

BYLAWS
OF THE

NORTH FRESNO
MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH
5724 North Fresno Street
Fresno, California

Revised September 2017

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this church shall be “North Fresno Mennonite Brethren Church,” hereafter referred to as “the church.”

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

Section 1. Bylaws

The purpose of these bylaws is:

- A. To guide the ministry and organization of the church.
- B. To conform to the principles and policies expressed in the Articles of Incorporation.¹

Section 2. Purpose, Mission, and Values of the Church

Purpose: Jesus Christ commanded us as the church to make disciples of all people, to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to teach them to obey everything he taught (Matthew 28:19-20).

Jesus also said his followers are to love God with our whole being and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves (Matthew 22:37-39). These two things: worshipping God and joining him on mission define who we are and all that we do.

Mission and Values:

Jesus is the center of our faith.

Community is the center of our lives.

Reconciliation is the center of our work.

¹Articles of Incorporation of the Church.

ARTICLE III

AFFILIATION

The church is a member of the Pacific District Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches and the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. The church, though autonomous in local matters, will support the above-mentioned conferences. All bylaws shall be in accordance with the bylaws of the Pacific District and U.S. Conferences.

ARTICLE IV

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Confession of Faith of the U. S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches² shall also be the statement of faith of this church.

ARTICLE V

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Admission

The following requirements shall be met for acceptance into membership:

- A. A personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- B. A testimony of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior shared publicly with either the Spiritual Ministries Committee, its designee, or the church.
- C. Baptism by immersion upon confession of faith. The church practices immersion, but will also receive those who have been baptized upon confession of faith with a mode other than immersion.
- D. Affirmation and acceptance of the confession of faith and the mission and vision of the church.
- E. Completion of membership classes.

²Confession of Faith of the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.

- F. Completed and signed application for church membership.

Section 2. Request for Transfer

A member may request a letter of transfer to another church. This request will be processed by the Spiritual Ministries Committee.

Section 3. Accountability and Restoration

- A. **Accountability:** Any member who brings reproach upon the name of Christ or who violates the statement of faith shall be approached in the following manner:

- 1) Each member shall be encouraged to exercise self-judgment of all personal sin. Matthew 7:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:28; 1 John 1:9, 3:3.
- 2) If a member continues intentionally to live contrary to Scriptural teaching, the Spiritual Ministries Committee shall initiate a process of accountability and corrective action in a spirit of love and restoration according to Matthew 18:15-19 and Galatians 6:1-2.
- 3) The intended purpose of any accountability or restoration process will be to bring the person back into right relationship. If, after prayerful and repeated attempts by the church, right relationship is not restored, the church will remain open to the sinning or disconnected member. Third party conflict mediation or other healing and reconciliation processes may be utilized during this time.

- B. Removal from Membership

- 1) The Spiritual Ministries Committee shall review the church membership roster annually.
- 2) Those who have not participated as active members (attended, contributed, or communicated with the church for more than a year) will be contacted.
- 3) If it is apparent that membership is not desired or appropriate, such memberships shall be removed at the discretion of the Spiritual Ministries Committee.
- 4) The Spiritual Ministries Committee may move members to

'Inactive' status. This individual would not be removed from membership, but would be inactive and not counted in formal membership numbers and not have voting rights. The individual could be moved back to active status on their request or decision of the Spiritual Ministries Committee.

- 5) A member may request to be removed from membership. This request shall be made in writing and will be processed by the Spiritual Ministries Committee.

ARTICLE VI

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 1. Schedules

- A. Congregational meetings shall be held in January and June, with elections in June. The January meeting shall be the Annual Corporate Membership Meeting.
- B. The annual budget shall be adopted at the January meeting and shall be retroactive to January 1st.
- C. Special meetings may be called by the Leadership Board.
- D. Notice of congregational meetings shall be published or announced at least ten days prior to the meeting. The agenda shall be published or announced at least one week prior to the meeting.

