet on the second Sunday of January in conjunction with morning worship services for consideration and approval of the church budget for the coming year.

Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to make a motion or vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting.

The Chairman shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The Chairman is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling.

SECTION B – NOTICE – Notice of all regular or special meetings of the congregation shall be given at least two weeks in advance of the meeting during the regular Sunday morning worship services.

ARTICLE VII TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS

- A. PRIVATE INUREMENT -- No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, Trustees, 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 1 Section B of the Constitution hereof.
- B. DISSOLUTION -- Upon the dissolution of the church, the Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all of the assets of the church to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for Christian purposes, aligned with our core beliefs and shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization 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 Trustees shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to tax-exempt organizations which agree with the church's Statement of Faith.

Final authority in all matters, except as set forth elsewhere to the contrary in these Constitution and By-Laws, shall reside in the Eldership.

These By-Laws may be amended by a unanimous vote of the Eldership. The proposed amendment(s) shall be communicated to the congregation in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the vote to facilitate discussion and input by the members of the congregation. The proposed amendment shall be posted and announced each Sunday two (2) weeks prior to the vote being taken.