

RIVERDALE BAPTIST CHURCH

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

**As Revised and Adopted
October 13th 2015**

RIVERDALE BAPTIST CHURCH

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Constitution:

1. The name of the Church shall be Riverdale Baptist Church.
2. The operations of Riverdale Baptist Church are to be carried out mainly in Whitehorse, Yukon and surrounding area.
3. The main objectives of Riverdale Baptist Church are:
 - 3.1 the maintenance and promotion of public worship and the preaching of the Gospel;
 - 3.2 the study of the Bible as the guide to right living and the instruction of the members in the Christian faith; (The doctrinal and theological teachings and beliefs of the Riverdale Baptist Church are outlined further in the church's Statement of Faith; Vision Statement; and Church Covenant.)
 - 3.3 the promotion and advancement of Christ's Kingdom through a vigorous program of evangelism, and the support of domestic and international missions;
 - 3.4 the help of the oppressed and the support of such causes as God makes the concern of the congregation;
 - 3.5 the furtherance of Christian fellowship;
 - 3.6 to affirm its affiliation with Baptist Union of Western Canada, Baptist Federation of Canada, Canadian Baptist Ministries, Baptist World Alliance and their successors.
 - 3.7 religious and charitable.
4. Riverdale Baptist Church shall not carry on any trade, industry or business.
5. The requisite majority needed to pass changes to the Constitution is 75% of the resident active membership of Riverdale Baptist Church.

By-Laws:

1. MEMBERSHIP:

1.1. Terms of admission for members: Having met one of the following conditions for membership the candidate shall be interviewed by at least two Elders and affirmed by the Elders Board.

1.1.1. Persons may be admitted into the membership of the Riverdale Baptist Church upon public confession of faith and having then received Believer's Baptism. Persons may be accepted as candidates for baptism following instruction from the Pastor and an interview with at least two deacons/elders. The mode of baptism administered by this church shall be by immersion. Baptism by this church will confer membership in Riverdale Baptist Church to a person so baptized unless that person declines membership.

1.1.2. Transfer of membership may be made from a sister church within the Baptist Federation of Canada through a letter of transfer from the sister church.

1.1.3. Persons who have previously received Believer's Baptism may be required to complete a program of instruction and shall be required to give a public confession of faith to the membership.

1.1.4. Persons who have received Believer's Baptism by a method other than immersion shall not be required to be re-baptized in order to be received into membership. They shall, however, be subject to all other conditions.

1.1.5. If the believer has been baptized in some other mode than that practiced by Riverdale Baptist Church, and is assured that their baptism meets biblical teaching, and Riverdale Baptist Church can assent to that assurance, then Riverdale Baptist Church would honour that believer's understanding and would welcome them into membership.

1.1.6. Others who regularly attend but who have not become formal members shall be known as adherents.

1.2. Rights of Members: A member, whose name is on the active roll and who is at least 18 years of age, shall be entitled to vote at any meeting of the church that has been called according to the by-laws.

1.3. Obligations of Members:

1.3.1. To support the goals and objectives of the Riverdale Baptist Church through regular givings and by active involvement in communion, church activities, programs, business meetings and functions.

1.3.2. To uplift and assist fellow Christians in their daily lives as outlined in the Church's Statement of Faith, Covenant and Vision Statement.

1.4. Dismissal of Members: Persons may be dismissed from membership by the action of the Church in any of the following ways:

1.4.1. By letter of transfer to another church;

1.4.2. By deletion of the member's name at his or her own request;

1.4.3. By decision of the members when discipline as spelled out in article 1.5 has failed; (A 75% majority of the resident active membership is needed at a duly called meeting of the church to make this decision.)

1.4.4. Members may be placed on an inactive membership list at their own request or by a decision of the Elders if a member does not have active involvement in communion, church activities, programs, business meetings and functions as per 1.3.1.

1.4.5. Persons placed on the inactive membership list not through their request are to be immediately notified by the Elders of this action. Persons on the inactive membership list are moved to the active membership list through notification to the Church Clerk by the Elders.

1.5. Discipline and Disputes of Members and Adherents:

1.5.1. If a member or adherent is absent from the church and the Lord's table for more than six months continuously without explanation, their name shall be brought up at the next Elders' meeting and a visitation committee appointed to enquire as to the cause of the absence, and to report to the church.

1.5.2. All cases of discipline shall be dealt with according to the direction given in Matt. 18:15-17. That is: One member will approach the member or adherent in question. If the concern is not dealt with to the satisfaction of both parties, a group of no more than two other members shall address the matter with both parties. If the concern is still not dealt with, the matter shall be brought before a duly called meeting of the church as referred to in section 1.4.3. The resolution of such a meeting shall be final.

1.5.3. Any dispute concerning the rights of a member shall be dealt with according to the direction given in Matt. 18:15-17. That is: The member whose rights are in dispute shall have the right of appeal to a duly called meeting of the church. The member shall present his dispute at this meeting and the church will decide by resolution either in favour or not in favour of the disputing member. A 75% majority of resident active members is needed to make this decision. The decision of the church shall be final.

