

WINNEMUCCA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Constitution – By Laws 2016

Article I-Name

The name of this organization (church) shall be “Winnemucca Christian Fellowship, Inc.”

Article II-Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to men that they might be saved through faith (evangelism) and to train believers in living which pleases God (discipleship) by providing for public worship, teaching the Bible, and promoting Christian fellowship.

Article III-Affiliation

This church shall be unrelated to any denominational body (non-denominational).

Article IV-Doctrine

The doctrinal position of this church shall be as follows:

A. We believe in the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments as inspired by God;¹ inerrant in the original writings;² and that they are the supreme and final authority in faith and life.³

B. We believe in one God,⁴ eternally existing in three persons⁵- Father, Son⁶, and Holy Spirit.⁷

C. We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God⁸ and fully man.⁹ We believe Jesus was born of a virgin¹⁰ and lived a sinless life.¹¹

¹2Tim 3:16; ²Pet 1:21; ³Matt 5:18; John 17:17; ⁴Acts 18:28; 26:22; Rom 15:4; ⁵Deut 6:4; John 1:14; ⁶Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; ⁷Heb 1:1-3; ⁸Acts 5:3-4; ⁹John 1:1,18; ¹⁰Php 2:5-8; ¹¹Luke 1:31-35; ¹¹Heb 4:15.

D. We believe that man was created in the image of God¹²; that he sinned¹³, and thereby incurred both physical and spiritual death, which is separation from God;¹⁴ that all human beings are born with a sinful nature,¹⁵ causing them to sin in thought, word, and deed and bringing them under the condemnation of God.¹⁶

E. We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice;¹⁷ and that all who believe¹⁸ in Him are justified¹⁹ solely on the ground of His shed blood.²⁰

F. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of Jesus,²¹ in His ascension into Heaven,²² and in His present ministry there for us as High Priest²³ and Advocate.²⁴

G. We believe in a future physical return of Jesus Christ.²⁵

H. We believe that all who trust the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, God's provision for sin, are born again of the Holy Spirit,²⁶ and thereby become children of God.²⁷ We believe that the Holy Spirit baptizes every believer once, at the moment of conversion, and indwells him thereafter.²⁸ We believe the Holy Spirit enables each believer for service.²⁹ We believe that each believer is filled with the Holy Spirit as he yields control of his life to Christ.³⁰ We believe the evidence of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit is the fruit of the Spirit in the believer's life demonstrated by living which pleases God.³¹

I. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both believers and unbelievers,³² the everlasting blessing of all who have trusted Christ as Savior³³ and the everlasting, conscious punishment of all who have not.³⁴

¹² Gen 1:26-27; ¹³ Gen 3:1-7; Psa 14:1-3; Rom 3:23; 5:12; ¹⁴ Gen 2:17; 5:5; Rom 6:23; Rev 20:12-15; ¹⁵ Psa 51:5; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:10-19; 8:6-8; Eph 2:1-3; ¹⁶ John 3:16-18; 5:28-29; ¹⁷ Rom 5:6-8; 8:32; 1Tim 2:5-6; 1Pet 1:3; ¹⁸ John 3:16; Eph 2:8-9; ¹⁹ Rom 5:8-10; 2Cor 5:21; ²⁰ Lev 17:11; Matt 26:28; Heb 9:22,26-28; ²¹ Matt 28:5-7; 1Cor 15:3-8; 1 Pet 1:3; ²² Acts 1:9; Eph 1:20-22; ²³ Rom 8:34; Heb 7:24-25; 9:24; ²⁴ 1Jn 2:1-2; ²⁵ John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; Php 3:20; 1Thes 4:13-18; Tit 2:11-14; Rev 22:20; ²⁶ John 3:6; Tit 3:5; Jms 1:18; 1Pet 1:23; ²⁷ John 1:12-13; ²⁸ Rom 8:9; 1Cor 12:13; Eph 1:13-14; ²⁹ Rom 12:3-8; 1Cor 12:7-10, 28-30; Eph 4:11; 1Pet 4:11; ³⁰ Eph 5:18; ³¹ Gal 5:19-26; ³² Dan 12:2; Luke 16:19-26; 1Cor 15:42; ³³ 1Cor

- J. We Believe that the purpose of the Church, the universal body comprised of all believers and its expression in individual congregations, is evangelism and discipleship.³⁵

Article V-Government

This church shall be governed by a board of elders elected by the church, the body of believers of whom it is composed. The board of elders shall make all decisions unless otherwise stated in this constitution. (see Article XI, Section 2:4, E)

Article VI-Officers

The officers of this church shall be the pastor(s), elders, deacons, treasurer, and financial secretary. Other officers may be selected to meet needs.

Article VII-Membership

Section 1-Because the church of Jesus Christ is composed of all who have trusted God's son for salvation, there shall be no official membership roll maintained for this local church.

Section 2-Those individuals who have expressed personal faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior; who agree with the doctrine and purpose of this church; who determine to live in a manner pleasing to God; and who regularly attend this church, shall be considered members.

Section 3-Those individuals meeting membership criterion (Article VII, Section 2) and who are age sixteen (16) or older shall be allowed to vote on all matters requiring approval of the church (Article XI, Section 2:4, E).

Article VIII-Ordinances

This church shall practice two (2) ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

³⁵Matt 28:19-20; Heb 10:25.

Section 1-Baptism. The mode of baptism practiced by this church shall be immersion. Baptism shall be limited to those individuals who have expressed faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.

Section 2-Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is recognized by this church as a memorial which symbolizes the death of Jesus Christ for mankind's sin. The Lord's Supper shall be open to all who have trusted Christ as their Savior.

Article IX-Church Discipline

Section 1-The board of elders shall remove fellowship from any individual for reason of immoral conduct, sinful practice or false teaching for which he or she does not show repentance. The method prescribed in Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, and Galatians 6:1 shall be used in dealing with such members.

Section 2-The aim of the church discipline is to restore the errant believer to fellowship with the Lord and other believers; to protect the reputation of Christ and the church; and, to warn others of the consequences of sin and false teaching. This action is not taken to punish offenders.

Section 3-The elders shall restore to fellowship any individual disciplined by the church who shows satisfactory evidence of repentance.

Section 4-Any individual removed from fellowship for reason of immoral conduct, sinful practice, or false teaching shall have no right in any business meeting of the church or in its property.

Article X-Business Meetings

Section 1-The board of elders shall meet at least once monthly to conduct church business. Regularly scheduled elders meeting shall be announced to the membership and open to their attendance. The elders may, at their discretion, meet in closed session.

Section 2-An annual church meeting shall be held in April of each year. This meeting shall be scheduled by the board of elders. At this meeting, all boards, committees, and auxiliary organizations shall present a report to the church reviewing the previous year's business/ministry and present plans for future business/ministry.

Section 3-The board of elders may call special meetings of the church to conduct business requiring membership approval (see Article XI, Section 2:4, E). Such meetings shall be announced at least one (1) week in advance. Announcement shall be made in the Sunday morning worship service.

Section 4-Quorums. The presence of fifty (50) percent of board or committee members shall be necessary to establish quorum at any board or committee business meeting.

Article XI-Election and Duties of Officers

Section 1-Pastor

1. Selection of Pastor. A pastor shall be called on recommendation of the board of elders by a vote of the church. His election shall take place at a meeting called by the elders for this purpose. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting shall be necessary for his selection. The pastor's salary shall be determined by the elders in accordance with the approved annual budget for the church.
2. Termination of Pastor. A pastor's term of office may be ended upon thirty (30) days notice by:
 - A. The written resignation of the pastor.
 - B. Action of the church in special meeting by recommendation of the board of elders. Notice of such a meeting and its purpose shall be announced in the morning worship service on the two (2) consecutive Sundays preceding this meeting. The consensus of two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting shall be sufficient to terminate said office.

3. Qualifications of Pastor. The pastor shall be required to meet all qualification for elders (Article XI, Section 2:3).
4. Duties of Pastor. The duties of the pastor shall be preaching and teaching, administering the ordinance of baptism, and the Lord's Supper, exercising pastoral oversight, and taking general care of the spiritual interests of the church. He shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of all boards and committees and shall be under the direct supervision of the board of elders.

Section 2-Elders. The board of elders shall consist of no more that twelve (12) men elected by the church. Elders shall serve a term of office no longer than five (5) consecutive years. Elders may be re-elected to office after one (1) year off the board. Terms of office shall be staggered so that at least one (1) new elder is being selected each year by the congregation.

1. Election of Elders. The selection process for elders shall begin by having the board of elders and deacons serve as a nominating committee. They shall interview prospective nominees to determine each candidate's qualification for service. The elders and deacons shall choose one nominee for each vacancy, and shall, in a meeting called for this purpose, present them to the church for approval.. Notice of such a meeting and its purpose shall be announced in the morning worship service on two (2) consecutive Sundays preceding this meeting. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting shall be necessary for election.
2. Removal of Elders. An elder may be removed from office prior to the expiration of his term, either by the written resignation of the elder or by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at a meeting called for this purpose. Notice of such a meeting and its purpose shall be announced in the morning worship service on the two (2) consecutive Sundays preceding this meeting.
3. Qualifications of Elders. All qualifications for Elders found in1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 apply. The following summary of qualifications is based on these passages. Elders are to be men of proven character. They should typically exhibit the following characteristics:

- A. Exemplary personal life. He should be a Spirit-controlled believer as evidenced by obedience to God's Word and consistent spiritual growth.
 - B. Good reputation. He should be respected in both the church and community.
 - C. Self-controlled. He should not be enslaved to any sinful habits. He should not be given to outburst of anger, passion, or other inappropriate behavior.
 - D. Faithful in family relationships. He should be a loyal and loving husband and father.
 - E. Gentle in dealing with people. He should be able both to confront and to disagree with others in a loving and respectful manner. He must not be quarrelsome and overbearing.
 - F. Not a recent convert. He should be known for Christian maturity.
 - G. Prudent. He should be known for having good judgment. He should be able to evaluate issues wisely. He should put biblical principals above the pressure of special interests.
 - H. He should not be motivated by greed.
 - I. Capable of teaching others. He should have an understanding of the fundamentals of the Christian faith and a growing interest in God's Word. He must agree with the doctrinal statement of the church and be able to explain it to others.
 - J. Hospitable. He should be friendly, able to make others feel welcome and accepted, and willing to open his home as needed. He should not be reclusive or withdrawn.
5. Duties of Elders. The duties and responsibilities of the elder board shall be the following:
- A. They shall oversee the preaching and teaching ministry of the church to insure that nothing contrary to the Word of God is taught or practiced and shall oversee all ministries to assure their effectiveness in fulfilling the purposes of the church.

- B. They shall be responsible for the spiritual care of members, including arrangements for all services, counseling, visitation, and discipline.
- C. They shall act as the administrative body of the church.
- D. They shall meet at least once monthly to conduct church business and privately whenever conditions and situations warrant. Regularly scheduled elders meetings shall be announced to the membership and open to their attendance. The board of elders may, at their discretion, meet in closed session.
- E. They shall hold open meetings with the members to seek approval of any of the following decisions:
 - 1. The buying or selling of any real property.
 - 2. The encumbrance of church property to borrow funds.
 - 3. The change of any part of the church's Doctrinal Statement or Constitution-By Laws.
 - 4. The removal of any elder.
 - 5. The hiring or dismissal of any paid pastoral staff.
 - 6. The final modification and approval of the church's annual budget, as recommended by the board of elders.

Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution-By Laws, a two-thirds (2/3) consensus of voting members in attendance shall be necessary to approve the elders' recommendation.

- F. They shall prepare for presentation to the church annually, a budget of estimated expenses for the upcoming fiscal year. This budget is to be presented to the church for approval. The church fiscal year shall extend from August 1 to the following July 31.
- G. They shall be responsible for the collection of the amounts necessary to maintain the budget and shall expend the same through the treasurer in the interest of the church work and proper maintenance of the church property.
- H. They shall oversee all paid staff and recommend changes when deemed necessary for the good of the church body.
- I. They shall be the custodians of all church property. Property is to be held in the name of the church and no part of the net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any individual.

- J. They shall appoint, aid, and direct the deacon body and its service to the church.
- K. They shall endeavor to seek the opinion and advice of members regarding decisions.
- L. They shall take sole action on a matter only after reaching a unanimous decision. When the board of elders cannot reach a unanimous decision, they may by a majority vote take the matter to the congregation for their decision.

Section 3-Deacons. The deacon body may be comprised of both men and women. They shall be appointed by the board of elders, who shall determine their number according to the needs of the church. They will serve for three year, renewable terms.

- 1. Election of Deacons. The deacon body (hereafter the term “deacon” refers to both deacons and deaconesses) shall be appointed by the board of elders. They shall nominate and interview candidates to determine qualification for service. Those qualified shall be elected to office by the unanimous approval of the board of elders.
- 2. Removal of Deacons. A deacon may be removed from office prior to the expiration of his/her term, either by the written resignation of the deacon or by the unanimous vote of the board of elders.
- 3. Qualifications of Deacons. All qualifications for deacons found in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 apply. The following summary of qualifications is based on this passage. Deacons are to be individuals of proven character. They should typically exhibit the following characteristics:
 - A. Exemplary personal life. They should be Spirit-controlled believers as evidenced by obedience to God’s Word and consistent spiritual growth.
 - B. Dignified. They should understand and be committed to fulfilling God’s will.
 - C. Faithful in speech. Their words should be characterized by truthfulness, consistency, and sincerity. They should be able to keep confidences and should not be known for gossip.
 - D. Self-controlled. They should not be enslaved to any sinful habits.
 - E. They should not be motivated by greed.

- F. Faithful in family relationships. They should be loyal and loving spouses and parents. They should manage their family well.
 - G. Sound in doctrine. They should have an understanding of the fundamentals of the Christian faith and a growing interest in God’s Word. The deacon must understand and be in full agreement with the doctrinal statement of the church.
4. Duties of the Deacon. The duties and responsibilities of the deacon body shall be the following:
- A. They shall be responsible for the administration of the family care and indigent care ministries, including the food closet and the “Heart Fund.” They will work with the pastor to identify those legitimately needing assistance and determine how the church can help.
 - B. They are responsible for the preparation and service of the Lord's Supper.
 - C. They are responsible for the maintenance of the church’s physical plant, including the scheduling and administration of church work days.
 - D. They are to serve with the board of elders as a nominating committee whenever an elder selection is required.
 - E. They are to be responsive to the needs of the church. Special needs may arise and the deacon body may be asked by the pastor or board of elders to take responsibility for duties not specified above.

Section 4-Treasurer. It shall be the responsibility of the treasurer to assist the board of elders in the maintenance of the financial matters of the church by overseeing the day to day financial affairs. The treasurer shall be accountable to the board of elders and shall serve a two (2) year, renewable term of office.

1. Appointment of the Treasurer. The treasurer shall be appointed by the board of elders.
2. Duties of the Treasurer. The duties and responsibilities of the treasurer shall be the following:

- A. He/she shall keep the financial books and maintain bank accounts of the church.
- B. He/she shall make timely payment of accounts payable.
- C. He/she shall prepare a financial report at the end of each month for submission to the board of elders and an annual financial report for submission to the church at its annual meeting.
- D. He/she shall maintain the church's budget and, at the end of each fiscal year, assist the board of elders in the preparation of the following year's budget.

Section 5-Financial Secretary. It shall be the responsibility of the financial secretary to assist the treasurer in the maintenance of the financial matters of the church by seeing that all contributions are properly collected, counted, recorded, and deposited into church accounts. The financial secretary shall be accountable to the board of elders and shall serve a two (2) year, renewable term of office.

1. Appointment of the Financial Secretary. The financial secretary shall be appointed by the board of elders.
2. Duties of the Financial Secretary. The duties and responsibilities of the financial secretary shall be the following:
 - A. He/she shall receive all offerings and shall assure that cash donations have been counted, recorded, and verified.
 - B. He/she shall weekly count and record contributions, make deposits to church accounts, and report total general fund and designated giving to the treasurer.
 - C. He/she shall maintain a record of annual giving for each member of the church. A statement of giving shall annually be prepared for and made available to each member for tax purposes. These records are to be confidential. They shall be revealed only to the contributor.

Article XII-Dissolution

Should it ever be necessary for this church to disband, all real and personal property or proceeds from its sale shall be designated to work(s) consistent with the stated purpose of Winnemucca Christian Fellowship (Article II).

Approved by Community Bible Church and Winnemucca Christian Fellowship July 14, 1991.

“Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and there be any praise, think on these things.” (Philippians 4:8).

“Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”
(1 Corinthians 14:40).

Addition to Constitution-By Laws approved by Winnemucca Christian Fellowship, January 17, 2016:

Article XIII-Beliefs on Cultural Issues

The position of this church is as follows:

A. Marriage and Sexuality

1. We believe that the term “marriage” has only one legitimate meaning, and that is the union, sanctioned by God, which joins one genetic man and one genetic woman in a single, covenantal union, as defined by Scripture (Gen 2:24; Mk 10:6-9; 1 Cor 7:1-9).

Marriage ceremonies performed in any facility owned or rented by this church will be only those ceremonies sanctioned by God.

2. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage as defined above. Any sexual activity, identity, or expression outside this definition of marriage is sin (Gen 2:24; Lev 18:1-30; Rom 1:26-29; 1 Cor 6:9-10; 1 Ths 4:1-8; Heb 13:4).

- B. Sanctity of Life. We believe that human life is a gift from God and that as followers of Jesus Christ we are ethically obligated to preserve, promote, and defend it.
1. We oppose abortion because human life begins at conception and deserves our protection (Job 3:16; Ps 51:5; 139:13-16; Isa 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer 1:5; Lk 1:36,44).
 2. We oppose suicide because life is sacred.
 3. We oppose all forms of euthanasia since God reserves the right to determine life's end (Ex 20:13; Mt 5:21; 1 Cor 6:19-20; Job 14:5).

We believe that although Christians should sustain life whenever possible, we are not obligated to prolong the process of dying through medical support systems.

C. Support of Israel. We believe that God established a covenant relationship with Israel that has not ended. We will therefore prayerfully seek to introduce Jews to Jesus and support the nation of Israel over which He will one day rule. (Gen 12:3; Psa 122:6-9; Rom 10-11).

[Editor's note of typographical correction made: paragraph "C" above was designated as paragraph "D" when approved.]