BY-LAWS OF BEACH COMMUNITY CHURCH
Approved by BCC Finance Council, December 12, 2020

VISION:

To be a community outreach, serving God by satisfying spiritual and physical needs with the love of God and the foundation of His Word.

MISSION:

To share the message of God's love, making disciples through Christian education to increase understanding of the Bible and comprehensively support men, women, youth, and children of our BCC family, as well as spiritual assistance to local communities in our preaching and worship services

WE ARE COMMITTED TO....

1. Providing Bible based church services to the local communities.
2. Offering Christian education, discipleship and emotional support to the men, women, youth and children of our BCC family.
3. Being a community outreach to the poor and needy, to meet both spiritual and physical needs with God's love.
4. Sharing the message of God's love and increase the understanding of His message.

THE CHURCH COUNCIL :

The council is a body of elected church members who oversee the financial operations of Beach Community Church. God provides people with a diversity of backgrounds, gifts, and perspectives. Through this plurality of leadership, and the mutual respect among its members, God's direction for BCC can be more reliably ascertained. The following items describe the structure of the council.

1. The council will consist of a membership of 5 to 7 individuals, including the pastor, chairperson, vice chair, and council secretary
2. New council members are generally nominated by the existing council, but may also be nominated by any church member. Such candidates must be vetted by the existing council, and if approved, announced to the congregation during a regular worship service, with a vote taken at the next week's service. Proxy voting is permitted for members that are unable to attend. A 2/3 majority vote is required to approve a new council member.
3. The council member will serve for a 3 year term.
4. The council member may be re-elected for a maximum of one additional term (total of 6 years).

5. The pastor will be an ongoing member of the church council and will not be rotated off. Other pastors do not serve on the council.
6. Council elections will occur during the annual church meeting. Special elections can occur any time during the year to fill any vacancies.
7. A council member may be removed by a 2/3 majority vote of the council.
8. Any major decision affecting the church property or finances that is not included in the approved budget must come before the congregation for a vote and be approved by a 2/3 majority vote.

Qualifications for church council members:

1. Has been a frequent, consistent attendee in good standing at BCC for at least one year.
2. Can share a personal testimony regarding his/her relationship with Jesus Christ.
3. Affirms the mission and vision statements and the core beliefs of BCC.
4. Is mature in the Christian faith.
5. Demonstrates commitment to God-given servant-leadership.
6. Demonstrates interest in volunteering to participate in ministry.
7. Continually seeks knowledge of the Word of God.
8. Has a spirit of unity, does not create divisiveness, and speaks the truth in love.
9. Has successfully been vetted through the same evaluation used for deacons as described in 1 Tim 3:8-13

ROLE OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL:

1. Manages the operations, maintenance and fiduciary responsibilities of BCC.
2. Reviews by-laws.
3. Represents the members of the congregation.
4. Relays any suggestions from the church members to the council.
5. Prepares the annual budget which includes all salaries. Present a summary of this budget to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting.
6. Monitors church expenditures.
7. Oversees the safety of the facilities and grounds.
8. Develops a means of assessing the pastor's performance as well as determining all salaries of church employees including the pastors.

9. Assigns one of its members to act as a liaison to the treasurer to convey council approved financial decisions, unless the treasurer is a council member.
10. Ensures that BCC complies with all applicable laws and regulations of Costa Rica regarding hiring practices, business records, financial reporting, and taxes.
11. Assess the impact of changes in Costa Rica laws and regulations on the church operations and make any necessary changes. It may from time to time engage outside legal counsel to assist in these efforts.
12. Approves all pastoral candidates recommended by the senior pastor through a unanimous vote. Presents approved pastoral candidates to the congregation for a church vote.

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

1. Officers are annually appointed by the Church Council during the first Council meeting of the fiscal year.
2. The offices of President, Vice President, and Council Secretary must be held by members of the church council. Additional offices including the Treasurer, Financial Secretaries and other offices required by Costa Rican law must be appointed by the council but may or may not be filled by members of the council. All officers should be nominated as early in the fiscal year as possible.
3. Officers must also be vetted against the requirements for deacons as described in 1 Tim 3:8-13

Church council meetings:

1. The Council will meet monthly or more as needed to talk about the future direction of the congregation so that the meetings and work of the leadership team supports the vision.
    1. A quorum (80% majority) is required for the Council to officially conduct business.
    2. An established written agenda must be developed for each meeting
    3. The council secretary must take minutes of each meeting. These are kept as official records of the church.
    4. Follow the process of making motions, seconding motions, and a voice vote of in favor or not in favor.

