

Fifth Avenue Christian Church By Laws

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Havre, MT 59501

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CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of this church shall be the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This congregation is an independent body of immersed believers in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and owing no allegiance to any organization claiming authority over the churches of Christ. It is not, nor ever will be affiliated with any organization not established by New Testament authority.

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.

Any person who has openly confessed his or her faith in Jesus Christ as the Living God, and has been immersed into Him and has so stated in public worship service, and has been given the right hand of Christian Fellowship; shall there upon become a member of this congregation. Voting in any congregation business meeting shall be limited to those who are 16 years of age and who have participated in public worship at Fifth Avenue Christian Church for a minimum of 6 months of the election, unless hindered by some good and sufficient reason. Any member who wishes to withdraw from membership in the church shall so inform the elder in writing.

Section 2.

A member may be dismissed on Scriptural grounds if conduct is determined to be detrimental to the spiritual welfare of the CHURCH. Dismissal will be by an affirmative vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of all of the Board of Elders duly then in office. (Matthew 18:15-18 will be used as a guideline)

Section 3.

A former member may be reinstated in this CHURCH after public indication of a desire to meet requirements for membership.

ARTICLE II. OFFICERS:

Section 1. Qualification & Responsibilities

In order to be eligible to hold any office in the church, the candidate must have been a member of Fifth Avenue Christian Church for a period of at least one year prior to the time of election.

Section 2. Elders

1. They shall meet the qualification set forth in Titus 1:4-9; Tim. 1:1-7
2. With endorsement from any Elder or Minister a man desiring the office and fulfilling the qualifications shall be recommended by the Board of Elders to the congregation at the annual meeting. The number of Elders shall not be limited.
3. A vote of approval will be at least three-fourths (3/4) of the ballots cast at the annual meeting.
4. After election by the congregation, the candidate shall be ordained into the office of Elder.
5. Accountability to the congregation
 - a. Because of conduct unbecoming the office of an Elder, dismissal can be by an affirmative vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of all the Board of Elders duly then in office, except for the Elder under consideration for dismissal. (Matthew 18:15-18 will be used as a guideline)
 - b. Each annual meeting one-third of the Board of Elders will put their name on the ballot for a vote of confidence from the congregation. The sequence for this may be started by a drawing of lots.

Section 3. Deacons

1. They shall meet the qualifications set forth in I Tim. 3:8-13. With endorsement from any elder or minister a man desiring this office and fulfilling the qualifications, shall be recommended by the Board of Elders to the congregation for election to the office of Deacon at the Annual Meeting.
2. A Vote of approval will be at least three-fourths (3/4) of the ballots cast at the Annual Meeting.
3. These shall be chosen for a three-year term, one-third to be elected there-after annually. It is hoped that each Deacon will aspire for the office of Elder.
4. There shall be no limit as to the number of Deacons.
5. Accountability to the congregation

Because of conduct unbecoming the office of a Deacon, dismissal can be by an affirmative vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of all the Board of Elders duly then in office. (Matthew 18:15-18 will be used as a guideline)

Section 4. Trustees

Shall be elected off the General Board annually. They shall hold in trust all real property of the church. Those chosen at the first election shall draw lots to determine the term of office they shall serve. They shall perform official duties and act in compliance with Board directions. They shall be Elders or Deacons at the time of election, and shall be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the church properties. They may disperse such sums as are authorized in the budget for maintenance and insurance. They may come to the Board for authority to spend sums beyond the budget, if the need arises. They shall employ the janitor and oversee his work. They shall, with the preaching minister constitute a committee to permit the use of church properties. They shall choose a chairman from their own number.

Section 5. Senior Minister

1. Administration: The Senior Minister shall be responsible for the planning and execution of the CHURCH program. He shall be an ex-officio member of all organized groups and coordinator of all ministerial work. All other Ministers shall be under the administrative direction of the Senior Minister.
2. Selection: The Senior Minister shall be employed in accordance with the following procedure: Upon the Pulpit recommendation, the Board of Elders by a vote of approval of at least three-fourths (3/4) of all Elders duly then in office shall recommend a candidate to the General Board. Upon receiving approval by at least three-fourths (3/4) of the General Board members present with all members contacted and told of special meeting, the candidate shall be recommended to the CHURCH at a special CHURCH meeting. Upon receiving approval by at least three-fourths (3/4) majority of the votes cast, the candidate shall be offered a contract of employment by the Board of Elders.
3. Termination: The term of employment of the Senior Minister shall be for an indefinite period and may be terminated by any one of the following: (1) his resignation, (2) by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of all the Elders duly then in office, (3) by a majority vote at a special congregational meeting. See Article VI. Sec. 6.

Section 6. Assistant Minister

1. Administration: The Assistant Minister shall be responsible in helping the Senior Minister in the execution of the CHURCH program. He shall be an ex-officio member of all organized groups.
2. Selection: The Assistant Minister shall be employed in accordance with the following procedure: Upon the Pulpit and Senior Minister recommendation, the Board of Elders by a vote of approval of at least three-fourths (3/4) of all Elders duly then in office shall recommend a candidate to the General Board. Upon receiving approval by at least three-fourths (3/4) of the General Board members present with all members contacted and told of special meeting.

3. Termination: The term of employment of the Assistant Minister shall be for an indefinite period and may be terminated by any one of the following: (1) his resignation, (2) by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of all the Elders duly then in office, (3) by a majority vote at a special congregational meeting. See Article VI. Sec. 6.

Section 7. Paid Personnel:

Paid personal shall include, but not limited to, Christian Education Director, Youth Director, and Secretary. Duties, vacations, salaries, and term of service to be decided by the General Board and Minister.

ARTICLE III. Church Officers

Section 1. Church Clerk:

Shall attend all meetings of the Board, call the roll of officers and keep record of their attendance at meetings and keep accurate minutes of each Board Meeting. It shall be the further duty of the Church Clerk to keep minutes of all Congregational Meetings and post notices of all official meetings.

Section 2. Financial Treasurer:

Shall receive all money paid into the church, keeping an accurate record thereof, together with the purposes to which they have been designated. The Financial Treasurer, upon request, shall release the records to the auditing committee for review. All money belonging to the church shall be deposited in the depository designated by the Board to the account of the Fifth Avenue Christian Church, with the Financial Treasurer own name fixed as Treasurer. The Financial Treasurer shall make all expenditures by check as authorized by the Board. The Financial Treasurer shall make a full accounting of money handled to the Board at each meeting and shall maintain records to present of the Auditing Committee when it meets for review.

ARTICLE IV. Board

Section 1. Board of Elders

There shall be a Board of Elders composed of the regularly elected Elders and Minister of the Fifth Avenue Christian Church, the Elders to select one of themselves as chairman. The duties of the Board to be the oversight of the spiritual welfare of the church. They shall meet as the need arises upon the call of the chairman or by petition of two or more Elders. This Board shall have the final authority over all the other organizations in the church including the General Board.

Section 2. General Board

The General Board shall consist of all elected Deacons and Elders plus the Clerk and Treasurer, who may be ex-officio members and not necessarily Elders or Deacons.

Section 3. Duties of General Board

Duties: The General Board shall meet monthly to transact such business as concerns the Church that may be brought before it. They shall hear and consider reports from the various officers and committees as are defined in these By-Laws, or as may be appointed. The General Board may fill possible vacancies by appointment to hold office until the next annual meeting. The Board may call special meetings for the entire congregation to consider such matters as they deem necessary. A quorum shall consist of at least eight (8) members of the Board. The Board shall elect from its own membership one to act as Chairman for the year.

ARTICLE V. Pulpit Committee

Shall be appointed by the Board Chairman, with the approval of the Board and shall consist of three members, all of whom shall be Elders and one of whom shall act as chairman. They are responsible for ministerial personal. In event of need for a new minister, they shall recommend to the Board such candidate or candidates as required. The Board shall in turn bring its recommendation to the congregation together with the terms of contract, at a previously announced time, for their approval.

ARTICLE VI. Congregational Meetings:

Section 1.

An Annual church meeting of the membership shall be held on a designated Sunday in February to hear reports from such ministries and individuals as the Elders/General Board shall require.

Section 2.

Notice of all congregational meetings, stating the purpose, date, time, and location shall be given at least 14 (Fourteen) days prior to said meeting. Such notice shall be published in all of the following: (1) The Sunday church bulletin (2) The mid-week paper (3) Mail (4) Posted in a conspicuous location visible to all.

Section 3.

An Annual Election shall be at the congregational Meeting to elect and/or confirm Elders, Deacons, and church officers as nominated by the Elders.

Section 4.

A quorum for business at any congregational meeting shall consist of the eligible voters present.

Section 5.

Officers for the following year shall be elected by a 2/3 (two-thirds) vote of the ballots cast.

Section 6.

The term of office for all newly elected Elders, Deacons, and officers shall commence on March 1st.

ARTICLE VII. Amendments to By-Laws

Section 1.

These by-laws may be amended by a 2/3 (two-thirds) vote of approval by the congregation present at an announced meeting when the proposed amendment(s) shall be considered

ARTICLE VIII. Nominating Committee:

Section 1.

To consist of the Board of Elders. This committee shall bring before the congregation such recommendations and nominations as the By-Laws calls for and as, in their judgment, should be considered or official action. Chairman of this committee shall be selected by vote of appointment by the chairman of the Elders.

ARTICLE IX. Nomination Procedure

Section 1.

When a man who has been a member of this CHURCH for at least one year, and receives nomination for Elder and /or Deacon by the present Board of Elders, the nomination process continues as follows:

- A. The Elders shall constitute the nominating committee to evaluate the scriptural fitness and qualifications of each suggested nominee.
- B. The Elders duly then in office may by a 2/3 (two-thirds) vote, veto or approve the nomination of the suggested nominee on scriptural grounds.
- C. Nominees then shall be notified by mail of two successive meetings, with a one week interval, the first to be held one week after nominations Sunday.
- D. The nominee will be notified in the letter that he will be expected to attend one of the orientation meetings and that an unexcused absence shall exclude him from further consideration.

- E. At these two meetings, the Senior Minister, or one designated by him, shall review the scriptural qualifications and the responsibilities of an Elder and a Deacon.
- F. After the second meeting the nominees aspiring to the office of Elder or Deacon shall so state their intention, giving permission to have their names placed on the ballot.
- G. This list of nominations shall be posted in the church in accordance with Article VI, Section 2, at least two Sunday before the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE X Special congregational Meetings

Special congregational meetings may be called by any of the following:

- A. A majority of the General Board duly then in office.
- B. The petition of not less than 100 (One Hundred) voting members of the church presented to the chairman of the General Board or church clerk in writing.
- C. The Chairman of the General Board shall issue a notice for the special congregational meeting within 14 (fourteen) days after the petition is presented.
- D. The Meeting must take place within 30 (thirty) days after the petition is received. However, this meeting may not take place less than 10 (ten) days from the day of notice

ARTICLE XI Ministry Department

Section 1.

Chairman of and membership on the Departments of Ministry shall be by invitation of the Chairman of the Board.

Section 2.

The Chairman and membership of each Ministry Department will be ratified by the General Board at the first meeting in March.

Section 3.

Chairman of these Ministry Departments shall be responsible to the General Board.

Section 4.

A report of each Ministry Department's activities shall be brought to the General Board each month by the Department Chairman or someone designated.

Section 5. Ministry Departments

- A. Evangelism
- B. Education
- C. Public Worship
- D. Missions
- E. Fellowship
- F. Stewardship
- G. Building and Grounds (Trustees)
- H. Ladies Circle
- I. The General Board may delete or add other Departments as needed.

ARTICLE XII Real Estate Financing

Section 1.

The General Board may lease, sell, exchange, transfer, or otherwise dispose of any Real or personal property of the CHURCH without authorization by the voting members of the CHURCH unless such lease, sale, exchange, or other disposition comprises all, or substantially all, of the Real or personal property assets of the church.

Section 2.

The General Board may purchase or otherwise acquire real estate on behalf of the CHURCH or sell or dispose of real estate of the CHURCH with authorization by members of the CHURCH unless such a question requires financing by mortgage indebtedness or involves the sale of real estate valued at over \$50,000.00.

Section 3.

The General Board may borrow money on behalf of the CHURCH in such amounts and upon such terms as they determine. The eligible voting members of the church must approve by $\frac{3}{4}$ (three-fourths) vote of members present at a duly called meeting the incurrence of or addition to mortgage indebtedness.