Section 2. Procedures

- A. A quorum shall consist of the church members present. A count shall be recorded in the minutes.
- B. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be observed in general.
- C. The moderator shall appoint a parliamentarian and, if necessary, a balloting committee before each congregational meeting.
- D. Motions shall be approved by a simple majority of member votes cast, unless otherwise stated. Only member votes will be official.

ARTICLE VII

NORTH FRESNO CHURCH LEADERSHIP BOARD

Section 1. Membership

- A. The Leadership Board includes the following:
 - 1) Moderator
 - 2) Secretary
 - 3) Treasurer
 - 4) Representative from the Spiritual Ministries Committee
 - 5) Representative from the Stewardship Committee
 - 6) Two members at large, on staggered terms
 - 7) Lead Pastor
- B. The Leadership Board will function as the Corporate Board of Directors and serve as trustees of the corporation.
- C. The Moderator, Secretary, and Treasurer will act as the Officers of the corporation.
- D. Board members shall be active members of the church in good standing.
- E. The Board will bring names to fill any vacancies to the June congregational meeting for a vote of affirmation.
- F. Board members shall be elected at the June meeting for a term of two years commencing July 1.
- G. Board members shall not serve in office more than two consecutive terms, except when having served only a partial term preceding their first official term. In special circumstances someone may serve additional time as recommended by the Board and approved by membership.
- H. The chairs of the Spiritual Ministries Committee and the Stewardship Committee are recommended to be the official representatives to

the Board, unless otherwise decided by the Board and committees.

- I. Due to the nature of different length of terms for Spiritual Ministries Committee members, this representative may serve on the Board for the full length of their committee term but not to exceed five years.
- J. Board members shall sign and serve in compliance with the church's conflict of interest policy.

Section 2. Organization

- A. The Executive Committee of this Board shall consist of the Moderator, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- B. The Moderator shall:
 - 1) Chair all Leadership Board meetings and congregational meetings.
 - 2) Prepare the agenda for all Leadership Board meetings and congregational meetings.
- C. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of Leadership Board meetings and all congregational meetings.
- D. The Treasurer shall keep an account of all finances, oversee the disbursement of funds, and make financial reports regularly to the Leadership Board and to the church as needed.
- E. An Assistant Moderator, elected from within the Board, shall serve on behalf of the Moderator when needed or as the Moderator on an interim basis if the role is vacant.
- F. The minutes of this board shall constitute the official record of the church and be kept in perpetuity.
- G. Quorum for all decision items is 50% plus one. If quorum is not reached at any meeting action items shall be held until quorum can be reached.
- H. The church shall carry liability insurance covering and providing indemnification for all individual directors and officers.

Section 3. Responsibilities

The board shall:

- A. Provide primary leadership to the church.
- B. Review all significant matters brought before the church.
- C. Interpret and execute the bylaws and recommend amendments.
- D. Fill all elected church office, board member, committee member, and ministry leader vacancies.
- E. Annually review and affirm the Ministry Overview and Leadership Team Structure (See Article XI)
- F. Meet monthly or as often as needed.
- G. The Officers of the Church shall represent the church in legal matters.

Section 4. Salaries and Benefits Committee

- A. The Officers of the Church, a Spiritual Ministries Committee member, and the chair of the Stewardship Committee shall serve as the salary-benefits committee. They shall annually review the salary-benefits package and make recommendations to the Stewardship Committee. The Moderator shall chair this meeting.

ARTICLE VIII

LEAD PASTOR

Section 1. The Call

- A. When a vacancy occurs, the church shall set aside time for prayer to seek the will of God before other steps are taken.
- B. A Pastoral Search Team shall be formed to lead the search process. The team shall be nominated and elected by the church. Not more than three shall be members of the Leadership Board and/or Spiritual Ministries Committee. The suggested size is seven members.

