

**BY-LAWS**  
**OF THE**  
**TRI-VALLEY CHINESE BIBLE CHURCH, CALIFORNIA**

Preface

The Tri-Valley Chinese Bible Church started originally as a mission on September 17, 1989 by the Chinese for Christ Church of Hayward. In June 1990, the Tri-Valley Chinese Bible Church was established, and these By-Laws were read, discussed, voted upon and approved by the members of Tri-Valley Chinese Bible Church on June 2, 1990.

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of this organization is "Tri Valley Chinese Bible Church, California."

ARTICLE 2 - STATEMENT OF FAITH

- A. We believe all things are created by God. We believe that Godhead eternally exists in three persons - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit - and that these three are one God.
- B. We believe that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." We believe that the Bible is supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct of the Christian.
- C. We believe that Jesus Christ, our Lord, is the only Son of God. We believe in His virgin birth, atoning death, and bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
- D. We believe the truth of "justification by faith." We are saved by the grace of Jesus Christ.
- E. We believe in the one Holy Universal Church which is the Body of Christ and to which all believers belong, and in its mission to witness concerning its Head, Jesus Christ, preaching the gospel to all nations.
- F. We believe that baptism by immersion and the Lord's supper are the two most important sacraments and ordinances of the Church and that they are a Scriptured means of the testimony for the church its age.

ARTICLE 3 - PURPOSE

Under the leadership of the ministers and the Church Leadership Team, we seek to serve the Lord, to have spiritual fellowship and to preach the gospel. We should be the light and salt of the world.

ARTICLE 4 - CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

A member must accept the statement of faith of this church, agree upon the purpose of this church, approve the organization of this church, support, and serve the church.

- A. Full membership: A Christian who lives in San Francisco Bay Area or its vicinity who wishes to join this church, after mutual fellowship, may be accepted as a full member. All Christians who participate in this church's baptismal ceremony are considered full members.
- B. Associate membership: Any full member who has moved out of the area or its vicinity will automatically become an associate member.
- C. Voting rights: Voting rights are reserved for full members. Only full members may be elected as elders and trustees, deacons or deaconesses.
- D. Acceptance:
  - i. Application of membership should be recommended by the Pastor, elders, or any deacon or deaconess.
  - ii. The Church Leadership Team shall satisfy itself as to the qualification of the person applying for membership.
  - iii. The membership will be announced in Sunday service and the church bulletin.
  - iv. A welcome will be extended to the member during Communion Service.
- E. Discipline:
  - i. Members who have not actively engaged in church meetings with no apparent reason for a period of six months or more, may be considered to have forfeited their memberships.
  - ii. Any member, who is found to engage in activities contrary to accepted Biblical teachings and the statement of faith of this church, and/or in any such activity which may conflict with the interest of the church, may have his or her membership revoked by a vote of three-fourths or more of the Church Leadership Team. Before any disciplinary action is taken, it shall be the responsibility of the Church Leadership Team and the Pastor to conduct a fair and thorough investigation of the matter as the situation allows, exercising this investigatory prerogative only as laid down in Matthew 18: 15-20. The findings of such investigations shall be presented to the member being investigated. The member involved shall be given plenty of opportunities for taking corrective actions.

#### ARTICLE 5 - CHURCH LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Church Leadership Leader Team consists of the Pastor/Minister, Elders, Deacons and Trustees, and represents the executive body of the church. The Pastor and members of the Church Leadership Team are also officers of the church.

- A. The Church Leadership Team shall include a total of seven Deacons or Deaconesses. Out of the seven Deacons or Deaconesses, there shall be a Chairperson, a Church Secretary and a Church Treasurer. The church may from time to time have need for more Deacons or

Deaconesses, but the number shall not exceed eleven. The Church Leadership Team shall administer the planning and the general affairs of the church. The Deacons and Deaconesses are elected during the annual congregational meeting to serve for two years. They shall take office on January 1 of each year. No Deacon shall succeed himself or herself after two terms unless for special reasons. Should any vacancy occur among the Deacons, a member shall be appointed to fill that vacancy for the remaining period.

B. Qualifications for Deacons and Deaconesses:

- i. He or she must be loyal to God, His Word and be a full member.
- ii. He or she must be a Christian for three years or more.
- iii. He or she must bear a good witness among his or her family members.
- iv. He or she must tithe of his or her income and be an example in these matters for other members.
- v. He or she must have a sacrificial spirit in serving the Lord due to his or her love for the Lord.

C. Nomination:

- i. A Nomination Committee is formed by the Pastor, Chairperson of the Church Leadership Team, and a full member who is appointed by the Church Leadership Team.
- ii. Several members may be nominated and approved by three-fourths of the votes of the Church Leadership Team.
- iii. The pastor will notify the nominee and have fellowship with him or her and give him or her a period for consideration and prayer.
- iv. After the nominee has accepted the nomination, the Church Leadership Team will introduce the candidates publicly and on the church bulletin to the members two weeks before elections.
- v. All members will have the right and opportunity to make recommendations to the Nomination Committee during the nomination period. All members will also vote in the annual congregational meeting.
- vi. Nominees will be presented to church members for voting at the annual congregational meeting. An affirmative vote of at least fifty percent of the members present is required to elect deacons/deaconesses.

D. Duties of the Deacons:

- i. Chairperson of Church Leadership Team - The Chairperson is elected by members of

the Church Leadership Team. He shall preside over all business meetings of the church. He shall oversee and assist all committees. He shall carry on all pastoral functions in the absence of the Pastor/Elders.

- ii. Secretary - The Secretary shall keep a written record of all the business meetings of the church. He or she shall distribute minutes of all the meetings of the Church Leadership Team to the general membership. He or she shall keep the important documents of the Church. He or she shall take the place of Chairperson in his or her absence.
- iii. Treasurer - The Treasurer shall receive into his or her custody all money belonging to the church. He or she shall deposit all money received within three days in a bank designated by the Church Leadership Team. He or she shall make payment as authorized by the Church Leadership Team. He or she shall keep accurate and up-to-date accounting records. He or she shall make a written report of the finances of the church at its annual meeting each year and shall make monthly financial reports to the general membership.
- iv. Other Deacons and Deaconesses - They shall carry out the work assigned by the Church Leadership Team. They shall coordinate and help each committee with the assigned duties from the Church Leadership Team.

E. Duties of Elders and Trustees are described in Articles 7 and 8.

#### ARTICLE 6 - PASTOR/MINISTER

A. Duties:

- i. The pastor shall preach the Bible and direct the Church Leadership and the general membership according to the principles of the Bible.
- ii. The pastor must faithfully and accurately preach the Word of God based on the statement of faith of the church.
- iii. The pastor shall administer the sacraments.
- iv. The pastor should teach the Word of God and set a good example in his life to edify believers in their faith and lives. The pastor should be a diligent soul and spirit saver according to the Word of God.

B. The process for calling a pastor:

- i. The Church Leadership Team shall elect a Search Committee with three to five members.
- ii. The Search Committee shall nominate one to three candidates to the Church Leadership Team.
- iii. The Church Leadership Team shall approve the candidates, and the Church shall have a

congregational vote. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present shall be required to elect a new pastor.

C. Contract:

A contract shall be entered between the pastor and the Church Leadership Team, specifying the terms of the office, which shall not be less than one year or more than five years. Either party may terminate the contract upon six months written notice. Termination of the contract with the pastor must be proposed by the Church Leadership Team and voted by two-thirds of the membership.

#### ARTICLE 7 - ELDERS

- A. Duties - The Elders shall assist the pastor in the spiritual care of the church, and shall carry on all pastoral functions in the absence of the pastor.
- B. Term of office - The Elders must be members of the church and shall serve for three years beginning January 1. The elders may be re-elected. No Elder shall concurrently hold a post as a Deacon or Deaconess.
- C. Nomination - The elders shall be nominated by the pastor, or by an elder, or by any member of the Church Leadership Team. The nomination must follow the qualifications mentioned in I Timothy 3: 1-7 and I Peter 5:1-4. The Church Leadership Team must approve the nominations. An affirmative vote of two thirds of the members present in an annual meeting is required.

#### ARTICLE 8 - TRUSTEES

A. Organization

The Trustees shall consist of not less than two but not more than four members.

B. Nomination

Procedures for election of Trustees are the same as those for the Deacons, except that an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present in a congregational meeting is required to elect the Trustees.

C. Duties

Trustees shall have care, custody and control of all property of the church and administer the same under such rules as may be prescribed by the church. The Trustees shall execute all legal instruments as may be authorized by the Church Leadership Team. They are also consultants to the Elders and Deacons on legal and financial matters related to the acquisition, sale and management of church properties. They have the same voting powers as the Elders and Deacons.

D. Term of Office

The trustees may serve a term of five years and they may be re-elected.

#### ARTICLE 9 - DISCIPLINE FOR THE OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

- A. When the Pastor or Elder shows evidence of serious doctrinal errors or a serious deviation from Christian conduct contrary to the teaching of the Bible, the Church Leadership Team shall deal with him for correction. If he does not change, the Church Leadership Team may call a congregational meeting. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present shall determine the appropriate action. When a Deacon or Trustee commits the above errors, the Church Leadership Team will decide the appropriate action. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members of the Church Leadership Team can terminate his or her position.
- B. If an Elder or Deacon is absent from the monthly Church Leadership Team meeting for three consecutive months for no apparent reason, he or she shall forfeit his or her position.

#### ARTICLE 10 - CHURCH PROPERTY

- A. All real estate bought or built with funds of this church will be under the title of this church.
- B. All selling, change of title, or mortgaging of property under the title of this church should be based on the need to expand God's work. The above should be approved by a two-thirds vote of the congregational members.
- C. In case the church becomes dissolved, any church property which exists then shall in no way be diverted for other purposes. The title shall be given to another organization or church, which has similar statement of faith.

#### ARTICLE 11 - MEETINGS

- A. The Church Leadership Team shall meet at least once a month to tend to church business. The Pastor, Elders and members of the Church Leadership Team have voting rights.

- B. Annual congregational meeting:

The annual meeting of the church shall be held in October of each year at the church. Written notice of said meeting shall be posted at the church at least two weeks prior to the meeting. At the annual meeting there will be the annual reports, election of officers, adoption of the budget and all business that may properly come before the meeting.

- C. Special congregational meetings:

Special meetings may be called by the Church Leadership Team or the written petition of more than fifty percent of the full members. The Church Leadership Team shall announce the special meeting at least seven days in advance. In case of emergency, the Church Leadership Team shall be responsible for notifying all members and announce the meeting during that Sunday service.

D. Quorum:

The quorum for all meetings shall consist of a majority of the membership of the Church Leadership Team, in case of a meeting of the Church Leadership Team, and a majority of the membership of the church for all congregational meetings of the church.

E. Voting privileges:

Only persons with full membership and age 18 or above shall have the right to vote.

#### ARTICLE 12 - AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended at any congregational meeting of the church membership by vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting, if they constitute a quorum. The notice of any meeting shall include the subject matter of any proposed amendment. These By-Laws and/or the amendments are effective immediately after they are passed by the congregational meeting.