

**Elk Lake Baptist Church
Association**

Victoria, B.C.

**CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS
AND POLICY STATEMENTS**

Adopted March 1991

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**This Constitution and By-Laws supercede all others previously
adopted by the congregations of Elk Lake Baptist Church and
The Church By The Lake**

CONSTITUTION OF THE ELK LAKE BAPTIST CHURCH ASSOCIATION

CLAUSE 1 - Name

The name of this Association shall be "Elk Lake Baptist Church Association".

CLAUSE 2 - PURPOSE

Having been led, as we believe, by the Holy Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord, we solemnly enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ. The purpose of this church so formed under God is:

- a. to provide a house of prayer and worship for all people;
- b. to serve as a source of biblical instruction and Christian fellowship;
- c. to labour for the redemption of our community and the world;
- d. to maintain a program which will bring:
 - happiness to little children;
 - inspiration and instruction to youth;
 - vision and support to men and women in the midst of life;
 - and comfort to those who have come to the evening of life's journey.

CLAUSE 3

This church shall hold and advocate the beliefs commonly held by the Baptist Union of Western Canada, namely:

THE BIBLE - God's Word inspired by the Holy Sprit, as the authoritative and sufficient rule of faith and practice.

THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST - The guiding principle for all life.

REGENERATE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP - The church is made up of believers, those who have accepted Christ as Saviour and Lord.

THE ORDINANCES - The baptism of believers by immersion and the Lord's Supper shared regularly.

A. The Ordinance of Baptism:

Upon request, the ordinance of Baptism by immersion (except where circumstances do not permit) shall be administered to those who have professed faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and given evidence of a personal Christian experience. These candidates are to be interviewed by a committee appointed by the Board of Deacons.

B. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper:

The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at stated intervals. The service is open to all who have accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. The Pastor or another appointed representative of the church shall preside.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS - All may approach God personally through Jesus Christ.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY - Each person created in the image of God is morally accountable and must freely choose his own destiny. That liberty carries with it momentous responsibilities.

SEPARATION OF THE CHURCH AND STATE - A "free" church in a "free" state. This Clause 3 is ALTERABLE.

CLAUSE 4

The operations of the Association are to be chiefly carried on in Greater Victoria and the Saanich Peninsula, in the Province of British Columbia. This Clause 4 is ALTERABLE.

CLAUSE 5

The Association shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other accretions to the Association shall be used in promoting its objects.

CLAUSE 6

In the events of winding up or dissolution of the Association, any funds and assets of the Association remaining, after the satisfaction of its debts and liabilities, shall be transferred to the Baptist Union of Western Canada, Calgary, Alberta.

CLAUSE 7

Clauses 5, 6, and 7 of this Constitution are **UNALTERABLE**, in accordance with the Societies Act.

BY-LAWS

Article I - Membership

A. Reception of New Members.

Upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons and affirmative vote of this Church Association, new members shall be admitted as follows:

1. Those who accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and experience Baptism by immersion.
2. Those who are members of other Baptist Churches, by letter of transfer.
3. Those who make a statement of Christian faith and experience if previously baptized by immersion.
4. Those who for some reason have had their name deleted from the church membership and wish to be restored to full fellowship.
5. Those Christians of good standing in this or any other Communion who after examination are found to be spiritually kin with us may be accepted into our church membership upon their request. Such members shall not be eligible as delegates to Associations or Conventions, unless these bodies at some time decree that such restrictions be lifted.

B. Rights of Members.

1. The members of this Church Association shall have equal voting rights, i.e. one person, one vote.
2. All members are eligible to hold any Office within the Association.

C. Responsibilities of membership shall be:

1. To promote the spirituality and well-being of the church through faithful attendance at worship and communion services; through up-holding ordinances, doctrine and disciplines established; and through its various offices.
2. To promote, through systematic giving, the support of the ministry, expenses of the church, relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.
3. To endeavor to maintain personal and family devotions and to encourage the continuing religious education of all through suitable programs.

4. To remember each other in prayer, aid each other in sickness and distress, cultivate Christian courtesy in speech, be slow to take offense and always ready for reconciliation.
5. To make an honest effort to walk circumspectly in the world, be just in our dealings and faithful in engagements, and seek the salvation of kindred and acquaintances.
6. To seek affiliation with another church upon moving from this area. A letter of transfer or commendation will be sent to the church if requested.

Article II - Termination of Membership

1. Whenever a member joins another church his membership here is automatically terminated.
2. Members who are inactive without just cause will cease to be in good standing and will have their names deleted from the church roll.
3. Members who actively attempt to subvert the covenant and purpose of the church will be expelled from membership as provided in Article III (3).

Article III - Meetings of the Church Association

1. The annual general business meeting shall be held in the last week of January, as far as possible. All organizations within the church will present a written report and a financial statement. All treasurers will make their books available to the auditors for scrutiny.
2. General business meetings shall be called regularly, not less often than once quarterly. Notice of general business meetings must be provided to the members through notification in the church bulletin at least fourteen days prior to the date of the proposed meeting.
3. Special business meetings shall be called to make decisions regarding the calling of a Pastor, asking for the resignation of a Pastor, the removal from office of directors or officers, the expulsion of a member, the purchase or sale of property, or other matters of a special nature that might arise.

Special business meetings shall be called by the Pastor, the Board of Deacons or the Chairman of the Pulpit Committee.

Notice of a special business meeting shall be mailed to all members giving at least 14 days notice of such meeting, and clearly stating the purpose of the meeting being called.

The Board of Deacons shall call a special business meeting within one month of the receipt of a petition from 10 percent of the members representing at least five (5) families of the church, asking that such a meeting be held. The petition must state the business for which the meeting is requested.

4. All business meetings shall be chaired by the Moderator. If the Moderator is unable to attend he/she shall ask either the Chairman of the Board of Deacons or the Pastor to substitute for him/her. In the event that none of the above officers are able to act, those in attendance will elect one of their numbers to fill the position.
5. Should any business meeting be unable to proceed due to lack of quorum it shall be immediately re-scheduled for the earliest feasible date.
6. For general business meetings a quorum shall consist of fifteen (15) members of 25% of the resident active members, whichever number is greater.
7. For each special business meeting a quorum shall consist of one half of the active, resident members but not less than 3 members; and it shall require an affirmative vote of 75 per cent of those present to carry any motion.

NOTE: At a special business meeting convened regarding the calling of a Pastor it shall require an affirmative vote of 90% of members present to carry a motion.

8. Voting shall usually be conducted by a show of hands at general business meetings. At special business meetings voting shall be by secret ballot.
9. Voting by proxy shall be acceptable only at special business meetings. Members unable to attend a special business meeting because of ill health may with the consent of and through the Chairman, cast a proxy vote.

Members voting in this manner shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.

Article IV - Church Association Organization

1. The Church Association shall appoint Officers and Committees to facilitate the work. All Officers and Chairmen of Committees must be active members of the church, or have approval of the Board of Deacons.
2. For the purpose of the Societies Act, the Deacons of the Church shall be recognized as the Directors of the Association.

There shall be at least six (6) Deacons, one third to be elected annually, each to serve three years.

The Deacons (Directors) shall serve without remuneration. They may be removed from office as established in Article III - 3.

3. Officers and Committees

a.) THE PASTOR

The Pastor shall conduct the public worship of the church, administer the ordinances; perform the pastoral and administrative duties of his office; cooperate with the officers and committees of the church and affiliated entities. The Pastor shall be ex-officio member of all Boards and committees of the church.

b.) THE MODERATOR

The Moderator, elected annually, shall preside at every business meeting of the church; is ex-officio member of all Boards and Committees; shall seek to promote the harmonious functioning of all official Boards, Committees and Organizations; shall chair all joint meetings of officials Boards. In co-operation with the Pastor, Church Clerk, and Chairmen official Boards he/she shall prepare the agenda of the annual meeting of the church at least two (2) weeks in advance of the meeting. In the absence of a Moderator the Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall assume his duties.

c.) THE BOARD OF DEACONS

The Deacons shall act as counselors and assistants to the Pastor in advancing the general interest of the church, both temporal and spiritual; assist in administering the Ordinances; visit the sick, the needy and negligent members; and, together with the Pastor have general charge of the work of the church.

They shall have the responsibility for deciding what meetings may be held within the church buildings, or under the name of the church.

The Deacons shall review all applicants for baptism, membership or for letters of transfer and shall make suitable recommendations.

The Deacons shall, under ordinary circumstances, meet monthly; further meetings to be held at the call of the Pastor or Chairman of the Board.

If the practices, services or attitudes of the Pastor should prove unsatisfactory in relation to the best interests of the church it shall be the duty of the Deacons to counsel with the Pastor and recommend to the church such action as the situation may demand.

d.) THE CHURCH CLERK

The Clerk shall be elected annually.

The Clerk shall act as secretary of all business meetings of the church; deal with all church correspondence; be custodian of the church membership register and give a report at each business meeting; and take responsibility for the careful preservation of all church records.

e.) THE TREASURER

The Treasurer shall be elected annually, and be an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee.

The Treasurer shall receive and deposit all monies and pay all approved accounts; shall maintain an accurate ledger; shall present a financial statement at all regular business meetings and an audited statement at the annual meeting.

f.) THE ENVELOPE CLERK

The Envelope Clerk shall be elected annually but due to the confidentiality of this office should be re-elected for as many years as is suitable.