- 1) The search team shall actively promote and communicate the open position and interview prospective candidates.
 - 2) The search team shall discern the best suitable candidate and present the candidate to the Spiritual Ministries Committee and Leadership Board for unanimous approval.
 - 3) The Pastoral Search Team, Leadership Board, and Spiritual Ministries Committee shall present this candidate to the church at least two weeks in advance of a decision to consider the calling of the candidate as pastor.
- C. The church shall have suitable opportunity to become acquainted with the candidate. At the discernment of the Leadership Board and Spiritual Ministries Committee, the candidate will be brought to the church members for a vote of affirmation. A call shall be issued to the candidate if at least 85% of member votes are in favor.
- D. The pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time.

Section 2. Responsibilities

The Lead Pastor shall:

- A. Give leadership in defining, developing, and fulfilling the mission of the church. The pastor shall utilize primary gifts and passions in this role and devote attention to help the church thrive in evangelism, discipleship, and equipping. A job description shall outline specific expectations of the pastor.
- B. Be a member of the North Fresno Church Leadership Board, the Spiritual Ministries Committee, and an ex-officio member of all other committees and leadership teams. Ex-officio responsibilities may be assigned to a designee.
- C. Report to the Leadership Board and Spiritual Ministries Committee at their regular meetings and to the church at its congregational meetings.
- D. Give oversight and leadership to the whole pastoral and administrative staff.

Section 3. Termination

- A. The pastor may submit resignation at any time with a suitable date

of end of employment agreed upon by the pastor and Leadership Board.

- B. The Lead Pastor shall be reviewed regularly, according to the latest review process and schedule laid out in the NFC Staff Handbook. This process shall be led by the Spiritual Ministries Committee. The Leadership Board or Spiritual Ministries Committee may request a review of the pastor at any time.
- C. After careful discernment, the Leadership Board may terminate the Lead Pastor.

ARTICLE IX

ASSOCIATE PASTORAL STAFF

Section 1. The Call

- A. The Leadership Board shall identify the need for associate pastoral staff.
- B. When a vacancy occurs, the church shall set aside time for prayer to seek the will of God before other steps are taken.
- C. As necessary, a Pastoral Search Team will be formed by the Spiritual Ministries Committee and as suitable follow a similar process as outlined for the Lead Pastor (see Article VIII, Section 1, B)
- D. The church shall have suitable opportunity to become acquainted with the candidate. At the discernment of the Leadership Board and Spiritual Ministries Committee, the candidate will be brought to the church members for a vote of affirmation. A call shall be issued to the candidate if at least 75% of members' votes are in favor.
- E. The Associate Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time.

Section 2. Responsibilities

- A. Associate pastoral staff shall give primary leadership in their ministry area, and serve on other committees or leadership teams as designated by the Leadership Board or Spiritual Ministries Committee.

- B. Ministry responsibilities:
 - 1) Be responsible to the Lead Pastor unless otherwise designated.
 - 2) Work closely with the Lead Pastor and other staff or volunteer leaders in the areas where their duties fall.
 - 3) Give primary leadership in their ministry areas, as outlined in their job description, and develop and work with leadership teams in their areas.

C. Specific job description and assignments:

The specific areas of ministry shall be stated and defined together with the Spiritual Ministries Committee and/or Leadership Board and listed in their job description.

Section 3. Title

The title given the Associate Pastor shall describe the ministry area and be decided by the Spiritual Ministries Committee.

Section 4. Termination

- A. Associate Pastors may submit their resignation at any time with a suitable date of end of employment agreed upon by the resigning pastor and Leadership Board.
- B. Associate Pastors shall be reviewed regularly according to the latest review process and schedule laid out in the NFC Staff Handbook. This process shall be led by the Spiritual Ministries Committee. The Leadership Board or Spiritual Ministries Committee may request a review of a pastor at any time.
- C. After careful discernment, the Leadership Board may terminate an Associate Pastor.

ARTICLE X

STANDING COMMITTEES

The following are standing committees under the Leadership Board:

1. SPIRITUAL MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

Section 1. Membership/Election

- A. The committee includes the following:
 - 1) Five members elected at large for five-year terms.
 - 2) Lead Pastor.
- B. The five members elected at large shall be elected at the June meeting, to staggered terms, with one member retiring and a new member elected annually, commencing July 1.
- C. Members shall not succeed themselves in office except when having only served a partial term of two years or fewer.
- D. The Committee shall elect a Chairperson, not a pastor, who shall organize and chair the meetings and also appoint a secretary who will take minutes.
- E. Quorum for all decision items is 50% plus one. If quorum is not reached at any meeting action items shall be held until quorum can be reached.

Section 2. Responsibilities

- A. Provide guidance and be responsible for the spiritual life and direction of the Church.
- B. Provide direction for the doctrinal and spiritual life of the Church and deal with matters of accountability and restoration.
- C. Provide a sounding board for congregation and pastors, listening to suggestions and offering guidance and encouragement to the pastoral staff.
- D. Review pastoral tenure, evaluate pastoral staff, and recommend any pastoral changes to the Leadership Board.
- E. The committee shall meet monthly or as often as needed.
- F. Committee minutes shall be kept in perpetuity.

2. STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Section 1. Membership/Election

- A. The committee includes the following:
 - 1). Treasurer.
 - 2). Members at Large. Three to five members at large are recommended.
 - 3). The Business Administrator, an NFC staff member.
- B. The Committee shall elect a Chairperson who shall organize and chair the meetings, and also appoint a secretary who will take minutes.
- C. Committee members shall be elected at the June meeting for a term of two years commencing July 1. Member terms should be staggered to balance those moving off the committee.
- D. Committee members shall not serve in office more than two consecutive terms, except when having served only a partial term preceding their first official term. In special circumstances, someone may serve additional time as discerned by the Board and approved by the congregation.

Section 2. Responsibilities

The committee shall work cooperatively in all matters relating financially to the church. For practical purposes its duties may be divided as follows:

- A. Stewardship Maintenance: This function shall include projection of budgets, collecting and expending church finances, supervising property, buildings, and equipment, negotiating leases with ministry partners, and careful and accurate receipting and reporting for tax purposes.
- B. Stewardship Education: This function shall include assessing the congregation's stewardship, keeping the church advised of trends and needs, educating members to enhance the church's stewardship ministry, and planning capital investment strategies and campaigns as needed.
- C. Coordinate and administer post-secondary church-match

scholarships for North Fresno Church students.

- D. The committee shall meet monthly or as often as needed.
- E. Committee minutes shall be kept in perpetuity.

ARTICLE XI

Ministry Teams

Section 1. Overview of Ministries

- A. The Leadership Board shall determine the ministries needed to effectively carry out the mission of the church. This shall happen on an ongoing basis and Ministry Teams organized accordingly by the Leadership Board.

Section 2. Guiding Document

- A. Ministry Teams shall be formed for each major ministry area, as discerned by the Leadership Board and congregation, and operate within the parameters of the Ministry Team Overview and Structure Document.
- B. A Ministry Team Overview and Structure Document shall be in effect at all times. This document will define all current North Fresno Church ministries, where they fit into the overall structure of the church, how they function together, what their responsibilities are, and their leadership and accountability structure.
- C. This guiding document shall be an official church document and part of its organizational structure. Changes shall be presented to the church at a congregational meeting.
- D. Primary leadership of each Ministry Team will be designated to a pastor or a volunteer leader by the Leadership Board. Volunteer leaders will be discerned, called out, and affirmed. These leaders will serve within the parameters set out in the Ministry Team Overview and Structure Document.

ARTICLE XII

Amendments

Section 1. Proposals

Proposed amendments may be introduced at any business meeting.

Section 2. Adoption of Amendments to these Bylaws

1. The bylaws may be amended during any congregational meeting as long as the proposed amendment has been approved by the Leadership Board and has been presented to the church membership in writing at least fourteen days before the meeting.
2. No changes may be contrary to the Bible or to the Confession of Faith or the constitution of the Pacific District Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.
3. A two-thirds vote of members present and voting shall be required for the adoption of any amendment to these bylaws.

This document replaces the 2011 version in its entirety. Approved by the Board of Administration on 08/17/2017. M/S/C at the ???/2017 Congregational Meeting.