Nominations for Council Members:

Nominations for council members may be offered by any member in good standing. These nominations will be reviewed by the existing council using the Biblical criteria for deacons. After this vetting process is complete, a list of candidates will be brought forward for vote to the congregation. This list must be presented to the congregation at least two weeks before the congregational vote takes place.

Council duties with respect to the Annual Budget:

1. The council will prepare a proposed annual budget and present it to the congregation. Comments will be taken and recorded by the Council Secretary for consideration by the council.
2. The proposed annual budget will be voted on by the congregation at the annual meeting.
3. The fiscal year for Beach Community Church will be January 1 through December 31.
4. The treasurer will present to the council the proposed annual budget. Recommendations, suggestions or comments from the officers or the church body are requested no later than November 1 of each year.
5. After review and approval by the council, the chairperson will present the Council's recommended budget to the congregation for approval no later than December 1 of each year. A majority vote is required to pass the budget.
6. Comments and suggestions will be taken in writing and considered by the Council.

Amending The By-Laws:

1. The bylaws can be amended only through the unanimous recommendation of the church council and a 2/3 majority vote of the congregation.
2. Bylaws are made available to all church members. Ideas and suggestions will be considered by the council when submitted in writing and acknowledgment of same shall be made by the recipient council member within one week.

CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP:

1. Anyone can be a member who lives in the area or visits with any frequency, who calls BCC their spiritual home church.

2. A member must be in agreement with the mission, vision and values of Beach Community Church.
3. For purposes of congregational voting, the board may establish guidelines to ensure that all voters meet the membership requirements defined above.

PASTORAL DUTIES:

BCC has the following pastoral positions:

- Senior Pastor : This pastor is in charge of all pastoral functions.
- Lead Pastors : One lead pastor will do the primary preaching in the English congregation. The other lead pastor will do the same for the Spanish speaking congregation.
- Associate Pastors : Recommended to the council by the senior pastor as required.

The pastors, as with all employees of the church, must have permission to be paid according to Costa Rica law through residency, citizenship, a government issued work permit, or missionary status with a legally recognized agency. The following will be their responsibilities:

1. Prepare for regular worship services.
2. Participate in Bible studies as appropriate. Work alongside the study leaders.
3. Participate in, and /or lead Life Groups (i.e. small group classes) as needed.
4. The Senior Pastor will be a member of the council and coordinate the agenda with the chairperson. Any other elected church non-pastoral member may sit on the council.
5. Keep the council up to date with program proposals via coordination through the senior pastor. They will also will provide continued updates in the weekly newsletter.
6. Lead out with discipleship throughout all the ministries of the church. They will encourage people in the congregation to use their spiritual gifts and pursue their passion in ministry.
7. Follow up with newcomers by emailing, calling and visiting them when possible.
8. Develop relationships with the congregational members.
9. Follow up with members who are absent or ill by calling and/or visiting them.
10. Pray, counsel and encourage the lonely, discouraged and hurting.
11. Meet with and encourage others in their ministry by providing leadership and counsel as needed.
12. Perform weddings, memorial services, baby/child dedications, believer baptisms and communion.
13. Assist with the special events coordinator with outreach programs during the calendar year.
14. Lead pastors will communicate weekly.

15. Appoint elders and deacons as needed after consultation with the senior pastor.
16. The selection of associate pastors will start through senior pastor recommendation, require unanimous council approval, and 80% or higher BCC congregational vote (in that order). All pastors must meet the same qualifications as the Elders.

Note that all duties above may be delegated to other elders or deacons as the senior pastors deems appropriate.

CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL:

1. The chairperson of the council shall be elected by members of the council following each annual meeting.
2. The chairperson is responsible for scheduling regular and special meetings of the council, prepares the agenda for the council meeting with the pastor and other members as requested, and presides at all meetings of the council. If the chairperson is not available the vice chairperson shall preside.
3. The chairperson can be the liaison for seeking legal council or can appoint a member to be the liaison on behalf of the church association.
4. The chairperson is responsible for updating the legal book that is kept with church attorneys.
5. The chairperson is responsible to see that two individuals (separate from the pastors) are listed on the bank's authorization signature card.

