

CB Northwest Guidelines For Doctrinal Statement and Bylaws

Doctrinal Statement and Bylaws FirstChurch ThisCity, WA Adopted: DATE

(A Title Page is not required, but helpful.)

Statements highlighted in bright green are required in Washington.

Statements highlighted in gray are required by the IRS for 501(c)3 status.

Statements highlighted in red are required by CB Northwest.

Table of Contents

(the table of Contents is not required, but helpful)

Name	5
Purpose.....	5
Authority and Government.....	5
Elders	5
Number of Elders	6
Qualifications of Elders	6
Election, Terms, and Succession of Elders	6
Removal of Elders	6
Elders Meetings	6
Roles and Responsibilities of Elders.....	6
Officers	6
Listing of Officers	6
<i>State required officers.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Other officers, e.g. Deacons, Deaconesses</i>	<i>6</i>
Qualifications of Officers	6
Appointment, Terms, and Succession of Office.....	6
Removal of Officers.....	6
Roles of Officers	6
Membership.....	6
Qualification of Members	7
Reception of Members (Election or Appointment)	7
Responsibilities of Members.....	7
Privileges of the Members (Rights).....	7
Classification of Members	7
Conflict Resolution	7
Discipline of Members	7
Removal of Members.....	7
Member Meetings.....	7
For Worship.....	7
For Business	7
Quorum and Voting	7
Rules of Order	7
Books and Records	7
Committees.....	8
General Controls	8
Standing Committees.....	8

Special Committees 8

Auxiliary Organizations..... 8

 Authority 8

 Approval..... 8

 Officers 8

 Bylaws 8

 Meetings 8

Licensure and Ordination..... 8

 Licensure 8

 Ordination 8

Finances 9

Dissolution of this Church 9

Amendments..... 9

Doctrinal Statement

To secure your religious freedom and rights in the view of the state it is important to include a doctrinal statement in your governing documents.

You must have a doctrinal statement that is congruent with the CB Northwest Identity Document (you are welcome and encouraged to use the Doctrinal Statement in the CB Northwest Identity Document).

The following areas are covered by the identity document:

Scriptures

God

The Father

The Son

The Holy Spirit

Humanity

Family

Sin

Salvation

Church

Angels

Last Things

Bylaws

The state requires that the initial board of directors adopt bylaws. (WA)

In this document we're using the term "Bylaws" as the name of the governing document. If your church uses the name "Constitution" for your governing document, the state will be okay with that. (You may presently have a Constitution and Bylaws, the state only requires one governing document. If you are only making changes to one of your existing documents make sure the documents are in agreement with each other.)

Name

Name is required in your Articles of Incorporation and not a necessary piece of this document. If you include Name in your Bylaws be sure it matches your Articles of Incorporation.

Purpose

*Purpose is required in your Articles of Incorporation for Alaska and Washington **and** to receive 501(c)3 status from the IRS. If you include Purpose in your Bylaws be sure it is congruent with your Articles of Incorporation.*

- **You are required to place your purpose in your Articles of Incorporation. (WA)**
- You are required to place your purpose in your Articles of Incorporation.

Authority and Government

Required to affirm agreement with the CB Northwest Identity Document.

Elders

State law speaks to the number, election or appointment, terms, resignation, removal, vacancies, and meetings of directors. In many cases the bylaws may override state law, but if the bylaws make no provision in an area, then the law is the guideline.

The affairs of a corporation are managed by the board of directors. The bylaws may specify a different title for directors.

- **To be congruent with the CB Northwest Identity Document the elders of the church must be designated as the directors of the corporation.**
- **The board of directors must have at least 1 director. The bylaws may either fix or prescribe a manner for determining the minimum number greater than 1. (WA)**
- **Loans cannot be made to directors and officers. All directors who vote or assent to make a loan to a director or officers and any officers participating in such action are jointly liable to the corporation for the amount of the loan until repayment. (WA)**
- **Elders must meet the biblical qualifications for their office and submit to the headship of Christ, emulating His servant leadership. We believe the function of eldering is reserved for biblically qualified males, who will serve in a plurality.**

The directors of this church are the elders...

Number of Elders

Qualifications of Elders

Election, Terms, and Succession of Elders

Removal of Elders

Elders Meetings

Roles and Responsibilities of Elders

Officers

- Required Officers of the corporation are President, one or more Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer. An individual may hold more than one office, except that the office of President and Secretary cannot be held by the same person. The bylaws may specify different titles for officers. (WA)
- Loans cannot be made to directors and officers. All directors who vote or assent to make a loan to a director or officers and any officers participating in such action are jointly liable to the corporation for the amount of the loan until repayment. (WA)

For further explanation of the employment of pastor staff and other staff see our samples.

Listing of Officers

State required officers

Other officers, e.g. Deacons, Deaconesses

Qualifications of Officers

Appointment, Terms, and Succession of Office

Removal of Officers

Roles of Officers

Membership

State law does not require your organization to have members.

If you incorporate with members, state law speaks to the election or appointment, qualification, removal, and rights of members. In many cases the bylaws may override state law, but if the bylaws make no provision in an area, then the law is the guideline.

If you incorporate with members, CB Northwest recommends that you include a general statement about membership followed by specifics on the following topics.

- The election or appointment, qualifications, and rights of members must be stated in the bylaws. (WA)

Qualification of Members

Reception of Members (Election or Appointment)

Responsibilities of Members

Privileges of the Members (Rights)

Classification of Members

Conflict Resolution

Discipline of Members

Removal of Members

Member Meetings

If a corporation has members, an annual meeting of the members is required.

State law speaks to the types of meetings, notice, voting, and quorum. In many cases the bylaws may override state law, but if the bylaws make no provision in an area, then the law is the guideline.

- **There must be an annual meetings of members. (WA)**
- **Notice of the annual meeting and special meetings must include place, date, and time and be delivered not less than 10 days and not more than 50 days before the date of the meeting. Notice of Special Meetings must include the purpose or purposes of the meeting. Notice must be by tangible means or electronic delivery. If mailed, the notice is considered delivered when deposited with USPS, addressed with postage paid. Notice of regular meetings other than the annual meeting shall be made by providing each member with the adopted schedule of regular meetings for the ensuing year at any time after the annual meeting and 10 days prior to the next regular meeting and at any time when requested by a member . The bylaws may add further requirements of notice for regular meetings. (WA)**

For Worship

It is recommended you have a brief statement on worship, to differentiate those meetings from business meetings.

For Business

Quorum and Voting

Rules of Order

It is recommended you have something that defines how you will conduct your business meetings.

Books and Records

State law speaks to the types of records a corporation must keep, as well as where they must keep them, for how long, and members' rights to inspect these records. In most of these things, the bylaws cannot override state law.

- Each corporation shall keep at its registered, principal, or secretary's office: current articles and bylaws; a list of members including names, addresses, and classes; correct and adequate statements of accounts and finances; a list of officers' and directors' names and addresses; minutes of member meetings, board meetings and meetings of board committees. Corporate records are open to any member of more than 3 months or a representative of more than 5% of the membership, with a purpose for inspection reasonably related to membership interests. (WA)

Committees

State law allows the board of directors or bylaws to create committees and guidelines for those committees. This article is not required.

If your church will have committees CB Northwest recommends you include some general guidelines for those committees.

General Controls

Standing Committees

Special Committees

Auxiliary Organizations

This article is not required.

Auxiliary organizations are things such as Daycares, Pre-Schools, Christian Schools, etc. If your church will have these CB Northwest recommends you set forth some guidelines for how these organizations will relate to the church.

Authority

Approval

Officers

Bylaws

Meetings

Licensure and Ordination

This article is not required.

CB Northwest recommends that you include provisions for licensing and ordination in your bylaws.

Licensure

Ordination

Finances

This article is not required.

Dissolution of this Church

Dissolution is required in your Articles of Incorporation for Washington State and to receive 501(c)3 status from the IRS. If you include Dissolution in your Bylaws be sure it matches your Articles of Incorporation.

You must have one in all states.

- **You were required to place your dissolution clause in your Articles of Incorporation. (WA)**
- You were required to place your dissolution clause in your Articles of Incorporation.

For an example statement see the document: Legal Guidelines.

Amendments

State law speaks to the procedures for amending bylaws. Bylaws may override state law, but if the bylaws make no provision for amendments, then the law is the guideline.