

Boston MetroWest Bible

Church

Article 1: Name

The name of this church is “Boston MetroWest Bible Church.” Hereafter, this name can be denoted as BMWBC. The Chinese Name is “波士頓西郊聖經教會”.

Article 2: Purpose

BMWBC exists to glorify God: together we worship Him; nurture His people to be Christ-like according to the Bible; and share His love to all peoples, in Greater Boston and beyond. BMWBC is organized exclusively for religious, charitable and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations described under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

BMWBC does this through:

1. Worship and Prayer: to participate in worship as a corporate expression of our passion for the supremacy of God in all things to the joy of all peoples; and to seek that God’s will be done, through prayer. (Jn 4:24; Rev 4:8-11,; Eph 2:21; Mk 11:17)
2. Spiritual Formation: to grow in the knowledge and application of God’s Word in order to develop God’s people toward full Christian maturity and to train them for effective ministry. (Eph 4:11-13; 2Ti 2:2; 1Ti 3:15)
3. Community Fellowship: to love and care for one another as the family of God by encouraging, supporting and praying for each other. (Ac 2:44-47; Heb 10:23-25; Jn 13:34-35; Eph 3:15)
4. Ministry and Service: to demonstrate the love of Christ to those in our church, in our community, and in the world. (Mt 25:34-40; Gal 5:13; 2Co 9:11-12; Ro 12:4-8; Eph 4:12)
5. Evangelism and Missions: to extend the Kingdom of God by advancing the gospel through evangelism in our community and through missionary endeavors throughout the world. (Ac 1:8; 2Co 5:20; Mt 28:18-20; 2Pe 3:9)

Article 3: Statement of Faith

1. We believe that all Scripture – consisting of sixty-six books in the Old and New Testaments – is the only divinely inspired and infallible Word of God. Scripture is the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (2Ti 3:16-17; 1Th 2:13; 2Pe 1:19-21; 1Ti 4:12-13; Jas 1:21-25)
2. We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing as three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – who are equal in power and glory. This Triune God created all, upholds all, and governs all. (Dt 6:4; Mt 28:19; Eph 2:18)
3. We believe that Jesus Christ our Lord is the Son of God – both fully God and fully man – and the Savior of the world. Through his life, death, and resurrection, he atoned for sin and made provision for the redemption of mankind. (Mt 1:18-25; Jn 1:14; 3:16; Ro 3:25; 1Ti 3:16; Heb 2:9; 1Pe 3:18)
4. We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the blessed Trinity, brings people into a saving relation with God, and that he is the Comforter, Sanctifier, and Guide of all who receive Jesus Christ as personal Savior. (Jn 3:3-8; 14:16-18,26; 16:8-11,13,15; Tit 3:5; Ro 15:16; 2Th 2:13)
5. We believe that man was created in the image of God, for the purpose of glorifying God. We believe that as a result of the Fall, sin entered into the human race as a universal condition, and that sin condemned the whole human race to death. (Ge 1:27; 3:1-6; Ro 5:12,18; 3:10-12,23)
6. We believe that repentance for sin and reception of Jesus Christ as personal Savior is the one and only way whereby sinful man may be reconciled with God. (Ac 4:12; 1 Jn 5:12)
7. We believe that the Church is the body of believers united in Christ with him as the head. The Church invisible and universal is composed of the redeemed of all ages. The local church is the visible manifestation of the invisible Church. (Ac 2:46-47; Mt 16:18; Eph 4:4-6,11-16; 5:23)
8. We believe that baptism by water is the public confession of Christ as Savior and Lord. It is a symbol of one's union, by faith, with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection. (Mt 28:19; Ac 2:38-41; Ro 6:3-5). We believe that the Lord's Supper should be observed by all believers. It consists of partaking corporately of the bread and cup, in remembrance of the death of Christ for the remission of sins. (1Co 11:23-34; Lk 22:19-20)
9. We believe that God has established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman and that all intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin (Gen. 2:24-25; Ex. 20:14, 17, 22:19; Lev. 18:22-23, 20:13, 15-16; Matt. 19:4-6, 9; Rom. 1:18-31; I Cor. 6:9-10, 15-20; I Tim. 1:8-11; Jude 7).
10. We believe that at the end of the age, the Lord Jesus Christ shall descend from heaven to redeem his people into eternal life, and to judge the wicked into eternal death. (1Pe 4:7; Ac 1:11; 24:15; Mt 25:31-46; 1Th 4:14-17)

Article 4: Membership

1. Basis for Membership

- 1.1. We welcome born-again Christians who worship among us and accept our bylaws to join us as members.
- 1.2. Members of BMWBC have the right to vote on matters concerning this church. A member can be reclassified as inactive member; inactive member may not vote on any church matters.

2. Admission of Members

- 2.1. Christians baptized at BMWBC, upon signing the membership covenant, shall be received into this church as members.
- 2.2. Open invitations are extended to those among us who were baptized as adults, or received confirmation of infant baptism, These Christians, if not intending to remain as an active member in another church, may submit the membership application; hence, becoming a membership candidate.
- 2.3. A candidate shall be received into this church as a member in a public, new member induction/welcome ceremony upon:
 - 2.3.1. completing the new membership class;
 - 2.3.2. signing the membership covenant; and
 - 2.3.3. receiving the approval from the membership committee.

3. Inactive Members

- 3.1. A member can change his/her membership status to inactive by submitting a written request to the Membership Committee.
- 3.2. The Membership Committee may designate as inactive any member who has been inactive for a prolonged time period.

4. Termination by Separation

The Membership Committee, after consultation with a member, may recommend the termination of that member's membership status to the Board of Deacons for final approval under any of the following conditions:

- 4.1. The member or inactive member submits a written request for separation; or
- 4.2. The member or inactive member joins another church; or
- 4.3. The member moves to a different locale and is unable to attend this church on a regular basis.

BMWBC encourages its member who left the Boston area permanently to seek and join a local church of the same faith. BMWBC will provide a letter of reference upon request for this purpose.

5. Termination by Removal

By petition of at least two church members or by recommendation of the Membership Committee, after review and admonition by the Board of Deacons with due process, any member found guilty of gross misconduct and not evidencing genuine repentance shall be removed from membership. The principles described in Matt 18:15-17 shall be followed.

6. Reactivation of Membership

- 6.1. An inactive member may be reinstated after resuming worshiping with our congregation as evident by rejoining the church-wide worship service for three consecutive months.

- 6.2. Once the conditions prompting separation are resolved, a prior member terminated within ten years by separation may be reinstated (with a waiver from Membership Class).
- 6.3. After evidence of genuine repentance, a prior member terminated by removal within the preceding five years may be reinstated with the approval of the Board of Deacons.

Article 5: Governance Structure

Under the general oversight of the Board of Deacons, BMWBC ministries shall be implemented by members of the Board of Deacons and committees authorized according to the bylaws. The Board of Deacons is responsible to the congregation. As such, its decisions may be subject to modification at a business meeting of the congregation.

1. Board of Deacons

1.1. Responsibilities

- 1.1.1. Operation of this church;
- 1.1.2. Coordination on all motions that need to be approved by the church membership.
- 1.1.3. Approval of the annual budget of this church.
- 1.1.4. Board of Deacons meetings shall be called by the Chairman.
- 1.1.5. Special meetings of the Board of Deacons may be called by at least five members of the Board of Deacons.

1.2. Qualifications: Deacons shall be church members in good standing and shall meet the qualifications set forth in such Scripture as Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Tim 3:8-13.

1.3. Membership: The Board of Deacons shall consist of at least seven members elected from the general membership. The Board of Deacons shall decide on the number of deacons to be elected each year.

1.4. Term and Election/Confirmation

- 1.4.1. The term of a deacon shall be two years. Deacons are eligible for nomination for a consecutive two-year term. If a deacon cannot serve the full two-year term, the Board of Deacons may appoint another church member to serve the remaining term.
- 1.4.2. Candidates for deacon shall be selected by the Deacon Nomination Committee, chaired by an elder or a deacon and consisting of at least one deacon and additional church members appointed by the Board of Deacons. The Deacon Nomination Committee shall submit the final list of candidates for deacons to the Board of Deacons four weeks before the Annual Membership Meeting. Upon recommendation from the Board of Deacons, nominees shall be elected/confirmed at the Annual Membership Meeting. If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of vacancies, a candidate shall be confirmed by at least two-thirds of the votes cast. Otherwise, a candidate shall be elected by a simple majority of the votes and the vacancies shall be filled in the order of the number of votes received.
- 1.4.3. A deacon may be removed from office by agreement of at least two-thirds of the Board of Deacons, unless it is overruled by at least two-thirds of the votes cast at a Membership Meeting called for this issue

1.5. Organization

- 1.5.1. The Board of Deacons shall elect a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, from its members.
- 1.5.2. The Chairman shall be elected to a one-year term and shall be eligible for election to consecutive terms. The Chairman shall preside over the meetings of the Board of Deacons.
- 1.5.3. The Secretary shall be elected to a one-year term and shall be eligible for election to consecutive terms. The Secretary shall serve both as Secretary of the Board of Deacons. In the absence of the Chairman, the Secretary shall serve as acting Chairman.
- 1.5.4. The Secretary shall record minutes of all Board of Deacons, Board of Deacons meetings, and Membership Meetings and shall distribute them to the general membership. The Secretary shall post notice of the Annual Membership Meeting and any Special

Membership Meetings, and shall be responsible for balloting. The Secretary shall post the minutes of the Annual and Special Membership Meetings.

1.5.5. The Treasurer shall be elected to a one-year term and shall be eligible for election to consecutive terms. The Treasurer shall also serve as Chairman of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer of the Board of Deacons shall oversee all funds belonging to BMWBC.

1.5.6. The Treasurer shall prepare the church budget and shall provide monthly financial reports to the general membership. The Treasurer shall also submit an annual written report of church finances at the Annual Membership Meeting.

2. Elders

2.1. Responsibilities

2.1.1. The Elders shall assist the Pastor in the spiritual care of this church, and shall carry on all pastoral functions in the absence of the Pastor and the Acting Pastor, except those reserved only to ordained Ministers under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

2.1.2. The Elders are advisors to the Board of Deacons. As such, one shall not serve simultaneously both as an elder and a deacon. In situations where a resolution or action taken in this church should raise concerns among the elders, the elder(s) (with at least an unanimity minus one when there are three or more elders) will have the prerogative to request the Board of Deacons to pray further and consider corrective actions. If after two such requests on the same matter the Board of Deacons has not deemed necessary to alter the decision, the matter shall be submitted to the membership for final resolution at a Membership Meeting."

2.2. Term and Election/Confirmation

2.2.1. Term of office – The Elders must be members of this church, and shall serve for three years beginning January 1. The Elders may be re-elected.

2.2.2. Number – The number of Elders shall be determined by the Board of Deacons and the Elders.

2.2.3. Nomination – The Elders shall be nominated by the Pastor, or by any member of the Board of deacons. Upon a recommendation from the Board of Deacons and the Elders, the nominees shall be elected at a general meeting of this church by three-fourths of the members present and voting, if they constitute a quorum.

3. Church Officers

The Pastor, the Chairman of the Board of Deacons, the Secretary of the Board of Deacons, and the Treasurer of the Board of Deacons are the officers of this church.

Article 6: Pastors and Ministers

1. Responsibilities

Pastors and ministers are under the leadership of the Pastor. They are responsible for shepherding, preaching, and teaching.

2. Pastoral Qualifications

All pastors and ministers shall meet the qualifications for office as set forth in such Scripture as 1 Tim 3:1-7 and become church members.

3. Pastor (Lead Pastor)

3.1. Responsibilities

- 3.1.1. The Pastor, responsible to the Board of Deacons, is the spiritual leader of this church and serves primarily as shepherd, preacher, and teacher.
- 3.1.2. The Pastor is responsible for giving spiritual encouragement, and for leading the ministries of this church.
- 3.1.3. The Pastor shall supervise the pastoral and administrative staffs.
- 3.1.4. Except for nomination committees, the Pastor shall be an ex officio member of all boards, committees, and coworker teams of all ministries and fellowship groups.

3.2. Confirmation

- 3.2.1. When the position of Pastor shall become vacant, the Board of Deacons shall appoint a Pastor Search Committee, consisting of five members representation from the general church membership and chaired by an elder or by a deacon if no elder is available.
- 3.2.2. The recommendation of the Pastor Search Committee shall be submitted to the Board of Deacons. To be approved as a Pastor Candidate, a recommendation must receive at least 'unanimity minus one' positive approval by the Board of Deacons. The Pastor and/or Acting Pastor shall not vote upon the recommendation of a Pastor.
- 3.2.3. The Pastor Candidate shall be submitted to the Board of Deacons for coordination of confirmation. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall call a Membership Meeting to vote on the Pastor Candidate. Confirmation by at least two-thirds of the votes cast at this meeting shall be required to appoint the Pastor Candidate as Pastor.
- 3.2.4. The Pastor shall enter into an initial contract for employment of one year. The employment of the Pastor may be terminated by the vote of at least two-thirds of the deacons, unless it is overruled by at least two-thirds of the votes cast at a Special Membership Meeting called for this matter.

4. Other Pastors and Ministers

- 4.1. With the approval of the Board of Deacons, the Pastor may appoint one or more Pastors and Ministers as required. All Pastors and Ministers shall be under the supervision of the Pastor.
- 4.2. A Pastor or Minister shall enter into a contract for an initial employment for the term of one year.
- 4.3. A Pastor or Minister shall assist the Pastor, at his direction, in carrying out pastoral responsibilities.

5. Acting Pastor

- 5.1. When the Pastor is absent for a limited time, he may designate a Pastor to be Acting Pastor.

- 5.2. When the position of Pastor is vacant, the Board of Deacons shall designate a pastor or an elder to be an Acting Pastor. The Board of Deacons may invite a seasoned outside pastor or elder to be an Acting Pastor. The term of an Acting Pastor shall be at most two years. No one may serve continuously for more than 2 years as an Acting Pastor.

Article 7: Committees

The Board of Deacons may establish and organize committees to assist in the implementation of church ministries.

Unless otherwise specified, committees are responsible to the Board of Deacons, the respective committee chairs are appointed by the Board of Deacons for one year term without term limits, and all committee members are recommended by the respective chair and confirmed by the Board of Deacons. The committees shall administer in accordance with established policies, develop new policies as subject to the approval from the Board of Deacons and submit ministry reports, including changed and/or new policies, as mandated by the Board of Deacons for review.

Standing committees of BMWBC are:

1. Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee, responsible to the Board of Deacons, shall be in charge of the operations and maintenance of all church properties, and shall provide logistical support to designated church functions, such as property, transportation, food service, information and telecommunications, etc. Sub-committees shall operate under the Stewardship Committee. The chairman shall be a deacon appointed by the Board of Deacons.

2. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee, responsible to the Board of Deacons, shall oversee the financial matters of BMWBC and shall ensure compliance with IRS rules in all matters, such as all bank accounts using the name of this church. The Committee shall also monitor, and has authority to audit, any church accounts.

3. Missions Committee

The Missions Committee shall be responsible for the implementation of the missionary program of this church.

4. Membership Committee

The Membership Committee shall have the responsibility for the Membership Class. It shall administer all membership related tasks.

5. Human Resources Committee

The Human Resources Committee shall have the overall responsibility for the administration of the church's Personnel and Benefit Policy for the pastoral staff and for the administrative staff. The committee shall periodically review the Personnel and Benefit Policy and practices to ensure regulatory compliance.

6. Deacon Nomination Committee

Article 8: Meetings

8.1. Business Meetings

8.1.1. Membership Meetings: The purpose of Membership Meetings includes, but is not limited to, the following: approval of bylaws revision, appointment of the Lead Pastor, election/confirmation of elders and deacons, approval of significant capital spending, disposal/dissolving of significant assets, and announcement of policies/procedures implementations.

8.1.1.1. Annual Membership Meeting: The Annual Membership Meeting shall be held in October for the purpose of presenting reports, holding elections, and conducting any other business that may properly come before the meeting. Written notice shall be posted at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

8.1.1.2. Special Membership Meeting: With at least two-week's notice, a special membership meeting may be called by the Chairman, by the Lead Pastor, by an elder, by at least five members of the Board of Deacons, or by at least thirty voting church members. The Secretary shall post notice and the Chairman shall convene the meeting. In case of emergency as approved by the Board of Deacons, such meetings may be held with less than two-week's written notice or posting. All resolutions passed at a Special Membership Meeting and in accordance with the bylaws shall be binding.

8.1.2. To be introduced and considered in a membership meeting, an original main motion shall be offered to the Board of Deacons two (2) months before the meeting in the form of a resolution; and signed by the Chairman, by the Lead Pastor, by an elder, by five members of the Board of Deacons, or by the originator(s) with ten or more signature seconds.

8.1.3. Original main motions from the floor in a Membership Meeting may be accepted for voting only at a future Membership Meeting.

8.1.4. Meetings of the Board of Deacons: The Board of Deacons shall meet regularly – not less than once each quarter – to attend to church business.

8.2. Parliamentary Procedure

The Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, as may be amended from time to time, shall govern the meetings of members insofar as such rules are not inconsistent with the bylaws and any special rules of order BMWBC may adopt.

8.3. Quorum

8.3.1. Annual and Special Membership Meetings: Seventy-five percent (75%) of the average number of valid votes cast in the preceding two Annual Membership Meetings shall constitute a quorum at all Membership Meetings. Absentee ballots shall be counted toward the quorum.

8.3.2. All Other Meetings: A simple majority of a group or committee meeting shall constitute a quorum for that meeting.

8.4. Voting

8.4.1. Only members 18 years of age or older shall be eligible to vote at Membership Meetings.

8.4.2. A simple majority of votes cast shall be required to pass all resolutions, except as otherwise specified in the bylaws.

8.4.3. Voting in election and/or confirmation, adoption of bylaws revisions, and all significant motions shall be by ballot.

8.4.4. Absentee ballots may be cast for matters presented on printed ballots distributed to members before the meeting. Absentee ballots must be delivered to the Secretary prior to the meeting.

8.5. Conflict of Interest

The principle of 'avoiding conflict of interest' shall be the norm and be observed in all decisions made in the Board of Deacons and all ministries.

Article 9: Emeritus Status

To acknowledge the heritage of BMWBC, a retired pastor or elder may enjoy the honorary status of Emeritus.

With the majority vote of approval by the Board of Deacons, a pastor or elder retired in this church at least at age 65 with at least ten years of good standing service as either a pastor or elder in this church shall receive the Emeritus status. Those with Emeritus status can serve as non-voting advisers regarding all church-related matters.

Article 10: Amendments

The bylaws may be amended, altered, waived, or replaced at any Annual or Special Membership Meeting by at least two-thirds of the votes cast, provided there is a quorum. Notice of any meeting for such purpose shall include the subject matter of the proposed amendment.

Article 11: Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.