

Central Community Church

BY-LAWS

BY-LAW 1: RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIVILEGES OF AFFILIATION

- 1.1 Accepting our responsibility under the great commission of the Lord Jesus Christ, as stated in Matthew 28 and Mark 16, this local church shall support the missionary program and policy of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.
- 1.2 Recognizing the important services rendered to this congregation by the international and district offices of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, this local church shall support the ministry and fellowship services of the International and District offices, the international missions objectives of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Bible college serving this district, and other responsibilities as may be determined by the General Conference of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.
- 1.2.1 This shall be done in accordance with the General Conference resolution that each local church forward an amount equal to ten (10) percent of its general fund offerings (does not include missionary offerings, building fund, or any other special fund) to the District office at regular intervals to support the ministry and fellowship services. The District office will forward ten (10) percent from these funds to the International Office for ministry and fellowship services.

BY-LAW 2: FINANCES

- 2.1 Prior to the making an application for a loan from any source or incurring indebtedness on a purchase plan or otherwise when repayment is not to be made in full within 12 months of the date of the intended loan or where the intended indebtedness, together with all other indebtedness of the said local church, in the aggregate will exceed ten (10) percent of the total amount of the previous year's gross revenues, this local church shall obtain the approval of its congregation to the proposed action by resolution, passed at a duly called special or regular annual business meeting.
- 2.2 The District executive of the Western Ontario District of the PAOC has the privilege to create policies which will allow local churches to request care and intervention from time to time.

BY-LAW 3: AMENDMENTS

- 3.1 These by-laws may be amended at any Annual Business Meeting of this local church or any Special Business Meeting duly called for that specific purpose, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment has been presented in writing to the Church Board and to the District Superintendent at least 30 days before the date of the business meeting, and providing that notice of said proposed amendment shall have been given in the announcements of the said business meeting.
- 3.2 A copy of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be available to any voting member between the time of announcement and the time of the Business Meeting on application to the secretary of the Church Board.
- 3.3 An amendment to be adopted shall require a three-quarters (3/4, 75%) majority vote. Such amendment shall not be contrary to the regulations of the General Conference or General Constitution and By-Laws or district constitution and by-laws or Local Church Constitution and By-Laws of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, or contrary to the Declaration of Trust, where applicable.

BY-LAW 4: PARTNERSHIP

- 4.1 Partners are held to a Biblical standard of living and must affirm the following statements of faith:
 - 4.1.1 The Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:15-16)

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- 4.1.2 There is one God, eternally existent in three person: Father, Son & Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 3:16,17; Mark 12:29)
- 4.1.3 Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, was crucified and resurrected three days later (Isaiah 7:14; Romans 8:34; Acts 1:10-11)
- 4.1.4 Sins can be forgiven through Jesus alone (Isaiah 55:7; Romans 4:23-25; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19)
- 4.1.5 Water baptism is a public declaration of faith in Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:3-5)
- 4.2 Partners agree to take ownership of and responsibility for the church family, including participating in the community through generous and cheerful giving of their time, talent, and treasure. They formally commit themselves to the mission of Central and work in a mutually accountable community.
- 4.3 Prior to being approved as a partner, a current board member of the Church will interview each individual who applies for partnership to ensure the individual is aligned with this bylaw as well as current policies and procedures surrounding partnership. Partners will be approved by a majority vote of the Board, after the previous steps have been confirmed.
- 4.4 PARTNERSHIP RENEWAL:**
- Partnership will be renewed every year as outlined in established policies and procedures. If Partners are unable to commit to the accepted expectations, Partnership will lapse.
- 4.5 SPECIAL PARTNERSHIP STATUS:** At times, it may not be possible for some Partners to abide by all expectations of partnership. The following statuses have been formed for their respective circumstances:
- 4.5.1 **A "Legacy Partner" is a Partner who has held partnership for at least 10 years but is unable to continue serving in the regular capacity of a Partner due to limitations of their age, disability and/or physical distance from the church. These Partners continue to be dedicated to the mission of Central, but certain limitations do not allow for the practical attendance or participation in the regular requirements of a Partner. To honour their continued dedication and support of the mission and vision of Central, they will continue to have the ability to vote and participate in the business of Central as a regular Partner would.**
- 4.5.2 A "Honorary Partner" is a partner who has moved outside of the country for missionary work. They are unable to regularly attend or volunteer, but may retain their partnership as an Honorary Partner.

