

**CONSTITUTION
AND
BY-LAWS
OF
COLUMBIA CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH**

December 1, 1991
Revised February 20, 2005
Revised 2nd time May 27, 2012

5005 Waterloo Road
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

(Old address: Owen Brown Community Center
6800 Cradlerock Way
Columbia, Maryland 21045)

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and so that this body may be governed in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches of the same faith.

I. NAME

This body shall be known as the Columbia Chinese Baptist Church of Howard County, Maryland.

II. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 and updated in 2000. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

III. CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines.

To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to educate our children religiously; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances.

To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings; faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and, mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

IV. CHARACTER

Section 1. Polity

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the association and state convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2. Doctrine

This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of other Southern Baptist churches.

V. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

2.1: For current members with memberships obtained before the approval of this 2nd revision, in order to maintain the membership, they must complete membership re-registration by signing and dating the membership re-registration form which includes:

- Profession of faith according to the policies of this church and the doctrinal statements of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 (BFM 2000)
- Agreement of the Constitution and by-laws of Columbia Chinese Baptist Church

2.2. Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented by the pastor or deacon chairperson to the church at any regular worship service for membership in any of the following ways:

A. To become church members for those to be baptized at CCBC, such candidates must:

- Complete baptism class and membership class, which includes, but not limited to:
 - Profession of faith according to the policies of this church and the doctrinal statements of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 (BFM 2000).
 - Agreement of the Constitution and by-laws of Columbia Chinese Baptist Church.
- Attend church's regular activities including Sunday worship for at least 6 months.
- Complete baptism.
- Apply in person.
- Complete membership registration.

B. To become church members for those to be transferred from other Baptist churches, or other denominations of Christian churches whose doctrinal statements are in agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message (BFM 2000), such candidates must:

- Complete membership class, which includes, but not limited to:
 - Profession of faith according to the policies of this church and the doctrinal statements of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 (BFM 2000).
 - Agreement of the Constitution and by-laws of Columbia Chinese Baptist Church.
- Attend church's regular activities including Sunday worship for at least 6 months.
- Apply in person.
- Complete membership registration.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the pastor and the deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A three fourths vote of those members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

Section 3. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- (1) Death
- (2) Dismission to another Baptist church
- (3) Exclusion by action of this church *
- (4) Erasure upon becoming affiliated with a church of another faith or denomination.

* Should a member become an offense to the church and to its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his covenant vows, or nonsupport of the church, the church may terminate his membership by a two thirds vote, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment.

Section 4. Voting Members

By definition, voting members are church members who are eligible to vote on various church decisions. A voting member must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Be a church member who fulfills the requirements outlined in Article V Section 2.
- Be a church member for at least 12 months.
- Be a regular attendee of the Sunday worship services at least 60% of attendance within 12 months timeframe.

The voting member list will be reviewed and updated annually. The Deacon Committee will post the voting member list for one month for public review. After public review, the voting member list becomes effective immediately and will remain effective until the next annual update.

VI. CHURCH OFFICERS

All church officers must be members of the church. The officers of this church shall be as follows:

Section 1. Pastor

The pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff in performing their tasks. A major concern of the pastor is to perform pastoral responsibilities. The pastor is the leader of worship, proclamation, education, and pastoral ministry.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice shall be given.

A pulpit committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and their recommendations will constitute a nomination, though any member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three fourths being necessary for a choice. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of the church. The pastor shall preferably give at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor.

The initial term of the pastor should be two years and six months. The term should be reviewed at least every two or three years. At least Six months before the renewal date, a Reconfirmation Committee should be formed. (see VII. COMMITTEES) The Reconfirmation Committee should make its recommendation at least three months before the renewal date to the congregation. Reconfirmation shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two week's public notice shall be given. Reconfirmation shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of two thirds being necessary for a pass.

Section 2. Church Staff

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined. Vocational staff members other than the pastor shall be recommended to the church by the deacons and employed by church action.

The secretaries and custodians shall likewise be recommended to the church by the deacons and employed by church action.

Section 3. Deacons

(1) There may be a minimum of 5 and maximum of 13 deacons. The deacon shall be at least 25 years of age, but there shall be no upper age limit. The deacon must also be a member of the church for at least two years, and must be a regular attendee of the Sunday worship services, i.e. at least 65% attendance. No husband and wife can serve as deacons at the same time. Deacons shall be elected at regular business meetings of the church by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of three fourths is necessary for a choice.

The deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. Each year the term of office of one third of the number of deacons shall expire, and election shall be held to fill the vacancies. In case of death, removal, or incapacity to serve, the church may elect to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three years, no deacon shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of at least one year. There is no obligation to constitute as an active deacon a person who comes to the church from another church where he has served as deacon.

(2) In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to assist the pastor in performing pastoral responsibilities.

(3) The deacons shall elect their officers and shall be organized to assist the pastor, and for the consideration of problems related to their work. They may organize themselves into committees to serve the church in the specific areas of baptism, Lord's Supper, benevolence, etc. Special committees may be needed for special assignments and projects. (see VII. COMMITTEES)

Section 4. Moderator

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator shall be elected.

Section 5. Clerk

The church elected clerk of the church shall keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. He is responsible for keeping a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. He shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official

reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these by-laws. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when one is maintained.

Section 6. Treasurer

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and reimbursements for the preceding month. The treasurer's report shall be audited semi-annually by an auditing committee or public accountant.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

Section 7. Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall be elected by the church annually. He/She shall receive the empty collection envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the proper persons selected by the church to serve in turn; and from these he/she shall give donors individual credit. He/She shall keep the envelopes for reference for a period of two years. He/She will fill out the sheet for the monthly balance, which will indicate receipts from envelopes, plate or loose, and miscellaneous or special offerings. He/She shall also be responsible for preparing and mailing annually records of contributions to all requested contributing members.

Section 8. Church Ushers

Every church usher shall be selected by the deacons. The ushers shall be led by a head usher also selected by the deacons. The ushers are to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time, provide bulletins and/or other materials at the time of seating. The ushers will be attentive to the needs of the congregation and the pastor.

Section 9. Church Council

(1) The primary functions of the council shall be to recommend to the congregation suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the congregation the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate program achievements in terms of church goals and objectives.

(2) The number of council members is identical to deacons. The council members shall be at least 30 years of age, but there shall be no upper age limit. The council member must also be a member of the church for at least two years, and must be a regular attendee of the Sunday worship services, i.e. at least 65% attendance. No husband and wife can serve at the council at the same time. No church members can serve as deacon and council member at the same time. Council members shall be elected at regular business meetings of the church by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of two thirds being necessary for a pass.

The council members shall serve on a rotation basis. Each year the term of office of one third of the number of council shall expire, and election shall be held to fill the vacancies. In case of death, removal, incapacity to serve, the church may elect to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three years, no council member shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of at least one year.

The church council shall elect their officers and shall be organized to perform church council functions. They may organize themselves into committees for special assignments and projects.

(3) All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already provided for, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

Section 10. Trustees

Six trustees, one third of whom shall be elected by the congregation during the annual business meeting to serve for three years, and, until their successors shall be appointed, will hold in trust the property of the church. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, or purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required.

VII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. General

All church committee members shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise indicated in the description below. The committee members shall serve on a three-year rotation system with one third to be elected each year. The following committees shall be elected.

Section 2. Baptism Committee

This committee shall consist of deacons and wives. The baptism committee is elected to assist the pastor in preparing for the ordinance of baptism. The committee is responsible for preparing the candidates and the baptistery for the ordinance. This is a deacon committee.

Section 3. Flower Committee

The flower committee is responsible for securing, arranging, and disposing of floral arrangements for church services, and for providing flowers for sick and bereaved members.

Section 4. History Committee

The history committee is to preserve and use the historical records of the church. The committee is especially concerned with gathering and preserving available church records, recording full and accurate records, and using the records to help members understand and appreciate their heritage and mission.

Section 5. Lord's Supper Committee

The Lord's Supper committee prepares the elements and the equipment for the observance of the Lord's Supper. The committee does the preparatory and maintenance work needed to observe the memorial service. The committee will prepare the elements on a schedule approved by the church. This is a deacon committee.

Section 6. Nominating Committee

The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions that are filled by volunteers. The nominating committee recommends persons for all volunteer positions to be elected by the church.

Section 7. Properties Committee

The properties committee assists the church in matters related to properties administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties, recommending employment of maintenance personnel, and assigning responsibility to appropriate personnel for supervision.

Section 8. Recreation Committee

This committee seeks to serve the entire church in seeing that all recreation activities sponsored by the church or any organizational unit are properly planned and that they contribute to the ultimate objectives of the church. The committee will plan all church activities and serve as a resource to others who plan activities.

Section 9. Nursery Committee

The nursery committee is to coordinate the church's nursery activities and to help nursery parents and teachers work together. The committee will see that adequate provisions are made for nursery children each time they are at church.

Section 10. Public Relations Committee

The church relations committee is to know and discover the public relations needs and choose the means of communication to those inside and outside the church. The committee is responsible for discovering what needs to be communicated and to communicate with the proper audience.

Section 11. Benevolence Committee

The benevolence committee is to perform acts of benevolence to persons in need in the name of Christ and his church. These needs may be physical, social, or mental. This is a deacon committee.

Section 12. Kitchen Committee

The kitchen committee is responsible for formulating policies of the church luncheon and for communicating these policies to church members.

Section 13. Stewardship Committee

The stewardship committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship information plan, and administers the gifts of church members, using sound principles of financial management.

Section 14. Missions Committee

The missions committee seeks to discover possibilities for local or international missions projects, shares findings with church program organizations, and serves the church in establishing and conducting such mission projects as may be assigned to it.

Section 15. Reconfirmation Committee

The Reconfirmation Committee should be formed at least six months before the renewal date of the pastor's term. The committee should consist of seven church members through open nomination. The committee will recruit feedbacks from church members. The committee then presents its recommendations on the new term for the pastor to the congregation at least three months before the renewal date. The new term, if offered, should be of at least one year but not more than three years.

VIII. EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Section 1. General

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church. It is understood that the pastor is an ex-officio officer of all the organizations named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them.

Section 2. Sunday School

There shall be a Sunday School, divided into classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of a general superintendent, for the study of God's Word. Sunday School is to be conducted each Sunday morning.

The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the biblical revelation; lead in reaching all prospects for the church; lead all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 3. Training Union

There shall be a Training Union, divided into departments for all ages and conducted under the direction of a general director. The Training Union shall serve as the training organization of the church.

The tasks of the Training Union shall be to teach systematic theology, Christian history, Christian ethics, and church polity and organization; give orientation to new church members; train all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; train leaders for the church and the denomination; discover, recruit and train potential leaders; provide for specialized training; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 4. Woman's Missionary Union

There shall be a Woman's Missionary Union with such officers and such forms of organization as needed. The tasks of the Woman's Missionary Union shall be to teach missions; lead persons to participate in missions; provide organization and leadership for special mission projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 5. Brotherhood

There shall be a Brotherhood, made up of such standard organizations, including Royal Ambassadors, as needed. This program shall be directed by a director who shall be elected by the church. The tasks are to teach missions; lead all men, young men, and boys to participate in mission activities; provide

organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 6. Music Ministry

There shall be a Music Ministry under the direction of the minister of music. Such officers and organizations shall be included as needed. The music tasks shall be to teach music and hymnody; provide music and musicians for the congregational services and the organizations of the church; lead persons to participate in hymn singing; train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

IX. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God and on Friday evening for prayer or Bible study. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

Section 2. Annual Business Meeting

The annual business meeting shall be held on the first Sunday of December after the Lord's Supper.

Section 3. Deacons Meetings

The deacons meeting shall be held in the second Sunday afternoon of each month. Should there be any unusual business or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular monthly meeting, notice shall be given to the deacons one week prior to the meeting.

Section 4. Special Business Meetings

A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one week notice must be given to the membership for the specially called business meeting, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable.

Section 5. Quorum

The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Section 6. Parliamentary Rules

"Robert's Rules of Order Revised" is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church, the deacons, and the committees.

Section 7. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall be the same as the calendar year.

Section 8. Church Council Meetings

The church council shall meet on the first Sunday at least every other month. Should there be any unusual business or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular monthly meeting, notice shall be given to the council members one week prior to the meeting.

Section 9. Affirmative Vote

The denominator to calculate the fraction or percentage of affirmative vote is defined as the sum of valid ballots from the voting members who are present to vote and the valid absentee ballots received within two weeks from the date of the vote. All votes unless otherwise specified should be in secret ballot.

X. CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1.

The stewardship committee, in consultation with the church council, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval and inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses.

Section 2.

All funds, for any and all purposes, shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

Section 3.

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts. Each new member shall, therefore, be immediately approached by a representative of the church for a pledge to the church's unified budget; and at least annually, plans shall be put into operation for securing a worthy subscription from each member of the church.

XI. DISCIPLINE

Section 1.

Should any unhappy differences arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew.

Section 2.

Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the deacons shall endeavor to remove the offense; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the church.

Section 3.

All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

Section 4.

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the church, upon evidence of his repentance and reformation; or, if on account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation.

XII. Petition

The deaconry shall accept the petition endorsed by at least 25% of the church members. The deaconry may verify the endorsement then shall announce the petition to the congregation within two week after verification. The deaconry may form a special committee to address the petition and shall respond within forty five day from the acceptance of the petition.

In the event of non-resolution of the petition, the deaconry shall call for joint meeting among the deaconry, church council and the petitioner(s) to resolve the issues. If such meetings fail to resolve the issue, the deaconry shall call for a congregational vote.

Such vote shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice shall be given and the voting shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of 51% being necessary for a pass. Absentee ballots should be provided.

XIII. AMENDMENTS

Changes in this constitution and by-laws may be made at any deacons meeting of the church, provided such amendments shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each deacon present. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of all members of the church present entitled to vote; amendments to the by-laws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting.