

BY-LAWS

BRAGG CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH OF GOD

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May 06, 2001

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BY-LAWS OF BRAGG CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH

BRAGG CREEK, ALBERTA

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Bragg Creek Community Church of God at Bragg Creek, Alberta. It is associated with the Church of God whose publishing headquarters and general offices are in Anderson, Indiana, U.S.A. The central offices for the General Assembly of the Church of God in **Western Canada are located in Camrose. Alberta.**

ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE

Section 1: The object of this organization, hereafter referred to as the Congregation under these bylaws, shall be:

1. To acquire and hold real estate for religious, education, charitable and related purposes, and
2. To collect and disburse monies for the extension of the cause of Christ, and
3. To select such committees, boards and other agencies, as may be necessary to provide for the orderly conduct of the affairs of the congregation, and
4. To advance the Kingdom of God among all people in conformity with the doctrines, practices and standards of the Word of God as generally held by the Church of God.

ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Membership in the Congregation consists of those who have had an experience of conversion to Christ, a testimony of faith in Him and who make Bragg Creek Community Church their primary center for worship and service.

Section 2: Membership for purposes of voting requires the following:

- a) A member must be at least sixteen (16) years of age, and
- b) Must have worshipped regularly with this Congregation for a period of at least six (6) months immediately preceding any meeting at which they exercise their voting rights. (this limitation may be waived by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting, thereby giving any member in good standing the right to vote), and
- c) The member must have lived, during that six (6) months, in harmony with the generally accepted standards of the Church of God and in fellowship with the Congregation, and
- d) A registration sheet for Bragg Creek Community Church Members shall be available two (2) weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting (hereafter referred to as the AGM). For those wishing to be recognized as members of this Congregation, the registration sheet has a place for the individual to print his/her name and for their signature. The registration sheet shall be ratified as the first item of business at the AGM.

Section 3: The rules governing voting privileges, as herein stated, shall apply to the business organization only and shall not affect, in any way, the religious rights and privileges of members of this Congregation.

ARTICLE 4 - CHURCH COUNCIL

Section 1: The Church Council shall be composed of seven (7) members: the duly elected Pastor, and six (6) elected by the Congregation. Elected members shall serve for a term of three (3) years and be so elected that two (2) terms expire each year. Elected members may serve a limit of two (2) full terms and will be eligible for further terms only after an absence from the Council for one (1) year. No two (2) elected Council members shall be from the same immediate family.

If a Council member resigns within three (3) months or less of the next AGM, the position will not be filled until the next AGM. At the AGM a new Council member will be elected to complete the term of the Council member who resigned.

If the Council member resigns and there is more than three (3) months until the next AGM. Then the Council will nominate and appoint an interim replacement member who will assume the duties and responsibilities of the resigning Council member. The appointed replacement member will serve only until the next AGM, at which time the Congregation will elect an official replacement for the resigning Council member. This newly elected Council member will not serve for the normal three (3) year term, but will complete the term of the resigning Council member.

- a) Elected Council members shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age and meet all the voting membership requirements as stated previously in Article 3.
- b) The Council shall elect, from among their elected members, a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson annually within fifteen (15) days of annual elections.
- c) The Council shall appoint, annually, a Secretary and Treasurer, subject to ratification by the Congregation. These officers may or may not be elected Council members but must be bona fide voting members of the Congregation. If they are not elected Council members they shall be non-voting members of the Council.
- d) The last scheduled Council meeting for the retiring Council members will be held with the newly elected or appointed Council members in attendance, in accordance with these bylaws.

Section 2: It shall be the duty of the Church Council to hold in trust all the properties, effects and assets of the Congregation, with the power to regulate the use and control of the same for the benefit of the Congregation. They shall attend to all improvements, leasing, buying and selling, renting, hiring and supervising of labour, insurance, and maintenance of any and all properties. Power is limited in that any transaction involving more than \$500.00, not designated by the Church budget, shall require a vote of approval by the Congregation before the expenditure is made.

- a) It shall be the duty of the Council to develop a proposed budget for approval by the Congregation at its AGM. The proposed budget shall be posted or otherwise available for viewing by members of the Congregation at least two (2) Sundays prior to the AGM.
- b) It shall be the duty of the Council to study, plan, promote and strive to improve all educational, evangelistic, fellowship, and worship activities of the Congregation so as to provide an effective, well-rounded, long-range program. As ever, the goal is to make God's plan of salvation known to the world and bring Christians to a mature relationship in Jesus Christ.
- c) The Council shall meet at least ten (10) times yearly. Two-thirds (2/3) of elected members shall constitute a quorum to transact business.

- d) The Council shall have the power to appoint standing or special committees, if such appointment will assist the Council in discharging its duties.
- e) Auxiliary groups within the Church are entitled to non-voting representation at Council meetings. Appointed Ministry Directors shall be regular non-voting members (unless they are also elected Council persons) of the Council.
- f) The Council shall authorize all spending outside the approved budget, subject to the \$500.00 per transaction limit specified above. Any fund raising activities to be undertaken within or on behalf of the Congregation or auxiliary group of the Congregation must be sanctioned by the Council.
- g) The Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of four (4) members, two (2) months prior to the AGM, for the purpose of presenting, to the Congregation, a slate of potential Council candidates to replace retiring Council members, as provided in these bylaws. The Nominating Committee will also prepare the ballot to be utilized for the vote to be taken at the AGM.

Section 3: Duties and Powers of Church Council Officers.

- a) The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings and shall perform such duties as usually are assigned to the Chairperson of a deliberate body. He/she shall also act as Chairperson of the business meetings of the Congregation.
- b) The Vice-Chairperson of the Council shall perform all the duties of the Chairperson during his/her absence or inability to act.
- c) The Secretary shall keep, in a book provided by the Congregation suitable for the purpose, an accurate record of the acts, decisions and proceedings of the Council. This record shall be the property of the Congregation. He/she shall perform other duties incident to his/her office. He/she shall also serve as Secretary of Congregational meetings and keep a record of all business proceedings and decisions in the meetings in a book provided for that purpose, separate from the Council records. This book shall also be the property of the Congregation. He/she shall have charge of the Church correspondence and keep a file of the same. He/she shall at all times comply with the requirements of Section 20 of the Religious Societies' Lands' Act.
- d) The Treasurer shall receive and deposit the funds of the Congregation in whatever bank or banks are designated by the Council. The bank accounts shall be in the name of the Congregation. The Treasurer (or the designated Financial Secretary) shall be authorized to give receipts for all monies paid to the Congregation. He/she shall cause all vouchers and orders paid by him/her to be filed and properly preserved as a part of the church record. He/she shall make regular reports, monthly, to the Council and at least annually to the Congregation, showing receipts and disbursements and their relationship to the budget. The books shall be subject to inspection by the Pastor and members of the Council. The books are to be audited internally by a Council-appointed committee of two (2) voting members of the Congregation. Council shall provide for an outside audit every four (4) years. Audits are to take place within sixty (60) days of the fiscal year end.
- e) The officers authorized to sign on behalf of the Congregation shall be the Chairperson and the Secretary or such others as the Council shall designate from time to time.

ARTICE 5 – PASTOR

Section 1: The duly elected Pastor shall exercise general supervision of the program and ministry & mission of the Congregation. He shall endeavour to give leadership and guidance to every department of church life.

- a) He shall be ex-officio member of all organizations, boards, or committees of the Congregation.
- b) He shall exercise his ministry in consultation with the Council and direct his efforts toward the accomplishment of mutually determined objectives, programs, and emphasis.
- c) He shall report at each Council meeting along with other officers and persons with program responsibilities and give a written report to the Congregation at its annual meeting.

Section 2: The Pastor's office shall be filled in the following manner:

- a) A Pulpit Committee composed of six (6) members shall carry out the leadership search function. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary of the Council shall be members by virtue of position. Three (3) other voting members of the Congregation, who are not Council members, shall be appointed by the Council and ratified to serve, by the Congregation. Appointments should insure a balanced cross-section of the Congregation.
- b) The Pulpit Committee shall see that the pulpit is supplied during the vacancy of the pastoral office. The Council will be responsible for assigning such tasks as may be imperative to maintain continuity of ministry.
- c) The Pulpit Committee shall consult with the Credentials Committee of the Church of God regarding prospective candidates. Serious negotiations will only be pursued with those candidates having the credentials clearance of the Credentials Committee of the Church of God.
- d) The Pulpit Committee will do a congregational self-study to determine the perceived needs and expectations of the membership as well as pastoral leadership strengths needed in the incoming Pastor. This study is to be done and reported to the Congregation prior to considering any candidate.
- e) Resumes will be reviewed and interviews conducted, by the Pulpit Committee, until such time as there is unanimous agreement within the Pulpit Committee of one (1) candidate to be recommended to the Council for presentation to the Congregation for their consideration.
- f) The Pulpit Committee shall negotiate, on behalf of the Congregation, the new Pastors tenure of employment including moving costs. They shall request the participation of the Church of God Executive Office in the planning/carrying out of any appropriate service of installation.

Section 3: Procedure for the initiation, review and resolution of concerns about the Pastor's work or his suitability to lead the Church. Concerns may include, but not be limited to, such things as work habits, allocation of time, methods of preaching, visitation, etc.

- a) The review process is initiated when the Council receives a written request from five (5) or more, voting members of the Congregation, outlining their concerns.
- b) The Council shall review the concerns and meet with the Pastor to address the perceived problem(s). This process would involve an analysis of the perceived problem(s), reasons behind the concerns (Congregational or Pastoral), and if necessary, action steps to address the concerns and a timetable for implementation.
- c) If the Council or the Pastor does not agree with, or accept that there is a problem, then Council will authorize the development of a Congregational questionnaire to ascertain the level of Congregational dissatisfaction. This questionnaire would be written jointly by a Council-appointed committee of two (2) members and the Pastor. Following the analysis of the

questionnaire, the Council and the Pastor will conduct a re-assessment of the perceived problem.

- d) If step (3) does not result in a resolution of the concerns then an independent mediator should be called-in, such as:
 - i. Credentials Committee representative from the Church of God, or a - Qualified church person, or
 - ii. Someone with authority (recognized by Council and Pastor)

Section 4: Procedure to follow if the Pastor is involved in a scandalous situation where it is has been established that the Pastor has indeed compromised the integrity of the Church through a sinful act.

- a) If it has been firmly established in the Council's minds that such a situation exists then some sort of Council initiated communication with both the Pastor and Congregation is required. The situation will govern the method.
- b) Based upon the results of the meetings in (I) above, the Council may ask the Pastor to resign. As his Christian family, the Council will do what they can to help and restore him as a believer in good standing. Any help that his family needs will also concern the Council.

Section 5: In addition to Sections (3) and (4) above, the tenure of the Pastor may be terminated at the discretion of the Pastor or the Congregation. Either party must give at least sixty (60) days notice unless an earlier date is mutually agreeable.

- a) A written request by five (5) voting members of the Congregation desiring an expression, on the part of the membership, as to the continuation of the services of the Pastor, may be sent to the Chairperson of the Council. The Council shall consider carefully any objections and endeavour to reach an understanding. If no acceptable solution to the problem is reached the Council shall bring the matter before the Congregation at a duly called special meeting. The Pastor must have a two-thirds affirmative majority to be sustained in the office.
- b) If the Pastor is found to have a defection of character resulting in a loss of ministerial status the Council may approve immediate removal and the Congregation shall have no further financial obligation. If such a defection is under investigation and/or action pending by the Credential Committee, the Council may order suspension with pay until the matter is determined officially.

Section 6: The Congregation will perform a yearly evaluation of the Pastor. The Council will develop the evaluation format and the questionnaire that will be given to the Congregation. The Congregation will be asked to respond to the questionnaire. The results will be tabulated by the Council and reviewed with the Pastor before being presented to the Congregation. It is important to remember the following points.

- a) The process must remain positive, i.e., try to solve problems, not create them.
- b) It is the Pastor who is being examined, not his family.
- c) If a solution to any highlighted problems can not be reached, the Pastor should resign; not be fired.

ARTICLE 6 – EXPULSIONS

Section 1: Any officer of this body, or any member of Council or any regular or special board or committee which it may be constituted, may be expelled from his/her office by a majority vote at any regular or special meeting. Such expulsion may be for conduct unbecoming a member of the Church of God; for failure of duty; for lack of interest and zeal in the work of the Congregation; for adhering to or propagating doctrine in opposition to the general teachings of the Church of God; or for absenteeism (without valid reason) from three (3) or more consecutive meetings of Council or committee on which he/she was elected to serve.

Section 2: Notice of the time of the meeting and reason for expulsion shall be given at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. This notice is to be given in writing by the Council Secretary prior to the announcement of the meeting at which action is due. An expelled officer loses his/her authority of office immediately. Expulsion does not affect the member's religious privileges in the congregation nor his/her participation where he/she otherwise qualifies.

ARTICLE 7 – MEETINGS

Section 1: The AGM of the Congregation shall be held between January 15 - 31 at a day and times may be set by the Church Council. Notice of date and time will be posted, at least thirty (30) days, in advance. All AGM reports are to be given to the Council Secretary no later than twenty-one (21) days prior to the AGM. The Council Secretary will assemble packages containing all financial and other reports. These packages are to be assembled and individual copies made available 10 Congregation members fourteen (14) days prior to the AGM.

Section 2: Special business meetings of the Congregation may be called any time by the Pastor or the Church Council, providing it is announced at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting, and the reasons for the meeting are stated. Any five (5) voting members may petition the Council to call a meeting stating their reasons.

Section 3: Meetings for buying/selling real estate or buildings, borrowing, mortgaging or lending must be announced fourteen (14) days before the meeting. Notice must state the purpose, time, date and place of the meeting and be announced at all regular meetings of the Congregation during that period. A two-thirds majority shall be required for Council or its officers to be authorized to transact these categories of business <Religious Societies' Lands Act>.

Section 4: A quorum for conducting business at any properly called meeting shall be fifty-one percent (51%) of the eligible voting members.

Section 5: Voting in all elections or expulsions will be by secret ballot. Only properly marked ballots may be counted. Absentee ballots will be made available by the council Chairperson to those members who have valid reason to be absent from any business meeting; said ballot is to be returned to the Chairperson in a signed and sealed envelope prior to the business meeting.

Section 6: The order of business at regular business meeting shall be:

- a) Worship or prayer
- b) Roll call
- c) Disposition of Minutes
- d) Reports of Officers
- e) Reports of Committees
- f) Unfinished Business
- g) Election of Officers
- h) Original Resolutions and New Business
- i) Council Sharing
- j) Closing prayer
- k) Adjournment

ARTICLE VIII - DIVISION, DISSOLUTION AND DISPOSITION OF ASSETS

Section 1: In case of division in the Congregation, its property, real and personal, shall belong to that part regardless of size, which remains faithful to these by-laws, and which adheres to the doctrines and practices commonly held by the Church of God, whose publishing headquarters and general offices are in Anderson, Indian, U.S.A. and Canadian offices, in Camrose, Alberta.

Section 2: Should there be dissolution of this Congregation from any cause whatsoever, the lands, tenements and other estates, real and personal, thereto belonging shall vest in the voting members of this Congregation who are at the time of dissolution members in good stand as prescribed in Article 3 of these by-laws. Should there be no continuing Congregation, or should the membership be reduce to five (5) members, the property shall be administered as directed by the General Assembly of the Church of God in Western Canada with offices in Camrose, Alberta.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

The by-laws may be revised or amended by a three-fourths majority vote at any regular or special meeting of the Congregation, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment(s) is posted, and notice that such action is to be taken is given at least fourteen (14) days prior to such regular or special meeting. The Secretary shall cause these by-laws to be reproduced and a copy thereof given or sent to each officer and member of the Congregation. These by-laws were adopted at a properly called business session of the Bragg Creek Community Church Congregation, this 6th day of May, 2001.

Chairperson, Church Council

Secretary, Church Council