



Bylaws Blendville Christian Church Joplin, Missouri

The vision of Blendville Christian Church is “Engaging Community. Transforming Community.” Our mission is to “CONNECT with each other, GROW in our relationship with Jesus, and SERVE the world.” This document will help us with our vision and mission by outlining the guidelines we use to select key leaders and for managing ongoing systems and procedures. In addition, this document provides accountability for ministry leaders and details key information for the church body. While impossible to anticipate all future contingencies, the intent of this document is to provide flexibility to meet long-term changing needs.

Article 1

Name

This church is incorporated as Blendville Christian Church (BCC or Blendville) located at 2201 S. Picher Ave, Joplin, MO 64804. Our identity is with Christ, the Scriptures, and is led by the Elder Team.

Article 2

Statement of Beliefs [Verify citations]

1. This church shall accept the Holy Scriptures as the will of God (Rom. 12:2) revealed to man by the Spirit to prophets and apostles (Amos 3:7; Eph. 3:5) and that Jesus has all authority in heaven and earth and can bind or loose that authority as He chooses (Mt. 28:18). Jesus gave that authority to the apostles (Mt. 16:19; 18:18) and we must submit to that authority as the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, any unintentional appearances of this document to the contrary notwithstanding.
2. **We believe in one God** – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 5:16, 45; 6:1,4,8,9; Jam. 1:17; John 1:1; 14:9; Gen. 1:2; John 4:24; 14:16-20; 2 Pet. 1:21).
 - a. Who indwells every Christian (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Tim. 1:14).
3. **We believe God inspired the autographs (original writings) of the Scripture** – and those autographs were without error (Mark 12:36; John 14:26; 16:12-15; Acts 1:16; 1 Cor. 2:12-13; 2 Tim. 3:14-16; 2 Pet. 1:20- 21).
4. **We believe the Bible teaches that man, created by God, willfully sinned against God** – and is consequently lost and without hope apart from Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; Rom. 3:23).
5. **We believe the Bible teaches that salvation** – the forgiveness of sins – is only by grace through the blood of Jesus Christ (Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:9; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 John 1:7-9).
6. **We believe the Bible teaches that one receives God’s grace** – by putting faith in Christ, repenting of sin, confessing Christ and being immersed (baptized) into Christ, but that none of these is sufficient in and of itself for the assurance of salvation (Rom. 5:1-2; Luke 24:45-47; Acts 17:30; Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9; 1 John 4:15; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:1-7; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21).
7. **We believe the Evidence of Salvation** - the outward evidence to other Christians is one who is obedient to God’s command and exemplifies the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22) but the outward

evidence to the world is the love we have for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ (John 13:35; Rom. 12:10).

8. **We believe in the Church of Jesus Christ** – founded on the Day of Pentecost and consisting of all Christians everywhere (Matt. 16:13-18; Acts 2:14-47).
 - a. We believe the true church of God (Acts 20:28; Rom. 16:16) is both a universal and local body of Christians that consists exclusively of those persons, who are disciples of Jesus (Matt. 28:19; Acts 11:26) “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24).
9. **We believe the Lord's Supper** – consisting of the elements bread and the fruit of the vine, the symbols of the body and blood of our Lord, should be observed weekly by believers as a memorial of Jesus' suffering and death, and as a witness to the unity of all obedient believers in Christ (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 10:16-17).
10. **We believe the Bible teaches that the Elders** – are to exercise authority/oversight over the local congregation (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4) and that all members of Blendville Christian Church are to submit to the Eldership (Heb. 13:17).
11. **We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning** – and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:24; Mt. 19:4-6, 9).
 - a. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other (Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
 - i. We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God (Lev. 18:22-30; 20:13; Dt. 22:5; Rom. 1:26-31; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:10-11).
 - ii. We believe that to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

Article 3

Membership

The people who make up Blendville Christian Church be committed and loyal to the unity and wellness of the church. Requirements to be a member are:

- Immersed believer in Jesus
- Expressed and demonstrated (whether publicly to congregation or privately to Elder Team) commitment to ministry with Blendville Christian Church and its Statement of Beliefs.

Article 4

Elders

Section 1- Qualifications of Elders:

- Above Reproach (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)
- Have biblical basis to serve
- Be willing to serve
- Be a Member of Blendville Christian Church

Section 2- Responsibilities of the Elder Team:

- Shepherd the people of Blendville Christian Church
- Oversee all business affairs and ministry of Blendville Christian Church and delegate action as needed
- Oversee all stewardship of Blendville Christian Church. This includes appointing a church treasurer and Finance Ministry Team.
- Appoint Ministry Team Leaders and oversee all Ministry Teams
- Interpret and apply this document
- Elders shall also serve as Trustees for purposes of the Articles of Agreement or Charter of Blendville
- Enact Biblical church discipline

Section 3- Continuation of Service:

- Be committed to leadership meetings
- Be committed to attending/leading worship and study gatherings
- Be committed to being a part of the community, this includes the Blendville community as well as the Joplin (and surrounding area) community
- Be committed to maintaining biblical qualifications for Elders.
- Current Blendville Elder Team will ensure these are taking place.
- A member who has a biblical objection to an elder continuing in service may submit a signed explanation to the Elder Team. The Elder Team will evaluate the objection and take appropriate action.

Section 4- Adding to Elder Team:

- As needed, Elder Team will:
 - Consider and examine candidates for elders
 - Present candidates to congregation
- The Congregation will have thirty (30) days to submit in writing any biblical objections to anyone presented to serve as an Elder. If no objections are filed, candidate is approved.
- The current Elder Team will evaluate objections and take appropriate action.

Article 5

Ministry Handbook and Staff Handbook

The Ministry Handbook and Staff Handbook will be written in harmony with Scripture and these Bylaws.

- The scope of the Ministry Handbook is the procedural, working guidelines for operation and ministries of Blendville Christian Church not already defined in the Bylaws.
- The scope of the Staff Handbook will be the guidelines for work and workplace procedures and practices for BCC employees.

Changes to the Ministry Handbook and Staff Handbook will take place if approved by the Elder Team.

Article 6

Ministry Staff

Section 1- The Elder Team will appoint staff as needed for various ministry responsibilities of the church. Ministry Staff will work in accordance with the Ministry and Staff Handbooks.

Section 2- Hiring and Terminating

- The Elder Team is responsible for all staff hires. They may appoint an advisory team as needed. The advisory team may include elders, current ministry staff, and congregational members as appropriate.
- The Elder Team will present full- and part-time ministry staff hires to the congregation. Recommendations for full-time lead minister (or like position) need an 80% approval vote of members (18 years or older) present. No absentee voting.
- The Elder Team may terminate any staff position.

Section 3- BCC Staff Organization

The Elder Team will determine the functional organization of the Staff, including reporting and accountability relationships as defined in the BCC Ministry Handbook and Staff Handbook.

Section 4- If Ministry staff is hired in a current ministry area, existing ministry team will end and the Elder Team and staff may organize an advisory team.

Section 5- Vacated Ministry Staff Positions may be filled on an interim basis at the discretion of the Elder Team.

Article 7

Ministry Teams

Section 1- The Elder Team may organize or reorganize teams and team leaders to fulfill particular ministry responsibilities. These teams may include staff and/or volunteers. These teams can be long or short term in nature.

Section 2- Qualifications for Ministry Team Leaders are to be in line with Biblical teaching and examples of servants/ministers ("deacon")

Section 3- For the purposes of communication and collaboration, the ministry team leaders, staff, and Elder Team will meet on a regular basis defined in the BCC Ministry Handbook.

Section 4- Removal of Ministry Team Leader

The Elder Team may at any point remove or change a Ministry Team Leader on the basis of not meeting qualifications or the ability to fulfill team leadership responsibilities.

Article 8

Budget

Section 1- Fiscal Year

The Fiscal Year for Blendville Christian Church will be January 1 through December 31 of the following calendar year.

Section 2- Building the Budget

- The Finance Ministry Team will be responsible for submitting a proposed budget to the Elder Team nine (9) weeks before the start of the fiscal year.
- Ministry Staff and Ministry Team Leaders need to submit budget requests for the next fiscal year twelve (12) weeks before the start of the next fiscal year.

Section 3- Budget Approval

- The proposed budget will be available to the members of BCC approximately 6 weeks before the start of the fiscal year.
- There will be a membership meeting approximately 3 weeks before the start of the fiscal year for members (18 years or older) to vote on the proposed budget. The meeting will be announced on the two Sundays preceding the meeting.

Section 4- Budget Contingency

- In the event that the budget does not pass by majority vote of BCC Members, a revised budget proposal will be available within two weeks from membership meeting.
- Another membership meeting will be held one week after revised budget is made available to vote on revised budget.
- The revision process will repeat until a budget can be approved.
- If a budget is not approved by the beginning of the fiscal year, the approved amount from the previous budget will be in place until a new budget can be approved.

Article 9

Church Property

Section 1-Purchase and Sale of Real Property

The Elder Team may appoint a team of BCC members to manage transactions of real property.

Section 2- Maintaining Church Facility

A Plant Operations Ministry Team will be responsible for maintaining the church facilities in cooperation with the Ministry Staff and Elder Team.

Section 3- Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of Blendville Christian Church, any remaining assets will be distributed to another Independent Christian Church or to an Affiliated Ministry, as overseen by the Elder Team.

Article 10

Amendments and modifications of the Bylaws

Section 1- Changes to these Bylaws may be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the members (18 years or older) at a meeting announced for the purpose.

(December 4, 2016)