2. MEETINGS

- 2.1. The Annual General Meeting of the Riverdale Baptist Church shall be held during the first quarter of the fiscal year at which time the accounts are reviewed, reports are tabled by committees, and initiatives for the year presented and discussed. Notification of this meeting must be given at least two Sundays in advance at the regular church service.**
- 2.2. The fiscal year shall be September 1 through August 31st.**
- 2.3. There shall be quarterly meetings held with the AGM constituting the first quarterly meeting. The fourth quarterly meeting shall include the election of officers and members of the various committees and approval of budget for the coming fiscal year. Notification of these meetings must be given at least two Sundays in advance at the regular church service.**
- 2.4. Special meetings may be called to deal with special issues. These meeting may be called by the Deacons'/Elders' Board or on the written request of any five members. A minimum of two Sundays notice must be given for the special meeting.**
- 2.5. A quorum shall consist of 20% of the resident active members, legal voting age and older, and is required for all duly notified and called meetings at which decisions by the congregation are required. When a quorum cannot be met the items requiring congregational decision will be deferred to the next quarterly meeting.**
- 2.6. The agenda for all duly called business meetings of the church shall be set by the Moderator and Deacons' Board and posted at least two weeks in advance. Any changes to the agenda must be submitted to the Moderator of the church at least three days prior to the meeting. For any changes that propose a substantial impact on either the finances or programs of the church, the Moderator will have the discretionary power to redirect such proposals to the appropriate committee for consideration until the next duly called meeting.**
- 2.7. The need for and method of alternatives to in-person voting shall be determined by the Deacons' Board at least 14 days in advance of such a vote and shall be verifiably limited to resident active members, legal voting age and older.**

3. CHURCH ORGANIZATION

- 3.1. The Pastoral Staff shall consist of the Senior Pastor and the Associate Pastor: The Senior Pastor shall be the chief pastoral leader of the church, a member of the Board of Elders and ex-officio to all other boards and committees. The Associate Pastor shall report to the Senior Pastor and shall be a member of the Board of Elders and ex-officio to all other boards and committees. Other pastoral staff may be added from time to time.**

3.2. The Officers and Boards of the church shall be as follows:

- 3.2.1. The chief executive officer of the church shall be the Church Moderator.**
- 3.2.2. The signing officers of the church are the members of the Board of Deacons, the Church Clerk and the Treasurer. The Board of Deacons may, from time to time, determine how and by whom any particular document is to be signed.**
- 3.2.3. The Board of Elders shall be a body of dedicated people who are members of the church. Elders will be appointed for an indefinite term.**
- 3.2.4. The Board of Deacons shall be Church members. The board shall consist of the Church Moderator, Deacon of Administration, Deacon of Christian Education, Deacon of Church Life: Adult, Deacon of Church Life: Youth, Deacon of Outreach and Deacon of Worship. The board may include vice Deacons as support for any as deemed prudent for continuity and to share the work. Deacons' positions will be elected for a two year term with half to retire annually on a rotation basis. A retiring Deacon shall be eligible for immediate re-election. Deacon positions are open to males and females.**
- 3.2.5. Committees of the church shall be instituted from time to time, some permanent and some ad hoc, reporting and answering to and having their mandate and leadership from the Deacons' Board. Names of Boards, committees and their duties are listed below.**

4. CHURCH ADMINISTRATION:

4.1. Formation and Duties of the Church Officers and Boards.

- 4.1.1. Church Moderator: The Moderator, a member of the church, shall work in close liaison with the Pastor(s), Elders and the Deacons' Board for the purpose of setting agendas for all congregational business meetings and Deacons' Board meetings. The Moderator, or designate, shall preside at all congregational business meetings and Deacons' Board meetings. The Moderator shall provide liaison between the Elders' Board, Deacons' Board and Pastoral Search Chair & Committee and shall supervise a Constitution & Bylaws Chair & Committee. The Moderator shall coordinate and supervise the work of the Church Clerk and Vice Moderator.**
 - 4.1.1.1. Church Clerk: The Church Clerk, a member of the church, shall take the minutes of all Deacons' Board and Church General Meetings and provide the Moderator of the Church with a written summary subsequent to each meeting, highlighting all decisions and motions; shall keep records of Church membership, adding to or deleting from it as directed by the Deacons' Board or Board of Elders, including requests for transfer of membership to another church; shall manage all correspondence addressed to the church clerk, or as directed by the Deacons' Board or Board of Elders, and to attend to such clerical matters as required by the Church; and**

shall maintain, in the church building, an accessible records file and shall be deemed to have full voice and vote at Deacons' Board Meetings.