CHURCH TREASURER:

1. The treasurer does not have to be a member of the council but will be nominated and voted on by the council.
2. The treasurer serves as the financial officer of the church.
3. All bank accounts will be under the name of ASSOC. IGLESIA DE COMUNIDAD CHRISTIANA DE LA PLAYA
4. The treasurer will be in communication with our stateside 501-3C donation/tax exempt account contact, Assisting Christian Individuals (ACI) https://aciint.org/ministries/
5. The treasurer will be responsible for the quarterly transfer of funds from ACI to BCC.
6. The treasurer or other signer on the bank account will be responsible for paying salaries and other expenses identified in the budget on the 15th and 30th of each month.

7. The treasurer or other signer on the bank account will be responsible for purchasing all the items and supplies for the operation and maintenance of the church.
8. The treasurer or other signer on the bank account will be responsible for paying church utilities and CCSS payments for appropriate employees.
9. The treasurer will receive authorization for making payments through one council member who is so designated by the council.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY:

The position of financial secretary will be appointed by the council having the following responsibilities:

1. Choose an individual to assist each time an offering is conducted. Anyone attending the service that is not the treasurer, or related to the financial secretary or treasurer may be chosen as the assistant.
2. Count all contributed funds immediately or as soon as possible after the offering has been conducted.
3. Instruct the assistant to independently count the same funds.
4. Verify that the two counts are identical.
5. Record the total on a financial giving form approved by the board, along with the date and applicable worship service or event. Both the financial secretary and the assistant will sign the form.
6. If a donor has given funds toward an approved designated fund, record that amount along with the donor's name in the space provided on the form.
7. Protect the offering and deposit it at a local BCR bank crediting the BCC account. This should be done on the first day the bank is open following the offering.
8. If necessary, the council may appoint more than one financial secretary. This may be needed to support the multiple services that BCC conducts, or to be sure that the responsibilities can be covered during absences.

ELDERS

Elders will be appointed by the senior pastor for the purpose of assisting or extending BCC ministry as envisioned by the senior pastor. An Elder's qualification will be based on the senior pastor's evaluation of his meeting the standard described in 1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4, James 5:13-15, and Acts 20:28. Elders do not carry any authoritative power, nor do they

form an authoritative board in and of themselves. Rather, they are chosen as spiritually mature members of the body whose influence is based on a good reputation, respect at BCC and the community. Elders may be called on to support the senior pastor or other pastors in the following ways:

- Tend to the general welfare of BCC
- Spiritual oversight: guarding spiritual aspects of our statement of beliefs in regard to false doctrines and disunity
- Help disciple, teach, serve alongside the pastors, encourage, provide insight and accountability
- Teach Bible studies or other life groups
- Provide pulpit supply when the pastor is absent
- Engage in spiritual counseling
- Brainstorm and pray with the senior pastor regarding important spiritual decisions under consideration

All pastors so designated by the council are considered to be elders. Lay elders may serve on the council if and only if they are selected to the nomination, vetting, and church election process described earlier in this document.

DEACONS & DEACONESSES

Deacons and deaconesses are appointed by the senior pastor to lead in specific areas of ministry. Areas of service may include but are not limited to the following:

- Service-oriented ministry: oversee BCC's grounds and facilities.
- Benevolence: take care of and visit the widows, orphans and the poor
- Finances: serve on the BCC finance council board
- Welcome team: Serve as ushers
- Communication : Maintain BCC website and providing audio-visual support.
- Community Outreach : Assist with community outreaches and BCC events
- Availability: Help in a variety of ways to serve.

A deacon's or deaconess's qualification will be based on the senior pastor's evaluation of his or her meeting the standard described in 1 Timothy 3:8–13. Deacons / deaconesses do not carry any authoritative power, nor do they form an authoritative board in and of themselves.

SUMMARY

It is the design of these by-laws to provide clarification of various roles and ministry areas of BCC. We believe that BCC should follow a New Testament model to the best of our ability. Granted, some things have changed since the 1st century and such changes have influenced these by-laws. As an example, we believe that the role of Apostles has passed into history, and consequently that office is no longer appropriate in our church organization. We have pastors and teachers that need the support of elders and deacons. We have made these roles to be appointments of the senior pastor, consistent with Acts 20:17,28.

We also believe that since much more is said in The New Testament about the qualifications of leaders than about church government, the form of such government is under the choice of the church. The past 2,000 years of both church and secular history have demonstrated risks associated with autocratic systems. Therefore, we wish to maintain checks & balances in our leadership through the church elected council. This provides a democratic influence in all church leadership. We feel it is imperative to maintain servant-leadership principles, not permitting leaders that "rule" or "lord over" anyone in the congregation (Matt 23:1-11, Matt 20:25-28). We are all brothers, sisters and servants.