

# Constitutional By-laws of Burnaby Pacific Grace Church

1. The English name of our church is Burnaby Pacific Grace Church, 本立比頌恩堂 in Chinese.
2. Our church is affiliated to the BC Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.
3. Doctrine: Our church accepts in totality the confession of faith of the Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.
4. Church Memberships: Membership is granted to those baptized in this church or accepted through membership transfer. Procedures stated below:
  - 4.1. Application for baptism: Applicants must be 12 years of age or above, enlightened by the Holy Spirit to repent of their sins and to confess the Lord Jesus as Saviour, accepting the faith of our church, attending its services regularly, and having completed the baptismal class. Upon recommendation by the lead pastor and after gaining approval from the board of deacons through a testimony and an interview session on faith, the applicant may be accepted as member.
  - 4.2. Application for membership transfer: Believers of other evangelical Christian churches transferring due to reasons of moving or special circumstances necessary to leave their former churches and who have subsequently attended this church regularly for at least three months, ready to accept the stated confession of faith and abide by the constitutional by-laws of this church, shall, through the recommendations of the lead pastor and the approval of the board of deacons, be accepted as members.
5. Duties of Members
  - 5.1. To regularly study the Bible, pray, follow God's teachings, and attend Sunday services and other meetings.
  - 5.2. To seek to glorify God in their daily living and conducts.
  - 5.3. To witness for the Lord diligently and lead others to Christ.
  - 5.4. To understand the truth of stewardship, giving material offering, gifts, and time to God, sharing in responsibilities of the church and serving the Lord in one accord.
6. Review of Membership
  - 6.1. Officers or members of this church who have acted or taught contrary to the teachings of God's word, bringing disgrace to His Holy name or the reputation of this church, and refuse to repent even after counseling, may, upon the approval of the board of deacons, be disciplined according to the severity of the issues in the following ways:
    - 6.1.1. Termination of their duties
    - 6.1.2. Termination of their participation in the Holy Communion
    - 6.1.3. Termination of their membership.
  - 6.2. Those whose participation in the Holy Communion or whose membership have been terminated may have their privileges reconsidered for restoration by the board of deacons if they truly repent and have demonstrated an obvious change of behaviour.
  - 6.3. Members who are over 18 years of age shall have the privilege to vote.
  - 6.4. Members who are over 21 years of age shall have the privilege to be elected.

6.5. Members who have not attended Sunday worship service for over six months without sufficient reason shall have their privilege to vote and privilege to be elected reviewed by the board of deacons.

7. Organization and Election:

7.1. Membership meeting should consist of all registered members of the church. The meeting is called once a year by the chair of the board of deacons in the beginning of each year, to approve the financial statement and ministry report of the previous year, and the annual budget of the current year. In case of special circumstances, the board of deacons may call for a special membership meeting. Every membership meeting must serve a two-week advance notice with the agenda announced. All motions at the membership meeting must be passed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present in the meeting.

7.2. The board of deacons

7.2.1. The members of the board of deacons shall consist of the lead pastor, pastoral staffs, and deacons elected by the members. A minimum of eight meetings shall be held each year. In case of special circumstances, the chair of the board of deacons may call for a deacon meeting. Part time pastoral staffs (with working hours no less than 20 hours per week) shall also have the right to vote.

7.2.2. The organization of the board of deacons shall consist of:

7.2.2.1. A chair, a vice-chair, a secretary, a treasurer, and an accountant. Except for the lead pastor who is the chair, all other posts are filled through agreement among the elected deacons. A steering committee, whose members are appointed by the current board, shall be formed to deal with urgent matters.

7.3. Number and terms of deacons

7.3.1. The board of deacons shall consist of at least 5 elected deacons. The number may be increased according to the needs of the church. The term for each deacon is two years. A deacon may not serve for more than two consecutive terms, after which he/she must retire for one year. The preferred number of newly elected deacons is no greater than half of the total number of deacons in the board. The current board shall determine the number of deacons. In case of special need, the board may invite deacons who have completed their terms to extend their service for one more year. If a deacon due to valid reasons needs to resign from the board, after the deacon board accepts his/her resignation letter, the vacancy is filled by the candidate with the next highest vote.

7.4. Ministry departments:

7.4.1. Ministry departments are to be formed under the jurisdiction of the board of deacons. They shall plan and coordinate various ministries in accordance to the development directions and goals of the church. These departments include: (1) Caring department, (2) Worship department, (3) Music department, (4) Literature department, (5) Evangelism department, (6) Children department, (7) Chinese Adult Sunday School department, (8) English department, (9) Library department, (10) House Affairs department, (11) Fellowship department, and (12) Audio-Visual department. The number of departments may be adjusted according to the needs of the church. The department heads shall be appointed by the board of deacons in accordance to their gifts. Each department head shall serve a term of two years and may not serve in the same position for over two consecutive terms. The committee members under the department heads shall be appointed by the department heads with the approval of the lead pastor.

- 7.5. Deacon Nomination Committee:
  - 7.5.1. The deacon nomination committee shall consist of 5 members: the lead pastor as the official chair, two members from the current board of deacons, and two members nominated in writing to the lead pastor from the general congregation. The deacon nomination committee is responsible for nominating prospective candidates for next year's board of deacons, in accordance to the deacon nomination guidelines set forth in the Bible.
- 7.6. Within a week after the list of nominees is announced by the deacon nomination committee, members of the church may submit other written nominations, each signed by two members, to the deacon nomination committee in accordance to the deacon nomination guidelines. Nomination by members must be first accepted by the deacon nomination committee before the new nominee is included in the list.
- 7.7. Guidelines for deacon nominees:
  - 7.7.1. Born again Christian, baptized for at least two years (1 Timothy 3:6), a member of this church (Acts 4:23), and familiar with this church.
  - 7.7.2. Monogamous, irreproachable in marital relationship and relationships with the opposite sex (1 Timothy 3:2).
  - 7.7.3. Of good reputation (1 Timothy 3:7; Acts 6:3).
    - 7.7.3.1. Not indulgent in bad habits or committing immoral or illegal acts
    - 7.7.3.2. Living out a good personal and family life (1 Timothy 3:2).
  - 7.7.4. Fulfilling one's responsibility in tithes and offerings, thus capable of being an example to others (Matthew 6:21; 1 Corinthians 6:2).
  - 7.7.5. Spiritually mature, willing to cooperate with others in serving the Lord (1 Corinthians 12:24).
  - 7.7.6. Has presided in other duties like department head, Sunday school teacher, or other evangelistic works, and is recognized as a faithful and responsible worker (2 Corinthians 8:22; 1 Timothy 3:10).
8. Ordinances:
  - 8.1. Baptism: Baptism is a testimony made by Christians before God and human. It is to be followed by all believers, symbolizing the truth of being dead, buried, and resurrected with Christ. Baptism by immersion is practiced in this church except in case of serious illness when baptism by sprinkling is conducted.
  - 8.2. Holy Communion: Holy Communion is to commemorate Christ according to His command, conducted once a month for all born again, baptized Christians.
9. Wedding and Funeral Services: Members of this church may request pastors of this church to officiate wedding ceremonies or funeral services in accordance to the following stated guidelines:
  - 9.1. The marriage partner must be a Christian and the union must be legal.
  - 9.2. Members who invite a pastor of this church to officiate funerals must not allow other family members to construct altars or conduct ceremonies that resemble to idol worship, chanting, occult practices, and rituals of other religions after the pastor has officiated a funeral service.
10. The board of deacons shall be the highest authority in the interpretation of these by-laws.
11. These by-laws may be amended as need arises by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present in the membership meeting.

12. Any other by-laws not stated in regards to administration, organization, authorities, and other aspects concerning the church should be referred to the constitution of the BC Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.

*Translation Last Revised: May 13, 2006*