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BY-LAW 5: BOARD ELECTION PROCESS and TERM LIMITS

- 5.1 The Board of Directors is elected by the partners by way of a process involving a Selection Committee and a Final Partnership Vote
- 5.2 The Selection Committee is formed by the following process:
 - 5.2.1 The Board of Directors selects three of the directors to sit on the Selection Committee
 - 5.2.2 The Partnership receives a notification (by email or other method) requesting nominations for the Selection Committee. These requests will be made as a part of the annual partnership renewal process.
 - 5.2.3 Those persons who are nominated for the Selection Committee confirm their willingness to have their name stand for the Selection Committee
 - 5.2.4 The Board of Directors will prayerfully review and select four nominees based on qualifications, nominations, and diversity representation
 - 5.2.5 After the selection has been made, both selected and non-selected individuals are informed by email of their inclusion or exclusion on the nominee list
 - 5.2.6 At a session of the Annual Business Meeting, partners are informed of the proposed selection Committee and vote on the slate of names presented.
 - 5.2.6.1 A majority vote of 50 plus 1% of the partners will constitute an acceptance of the slate of nominations and the formation of the Selection Committee
 - 5.2.6.2 If the Partners do not vote to approve the slate of names presented, a comprehensive list of nominated individuals will be presented until a majority vote is reached
- 5.3 Upon formation of the Selection Committee, each member is required to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- 5.4 The Board of Directors is Selected as Follows:
 - 5.4.1 In the same notification that is described in 5.2.2 above, the Partners would have received a notification requesting nominations for the Board of Directors.
 - 5.4.2 The Selection Committee reviews the nominations provided by the Partners and removes those who do not meet basic requirements
 - 5.4.2.1 Requirements include being a partner, regular giving, leadership and volunteering or participation in a group
 - 5.4.3 The remaining nominees are informed of their nomination by email (or current method) and invited to a mandatory meeting which is facilitated by current board members
 - 5.4.4 The Board nominees are then required to submit applications for consideration by the deadline as set out by the Selection Committee
 - 5.4.5 The Selection Committee reviews all applications, conducts prayerful assessments based on all requirements of the Board Applications and completes a rubric whereby selections are made. In review of nominees, the Selection Committee will consider the requirements for Board Directors including the current needs of the Board as deemed by the current needs of the church.

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- 5.4.6 If necessary, the Selection Committee conducts interviews with top candidates
- 5.4.7 After all necessary considerations are made, the Selection Committee selects the required number of names for proposal to the Board of Directors
- 5.4.8 The Board of Directors reviews and approves the selected nominees or offers comments for reconsideration.
- 5.4.9 Once approved, the selected candidates are notified of their selection
- 5.4.10 Those Candidates not selected are also informed
- 5.4.11 The slate of names for elected are provided to the Partners for their consideration and vote
- 5.4.12 At the final session of the Annual Business Meeting, the slate of names is presented to the Partners for affirmation and approval.
 - 5.4.12.1 A majority vote of 50 plus 1% of the partners is required for the slate to be accepted and the nominees elected.
 - 5.4.12.2 If the partners vote to reject the slate of names, a comprehensive list of nominated individuals is provided for the Partners to vote on until a majority vote is reached for each new Director of the Board.
- 5.5 Once Elected, directors shall serve on the Board for a three year term.
 - 5.5.1 At the end of the three year term, the director has the option of seeking reelection for another three year term with the maximum consecutive time on the board being a period of 6 years.

BY-LAW 6: STANDING COMMITTEES

- 6.1 At any time during the course of operations on behalf of the church, the Board of Directors may require standing committees to conduct business on behalf of the Board of Directors.
- 6.1 Standing Committees are composed of directors and non directors who are appointed by the Board to serve as the need arises.
- 6.1.2 Non Director members of Standing Committees are not elected by Partners
- 6.1.3 Non Director members of Standing Committees do not attend meetings of the Board of Directors unless invited for a specific purpose
- 6.1.4 Standing Committees exist only for the purposes of the current board and can be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the sitting Board of Directors

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STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL TRUTHS AND POSITIONS AND PRACTICES

Article 5 and Article 6 of the General Constitution and By-Laws Amended by General Conference, May 2022

ARTICLE 5: STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

PREAMBLE

This version of the Statement of Essential Truths represents the result of an extensive collaborative process to rephrase and refresh what is most essential to us. As before, we make no claim that this statement covers all biblical truth, nor that the human phraseology employed here is inspired/ We recognize as we did at the outset of our movement that there is some diversity of theological thought among us, but we remain committed as a Pentecostal community to the historic creeds of the church, to evangelical convictions of faith, and to the Full Gospel that is Saviour, Healer, Spirit Baptizer, and Soon Coming King.

TRIUNE GOD

There is one God, the creator, who exists eternally in unity as three equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.¹ The triune God is loving, holy, infinite, just, and worthy of all worship.²

The Father accomplishes his plan of salvation through both redemption and judgement.³ All things will be subject to him, and his kingdom will have no end.⁴

The Father sent the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary when she was a virgin.⁵ Jesus became fully human while remaining fully God.⁶ Anointed by the Spirit, Jesus revealed the Father and the kingdom of God by his sinless life, teaching, and miracles.⁷ After he died for our sin, God raised him from the dead, and he is now at the right hand of the Father.⁸

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son and gives life throughout creation.⁹ The Spirit draws people to repentance and new life in Jesus Christ.¹⁰ through the spirit's indwelling, the Father and the Son are present to all believers, making them children of God.¹¹

¹ Matt 28:19; 2Cor 13:14

² Exod 34:6-7; Psa 99:4-5

³ Exod 6:6; Rom 1:16-18

⁴ Psa 103:19; Rev 11:15; Eph 1:10

⁵ Matt 1:18-25

⁶ John 1:1,14; Col 1:19; Heb 2:17

⁷ John 1:32; 14:7-10; Luke 4:18-19

⁸ Acts 2:32-33; Rom 8:34

⁹ Psa 104:21-30; Acts 2:33

¹⁰ John 16:7-15

¹¹ Rom 8:14-17; 1John 3:24

BIBLE

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The Bible, both Old and New Testament, is the written revelation of God's character and saving purposes for humanity and for all creation.¹² As God's revelation, the entire Bible is true and trustworthy, and is the final and absolute authority for belief and conduct.¹³ The Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible enables its interpretation and application.¹⁴

CREATION

God created and sustains the heavens and the earth,¹⁵ which display God's glory. Formed in the image of God, both male and female, humankind is entrusted with the care of God's creation as faithful stewards,¹⁶ As a result of human rebellion, sin and death entered the world, distorting the image of God and all of God's good creation.¹⁷

Angels were created as supernatural beings to worship and serve God.¹⁸ Along with Satan, some angels chose to rebel and oppose the purposes of God.¹⁹ Christ gives believers victory over Satan and these demons.²⁰

SALVATION

Salvation is available to all people by the loving, redemptive act of the triune God.²¹ Through obedience to the Father,²² Christ gave himself as a ransom.²³ Christ, who had no sin, became sin for us offering himself and shedding his blood on the cross so that in him we might become right with God.²⁴ The life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ²⁵ provide the way of salvation for those who, by God's grace, repent from their sin and confess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.²⁶

Salvation means to receive the Spirit, to be forgiven, reconciled with God and others, born again, and liberated from sin and darkness, transferring the believer into God's kingdom.²⁷ Our experience of healing liberation includes healing whether spiritual, physical, emotional, or mental as a foretaste of our future, complete restoration.²⁸ Those who remain in Christ and do not turn away are assured of salvation on judgment day by the indwelling Holy Spirit,²⁹ who sanctifies and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.³⁰

SPIRIT BAPTISM

On the Day of Pentecost, Jesus poured out the promised Holy Spirit on the church.³¹ As his return draws near, Jesus continues to baptize in the Holy Spirit those who are believers.³² This empowers them to continue his work of proclaiming with speech and action the good news of the arrival and coming of the kingdom of God.³³ This experience is available for everyone, male and female, of every age, status,³⁴ and ethnicity.³⁵

The sign of speaking in tongues indicates that believers have been baptized with the Holy Spirit³⁶ and signifies the nature of Spirit baptism as empowering our communication, to be his witnesses with speech and action as we continue to pray in the Spirit.³⁷

12 Psa 119; John 20:30-31; Rom 15:4

13 2Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12

14 2Pet 1:20-21; John 16:13; 1 Cor 2:12-13

15 Gen 1:1; Col 1:15-17

16 Gen 1:26-27

17 Rom 5:12; 8:20-22

18 Heb 1:14; Psa 103:20

19 Rev 12:7-9

20 Acts 10:38; Eph 6:10-13

21 John 3:16; Gal 4:4-7; Titus 2:11-14

22 John 8:28-29; Phil 2:8; Heb 7:24-28

23 Mark 10:45; 1Tim 2:6

24 2 Cor 5:21; 1John 3:16

25 Rom 4:22-25; 5:19; 6:4-5; Heb 7:24-28

26 Rom 10:9; 1John 1:9; Acts 3:19; 4:12

27 Eph 2:13-16; Col 1:13-14, 19-20; 1Pet 1:3

28 Isa 53:4-5; 1Pet 2:24; Psa 147:3; Rom 8:23

29 Eph 1:13-14; 1John 4:13; Heb 6:5-6; Phil

3:12-14

30 1Thess 4:3-4; 1Cor 6:11; Rom 12:1-2;

1Pet 1:2

31 Luke 24:49; Acts 2:33

32 Acts 2:38-39; 8:14-17; 19:1-6

33 Luke 4:18-19, 43; Acts 1:8

34 Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18, 39

35 Acts 10:45-46

36 Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6

37 Acts 1:8; 2:11-43; 4:31; Rom 15:19; 1Cor

14:15

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THE CHURCH

Jesus Christ is the head of the church.³⁸ All who are united with Christ are joined by the Spirit to his body.³⁹ Each local church is an expression of the universal church whose role is to participate in the mission of God to restore all things.⁴⁰

Central to the church is the shared experience of the transforming presence of God.⁴¹ The church responds with worship, prayer, proclamation, discipleship, and fellowship,⁴² including the practices of water baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism by immersion symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ in his death and resurrection.⁴³ The Lord's supper symbolizes Christ body and blood, and our communion as believers. Shared together, it proclaims his death in anticipation of his return.⁴⁴

The Spirit gives all gifts to the church to minister to others in love for the purpose of bearing witness to Christ and for the building up of the church.⁴⁵ The Spirit also empowers leaders, both female and male, to equip the church to fulfil its mission and purposes.⁴⁶

RESTORATION

Our great hope is for the imminent return of Christ in the air to receive his own, both the living who will be transformed, and the dead in Christ who will be resurrected bodily.⁴⁷ Christ will complete at his second coming the restoration begun when he initiated God's kingdom at his first coming.⁴⁸ Christ will liberate creation from the curse, fulfill God's covenant to Israel, and defeat all powers that oppose God.⁴⁹ Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.⁵⁰

Ultimately, God will judge the living and the dead.⁵¹ God will judge the living and the dead.⁵¹ Such judgement is God's gracious answer to humanity's cry for justice to prevail throughout the earth and is consistent with God's character as loving, holy, and just.⁵² The unredeemed will go away into eternal punishment, but the redeemed into eternal life.⁵³ The redeemed will enjoy the presence of God where there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain.⁵⁴ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!⁵⁵

38 Col 1:18; Matt 16:18

39 1Cor 12:12-14

40 Acts 1:8; Matt 28:18-20; 2Cor 3:17-18

41 Acts 2:42-43; 1Cor 12:7; Matt 18:20; 2Cor 3:17-18

42 1Pet 2:9-10; Col 4:2-6; Acts 2:42

43 Rom 6:3-8; Matt 28:19

44 Matt 26:26-29; 1Cor 11:23-26

45 Acts 8:5-7; 1Cor 12:4-11; 14:12; Heb 2:3-4

46 Eph 4:11-16; Matt 20:25-28; Acts 2:17-18; 6:2-4; Rom 16:7

47 1Thess 4:14-17; 5:1-2

48 Matt 13:24-41; Rev 11:15-17; Acts 1:6-7; 3:20-21; Rom 11:25-27

49 Rom 8:19-21; 1Cor 15:20-26

50 Phil 2:10-11; Isa 45:23

51 Acts 10:42; 1Pet 4:5

52 Mal 2:17-3:1; Rev 6:9-11

53 Matt 25:46; Dan 12:1-2

54 Isa 25:8-12; Rev 21:3-4

55 Rev 22:20

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ARTICLE 6: POSITIONS AND PRACTICES

6.1 MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

Marriage is a provision of God wherein one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others enter into a lifelong relationship⁵⁶ through a marriage ceremony that is recognized by the church and legally sanctioned by the state.

Marriage establishes a "one-flesh" relationship⁵⁷ that goes beyond a physical union and is more than either a temporary relationship of convenience intended to provide personal pleasure or a contract that binds two people together in a legal partnership. Marriage establishes an emotional and spiritual oneness that enables both partners to respond to the spiritual, physical and social needs of the other.⁵⁸ It provides the biblical context for the procreation of children.

Marriage is to be an exclusive relationship that is maintained in purity.⁵⁹ It is intended by God to be a permanent relationship. It is a witness to the world of the relationship between Christ and His church.⁶⁰ Marriage requires a commitment of love, perseverance and faith. Because of its sanctity and permanence, marriage should be treated with seriousness and entered into only after counsel and prayer for God's guidance. Christians should marry only those who are believers.⁶¹ An individual who becomes a believer after marriage should remain with his/her partner in peace, and should give witness to the Gospel in the home.⁶²

The Bible holds family life as a position of trust and responsibility. The home is a stabilizing force in society, a place of nurture, counsel, and safety for children.⁶³

Marriage can only be broken by porneia, which is understood as marital unfaithfulness⁶⁴ involving adultery, homosexuality, or incest. While the Scriptures give evidence that the marriage vow and "one flesh" union are broken by such acts and therefore recognize the breaking of the marriage relationship, the Scriptures do recommend that the most desirable option would be reconciliation.⁶⁵

⁵⁶ Gen 2:24; Matt 19:6

⁵⁷ Matt 19:5; Mal 2:15

⁵⁸ Gen 2:24; Matt 19:6

⁵⁹ Eph 5:3; 26-27

⁶⁰ Eph 5:25; 31-32

⁶¹ 2Cor 6:1, 14-15

⁶² 1Cor 7:12-14; 16

⁶³ Eph 6:4

⁶⁴ Matt 5:32; 19:9

⁶⁵ Eph 4:32

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6.2 DIVORCE

We believe that divorce is not God's intention. It is God's concession to the "hardness of men's hearts."⁶⁶

We, therefore, discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. Our objective is reconciliation and the healing of the marital union wherever possible. Marital unfaithfulness should not be considered so much an occasion or opportunity for divorce but rather an opportunity for Christian grace, forgiveness, and restoration. Divorce in our society is a termination of a marriage through a legal process authorized by the State. While the Church recognizes this legal process as an appropriate means to facilitate the permanent separation of spouses, the Church restricts the idea of divorce, in the sense of dissolution of marriage, to reasons specified in Scripture.

The weight of the biblical record is negative and the explicit statement is made, "God hates divorce."⁶⁷ Divorce is more than an action of the courts which breaks the legal contract between partners in a marriage. It is also the fracture of a unique human relationship between a male and a female. Divorce has profound consequences for the children. Divorce is evidence of the sinful nature expressed in human failure. Jesus gives one explicit cause for the dissolution of marriage: porneia or marital unfaithfulness.

Where all attempts at reconciliation have failed and a divorce has been finalized, we extend Christ's love and compassion.

6.3 REMARRIAGE

Remarriage is the union, legally sanctioned by the State, of one man and one woman, one or both of whom have been previously married. It is regarded as acceptable in Scripture in the event of the death of a former spouse. It is also regarded as acceptable if there has been sexual immorality on the part of the former partner or if the former partner has remarried.

6.4 GENDER

We believe in the biblical teaching of God's original and ongoing design for humanity as two distinct sexes, male and female, determined by genetics. The basis and the intent for this is the conviction that the matter of human sexuality and gender is fundamental to biblical anthropology, not merely biblical morality. Due to human sin and brokenness, our experience of our sex and gender is not always that which God the Creator originally designed. In light of this foundational understanding of creation, fall, and redemption, we will avoid any behaviour or alignment with identity that contradicts the biblical teaching. We do not affirm the resolution of tension between one's biological sex and one's experience of gender by the adoption of an identity contradictory with one's birth sex.

6.5 TITHING

Tithing was divinely instituted by God under the old covenant and was compulsory upon the people who worshiped God.⁶⁸ Under the new covenant we are not bound by arbitrary laws; but the principles of right and wrong, as expressed by the law, are fulfilled in the believer's life through grace. Grace should produce as much as or more than law demanded. Regular systematic giving is clearly taught in the New Testament. It is known as the grace of giving.⁶⁹ The gauge or rule of this systematic giving is defined in the Old Testament, known as the law of tithing. All Christians should conscientiously and systematically tithe their income to God.

⁶⁶ Matt 19:8

⁶⁷ Mal 2:16

⁶⁸ Lev 27:30-32; Mal 3:10

⁶⁹ 2Cor 9:6-15