

LOCAL CHURCH CONSTITUTION

Preamble

The Local Church Constitution has been framed and adopted by the General Assembly of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, the denomination's highest legislative body.

Because each Christian and Missionary Alliance church is an integral part of the national and worldwide fellowship, it is united in governance, fellowship and service in order to promote unity of faith in the fullness of Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King, thereby facilitating the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Each local church shall be governed by the following constitution.

This constitution has two objectives:

1. to state the purpose of this local church and to define the nature of the relationships of this local church to The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada and the district of which it is an integral part
2. to stipulate the enabling instruments, legal procedures, and the empowering conditions under which this local church is to carry out its local and worldwide work.

The local church is the fundamental unit of Christian fellowship as exemplified in the Scripture. Faithfulness in multiplying churches around the world that are nourished in the Bible and full of the Holy Spirit is the scriptural pattern for carrying out the redemptive purposes of God and the Great Commission of our Lord and Saviour. The statement of our founder, A.B. Simpson is as relevant today as when he gave it in his address to General Council in 1912:

“We need to be perfectly adjusted in our loyalty to Christ and at the same time in our responsibility to the special trust which he has committed to our hands. God does not want us to be afraid of losing our consecration by being true to The Christian and Missionary Alliance, by knowing how to keep rank and by marching loyally under our own standard.

“Further, we must have the right adjustment of our home and foreign work, and the interdependence each upon the other, the home work as the constituency of the foreign, and the foreign as the outlet and complement of the other.

“Our foreign work is not only the fulfillment of the supreme duty of the Church of Christ, but the loftiest inspiration and uplift of our whole Christian life at home.

“God grant that this work may never lose its old simplicity, self-sacrifice and separation, not only from the secular but from the religious world in its spirit and practice. But at the same time, we must keep abreast of the progress of our age and be men and women of today in our message and ministry to our generation.”

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of this church is to glorify God by proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ and persuading men and women to become his disciples and dependable members of his Church.

Article III – Statement of Faith

This church subscribes to the following Statement of Faith which is the Statement of Faith of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada as amended from time to time. (All references are in Appendix 1 of this constitution.)

1. There is one God,¹ who is infinitely perfect,² existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.³
2. Jesus Christ is true God and true man.⁴ He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.⁵ He died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust, as a substitutionary sacrifice, and all who believe in him are justified on the ground of his shed blood. He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures.⁶ He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our great High Priest.⁷ He will come again to establish his Kingdom of righteousness and peace.⁸
3. The Holy Spirit is a divine Person, sent to indwell,⁹ guide, teach and empower the believer, and to convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment.¹⁰
4. The Old and New Testaments, inerrant as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of his will for the salvation of people. They constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice.¹¹
5. Humankind, originally created in the image and likeness of God,¹² fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death. All people are born with a sinful nature, are separated from the life of God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ.¹³ The destiny of the impenitent and unbelieving is existence forever in conscious torment, but that of the believer is everlasting joy and bliss.¹⁴
6. Salvation has been provided only through Jesus Christ. Those who repent and believe in him are united with Christ through the Holy Spirit and are thereby regenerated (born again), justified, sanctified and granted the gift of eternal life as adopted children of God.¹⁵
7. It is the will of God that in union with Christ each believer should be sanctified thoroughly¹⁶ thereby being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to God, receiving power for holy living and sacrificial and effective service toward the completion of Christ's commission.¹⁷

This is accomplished through being filled with the Holy Spirit which is both a distinct event and progressive experience in the life of the believer.¹⁸

8. Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil as taught in the Scriptures are privileges for the Church in this present age.¹⁹
9. The universal Church, of which Christ is the Head, consists of all those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and commissioned by Christ to go into all the world as a witness, preaching the Gospel to all nations.²⁰

The local church, the visible expression of the universal Church, is a body of believers in Christ who are joined together to worship God, to observe the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, to pray, to be edified through the Word of God, to fellowship, and to testify in word and deed to the good news of salvation both locally and globally. The local church enters into relationships with other like-minded churches for accountability, encouragement and mission.²¹

10. There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust; for the former, a resurrection unto life;²² for the latter, a resurrection unto judgment.²³

11. The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal and visible.²⁴ As the believer's blessed hope, this vital truth is an incentive for holy living and sacrificial service toward the completion of Christ's commission.²⁵

Article V—Ordinances

Believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper are recognized as the two ordinances of the Church as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is an act of obedience for all believers. While other modes of believer's baptism are recognized, baptism by immersion is taught and practiced as the scriptural mode. The Lord's Supper is administered regularly and offered to all believers.

Article VI – Membership

Section 1: Privileges and Qualifications

There shall be a voting membership and such additional types of association as may be defined in the bylaws.

The privileges of membership include eligibility to vote, to be considered for election to serve on the Board subject to Article VIII (Board) and such further privileges as may be specified in the bylaws.

The qualifications for membership include a credible testimony of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ before members of the Board; believer's baptism; a commitment to the principles of the Preamble; a commitment to the Purpose (Article II), and Statement of Faith (Article III) of this church; submission to the discipline procedures of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada; and such further qualifications as may be specified in the bylaws.

Section 2: Discipline

Discipline is an exercise of that spiritual authority which the Lord Jesus has given to his Church. The purposes of discipline are to maintain the honour of the Redeemer, the purity of the Church, the spiritual benefit of the members and the restoration of the offender. The discipline of a member shall be the responsibility of the Board or its designates, and shall be in accordance with the Discipline and Restoration Policy for Members of Local Churches adopted by The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada. It shall be a condition of membership that persons accept and comply with the Discipline and Restoration Policy for Members of Local Churches.

Vernon Alliance Church Bylaws

Adopted Nov 24, 2021

Preamble

The Local Church Constitution, the Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, and these bylaws constitute the governing documents of the church.

Definitions and Interpretation

In these bylaws, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Annual General Meeting”	means the general meeting of the members held annually as specified in these bylaws
“Board”	means the Board of Elders of the church
“bylaws”	means the bylaws of the church
“Constitution”	means the Local Church Constitution contained in the Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada
“church”	means Vernon Alliance Church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada
“ordinary resolution”	means a resolution that requires a simple majority of the votes cast at a general meeting by the members eligible to vote or at a meeting of the Board.
“Special General Meeting”	is a meeting other than the Annual General Meeting in which special or urgent business may be conducted.
“special resolution”	means a resolution that requires a majority of no fewer than two-thirds ($2/3$) of the votes cast at a general meeting by the members eligible to vote or at a meeting of the Board. It is required to make fundamental changes to the organization and governance of the church and decisions about major issues.
“officer”	means the positions of the Lead Pastor, the Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Part 1 – Mission, Vision, and Core Values

- 1.1** The Board shall ensure that a current statement of mission, vision, and values exists for the church and is communicated appropriately.

Part 2 – Membership

- 2.1** In the absence of any other structure they approve, the Board is responsible for all matters related to membership.
- 2.2** Qualifications for membership are as stipulated in the Constitution and these bylaws.
- 2.3** There are three categories of membership:

2.3.1 Active Member

An Active Member is a member in good standing who has been officially confirmed as having met the requirements for membership outlined in the Constitution and these bylaws, and who regularly attends and actively supports the church in ways outlined in the membership covenant.

Active Members are eligible:

- a) to vote,
- b) to give primary leadership to church ministries, and
- c) unless otherwise restricted, to be elected to the Board.

2.3.2 Associate Member

An Associate Member is a former Active Member who is non-resident and/or for reasons acceptable to the Board, desires to retain membership in the church.

Associate Members may not vote at meetings of members, nor hold office in the church.

An Associate Member may be returned to Active Member status at the discretion of the Board.

2.3.3 Member not in Good Standing

All members are in good standing except:

- a) a member who, in the opinion of the Board, has failed to remain active in the church, meaning that the member has been absent from the normal activities of the church for a period of twelve (12) months or more and has not communicated an interest in remaining a member of the church
- b) a member who is under discipline

A Member not in Good Standing may not vote at meetings of the members, nor hold office in the church.

A Member not in Good Standing may be returned to Active Member status at the discretion of the Board.

2.4 To become an Active Member of the church, an individual must participate in the church's application and orientation process. In addition:

- a) applicants for membership are expected to sign a membership covenant that identifies the commitments being made, and
- b) an applicant for membership becomes a member when officially confirmed by the Board.

2.4.1 Membership in the church must be reaffirmed annually by a date set by the board.

2.5 A person ceases to be a member of the church:

- a) by delivering their resignation in writing to the secretary of the Board by mail, email, or personal delivery to the address of the Board.
- b) upon death.
- c) by transfer to another church.
- d) upon having not been a member in good standing for 12 consecutive months.
- e) upon being expelled as a result of any disciplinary process.
- f) by the Board passing a special resolution which terminates membership upon the person failing to maintain the qualifications for membership or having accepted membership in another church. The person who is the subject of the special resolution for expulsion must be given an opportunity to be heard by the Board before the special resolution is put to a vote.

Part 3 – Government

- 3.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Members must be held within three (3) months of the end of the fiscal year on a date set by the Board.
 - 3.1.1 The proposed agenda and written reports for the Annual General Meeting must be available on or before the Sunday, two (2) weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting.
 - 3.1.2 The reviewed or audited annual financial statements must be presented at the Annual General Meeting of the members.
 - 3.1.3 The Board must recommend an independent Chartered Professional Accountant to the members to review or audit the church's financial statements for the upcoming year.
 - 3.1.4 The members must appoint an independent Chartered Professional Accountant to review or audit the church's financial statements for the upcoming year.
- 3.2 Special meetings of members to consider special or urgent business:
 - a) may be called by the Board.
 - b) must be called by the Board when requested by at least 30% of the Active Members. Such request shall include a brief written statement of purpose.
- 3.3 Notice of Meeting must be given to members by verbal and/or print media and/or electronic media (email, church website, etc.) at least twenty-one (21) days and not more than sixty (60) days prior to any meeting of members. Such notice must indicate the purpose of the meeting.
- 3.4 The quorum for a duly called Meeting of the Members is the Active Members present.
- 3.5 Each Active Member is entitled to one vote and voting by proxy is not allowed.
 - 3.5.1 The Chair must not cast a second vote in addition to the vote to which they may be entitled to as a member, and thus change the outcome of a vote.
- 3.6 The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order is the definitive resource on procedures at meetings of the members unless another procedure is otherwise provided by these bylaws.

Part 4 – Board of Elders

- 4.1 The Board must consist of the Lead Pastor, and at least three (3) and up to a maximum of 10 elected members. The number of elders must be set annually by the Board.
 - 4.1.1 If the number of elders falls below three (3) plus the Lead Pastor, the Board must appoint an eligible Active Member to serve until the next Annual General Meeting.
 - 4.1.2 Active Members who have attained the age of majority are eligible to serve on the Board.
 - 4.1.3 Board members must annually sign a declaration of not being ineligible as defined by the Canada Income Tax Act.
 - 4.1.4 Board members must declare any potential conflict of interest regarding any agenda item at the beginning of each meeting.
 - 4.1.5 The length of term shall be three (3) years.
 - 4.1.6 A Board member may serve a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms and will not be eligible for election for a period of one year.
- 4.2 The term of office begins at the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting at which the member is elected.
- 4.3 The Board must meet at least once per quarter. Meetings may be held at places the Board sees fit and attendance may include electronic means.
- 4.4 The quorum for meetings of the Board is a majority of the serving members.
- 4.5 A motion proposed at a Board meeting need not be seconded and the Chair of a meeting may move or propose a resolution.
 - 4.5.1 The Chair must not cast a second vote in addition to the vote to which they may be entitled to as a member, and thus change the outcome of a vote.
 - 4.5.2 The Board may pass a resolution without a meeting if a majority of the Board consents to the resolution in writing or by electronic means and it is recorded in the minutes.

- 4.5.3 The Board must appoint the officers of the church, with the exception of the Lead Pastor, from among its members. The positions of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by one person, in which case the position must be identified as Secretary/Treasurer.
 - 4.5.4 At the request of the Lead Pastor, the Board may nominate a Chair for consideration by the Lead Pastor.
 - 4.5.5 If the Lead Pastor is not the Board Chair, the position of being an officer of the church is retained.
- 4.6 Any two officers may sign documents on behalf of the church with the approval of the Board.
- 4.7 The Board may delegate any, but not all, of their powers to committees consisting of one or more Board members as they see fit.
- 4.7.1 A committee so formed in the exercise of powers so delegated must conform to any rules imposed on it by the Board and must report every act done in exercise of those powers to the earliest meeting of the Board after the act has been done.
- 4.8 The Board must set and be the final interpreter of church policies.
- 4.9 Unless stipulated in higher precedence legislation or these bylaws, the Board must determine the requirement for a special resolution.
- 4.10 The Board must annually review the Lead Pastor's ministry and remuneration.
- 4.11 Every member of the Board and officer of the church or other person who has taken or is about to undertake any liability on behalf of the church and their heirs, executors, and administrators, and estate and effects, respectively, must from time to time and at all times, be indemnified and saved harmless, out of the funds of the church or applicable insurance from and against:
- a) all costs, charges, and expenses whatsoever which the Board member, an officer, or other person sustains or incurs in or about any action, suit, or proceeding which is brought, commenced, or prosecuted against them in respect of any act, deed, matter, or thing whatsoever made, done, or permitted by them in or about the execution of the duties of their office or in respect of any such liability

- b) all other costs, charges, or expenses which are sustained or incur in or about in relation to the affair thereof, except the costs, charges, or expenses occasioned by willful neglect or default
- 4.12 A Board member may be removed from office by special resolution of the Board if the member:
- a) is absent for three (3) consecutive meetings without sufficient reason
 - b) becomes ineligible under the *Income Tax Act*
 - c) fails in their responsibilities as stipulated in the Constitution
 - d) becomes a member not in good standing
- 4.12.1 If a Board member is removed from office under Part 4.12, an Active Member may be appointed, by ordinary resolution of the Board, to serve as a member until the next Annual General Meeting.
- 4.13 Persons who are not Board members may be present at a Board meeting or portion thereof at the invitation of the Board.
- 4.14 The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order is the definitive resource on procedures at meetings of the Board unless another procedure is otherwise provided by these bylaws.

Part 5 – Finances

- 5.1 The Treasurer and those appointed by the Board are the signing officers for the church bank accounts.
- 5.1.1 The Treasurer must be one of the signing officers of all church-related accounts.
- 5.2 The church shall not incur debt, with the exception of church credit card debt and capital leases not exceeding \$30,000 per item, without the approval of the District Executive Committee.
- 5.3 The Board may, upon approval of the District Executive Committee:
- a) borrow money upon the credit of the church by obtaining loans or advances or by way of overdrafts or otherwise

- b) issue, sell, or pledge securities of the church including bonds, debentures, and debenture stock for such sums on such items and at such prices as they may deem expedient
- 5.4 Any non-budgeted proposed capital expenditure exceeding 10% of the annual budget must be approved by special resolution at a duly called meeting of the members.
- 5.5 Real property may be acquired, disposed of, improved, or encumbered by order of the Board, subject to the approval of the members by special resolution and to the approval by the District Executive Committee.
- 5.6 The fiscal year of the church is from July 1 to June 30.
- 5.7 The annual financial statements must be reviewed or audited by an independent Chartered Professional Accountant. The reviewed or audited financial statements must be prepared in accordance with the *Accounting Standards for Not-For-Profit Organizations*.
- 5.8 The Board must establish a Financial Statement Review Committee that must:
- a) be appointed by the Board and report to the Board.
 - b) consist of a minimum of two (2) Board Members (unless impractical), one being the Board Treasurer, with the majority of Committee members being Board members.
 - c) meet at least annually.
 - d) review the annual financial statements and the findings letter.
 - e) if necessary, meet in camera with the independent Chartered Professional Accountant who reported on the annual financial statements.
 - f) report its findings and recommendations to the Board prior to the first Annual General Meeting following the end of the fiscal year.
 - g) review other matters assigned by the Board such as, but not limited to, larger projects and purchases, proposed yearly budget, financial policies, and adequacy of insurance.

Part 6 – Church Ministries

- 6.1 The Board must ensure that there is an effective organizational structure for the church and its ministries.

- 6.2 The Board must ensure that policies and procedures are established for the affirmation, appointment, and potential removal of leaders in all church ministries.
- 6.3 Each ministry leader or committee must function with a ministry description that describes both responsibilities and accountability. The group or individual that appoints the person or committee must be responsible to ensure the ministry description is in place.

Part 7 – Elections

Nominating Committee

- 7.1 The Nominating Committee must consist of the Lead Pastor, a minimum of two (2) board members appointed by the Board, and an equal number of Active Members, who are non-Board members, elected at the Annual General Meeting or another duly called Meeting of the Members.
 - 7.1.1 The Nominating Committee must serve until the next Annual General Meeting.
 - 7.1.2 The Board must appoint replacements for any vacancy that should occur in the Nominating Committee membership during the term of office.
- 7.2 The Board must annually inform the Nominating Committee of:
 - a) the number of elders desired and the length of each term, ensuring a continuity of leadership
 - b) the number of eligible members who are not Board members to be elected to the Nominating Committee
 - c) the positions and number of candidates for any other office that are established by the bylaws or the Board
- 7.3 The Nominating Committee must place in nomination, and report to the members, the nominees required for each position as specified by the bylaws or the Board.
 - 7.3.1 If the Nominating Committee wishes to consider one of its members for nomination, that person must withdraw from the Nominating Committee meeting while the decision is being made regarding the nomination.

- 7.4 The Nominating Committee must establish its process for considering potential nominees.
- 7.5 The Nominating Committee must post its report via print and/or electronic media at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the date set for the Annual General Meeting. Such report must include biographical information of each nominee.

Nominations by Members

- 7.6 Additional nominations may be made by any two (2) or more Active Members by submitting the name in writing on an approved nomination form to the Lead Pastor for posting at least two (2) weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting. In the absence of a Lead Pastor, nominations must be filed with the Board Chair or Secretary.
 - 7.6.1 The proposed nominee must consent to being nominated before a nomination form is submitted to the Lead Pastor.
 - 7.6.2 Such nominations must be included on the ballot after being vetted by the Nominating Committee for membership and eligibility status.

Part 8 – General

- 8.1 No offering for outside agencies shall be solicited without the approval of the Board.
- 8.2 Members may inspect the records of the church with the exception of the proceedings (minutes) of the Board and individual donor records other than the member's own.

Part 9 – Amendments

- 9.1 Bylaw amendments may be proposed by the Board and submitted to the District Superintendent for approval by the District Executive Committee.
- 9.2 Amendments shall be valid only after being approved by the District Executive Committee and adopted by special resolution of the Active Members present at a duly called meeting for such purpose.

Record of Amendments

May 1, 1953	church start date
February 7, 1955	adoption when church was organised
August 20, 1983	first set of bylaws established
January 1996	addition of elder review for “active members”
September 19, 2000	clarify definitions of “active members” and “associate members”
February 17, 2004	change date of annual budget approval and budget forecast to June
October 3, 2006	change maximum number of board members
October 6, 2009	financial statements to be made available as part of AGM
October 4, 2011	financial reviews required as part of AGM agendas
May 22, 2012	requirement for financial statements to be reviewed annually
November 24, 2021	DEXCOM required review.