- 4.1.1.2. Vice Moderator: In the absence of the Moderator the Vice Moderator assumes the responsibilities of the Moderator as identified in 4.1.1. The Vice Moderator is to provide support to the Moderator and Deacons Board as deemed necessary.**
- 4.1.2. Board of Elders: The chief duty of the Elders, along with the Pastor(s) shall be to provide for the spiritual oversight of the church. They shall visit with the individuals of the congregation and shall identify any persons of the church or community who need material assistance, and direct the use of the benevolence funds of the church for the relief of such people. They shall do all within their power to assist those who have spiritual needs. The Elders shall officiate at the Lord's Supper. They shall interview and confirm all candidates for baptism or membership. The following scriptures shall determine the qualifications and duties of the Elders - 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-3. (See also bylaw 3.1)**
- 4.1.3. Deacons' Board: The Deacons' Board shall provide the co-ordination of the various activities and programs of the church; the co-ordination of the work of the various committees of the church; the attending to the routine business matters of the church; the general oversight of the financial matters of the church, including the annual preparation of the church budget. In the absence of an Elders' Board, the Deacons' Board assumes all of the duties ascribed to the Elders' Board. The following scriptures shall determine the qualifications and duties of the Deacons - 1 Timothy 3:8-13;**
 - 4.1.3.1. The Deacons' Board shall meet twice monthly, or as needed.**
 - 4.1.3.2. The Deacons' Board shall have the authority to spend up to 5% of the annual operating budget without referral to the church.**
 - 4.1.3.3. The Deacons' Board shall have the power to strike other committees as it sees fit. The heads of these committees shall be Deacons from the Board or persons appointed by the Deacons' Board or elected by the congregation. The Deacons' Board shall be able to co-opt persons to add to the Board as need arises subject to approval by the next annual general meeting.**
 - 4.1.3.4. Vacancies occurring in any of the above offices or committees, except for Pastor, during the course of the year shall be filled by appointment of the Deacons' Board and reported to the church.**
- 4.1.4. Nominating Committee chaired by the Chair of the Elders Board or designate, reflecting the diversity of the congregation shall be established by the Elders and Deacons Boards as a standing committee tasked with the responsibility to seek out and identify nominees for the positions of**

Officers, Board and Committee members and other such positions as the boards may identify.

4.1.5. Search Committees: When the need arises to call Pastoral staff or lay leadership in support of the Pastoral staff, the Church shall nominate a Committee as directed under the Search Committee Policy.

4.1.6. The duties of the Pastoral Search Committee shall be:

4.1.6.1. to investigate the merit of every person under consideration in regard to personal character, education, ministerial record, and preaching ability;

4.1.6.2. to determine the individual's fitness for the pastorate of this church;

4.1.6.3. to declare their recommendation to the membership. A vote shall be held prior to extending a call.

4.1.7. The call itself shall be extended only after a meeting of the church members. At least 75% of the resident active members must vote in favour of the call.

4.1.8. When the church extends a call to a pastor, the church shall make clear the financial support and employment benefits it will provide. These shall be in written form and specify the salary package (including all cost shared benefits), housing allowance, holiday periods and other conditions as the parties may require. The general duties that will be required of the Pastor will also be set forth in this document. This document will be updated annually by the Deacons' Board to reflect changes in the financial package and/or other portions of the agreement.

4.1.9. The employment relationship may be terminated by either the pastor or the church upon a minimum of 90 days notice unless otherwise mutually agreed. The Pastor shall serve notice to the Deacons' Board.

4.1.10. The dismissal by the church of a pastor shall be determined only after a meeting of the church members. At least 75% of the resident active members must vote in favour of dismissal.

5. MISCELLANEOUS:

5.1. There shall be no remuneration for any position to which a member or adherent of the church has been elected.

5.2. The members may by special resolution remove an officer before the expiration of the officer's term of office, and may elect a successor to complete the term of office.

5.3. Riverdale Baptist Church does not have a seal.

5.4. The Deacons' Board has the power to borrow up to 10% of the annual operating budget. Any debt load above this amount must be approved at a duly called meeting of the congregation.

5.5. Financial Statement:

5.5.1. The members shall in each year appoint a professional accountant who shall review and sign the financial statements of the Church which are to be laid before the annual general meeting of the Church.

5.5.2. The members of the Church may waive the appointment of a professional accountant by passing a motion to that effect at the Annual General Meeting.

5.5.3. The membership may request at an AGM that a review committee be appointed to carry out an in-house review of church financial statements and their findings to be reported at the next regular business meeting. The review committee is to be appointed at the AGM. Membership of this committee will consist of at least two resident active members with business experience.

5.6. The alteration of by-laws may only be done through a properly notified intent given not less than 21 days prior to the meeting for the purpose of passing a special resolution.

5.7. The requisite majority needed to pass changes to by-laws is 50% + one of the resident active members.

5.8. Policies and guidelines may only be amended by the Deacons Board making specific recommendations to the Elders Board and approval of the recommendation by the Elders Board. The Elders may request changes to the specific proposal be made by the Deacons Board as a condition of obtaining Elders Board approval but the Elders Board may not, on their own accord, change policies or guidelines except in regard to their own processes and procedures.

5.9. Books and Records:

5.9.1. All books and records of Riverdale Baptist Church will be stored in the church.

5.9.2. Any member may inspect the records and books at a time convenient to the member and the Deacons' Board with at least two weeks notice being given.

5.10. Upon dissolution of the Riverdale Baptist Church, the assets of the church will be dispersed to the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada.