



International Baptist Church of Cologne
Constitution
(Clean)

[November 2023 Proposed Amended Version]

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ARTICLE 1. Preamble

We, the members of the International Baptist Church of Cologne, establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, honour and preserve the liberties of each member, define our legal form and affiliations, and provide for the orderly conduct of the church's affairs internally and with other parties and legal authorities externally. We voluntarily commit ourselves to this constitution.

ARTICLE 2. Name

1. The name of this church is “International Baptist Church of Cologne im Bund Evangelisch—Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland, K.d.ö.R.” It may also be referred to as “International Baptist Church of Cologne”, “Cologne International Baptist Church”, “IBC Cologne”, or “IBCC”.
2. This church has its seat in Cologne, Germany.
3. Based on Article 4 of the “Verfassung des Bundes” this church is a legally dependent body within the Bund, participating in the corporate rights of the Bund. Within the rules and regulations of the Bund, this church manages its own affairs independently.

ARTICLE 3. Affiliations

This church is a member of the International Baptist Convention, Frankfurt, and fully supports the International Baptist Convention’s mission. The Membership Meeting may determine that this church shall also be a member of other organizations, as long as they do not violate the purpose of this church.

ARTICLE 4. Purpose

1. The Purpose of IBCC is to glorify God as a church filled with the Holy Spirit, dedicated to proclaiming the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We will seek to make disciples of all nations according to the word and will of God. We sum up our mission with the statement, “Reaching the nations for Jesus Christ, one disciple at a time.”
2. This church pursues directly and exclusively public-benefit (gemeinnützige), charitable (mildtätige), and religious (kirchliche) purposes.

ARTICLE 5. Statement of Faith

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We believe that it is the exclusive, final and complete revelation of God for all people and is the ultimate authority in all matters of faith and daily life.

(Galatians 1:8-9; Ephesians 3:4-5; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Peter 1:20)

1. We believe there is one God who exists in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). The Father is the creator of heaven and earth. He is righteous, holy, sovereign, all-knowing, all-powerful, and ever-present. In perfect love, he concerns himself mercifully in the affairs of all people. He hears and answers prayer. He forgives sin and saves from condemnation all who, by his grace, come to him through Jesus Christ.
(Genesis 1; Deuteronomy 4:25, 30, 31; Psalm 139; Psalm 145; Isaiah 6:3; John 4:24; Ephesians 2:8-9, 4:6; Titus 3:4-5)
2. We believe in Jesus Christ, God's one and only Son, fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. We believe in his sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe that he died in our place for our sin, that he rose again, and that he ascended into heaven. We believe he continually intercedes for his people and will personally and visibly return to earth.
(Luke 1:27-28; John 1:1-2; Romans 5:8-10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15, 7:25)
3. We believe in the Holy Spirit, sent to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He restores, sets apart for God's purpose, and empowers all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ and that he is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide.
(Genesis 1:2; John 14:1-16:33, 16:8-9; Romans 8:26; 1 Corinthians 12; Galatians 2:20)
4. We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation from which they are incapable of saving themselves. We believe that God, by his grace alone, has provided the only means for salvation through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We receive eternal life and enter a personal relationship with God when we confess and repent of our sins and commit our lives to Jesus Christ, our only Savior.
(John 1:12; Romans 3:23, 5:8, 6:23, 10:9-13; 1 John 1:9)
5. We affirm our belief in the global church, which is the living spiritual body of Jesus Christ, with Him as the head and all His followers as members. We also believe in the local church, which is accountable to God alone. This is where we gather as a community of believers in Jesus Christ for worship, work, learning, and fellowship. We are committed to fulfilling the Great Commission by going out and making disciples from among all peoples.
(Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 1:11)
6. We hold the belief that the Holy Spirit grants spiritual gifts to every believer. These gifts should be utilized to demonstrate love, provide service, and promote the growth of the Church in alignment with the biblical definition and purpose of such gifts, ultimately leading to the glorification of God.
(Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 14:1-40; Ephesians 4:16; Hebrews 2:4; Romans 12:4-8)

7. We believe that Christ has, according to the Scriptures, instituted two church ordinances for believers:
- a. Baptism is an act of obedience and a joyful expression of a personal commitment to Christ and discipleship. It is a public declaration of faith that involves being submerged in water "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." This act is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as well as the end of an old way of life and the beginning of a new life in Christ.
(Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:3-4)
 - b. Communion or "The Lord's Table" is a declaration and celebration of Christ's death, resurrection, and future return.
(Matthew 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:7-20; 1 Corinthians 11:17-26)
8. We await the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth in his full glory and power and the establishment of his eternal kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment of all humanity, the eternal joy in heaven of those who are made righteous through faith in Jesus Christ alone and the endless suffering in hell of those who did not place their faith in him.
(Matthew 24:1-25:46; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, 15:50-54; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; Revelation 20:11-15, 21:1-4)

ARTICLE 6. Membership

As a born again Christian, you are called by God and empowered through the Holy Spirit to live a new life in Jesus Christ by actively participating in your local church community.

To ensure effective organization, we maintain a membership roll that includes active members who have both rights and responsibilities as outlined in the following sections.

Section 6. A. Membership

1. Membership candidacy is open to everyone, without regard to gender, race, age, or background. To qualify, you must declare your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior and demonstrate your obedience through believer baptism.

To become a member, a candidate must meet the requirements listed below and follow the process outlined afterward:

- a. Agree with the Constitution.
 - b. Attend a new member's class.
 - c. Mutual acknowledgment between Church leadership and the prospective member that his or her life conforms to the principles of Scripture.
 - d. Submit a completed membership form (as per the Bylaws).
2. Rights and responsibilities members:
 - a. Every full member of the church over the age of 18 can confirm leaders and vote on all questions submitted to the membership meeting, provided the member is present.
 - b. Every full member of voting age is eligible for consideration as a candidate for leadership in the church.
 - c. Every full member of the church has the right to be heard in any regularly called or special membership meeting.
 - d. Membership is a commitment lived out in a willingness to share life and serve together. The member should, therefore, be willing to be held accountable to the responsibilities outlined in our membership form (see bylaws).

Section 6. B. Discipline of Members

1. Through God's grace, the four-fold purpose of church discipline is:
 - a. To help conform us individually and corporately to Christ, in terms of the purity and unity of his church, for the glory of God (Colossians 1:28; Ephesians 4:1-6; 1 Corinthians 10:31).
 - b. To help bring a wandering soul back to Christ (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1-5).
 - c. To help deter others from sin (1 Timothy 5:20).
 - d. To help protect the church from false teachers, sin, and division (Acts 20:25-31; Titus 1:10-11).

2. General categories of offenses in the Bible that may result in church discipline include:
 - a. Divisiveness (Titus 3:9-11; Romans 16:17-18)
 - b. Immorality (1 Corinthians 5:9-11, 6:9-10; Exodus 20:12-17)
 - c. Rejecting doctrines of the Christian faith (1 Timothy 1:19-20, 6:3-5; 2 John 9-11)

3. The objective of church discipline is the restoration and reconciliation through genuine repentance of the person or persons concerned and the preservation of the true identity, witness, and unity of the church of Jesus Christ. A spirit of gracious and loving concern shall guide all such proceedings.

4. Members of this church who err in doctrine and who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the elders shall be subject to appropriate church discipline. Application of church discipline shall be consistent with the biblical approach outlined in Matthew 18:15-18. As such, it is to be exercised against offenders who are members of IBCC. This includes:
 - a. Confronting the offender with scripture to show his or her erring.
 - b. If there is no repentance, a group of two or three will confront the offender again.
 - c. If, after the second attempt, the offender does not repent, the elders are to take it to the church.
 - d. If the offender does not listen and repent after this final attempt, the elders will call for the removal of that person's membership. They are to be treated as an unbeliever.

Section 6. Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated if one of the following has occurred and after communication has been attempted:

1. Transfer of Membership: Members of the church in good standing may be granted letters of transfer to churches of like faith and order. Requests for letters shall be brought before the church elders. Letters of transfer shall be sent directly to the requesting church.
2. Lack of active participation: Members of the church for whom there is no record or knowledge of attendance at services or engaging in activities for over 12 months.
3. Relocation: Anyone who has relocated out of the area.
4. Anyone who has become a member of another church.
5. By personal request.
6. By death.
7. By discipline. (Refer to Section 6. C. paragraph 4)

Article 7. Organizational Structure

Our organizational structure consists of the congregation, elders, and deacons. The qualifications of elders and deacons are defined in the Bible and referenced in this constitution. The process of confirming elders and deacons is laid out in the constitution's by-laws.

Section 7. A. Elders/Pastors

According to scripture, elders are qualified men responsible for providing oversight and leadership to the church. (Acts 20:28). Although scripture does not distinguish between elder and pastor (1 Peter 5:1-5; Acts 20:28), this constitution uses the term 'pastor' to describe an elder hired by the church.

1. The responsibilities are:
 - a. **Oversight.** The elders are responsible for the spiritual care and oversight of the church. This includes teaching, praying for the church, church discipline, and resolving doctrinal issues.
 - b. **Pulpit ministry.** Although the elders are responsible for the overall teaching of the Word, a pastor can be charged with being the primary preacher at Sunday services.
 - c. **Direction of public worship.** The responsibility for the format, content, conduct and execution of all corporate worship services rests with the pastor(s) in coordination with the eldership.
 - d. **Leadership Development.** The elders oversee and participate in the training of new deacons, life group leaders, and elders.
 - e. **Outreach.** To ensure Christ's commission remains at the forefront of the church's ministry, the elders will lead the church in evangelism in our local community and beyond.
 - f. **Administration.** The elders will work alongside the Administration Team to ensure the church's direction and assets align with its purpose and doctrine.
 - g. **Church staff.** leadership and oversight of church staff (if any) rests with the elders.

2. The calling and hiring of a pastor are laid out in the by-laws of this constitution.

Section 7. B. Deacons

Deacons are servants of the church who function to help administer the physical and practical needs of the church. The three types of deacons at IBCC are the administration team, ministry leaders, and trustees.

1. The administration team consists of deacons who serve to ensure that the church maintains good stewardship legally and financially and remains in good standing with the German Bund and the International Baptist Convention.

Any member nominated to serve on the Administration Team must fulfill the biblical qualifications for deacons found in the Bible (1 Timothy 3:8-12).

A representative of the elders will participate in all official Administration Team meetings.

The officers are:

- a. **Administrative Chairperson**—the chairperson is the leader of the administration team, oversees relations with the German Bund and the International Baptist Convention, and organizes and leads all church business meetings.
- b. **Financial Secretary** – The financial secretary is responsible for handling all church cash and bank accounts. In addition, the financial secretary also oversees the administration of the church's payroll. Upon election, the financial secretary shall be provided with legal authorization (power of attorney) by the Bund to enable them to execute banking transactions (Bankkontovollmacht).
- c. **Church Secretary**—The secretary is responsible for maintaining the church membership list and directory, taking a role in and keeping minutes in all official church meetings.

2. **Ministry Leaders** are persons appointed by the church to attend to and implement the church's service ministries. Any member nominated to serve as a ministry leader must fulfil the biblical qualifications for deacons found in the Bible (1 Timothy 3:8-12). All ministries shall be under the spiritual authority of the elders and in accordance with the statement of faith found within this constitution.

3. **Trustees** – For legal purposes, IBCC will have two members who serve as trustees (legal signatories). This role can be filled by any deacon or elder in the church. The responsibilities of the trustees are:
 - a. The trustees are responsible for signing all contracts requiring an official signature(s) by a legal representative of the church, including but not limited to employment contracts, purchasing contracts for items of a significant nature, leasing and rental contracts, and any contracts that commit the church for a period exceeding 12 months.
 - b. The trustees ensure that the elders and Administrative Team have duly approved all contracts requiring official signatures by a church official and that they are, to the best of their knowledge, in accordance with this constitution and legal requirements.

Article 8. Membership Meetings

The church shall hold regular meetings throughout the year to communicate the ministries and conduct the business of the church. The frequency and rules of governance of these meetings are found in the by-laws of this constitution.

1. The meeting chairperson may at any time use Roberts Rules of Order to maintain an effective process.
2. The following resolutions must only be taken by the membership meeting and cannot be delegated otherwise:
 - a. Calling and dismissal a pastor.
 - b. Confirmation and dismissal of the members of the elders, administration team, and trustees.
 - c. Approval of the annual budget, approval of the annual financial statements, and the indemnification of the elders and administration team.
 - d. Changes to this constitution and the by-laws.

Article 9. Church Finances

1. This church is funded through voluntary contributions of its members, donations, collections and other income. IBCC does not receive any funds from the German churchtax.
2. This church uses its finances directly and exclusively for charitable and church purposes in accordance with the “Abgabenordnung” (Fiscal Code of the German Federal Republic).
3. The fiscal year equals the calendar year.

4. The members do not participate in the assets of this church; they cannot claim refunds of paid donations or other contributions. Members are not entitled to private use of the church property.
5. The assets of this church may only be used for constitutional purposes, and no member shall benefit from expenditures that are against the purpose of this church or unreasonably high compensation. Members and other persons who are volunteers for this church may be reimbursed for proven and reasonable expenses.
Compensation based on a separate contract is not affected by this.

ARTICLE 10. Closure

1. The church can be closed by an affirmative vote of 75 percent of the members present and voting at a meeting called for this purpose. Advance notification of a called business meeting must be provided to the church during the worship service on two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting.
2. If IBCC ceases to exist as a church, it will seek appropriate advice from the International Baptist Convention and the German Baptist Bund for handling legal issues such as the disposal of assets.

ARTICLE 11. Amendments

1. Proposed amendments to the constitution must be written and forwarded to the elders. After proper review and study by the relevant team, the administration team will report proposed amendments to the church and the elders' recommendations.
2. The constitution may be amended at any church business meeting if proper notice has been given. Proper notice shall consist of making available a copy of the proposed amendment to each active member or family group at least one month prior to the meeting when the vote on the proposed changes will be taken and making an announcement during the worship service on the two Sundays preceding the meeting.
3. The constitution may be revised or amended by an affirmative vote of 90% of the members present and voting at the meeting where such changes are presented. A quorum for this meeting is 60% of the members.

ARTICLE 12. Effectiveness

The content of this constitution and its appendices is established as the will of the membership upon their vote at the membership meeting of Sunday 05.02.2017. Those elected as elders will be brought into office following the membership meeting where they will be affirmed by the church membership.

International Baptist Church of Cologne Bylaws

Purpose: To provide guidance in the fulfillment of the responsibilities set forth in the IBCC constitution; these bylaws establish the specific rules and procedures of guidance by which the church is to function. This church is to provide regular occasions of worship, including administering the Christian Ordinances (Baptism and the Lord's Supper), supporting Bible study and spiritual nurture/growth through a program of Christian education, and offering opportunities for Christian service.

Section 1. Meetings:

A. **Membership Meetings**—Regular meetings will be held at least twice a year, with one expected during the first four months of each year to review the previous year's financial statements, present and approve the budget, and elect positions of leadership. The second meeting of the year will at least provide an update on the church's financial position.

1. To ensure compliant notice and format, membership meetings will generally be called and moderated by the chairperson of the administration team.
2. The administration team is to ensure that minutes of all decisions in each meeting will be taken and archived.
3. The following topics shall only be voted upon if included in the meeting notice:
 - a. Calling or removing the lead pastor.
 - b. Amending the constitution.
 - c. Adopting, amending, or repealing bylaws.
 - d. Disposing of a significant portion of the church's assets.
 - e. Adopting or amending a merger agreement.
 - f. Approving a proposal to dissolve the church.
 - g. Approving the acquisition of real property and related indebtedness.
 - h. Permanent change of location for regular worship services.
4. For all membership meetings where voting will occur, the administration team must appoint a counting team.
 - a. Counting by show of hands for simple majority votes shall be carried out by a counting team of two members.
 - b. Written ballots will be tallied for votes concerning people and any other sensitive topic as determined by the meeting chairperson. The ballots are to be prepared by the administration team. The ballots will be handed out while names are checked off the membership list to determine the number of eligible votes cast. The counting team shall have three members.
5. The membership meeting is comprised of all members of voting age.

6. Non-members are invited to observe membership meetings but do not have the right to speak publicly or vote.
7. Membership meetings require a quorum of 30% of the full and associate members to conduct business. If the quorum is not present, the meeting will be rescheduled with a quorum of 15%.
8. The regular membership meetings are called by the administration team, with at least a two-week notice through announcement in a regular worship service and written invitation by e-mail or letter.
9. Special membership meetings may be held when the administration team or the elders request them. A membership meeting may also be called upon written notice by 20% of the members of IBCC who are eligible to vote.
10. The membership meeting can make decisions only if it has been duly called.
11. Decisions are to be made by a simple majority of all votes cast unless this constitution requires something different.
12. Confirmation and dismissal of people are always to be taken by written ballot.
13. A ministry update may take place during any membership meeting.
14. Although the ultimate authority rests with the church membership, the elders and deacons are given authority to make decisions within the context of their responsibilities.

B. Elder Meetings – The elders are expected to meet at least once per month.

1. The elders are to keep secrecy concerning matters that are confidential.
2. The elders will strive for unity in leading the church and implementing ministries.

C. Administration Team Meetings – The administration team is expected to meet at least once per month.

1. Special Meetings - An administration team meeting can also be called if at least two members of the administration team request this.
2. Quorum - The administration team meetings require a quorum of at least one-half of its members. Decisions are taken by simple majority vote of the members participating in the meeting. Time-sensitive decisions may also be taken by circulation if at least half of the administration team votes positively.
3. Minutes - All meetings are to be documented in written minutes and approved by the administration team at their next meeting. The meeting minutes are to be made available to all church members. The administration team determines any items of such confidential nature, which must not be made public and must, therefore, be excluded from the minutes. administration team
4. Members of the administration team are to keep secrecy concerning matters that are confidential by their nature.
5. Deacons will strive for unity in serving and administrating the church ministries.

D. Elders and Administration Meetings – An administration team representative of the elders will meet regularly with the administration team.

Section 2. Personnel - Call, Elections, and Term of Office

A. Pastor– The elders will form a pastor search committee from among the members of IBCC. The search committee will be confirmed at a membership meeting. The call of the pastor shall be as follows:

1. The pastor search committee will facilitate the finding and review of pastoral candidates. The names of the candidates will be given over to the elders and administration team.
2. Members of this church may submit candidates to this committee in sufficient time to allow review.
3. The leadership can present a pastoral candidate to the church for consideration at any member's meeting. The leadership's recommendation shall include the financial portfolio offered to the pastoral candidate. The church leadership shall bring only one candidate to the church at a time. No new nominations may be brought forward on the day of a meeting.
4. Pastoral candidates must exhibit Christian character and qualifications that fit them for the position, which aligns with the qualifications written in the Bible.
5. The confirmation of a pastoral candidate shall take place at a duly called special membership meeting. The tally of ballots shall be taken immediately and reported to the membership meeting. If a 75% affirmative vote is not obtained, there shall be no discussion. The leadership and pastor search committee shall then continue the selection process.
6. The pastor shall, by virtue of the elected position held, be permitted to assume responsibilities with the Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland and the International Baptist Convention.
7. The church shall call the pastor to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the pastor or the church. In either case, at least three months' notice shall be given to terminate the relationship unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.
8. If a pastor is discovered to be involved in moral misconduct that would render him unfit for the position of pastor or if he holds beliefs that conflict with the established doctrines of the church, the elders, in cooperation with the administration team, may request that he resign. If the pastor is unwilling to resign, a special church member meeting will be called to confirm the recommendation for his removal from office. If 30% of the active church members vote "no-confidence," he will be removed from his position.

B. Confirming elders – The following process will be followed for the confirmation of elders:

1. As a guideline, but not a strict rule, there should be one elder for every fifty regular church attendees. The elders will determine the number of candidates and communicate before the nomination period.
2. Any church member may propose candidates for the position of elder. The elders will then interview the candidates to determine their motivation and biblical qualifications.
3. The candidate will be confirmed at a membership meeting. The candidates presented for confirmation will be made known to the church body by the elders at least four weeks before the meeting. If there is an issue or concern regarding a candidate by a church member, these concerns must be brought to the current elders during this four-week period for their consideration.
4. Before the membership meeting, the candidate will present to the church body a brief statement of their Christian journey and experience at IBCC.
5. A confirmation of at least 70% is required to affirm an elder, who must be re-confirmed after completing a 3-year term.
6. Once confirmed, the new elder will undergo training to ensure they are equipped to serve and shepherd the church of Christ.
7. If an administration team member is confirmed as an elder, they will immediately step down from the administration team.

C. Confirmation of Administration Team – The guidelines for confirming the administration team members are as follows:

1. The members of the administration team are nominated from among the membership. The elders will interview the nominees to determine if they are spiritually qualified to serve in this manner. This report will be given to the church administration team.
2. Qualified candidates will be voted on for confirmation at a membership meeting.
3. At least two weeks before the membership meeting, the church will be notified about the candidate by an announcement at a regular church service and by email. If there is an issue or concern regarding a candidate's spiritual qualification by a church member, these concerns must be brought to the elders during these two weeks. The elders will review concerns and share their conclusions with the administration team.
4. Confirmation at the membership meeting will result in a three-year term and may be re-confirmed at a regular membership meeting.

D. Ministry Leaders—Ministry leaders are chosen from among the members with whom they are serving in an elder-approved ministry. After review and approval by the elders, the leader is presented to the church at the next membership meeting.

