

Constitution & Bylaws of Marysville Community Church (MCC)

Marysville, WA

(Adopted by the membership on 2019)

Preamble

Since it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to call some of His servants to unite here in Marysville, WA, under the name of Marysville Community Church (MCC), to worship God and spread the gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ, we, the members of Marysville Community Church adopt this Constitution as our bylaws, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of Jesus Christ and bring Him glory, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the Statement of Faith and Covenant of this church.

Article 1 – Name

The name of this church is: Marysville Community Church.

Article 2 – Purpose

This church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God, and is committed to pursuing God’s glory in all of its activities. This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:

Worshiping Him;

Equipping the saints through the faithful teaching of God’s Word;

Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching, personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with God’s Word;

Encouraging, supporting and participating in great commission work, local, domestic, and international;

Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion;

Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers; and

Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Article 3 – Membership

Section 1 – Qualifications

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must sustain the doctrines of our church and not hold any settled convictions contrary to them, in accord with our Statement of Faith, and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person’s qualification for membership candidacy. In

making determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence as the elders deem appropriate.

The normal process for becoming a member is completion of all sessions of the Marysville Community Church's membership class, a letter affirming good standing from previous church, an assessment of a person's qualification for membership in an interview with an elder, and a vote by the entire church on the basis of the person's profession of faith.

Section 2 – Admission

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by a simple majority vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members, recognizing that members of Christ's church should strive for unity in all things (**Ephesians 4:1-6**). At that point, newly elected members shall relinquish their membership in other churches.

Section 3 – Duties and Privileges

In accord with the duties listed in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those who are members of this congregation shall be entitled to lead in the ministries of the church. Non-members may serve on an ad hoc basis with the approval of the elders.

Under Christ, this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend members' meetings and vote on such matters as may be submitted to a vote.

Section 4 – On Church Discipline

Formative discipline is inherent in the preaching, teaching, and exercise of other ministries in the church. When formative discipline fails due to unrepentant sin, corrective discipline is then necessary. Corrective discipline is for the good of the church and the member who has sinned. It is never to be entered into lightly or rashly. The goal of corrective discipline is always remedial, that is, the goal is always the salvation and holiness and good of the one being disciplined.

Any member living in unrepentant sin, including a denial of our statement of faith, or consistently neglectful of his or her Christian duties, as specified in the church covenant, or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in **Matthew 18:15-17**, **1 Corinthians 5** and other examples in Scripture. In the case of a private offense, all grievances between members will be dealt with in accordance with the principles of **Matthew 18:15-20**. No public charge will be considered until the initial steps of **Matthew 18** have been pursued and the elders have become involved. Grievances of a public and/or scandalous nature should be dealt with in accordance with the principles of **1 Corinthians 5**, in order to protect the honor of Christ and His church. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, removal from office, and ex-communication from Marysville Community Church (see **Matthew 18:15-17**; **2 Thessalonians 3:14-15**; **1 Timothy 5:19-20**; **1 Corinthians 5:4-5**).

The purpose of such discipline should be:

1. For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (**Hebrews 12:1-11; Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians. 6:1**);
2. For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (**1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; Hebrews 10:24-25**);
3. For the purity of the church as a whole (**1 Corinthians 5:6-7; Ephesians 5:27; Revelation 21:2**);
4. For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (**Matthew 5:13-16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1-14**); and
5. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (**Leviticus 20:26; John 15:8; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 2:12**).

It is desirable in the case of public sin that a confession be made at an appointed meeting of the church, so that the church can freely extend forgiveness. Such public confession is especially necessary in the case of elders and deacons (**1 Timothy 5:19-20; Galatians 2:11-14**).

Section 5 – Termination of Membership

Termination of membership shall be recognized by the church following the death, transfer of membership, or voluntary resignation of any church member who is in good standing. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the elders) upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members, recognizing that members of Christ's church should strive for unity in all things (**Ephesians 4:1-6**).

Section 6 – Review of Membership Roll

On an annual basis the elders will bring before the congregation a list of members who have died or relocated to a new city so as to keep the membership list up to date.

Article 4 – Meetings

Section 1 – Worship Meetings

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day (Sunday), and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

Section 2 – Members' Meetings

In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Regular Meetings. There shall be regular members' meetings at some time apart from the Sunday morning service. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

Notice. The date, time, and purpose of any regular meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church at least two weeks preceding the meeting.

Quorum. Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present.

Moderator. An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church.

Minutes. Minutes of the regular and special members' meetings shall be taken and kept in the church records under the custody of the Church Clerk.

Business. The members shall consider such matters as may be presented at the members' meetings. At any regular or special members' meeting, officers may be elected and positions filled as needed, so long as all relevant requirements of the Constitution and Bylaws have been met. A budget for a new fiscal year shall be approved by the membership at a members' meeting no more than three months before the end of the current fiscal year and no more than three weeks after the start of the new fiscal year.

Voting. Unless otherwise provided in the Constitution and Bylaws, matters presented to the members for vote shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the members present at the members' meeting.

Resolutions adopted by the elders shall be reported to the church at members' meetings and may be reversed by the church by a majority vote of the members present.

Article 5 – Officers

Section 1 – Summary

Jesus Christ is the Lord and head of this church and He rules primarily through the Scriptures.

The Biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons, but the church is governed by the congregation. The Biblical terms “elder,” “pastor,” and “overseer” are understood to refer to the same Biblical office. All pastors-elders-overseers possess the authority and gifts of pastors, whether or not they are paid by the church. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section 2 – Elders

Number and Qualifications. We believe in a plurality of elders, and therefore shall strive to have a plurality of elders at all times, if biblically qualified and called men are available. If there are more than three elders, at least half of the active eldership must be composed of church members who are not in the regular employ of the church.

Elders shall be men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in **1 Timothy 3:1-7** and **Titus 1:6-9**. Only men may serve as elders in accord with **1 Timothy 2:12; 3:2**. No elder may hold the office of deacon during his tenure.

Duties. In keeping with the principles set forth in **Acts 6:1-6** and **1 Peter 5:1-4**, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church.

The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons

and appointed church agents, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for great commission work.

The elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions. The elders may establish ministry positions or advisory teams to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may hire non-pastoral staff positions in accordance with the budget. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of the elders. The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member. The duties and responsibilities, composition, and appointment of members to advisory teams shall be outlined in the Policies and Procedure Manual.

To facilitate their fulfillment of these responsibilities, the elders may recommend the appointment of Deacons to address the various concerns of the church.

Each year the elders shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a regular or specially-called budget meeting and called up for a vote at the following members' meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

Meetings. The elders will meet regularly to seek God's will through the study of the Word, prayer and the wisdom of others for the purpose of carrying out the responsibilities noted above.

The elders shall elect a chairman of elders' meetings. Meetings of the elders shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws and any procedures adopted by the elders. Unless otherwise provided by the Constitution and Bylaws or any procedures adopted by the elders, the act of the majority of the elders present at a meeting at which quorum is present shall be the acts of the elders.

Action without Meeting. Any action required or permitted to be taken by the elders may be taken without a meeting, if all of the elders, individually or collectively, consent in writing to the action. Such action by written consent shall have the same force and effect as the unanimous vote of the elders. Such written consent or consents shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the elders.

Minutes. Minutes of the meetings of the elders shall be recorded and circulated to the elders in a timely manner.

Quorum. A quorum of elders shall consist of two-thirds of the elders of the church.

Election. The church shall recognize, in accordance with **Article 7, Section 2** of the Bylaws, men gifted and willing to serve in the calling of elder. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. Except in the case of the Senior or Associate Pastor(s), this recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church triennially by a three-fourths majority vote. If the church fails to reaffirm its recognition of an elder, such elder's term of office shall terminate as of the third anniversary of his election as elder.

Section 3 – Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in **Article 5, Section 2**, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in **Article 5, Section 2**, for elders. His call shall be defined as per **Article 7, Section 3**.

He shall regularly preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws.

The Senior Pastor shall have primary responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.

In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

Section 4 – Associate Pastor

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the Senior Pastor is that of Associate. An Associate Pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in **Article 5, Section 2**, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time work of an elder. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation for elders set out in **Article 5, Section 2**. His call shall be defined as per **Article 7, Section 4**. He shall assist the Senior Pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the work of an elder, or as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the other elders.

Section 5 – Deacons

Qualifications and Duties. A deacon or deaconess shall be a church member who satisfies the requirement and description in **1 Timothy 3:8-13** and **Acts 6:1-7**.

Deacons are to care for the practical needs of the church and attend to the facilities used for public worship and ministry.

Each deacon will be appointed to a particular area of ministry. Although deacons are given responsibility in specific areas of ministry, fundamentally their role is to serve. Therefore, each deacon will function under the authority and oversight of the elders. If the elders determine that the church no longer needs a particular diaconal position, they may bring that position to an end.

Deacons will be responsible for the organization and administration of the assigned ministry. Their responsibilities might include recruiting volunteers, directing activities, promoting the ministry among the congregation, communicating with the elders, coordinating with the church office, disbursing funds, training a successor, or other such tasks.

Deacons are to promote the unity of the church.

Deacon of Finance

The Deacon of Finance, who shall not be a paid church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in the name of the church in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The Deacon of Finance also shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the church, and implement adequate controls to ensure that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by an officer, employee, or agent of the church. The Deacon of Finance shall be responsible for presenting biannual reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the church at a regular members' meeting; this responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the elders. The Deacon of Finance shall render to the elders an account of all transactions as deacon of finance and of the financial condition of the church as requested by the elders, but in any event at least annually.

Election. The church shall recognize, in accordance with **Article 7, Section 2** of the Bylaws, men and women who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons and deaconesses. They shall be nominated by the elders and elected to serve for a term of two years, or until their successors for their respective ministry area are elected.

Section 6 – Termination

Any officer's term may be terminated prior to its expiration by resignation or dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an officer should be dismissed should express such concern first to the elders and thereafter, if need be, to the congregation at any regular or special members' meeting. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in **Matthew 18:15-17** (and, in such case of elders, **1 Timothy 5:17-21**). Any officer may be dismissed by a three-fourths majority vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.

Article 6 – Ministry Staff

The Senior Pastor, in consultation with the elders, may hire other ministry staff in accordance with the budget.

The number and roles of ministry staff will be limited to those deemed necessary by the Senior Pastor, in consultation with the elders, to carry out effective spiritual ministry and for which salaries have been allocated in the church budget.

Ministry staff must: (a) meet all membership qualifications, (b) abide by and support the Statement of Faith and the Church Covenant, and (c) be members in good standing.

Ministry staff will be involved in the spiritual ministry of Marysville Community Church, serving the diverse, practical needs of the church. Therefore, in addition to the requirements above, they must meet the qualifications of a deacon, set forth in **1 Timothy 3:8-13** and the model provided in **Acts 6:1-7**.

Article 7 – Elections

Section 1 – Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles:

- Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process;
- Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders;
- All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members;
- The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2 – Selection of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members’ meeting of the church. The elders shall be responsible for nominating candidates to serve as officers of the church, but should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Names of nominees to serve as elders, deacons, or treasurer shall be presented by the elders at a members’ meeting, at least eight weeks prior to the election, and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members’ meeting.

For the office of elder, the moderator shall declare elected all men receiving three-fourth majority vote of the members present. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority vote of the members present. The persons elected shall assume their respective office upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

Section 3 – Calling of the Senior Pastor

For calling any man to the position of Senior Pastor, the same process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential Senior Pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as Senior Pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at all church services on two Sundays following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members’ meeting.

Section 4 – Calling of an Associate Pastor

For calling any man to the position of Associate Pastor, the same process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential Associate Pastor and, before being asked to express its judgement, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as Associate Pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at all church services on two Sundays following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members’ meeting.

Article 8 – Financial Policies

Section 1 – Contracts

Contracts may not be entered into unless reviewed by all the elders and agreed upon by a majority. All contracts for major services or expenditures should be reviewed by a competent attorney.

Section 2 – Designated Contributions

The church will not receive gifts with specific conditions attached. If a donor wishes to fund a specific item, that can be requested. However, the church reserves all rights, title, and interest in and to and control of such contributions, as well as full discretion as to the ultimate expenditure or distribution thereof in connection with any funds.

Section 3 – Fundraising

The church will not hold any fundraising events. Funds will only be received through regular giving.

Article 9 – Indemnification

Section 1 – Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the pastors determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The church shall purchase appropriate insurance to meet these potential liabilities.

Section 2 – Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who (a) acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and (b) either believed that his or her conduct was not unlawful or failed to abide by a law that the pastors determine to be in contradiction to Biblical obligations.

Section 3 – Procedure

If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

Article 10 – Dispute Resolution

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian church (see, e.g., **Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8**), the church shall urge its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to Biblically-based principles, without resorting to the civil courts.

An important exception to this principle exists for alleged criminal behavior (see **Romans 13:3-4**), not least because such behavior may in some cases legally be required to be reported to government authorities.

Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of Biblically-based principles and avoiding lawsuits to resolve disputes between the church itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities. The elders shall adopt policies and procedures to effect these aspirations.

Article 11 – Policies and Procedures

The elders and any of their designees shall be responsible for overseeing the development, maintenance and periodic review of policies and procedures for the day-to-day functions of the church. Such policies and procedures shall be maintained in a Policies and Procedures Manual, which shall be available at the church office for members to review.

Article 12– Amendments

The Statement of Faith and Church Covenant may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

The revised version of this constitution shall be made available to all church members by the Church Clerk.