The Envelope Clerk shall keep a confidential and accurate record of all envelope and identifiable giving; shall issue quarterly statements and annual receipts; shall sign receipts for offerings made as shown on audited statements of other organizations within the church; and shall comply with provincial and federal requirements.

g.) THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Sunday School Superintendent shall be elected annually and serve as an active member of the Christian Education Committee.

The Superintendent shall lead and co-ordinate the activities of the church school.

h.) THE AUDITORS

Two auditors shall be elected annually.

The auditors shall review and examine the financial records of all organizations within the church. A report of their findings shall be prepared for the annual meeting.

i.) THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, a member of the Board of Deacons, and four (4) persons elected by the church. Two of the latter four shall be elected annually, each for a two year term.

The Finance Committee shall meet regularly; encourage stewardship and keep the congregation informed of financial need; prepare a yearly budget and present it at the annual meeting; have general charge of the financial affairs of the church including the carrying into effect of all plans adopted by the church for its support.

j.) THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Christian Education Committee shall consist of the Sunday School Superintendent, a member of the Deacons Board, and three (3), six (6), or nine (9) persons, one third of whom shall be elected annually for a three year term.

The Christian Education Committee shall set policy and co-ordinate the program of religious Education in the church, offering advice and support to all associated groups; ensure adequate leadership and acceptable programming for all youth groups; promote and encourage leadership training; explore new and creative ministries and ideas; select suitable books to augment the library and appoint an interested person to be in charge of the library.

k.) THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Missions Committee shall consist of the four (4) persons, two of who to be elected annually to serve a two year term.

This committee shall promote and encourage the church in knowledge and understanding of missions and missionaries; stimulate an interest in missions within all church groups; and encourage the congregation in special prayer and giving to this cause.

l.) THE BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Building Committee shall consist of the five (5) persons. The term of office of electees, either one year or two years, shall be set by the Nominating Committee, to ensure reasonable continuity of committee membership.

This committee shall oversee the maintenance and upkeep of the church building and carry out such improvements as agreed upon by the church. It shall also be responsible for the church caretaker, with the following duties:

To engage or terminate such service when necessary.

To outline the duties and responsibilities of the caretaker and ensure they are carried out effectively.

To act as liaison between any member, group, committee or board and the caretaker concerning his duties. To make recommendations to the Finance Committee regarding his remuneration.

m.) THE GROUNDS COMMITTEE

This committee shall consist of at least four (4) persons. The term of office of electees, either one or two years shall be set by the Nominating Committee, to ensure reasonable continuity of committee membership.

This committee shall be responsible for maintenance of church grounds, landscaping, etc.

n.) THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall consist of the four (4) persons, two of whom to be elected annually to serve a two year term.

This committee shall present to the Fall Quarterly Business Meeting nominations for the following year; shall present nominations during the year to fill vacancies when committee members fall below the stated number. The consent of all nominees for the various offices must be obtained.

The committee will be responsible for the keeping of accurate records regarding terms of office and their expiry date for church officers and committee members.

o.) THE PULPIT COMMITTEE

At a meeting where the resignation of a Pastor is accepted the church shall appoint a Pulpit Committee. Those recommended to serve are the Moderator, Chairman of the Deacons Board, Chairman of the Christian Education Committee and four (4) other members.

This committee shall:

- a. notify the Area Minister when a Pastor's resignation has been accepted;
- b. secure supplies for the pulpit between pastorates;
- c. recommend a pastor whose credentials are accepted to the Baptist Union of Western Canada and:
 1. negotiate with and recommend only one person at a time,
 2. if possible invite members to hear the prospective Pastor in his own church,
 3. invite the prospective Pastor to meet with the congregation.

d. negotiate with the Pastor a “Letter of Understanding”, regarding terms of employment, as per recommendation of the Baptist Union of Western Canada, to be ratified by the church.

p.) THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Social Committee shall consist of not less than five (5) persons. The term of office of electees, either one year or two years, shall be set by the Nominating Committee, to ensure reasonable continuity of committee membership.

This committee shall be responsible for organizing the catering to church socials and be responsible for the preparation, serving and cleaning up of such events; shall arrange for refreshments after services, as requested; shall appoint a member to be Kitchen Coordinator who shall liaise with the W.A. to maintain the necessary kitchen supplies.

q.) USHERS

The Ushers shall consist of a Chairman elected at the annual meeting and the necessary number of volunteers to carry out their duties.

This group shall be responsible for the orderly seating of the congregation; receiving of the offering; and looking to the convenience and safety of the congregation.

r.) OTHER POSITIONS elected or ratified at the annual meeting:

Church Typist

Church Organist

Flower Convener

Preparer of the Lord’s Supper

Any other positions or committees deemed necessary by the congregation

s.) No elected member shall receive remuneration for serving as an officer of the Association.

Article V

No committee or individual has authority to incur any debt in the name of the Church Association, except those authorized by the Finance Committee.

The Association shall have the power to borrow or raise or secure the payment of money in such manner as the Association shall think fit. No debenture shall be issued without the sanction of a Special Resolution.

Article VI

All organizations within the Church Association will present a written report and a financial statement. All treasurers will make their books available to the auditors for scrutiny.

The auditors shall review and examine the financial records of all organizations within the Church Association. A report of their findings shall be prepared for the annual meeting.

Article VII

- 1.) The Moderator will be custodian of the Seal of the Association
- 2.) The Moderator, the Chairman of the Board of Deacons, and the Chairman of the Finance Committee must be present when the Association Seal is being affixed to any documents.

Article VIII

Other signing officers for the Church Association shall be:

- 1.) Any two of the Treasurer, Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee for financial matters
- 2.) The Church Clerk for matters of routine business.
- 3.) The Envelope Clerk for official financial receipts.

Article IX

The Deacons (Directors) shall ensure that the minutes of the members' meeting and minutes of the Deacons' meeting, and all other necessary books and records of the Association required by the by-laws or by any applicable statute or law are regularly and properly kept.

Article X

This Church Association shall be in affiliation with the Convention of Baptist Churches of British Columbia, the Baptist Union of Western Canada, the Canadian Baptist Federation, and the Baptist World Alliance; and shall call as Pastor only those whose credentials are acceptable to the Baptist Union of Western Canada.

Article XI

Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws shall only be made at a properly called business meeting of the church. When changes are to be presented “Notice of Motion” must be posted in the church and published in the church bulletin 30 days before the meeting.

Article XII

The Pastor and Moderator as ex-officio members of Boards and Committees carry full voting privileges at every meeting they attend.

Article XIII

The Deacons Board and all duly authorized committees shall each prepare a financial estimate to be presented to the Finance Committee for consideration and inclusion in the annual budget.

Article XIV

All auxiliary groups within the church shall ultimately be responsible to the Church Association.

Article XV

Deacons shall not be eligible for re-election when their term expires until after an interval of at least one (1) year.

Except as noted in Article IV. 3 (f), no person shall serve one particular office, as listed in Article IV. 3 (b) through IV 3 (h) for more than three (3) consecutive years, and no person shall serve on a particular committee for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

The Board of Deacons may, in the best interest of the church, approve the waiving of this provision for individual positions, when circumstances warrant such action.

Article XVI

The members may adopt policies for conducting the affairs of the Church Association. No policy statement may be amended or deleted without adequate “Notice of Motion” as provided in Article XI.

POLICY STATEMENTS

The following are policy statements, adopted by the membership, under which the affairs of the Church Association will be conducted. They may only be altered or deleted, as provided for in Article XVI

1. The Association may carry out its activities under the name “Elk Lake Baptist Church” or “The Church By The Lake”.
2. The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper shall normally be observed at the conclusion of the service on the second Sunday of each month.
3. The Board of Deacons, if it deems it prudent to do so, may cancel the general business meeting that follows the second quarter. If this decision is made, the congregation shall be informed through a notice in the bulletin.
4. Full voting privileges on each committee are extended to members who are elected, appointed, or serve by reason of their position.
5. All business meetings shall be conducted according to Robert Rules of Order, unless otherwise provided for in the By-Laws.
6. The Chairman of each general business meeting, if he judges it prudent to do so, may extend full courtesy of the meeting to all in attendance.
7. The church may, on recommendation of the Diaconate and by vote of a church meeting, elect to the office of “Life Deacon” (in an honorary capacity) a member who has rendered outstanding Christian service.
8. The first named to a committee in the annual report of the Nominating Committee shall call the first meeting, at which a chairman shall be elected. All committees shall be responsible to the church. Committees shall present a report at the regular business meetings of the church. All committees shall co-operate with the Finance Committee in the expenditures of their budgets.
9. A Property Management Committee shall be appointed to oversee the church rental property. It shall consist of three (3) persons: one appointed from the Finance Committee, one from the Board of Deacons, and one from the Building Committee. The Chairmen of the committees will co-operate in making their appointments to ensure that at least one appointee served in the prior year.

This committee shall act as liaison between the church and the renter of the church house, i.e. to acquire a suitable tenant under a formal rental agreement and if necessary terminate the agreement; to determine an appropriate rental rate in consultation with the Finance Committee; maintain the house and grounds in a state of good repair as determined under the agreement.

10. There shall be established a Long Range Planning Committee, consisting of an appointee from each of the Boards or Committees of the Church Association.

It will be the duty of this committee to study long range needs of the Association regarding programs and facilities, and to make recommendations as appropriate.

Appointments should be made carefully to ensure reasonable continuity of membership on this committee.

11. In special circumstances the Board of Deacons may recommend that an individual hold dual membership in this church and another sister Baptist Church.
12. The fiscal year-end shall be December 31 of each calendar year.