



International Baptist Church of Bonn
Constitution

[Adopted 20 March 2022]

CONTENT

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 1. Preamble	pg. 1
ARTICLE 2. Name	pg. 1
ARTICLE 3. Affiliations	pg. 1
ARTICLE 4. Purpose	pg. 1
ARTICLE 5. Statement of Faith	pg. 1
ARTICLE 6. Membership	pg. 3
SECTION 6. A. Membership	pg. 3
SECTION 6. B. Discipline of Members	pg. 4
SECTION 6. C. Termination of Membership	pg. 5
ARTICLE 7. Organisational Structure	pg. 5
SECTION 7. A. Elders	pg. 6
SECTION 7. B. Deacons	pg. 7
ARTICLE 8. Membership Meetings	pg. 8
ARTICLE 9. Church Finances	pg. 8
ARTICLE 10. Closure	pg. 9
ARTICLE 11. Amendments	pg. 9
ARTICLE 12. Effectiveness	pg. 9

BY-LAWS

SECTION 1. Meetings	pg. 9
A. Membership Meetings	pg. 9
B. Elder Meetings	pg. 10
C. Administrative Team Meetings	pg. 10
D. Elders and Administrative Team Meetings	pg. 11
SECTION 2. Personnel – Call, Elections and Term of Office	pg. 11
A. Pastor	pg. 11
B. Confirming Elders	pg. 11
C. Confirming Deacons (incl. Members of the Administrative Team)	pg. 12
D. Trustees	pg. 12
E. Personnel Hiring	pg. 12
SECTION 3. Finance	pg. 12
A. Budget Process	pg. 12
B. Offering Counting	pg. 13
C. Expense Reimbursement	pg. 13
SECTION 4. Membership Roll	pg. 13
SECTION 5. Ministries	pg. 14
SECTION 6. Church Planting	pg. 14
SECTION 7. Amendments	pg. 14

ARTICLE 1. Preamble

We the members of the International Baptist Church of Bonn, establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, to honour and preserve the liberties of each member, to define our legal form and affiliations, and to provide for orderly conduct of the affairs of the church internally, as well as dealing 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 Bonn im Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland, K.d.ö.R.” This church may also be referred to as “International Baptist Church of Bonn”; “IBC Bonn;” or “ICB.”
2. This church has its seat in Bonn, 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 Members may determine that this church shall also be a member of other organizations if they do not violate the purpose of this church.

ARTICLE 4. Purpose

1. The Purpose of ICB is to glorify God by the power of the Holy Spirit, dedicated to the proclamation of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the building up of His body in love. We seek to make disciples of all nations according to the Word and will of God.
2. This church pursues directly and exclusively public-benefit (gemeinnützige), charitable (mildtätige), and religious (kirchliche) purposes.

ARTICLE 5. Statement of Faith

Introduction

This Statement of Faith is a summary of the major themes and truths found in God’s Word and allows us to live, worship, and serve with one another in unity and love. These statements of faith do not contain everything we believe at IBC Bonn, but everything we teach agrees with the doctrine presented below. These statements reflect our devotion to the Bible’s first place in matters of faith and practice. The proof texts that are provided serve to confirm and elaborate what is stated.

The Bible

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit and without error in the original manuscripts. 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. We believe

that the Bible communicates God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ without confusion or distortion. (Galatians 1:8–9; Ephesians 3:4–5; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; Hebrews 1:1–2; 2 Peter 1:19–20)

God

We believe there is one God who exists in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). He is creator of heaven and earth. We believe that before its fall into a state of sin, God's creation was perfect in all things. As creator, God rules over His creation and is the only One who may judge between good and evil. He is righteous, holy, sovereign, all-knowing, all-powerful, and ever-present. In perfect love, He concerns Himself mercifully and graciously 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 by the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1–3; Exodus 34:6–7; 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)

Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's one and only begotten Son, fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. We believe that salvation from sin and to a new life in God is only possible through the gracious self-giving of Jesus Christ and must be received by faith. 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 bodily return to earth. (Genesis 3:15; Luke 1:27–28; John 1:1–2; Romans 5:8–10; 1 Corinthians 15; Philippians 2:5–8; Hebrews 4:15, 7:25; Luke 24:36–43; Acts 1:11; Ephesians 2:8–9; John 3:16)

Holy Spirit

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 at the point of salvation. Having sealed the believer in Christ, He remains 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; Ephesians 1:13–14)

Man

We believe that both men and women are created in God's image. Therefore, men and women, although distinct, are equal in dignity, honor, worth, and are together co-heirs with Christ. 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, atoning, and substitutionary death of Jesus Christ and His resurrection. We receive eternal life and enter a personal relationship with God, when by faith we confess and repent of our sin and commit our lives to Jesus Christ, our only Savior. (Genesis 1–3; John 1:12; Romans 3:23, 5:8, 6:23, 10:9–13; 1 John 1:9; Isaiah 53:1–12)

Church

We believe in the global Church, the living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all followers of Jesus Christ are members. We believe in the local church, accountable to God alone,

where we unite by the Spirit for worship, work, learning, and fellowship as a community of believers in Jesus Christ. We believe that we, in response to the Great Commission, have been sent out and given the task of making disciples (committed followers of Jesus Christ) from among all peoples. (Matthew 28:19–20; Mark 16:15; Acts 2:42–47; Romans 1:11)

Spiritual Gifts

We believe the Holy Spirit indwells and gives spiritual gifts to each believer to love, serve, and edify the Church according to the biblical definition, order, and function of those gifts for the glory of God. Each believer has a spiritual gift, and therefore has a ministry to be exercised within the local church. (Ephesians 1:13–14, 4:16; 1 Corinthians 12–14; Hebrews 2:4; Romans 12:4–8)

Church Ordinances

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, public expression of a previous, personal commitment to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. The baptism of the believer into and under water “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the end of an old way of life and the beginning of a new life in Christ. (Matthew 28:19–20; Romans 6:3–4)
- b. The Communion of the Lord’s Table is a proclamation, celebration, and a repeated reminder 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)

Future Things

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 God’s kingdom for those who are made righteous through faith in Jesus Christ alone, and the endless suffering in hell of those who do 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

Although we welcome everyone to come and worship the one true God, membership is reserved for those who are believers in Jesus Christ. To become officially recognised as a member, a person must agree with this church’s purpose and statement of faith and be actively involved in the ministry of IBCB.

We maintain a membership roll of active members who have the rights and responsibilities as given in the following sections.

Section 6. A. Membership

1. Membership candidacy is available to anyone regardless of gender, race, age, or background and shall be attained in one of the following ways:

- a. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as one's Savior and Lord, followed by a believer's baptism as a visible outward sign of their inward belief and commitment.
 - b. By statement of prior salvation experience and believer's baptism.
- 2. A candidate, who has met one of the requirements listed above, can officially be recognised as a member through the following process:
 - a. Agree with this constitution.
 - b. Acknowledge that his or her life conforms to the ultimate authority of Scripture.
 - c. Complete the IBCB Membership Form.
- 3. Rights and responsibilities of full members:
 - a. Every member of the church over the age of eighteen can confirm leaders and vote on all questions submitted to the membership meeting, provided the member is present.
 - b. Every member of voting age is eligible for consideration as a candidate for leadership positions in the church.
 - c. Every member of the church has the right to be heard in any regularly called or special membership meeting.
 - d. The biblically given responsibilities of members include the following:
 - i. attending corporate worship services (Hebrews 10:24–25)
 - ii. protecting the gospel from perversion (Galatians 1:6 and 2 Timothy 1:14)
 - iii. safeguarding the boundaries of the local church (Matthew 16:17–20 and 18:15–20)
 - iv. discipling fellow members (Ephesians 4:15–16)
 - v. making disciples (Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 5:19–20)
 - vi. following the leadership (2 Timothy 1:13 and 3:10–11)
 - e. All members are expected to mature in their Christian faith. Through sanctification every member is expected to grow in the spiritual disciplines including loving God and others, pursuing holiness, fleeing from all kinds of sin (including greed, anger, envy, idolatry, slander, jealousy, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, pornography, strife, rivalries, divisions, drunkenness, and all other works of the flesh), diligent Bible study, daily prayer, worshipping with the saints, doing the work of ministry, and cheerfully giving to the needs of others. This involves devotion, discipline, and discipleship as one's will is surrendered to God's will.

Section 6. B. Discipline of Members

- 1. Through God's grace, the fourfold purpose of church discipline is:
 - a. To help conform us individually and corporately to Christ (Colossians 1:28; Ephesians 4:1–6).
 - 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 offences 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 of the person or persons concerned through genuine repentance to preserve the true identity, witness, and unity of the church of Jesus Christ. All such proceedings shall be guided by a spirit of grace and love.
 4. “Restoration” refers to the errant individual’s return to membership, participation, and/or service in the local body of Christ. Restoration begins with true repentance and a readmission into the church community, but does not rule out the possibility of ongoing consequences because of sin such as long-term rehabilitation, counselling, loss of ministry privileges, etc.
 5. Those who do not follow true doctrine and who engage in conduct that violates Scripture shall be subject to appropriate church discipline. Application of church discipline shall be consistent with the biblical approach outlined in Matthew 18:15–18. This includes:
 - a. Confronting the offender with Scripture to show his or her sin.
 - 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 present it publicly to the church, e.g., in a member’s meeting.
 - 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 outsider from the community.

Section 6. C. 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 an ongoing breach of the Membership Agreement and an unwillingness to be an active participant in the life and ministry of IBC Bonn.
3. Anyone who has become a member of another church
4. By personal request
5. By death
6. By discipline

ARTICLE 7. Organizational Structure

IBC Bonn’s organizational structure consists of the congregation, elders, and deacons. The qualification 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 by-laws of this constitution.

Section 7. A. Elders

1. **Elders** shall be men who work in a leadership capacity alongside the pastor in cultivating the spiritual life of the church. They are servants of God and commissioned by God to give biblical direction and spiritual oversight to the church, along with helping “shepherd the flock” of God (Acts 20:28). It is the responsibility of the elders to make sure the ministries and direction of the church is in line with its teaching. The qualifications and responsibilities of an elder are defined in the Bible and described in this constitution. (Titus 1:5–9; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; 1 Peter 5:1–4)

The primary functions of the elders are:

- a. Praying for the church
- b. Spiritual oversight, protection, and leadership
- c. Living as examples of humility, faithfulness, godliness, self-control, gentleness, hospitality, justice, devotion, and peace
- d. Teaching and preaching in accordance with the truth of Scripture and sound doctrine
- e. Making disciples of Jesus
- f. Resolving doctrinal issues

Although the ultimate authority rests with the church membership, the elders and deacons are given authority, within the context of their responsibilities, to make decisions regarding the wellbeing, health, and function of the church. In this way there is a mutual submission within the body of Christ, each member submitting to one another in the power of the Spirit, in honor of Christ, and for the glory of the Father.

2. **Lead Pastor** is the title given to the lead elder of the church who is responsible for providing oversight and leadership to the church. The basic responsibilities and duties unique to the office of pastor are specified below. The qualifications of a pastor are laid out in the Bible. The hiring and calling of the pastor are laid out in the by-laws of this constitution. (Titus 1:5–9; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; 1 Peter 5:1–4)
 - a. **Oversight** – The pastor, in conjunction with the elders, is responsible for the spiritual care and oversight of the church.
 - b. **Pulpit ministry** – He will have specific charge of the pulpit ministry of the church, conducting regular and special services, and he is the primary preacher in corporate worship. The responsibility for finding a replacement person to fulfil the pulpit ministry when the pastor is unavailable rests with the pastor, in coordination with the eldership. The content of the preaching and teaching program should be broadly agreed with the eldership under the leading of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. **Direction of public worship** – The responsibility for the format, content, conduct, and execution of all public worship services rests with the pastor, in coordination with the eldership.
 - d. **Elders and Deacons** – It is the pastor’s responsibility to guide and encourage the elders and deacons in fulfilling their functions.
 - e. **The ministries of the church** – The pastor will provide guidance and encouragement for the church in every aspect of its ministries.
 - f. **Outreach** – The pastor will, in conjunction with those elders and members of the church who display the appropriate gifts, encourage outreach on an on-going basis to win converts to Christ and coordinate the necessary resources to make known the existence of the church to the community.
 - g. **Administration of church staff** – The leadership and oversight of church staff (if any) rests with the pastor and the elders.

Section 7. B. Deacons

Deacons are men and women who serve IBCB to help to administer the practical needs of the church. Anyone nominated to serve as a deacon must fulfil the biblical qualifications found in the Bible (Acts 6:1–7; Romans 16:1; 1 Timothy 3:8–12).

1. **Administrative Officers** are deacons who serve on the Administrative Team in an administrative capacity to ensure that the church maintains good stewardship legally, financially, and that the church remains in good standing with the German Bund and the International Baptist Convention.

The officers are:

- a. **Administrative Chairperson** – the chairperson oversees relations with the German Baptist Bund, and the International Baptist Convention, and organizes and leads all church business meetings.
- b. **Financial Secretary** – The financial secretary is responsible for the handling of all cash and bank accounts of the church. 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, directory, taking role and keeping minutes in all official church meetings.
- d. **Representative Elder** – The lead pastor or qualified elder will be member of the Administrative Team.

The responsibilities of the Administrative Team are:

- a. Leading and taking minutes of the Membership Meetings.
- b. Organizing and communicating church activities and events.
- c. Managing the expenditures within the overall spending budget as approved by the Membership Meeting. The Administrative Officers also ensure that spending is in compliance legally, with the authority given by the Membership.
- d. Safeguarding the church assets.
- e. Preparing and approving all contracts prior to the trustees signing them.
- f. Maintaining the membership roll.
- g. Creating and implementing administrative policies.
- h. Working with elders to accomplish the plans and actions for the church.

If a member of the administrative team resigns, a special membership meeting may be called to elect a new member for the remainder of the vacated position's term.

Other Deacons may serve the church in a variety of ways such as:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Music Ministry | h. Fellowship |
| b. Tech Ministry | i. Hospitality |
| c. Media Ministry | j. Men's Ministry |
| d. Counting Team | k. Women's Ministry |
| e. Children's Ministry | l. Community Outreach |
| f. Youth Ministry | m. Service |
| g. Nursery | |

2. **Trustees** – For legal purposes, IBCB 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 the signing of any and all contracts requiring 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 as well as any contracts which commit the church for a period exceeding 12 months.
- b. The trustees ensure that all contracts requiring official signatures by a church official have been duly approved by the elders and administrative team, and are, to the best of their knowledge, in line 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. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised will be followed for order and process in all meetings and committees. The meeting chairperson may deviate but may at any time use the rules 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 of the pastor.
 - b. Confirmation and dismissal of the members of the eldership team, Administrative Team, and trustees.
 - c. Decisions about membership in the church, such as changing the membership form.
 - d. Approval of the annual budget, approval of the annual financial statements, and the indemnification of the elders and administrative team.
 - e. Changes of 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. IBCB does not receive any funds from the German church tax.
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 refund of paid donations or other contributions. Members are not entitled to private use of the church property.
5. Assets of this church may only be used for the 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 membership meeting must be provided to the church during the worship service on two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting.
2. In the event of IBCB ceasing to exist as a church, it will seek appropriate advice from the IBC and the Bund for handling legal issues such as 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 Administrative Team will report proposed amendments to the church along with the elders' recommendation.
2. The constitution may be amended at any members' meeting of the church 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 75 percent of the members present and voting at the meeting where such changes are presented. A quorum for this meeting is 60% of active 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 _____. 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 Bonn By-Laws

Purpose: To provide guidance in the fulfilment of the responsibilities set forth in the IBCB constitution, these by-laws establish the specific rules and procedures of guidance by which the church is to function.

SECTION 1. Meetings:

A. Membership Meetings – Regular meetings will be held at least semi-annually 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 of the financial position of the church.

1. To ensure compliant notice and format, membership meetings will generally be called and moderated by an elder or the chairperson of the Administrative Team.
2. The Administrative Team is to ensure that minutes will be taken and archived of all decisions in each meeting.
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 by-laws.

- 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 administrative 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 administrative 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 (18 years).
 6. Non-members are invited to observe membership meetings but do not have the right to vote.
 7. Membership meetings require a quorum of 50% of members to conduct business. If the quorum is not reached, the meeting will be rescheduled. If quorum is not met, business essential to the continued operations of the church can be conducted by the elders and reported to the members in writing.
 8. Members have the possibility to participate in meetings via electronic communication channels and to exercise their membership rights (voting rights, participation in discussions, right to submit motions, etc.) if personal presence is not possible.
 9. The regular membership meetings are called by an elder or the chairperson of the Administrative Team, with at least a two-week notice through announcement in the regular worship service and written invitation by e-mail or letter.
 10. Special membership meetings may be called when the elders request it or when 3 Administrative Officers or 20% of the members of IBCB request the elders for a special meeting.
 11. The membership meeting can make decisions only if it has been duly called.
 12. Decisions are to be taken by simple majority of all votes cast unless this constitution requires differently.
 13. Confirmation and dismissal of people are always to be taken by written ballot.
 14. The elders will report assessment of church ministries in relation to the vision of IBCB

B. Elder Meetings – The elders are expected to meet at least once per month under the direction of the lead pastor.

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

C. Administrative Team Meetings – The Administrative Team is expected to meet at least quarterly.

1. Special Meetings – An Administrative Team meeting can also be called if at least two members of the administrative team request this.
2. Quorum – The Administrative 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.
3. Minutes – All meetings are to be documented in written minutes which are to be approved by the Administrative Team at their next meeting. The meeting minutes are to be made available to all members of the church. The chairperson determines any items of such confidential nature which must not be made public and must therefore be excluded from

the minutes. The minutes shall instead contain a reference of a more general nature that a confidential topic had been addressed by the administrative team.

4. Deacons 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 Administrative Meetings – The elders and Administrative Team are expected to meet at least four times a year, with the Administrative Team meetings being the best venue for them to meet.

SECTION 2. Personnel – Call, Elections, and Term of Office

A. Pastor – A pastor search committee shall be formed from among members of this church. Election of the committee shall be in accordance with the procedure set up for the election for the Administrative Team members. The call of the pastor shall be as follows:

1. Members of this church may submit candidates to this committee in sufficient time to allow review. No nominations may be brought forward on the day of the meeting.
2. The pastor search committee shall bring only one candidate to the church at a time. Pastoral candidates must exhibit Christian character and qualifications that fit them for the position which is in accord with the qualifications written in the Bible.
3. The recommendation of the committee shall include the financial portfolio offered to the candidate.
4. The call of the pastor shall take place at a duly called special membership meeting following a regular church service, typically on a Sunday. The tally of ballots shall be taken immediately and reported to the membership meeting. If 75% affirmative vote is not obtained, there shall be no discussion. The pastor search committee shall then continue the selection process.
5. 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.
6. The pastor shall be called by the church 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.
7. There will be a vote of confidence made by the church members every three years for the lead pastor. If 30% of all active church members vote a "no confidence", then the pastor will enter a three-month period of review led by the other Elders and the Administrative Team. This review period shall be followed by another vote of confidence.
8. If the pastor is found to be in a moral failing which would disqualify him from the office of pastor, or in doctrinal conflict with the stated beliefs of the church body, the elders, in cooperation with the Administration Team, can ask him to resign. If the pastor is unwilling to resign then a special church member meeting will be called to confirm the recommendation for his removal from office. In this case, 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 as a strict rule, there should be one elder for every fifty regular church attendees. The number of candidates will be determined by the elders and communicated prior to the nomination period.
2. Candidates for the position of elder may be proposed by any member of the church at least ten weeks before the membership meeting. The candidates will then be interviewed by the elders to determine their personal motivation and biblical qualification for the position. Eight weeks before the membership meeting, the candidates presented for confirmation will be made known to the church body by the elders. Any issues or concerns

regarding a candidate may be brought to the current elders during this eight-week period for their consideration.

3. Candidates for elder will go through an eight-week training process prior to confirmation to ensure they are equipped to serve and shepherd the church of Christ.
4. Prior to the membership meeting the candidate will present to the church body a brief statement of their Christian journey and experience at IBCB.
5. A 70% confirmation vote is required to affirm an elder, whereby he will serve for a term of three years. Elders can be re-confirmed after completing a full term. If he desires, he may take a one-year leave of absence before confirmation of his next full term.
6. If an Administrative Team member is confirmed as an elder, he will step down from the Administrative Team.

C. Confirming Deacons (incl. Members of the Administrative Team) – The following process will be followed for the confirmation of deacons:

1. As a guideline, but not as a strict rule, nominations for the role of deacon will be taken in response to a recognized need within the church. There is neither a maximum nor a minimum number of deacons required in the church. In response to an observed need within the church, elders will present a deacon role and a description of that role to the church at any members meeting, and the elders will call upon the members to prayerfully consider appropriate candidates.
2. During the nomination period (set by the elders) members may nominate any member of the church to be considered by the elders to fill specific deacon roles. Candidates will then be interviewed by the elders to determine their personal motivation and biblical qualification for the position.
3. Prior to the next membership meeting, the candidates presented for confirmation will be made known to the church body by the elders. Any issues or concerns regarding a candidate may be brought to the elders during this period.
4. A 70% confirmation vote is required to affirm a deacon, whereby the deacon will serve for a term of three years. Deacons can be re-confirmed after completing a full term. If desired, a deacon may take a one-year leave of absence before confirmation of another full term.
5. Following their confirmation, deacons will go through training and will meet at least quarterly.

D. Trustees - Upon confirmation by the membership meeting, the position of trustee is for a five-year term. Re-election is permitted.

E. Personnel Hiring

1. All hiring of paid staff, except for pastors, will be performed by the Administrative Team with agreement of the elders.
2. The Administrative Team will maintain written policies that ensure that all hiring will be done with contract and in compliance with all legal requirements.
3. The financial secretary is to ensure that all staff payments comply with church policies as well as tax and social security laws.
4. An annual review will be performed by the elders and administrative chairperson for all hired personnel.

SECTION 3. Finance

A. Budget Process - The creation and management of the annual budget is the responsibility of the elders and Administrative Team working together as a unit.

1. The elders and Administrative Team shall prepare an annual detailed spending budget

which is to be approved by the membership meeting within the first four months of the new budget year. For this reason, a budget will always be proposed for two consecutive years, so that the proposed budget for the second of these two years can be used as the operating basis until the new revised budget is approved by the membership. The budget approval will be for the total spending amount as well as any specific values that are not open to modification during the year.

- a. The elders are responsible for the overall guidance of the budget, to ensure that the vision and mission of IBCB have the right financial emphasis and priorities placed on the corresponding ministries.
 - b. The Administrative Team has the responsibility to create and manage the budget.
2. The budget shall be presented in detail along with the clear understanding of ministry priorities.
 3. The membership meeting approval is for the total budgeted amount. The Administrative 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, as long as the overall budget is not affected.
 4. All income and expenditure must be completely recorded and documented by the financial secretary in this church's bookkeeping.
 5. Petitions from membership to adjust the budget during the fiscal year are to go through the Administrative Team, with approval from the elders.
 6. This church's financial records shall be audited every two years by a professional third party. The auditors shall provide an opinion which shall be approved together with the financial statements by the membership meeting within the first four months of the following budget year.

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. When possible, donations are recorded individually with the name of the donor.
6. Foreign currencies are recorded separately.
7. Both counters are to physically count and then, upon recording the entire offering on the counting form, 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 organizing and overseeing the deposit of the money into a designated IBCB account.

C. Expense Reimbursement – Members, volunteers, and paid staff may receive reimbursement of expenses incurred in the service of the church, provided such expenses are supported by proof of payment, invoice, or receipt. Such payments will be authorized by the responsible ministry leader.

SECTION 4. Membership Roll

Membership Roll - The Administrative Team is responsible for maintaining the membership roll.

SECTION 5. Ministries

The elders approve all ministries of this church. They determine if the ministry fits within the doctrine, vision, and mission of IBCB. The elders support the church ministries and appoint ministry leaders, who are in turn responsible for their respective ministries. The responsibilities of the ministry leaders are to encompass, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Function as contact person for all who are serving in a particular ministry.
2. Obtain approval from the elders to determine the appropriate material and distribute curriculum for the ministry. Purchase approval is to be obtained from the Administrative Team.
3. Develop an annual plan for helpers.
4. Facilitate helper training.
5. Organizing events.

SECTION 6. Church Planting

A. Daughter Church

1. The daughter church is a legally dependent part of IBCB. It regulates its own matters by means of a regulatory system which depends on the approval of, and in accordance with, the essential principles of IBCB.
2. The membership meeting of the daughter church consists of the daughter church members as well as an IBCB elder or its representative. The IBCB elders must be notified in advance about upcoming membership meetings.
3. The daughter church makes decisions over its own matters, especially
 - a. Development of church community
 - b. Founding a leadership team consisting of at least three members
 - c. Budget
4. The following decisions are subject to approval by the IBCB elders and confirmed at an IBCB membership meeting.
 - a. Establishing membership
 - b. Installation or removal of full time or part time staff members
 - c. Budget
5. The daughter Church membership is to be kept separate from the membership of IBCB.

SECTION 7. Amendments

Changes or additions to these by-laws may be made only:

1. At a membership meeting
2. After notice of the proposed change or addition has been given in writing and announced from the pulpit on at least two Sundays prior to the meeting.
3. Approved by simple majority of the votes cast.