E. **Trustees**—Trustees serve a five-year term and can be re-elected after confirmation at a membership meeting.

F. **Personnel Hiring**

1. All hiring of paid staff, except for pastors, will be performed by the administration team in cooperation with the elders.
2. The administration team will maintain written policies that ensure that all hiring will be done under contract and in compliance with all legal requirements.
3. The financial secretary must ensure all staff payments comply with church policies and tax and social security laws.
4. The elders and administration team will perform an annual review of all hired personnel.

Section 3. Finance

A. **Budget Process**—The creation and management of the annual budget are the responsibility of the elders and the administration team.

1. The elders and administration team shall prepare an annual, detailed spending budget to be approved at the membership meeting within the first four months of the new budget year. A budget will always be proposed for two consecutive years. The proposed budget for the second of these two years can be used as the operating basis until the membership meeting that year approves a new budget. The budget approval will be for the total spending amount and any specific values not open to modification during the year.
 - a. The elders are responsible for the overall guidance of the budget, ensuring that the vision and mission of IBCC are reflected in it.
 - b. The administration team is responsible for creating and managing the budget and overseeing expenditures.
2. The budget shall be presented in detail, together with a description of ministry priorities.
3. Approval of the budget at a membership meeting is for the total budgeted amount. Any fixed expenditures must not change without notifying the congregation. Those fixed expenditures will be highlighted.

4. The administration team must notify the church if the total spending is projected to exceed the approved budget by 2% or more or if anything threatens the financial health of the church, whether overspending or an anticipated reduction in income. Amounts can move between spending categories if the total budget is unaffected.
5. The financial secretary must record and document all income and expenditure in this church's bookkeeping.
6. Petitions from the membership to adjust the budget during the financial year are to go through the administration team, with approval from the elders.
7. This church shall conduct an annual financial audit. The auditor's report will be presented at the subsequent membership meeting by the financial secretary.

B. Offering Counting - The following process applies to counting of the offering:

1. The counting of the offering must take place in a non-public room.
2. The counting must be performed by two non-related adults who must remain present during the entire process.
3. The offering counting form must be used to tally and record the offering.
4. Bank notes and coins are recorded individually and tallied.
5. Donations are recorded individually with the name of the donor.
6. Foreign currencies are recorded separately.
7. Both counters are to count physically, and then upon recording the entire offering on the counting form, they must sign the form in each other's presence to attest to the accuracy of the count.
8. The financial secretary is responsible for recording the offering in the church ledger.
9. The financial secretary is responsible for organising and overseeing the deposit of the money into a designated IBCC account.

C. Expense Reimbursement - Members, volunteers, unsalaried individuals, and paid staff who serve the church may be reimbursed for expenses they incur, so long as they are supported by proof of payment, invoice, or receipt. The ministry leader in charge will authorize such payments.

Section 4. Membership Roll

Membership Roll - The administration team is responsible for maintaining the membership role.

Section 5. Ministries

The elders approve all ministries of this church. They determine if the ministry fits within the doctrine, vision, and mission of IBCC. They support the church ministries and appoint ministry leaders, who are, in turn, responsible for the direction of the ministries they oversee.

Section 6. Church Planting

A. Daughter church

1. The daughter church is a legally dependent part of IBCC. It regulates its own matters by means of a regulatory system that depends on the approval of and has to be in accordance with the essential principles of IBCC.
2. The membership meeting of the daughter church consists of the daughter church members as well as an IBCC elder or representative. The IBCC elders must be notified in advance about upcoming membership meetings.
3. The daughter church makes decisions over its own matters, especially over
 - a. church life framework
 - b. founding a leadership team consisting of at least three members
 - c. budget
 - d. The following decisions require approval by the IBCC elders and confirmation at an IBCC membership meeting: membership, budget, installation, or removal of staff members.
4. The membership of the Daughter Church should be distinct and separate from the membership of IBCC.

Section 7. Amendments

Changes or additions to these bylaws may only be made under the following circumstances:

1. At a regular membership meeting or a special membership meeting that has been called specifically for the purpose of making changes or additions to the bylaws.
2. After a written notice has been provided to all members of the proposed change or addition.
3. After the proposed change or addition has been announced verbally from the pulpit on at least two Sundays before the membership meeting.

Amendments to these bylaws are approved by a simple majority of votes cast.

Agreed to by vote of the members of International Baptist Church of Cologne on Sunday
05.02.2017. Amended 07.10.2018. Amended _____

Signed on behalf of the members by:

Name:

Signature:

Name:

Signature:

Name:

Signature:

Name:

Signature:

Name:

Signature:

Date: