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BY-LAWS
for the
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR BAPTIST FREEDOMS

PREAMBLE

Being led as we believe by the Holy Spirit, who moves with renewing power among Christians in all denominational traditions;

And as Baptists committed to preserving and celebrating our historic freedoms;

And desiring to associate ourselves in a fellowship which seeks to experience and express both personally and in the corporate life of our Churches that freedom in which Christ makes us free;

And further desiring to continue the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship, initially established November 20, 1971, pursuant to the following By-Laws.

INTERPRETATION

1. Definitions. In these By-Laws:

- (a) “CABF, “Fellowship” or “Society” means CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR BAPTIST FREEDOMS.
- (b) “Members” or “Member” means Individual Members and Member Churches, collectively or singly, or either of them, as required by the context.
- (c) “Registrar” means the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies appointed under the *Companies Act* of Nova Scotia.
- (d) “Special Resolution” means a resolution passed by not less than **three quarters** ($\frac{3}{4}$) of such Members entitled to vote as are present in person or by proxy, where proxies are allowed, at a general meeting of which notice specifying the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution has been duly given.
- (e) “Policy and Procedures Manual” means a separate document that contains the approved operating policies and procedures of the CABF, hereafter referred to as the “P&P Manual.”

2. Interpretation. In these By-Laws, words importing the singular number only, include the plural number and *vice versa*, and words importing the masculine gender only, include the feminine or neuter gender and *vice versa*. The headings and other descriptions of all articles, sections, paragraphs and sub-paragraphs are inserted for convenience of reference only and shall not affect the construction or interpretation of these By-Laws.

MEMBERSHIP

3. **Accountability.** The CABF is ultimately accountable to the Members of the Fellowship.
4. **Members.** The Members of the CABF shall be those Baptist Churches and individuals from time to time who have declared and registered their support for the objectives of the Society as set out in the Memorandum of Association of the Society, are enrolled as Members of the Fellowship at its head office and pay the prescribed membership fee. There shall be maintained at the head office of the Society a list of Members in good standing enrolled at such office. The CABF does not consider its membership to be exclusive of other associations. Members may freely associate with other groups or organizations without interference from the Society.
5. **Membership Fees.** Save as otherwise expressly herein provided, the fee for membership in the Society, for each class of Member (as hereinafter provided for), shall be such sum *per annum* as may be recommended from time to time by Council and ratified by the Members.
6. **Classes of Membership.** There shall be two classes of membership in the Fellowship, namely:
 - (a) Individual Members, and
 - (b) Member Churches.
7. **Individual Members.** Individual Members shall be those individuals who have filed an application for such membership with the CABF and who have been accepted as an Individual Member by the Fellowship. Any Individual Member is eligible to **one (1)** vote unless they are a delegate as a member church and any Individual Member of legal age is entitled to hold any office in the CABF. Any individual voting as a member shall not be eligible to vote as a member church.
8. **Member Churches.** Member Churches shall be those Churches which have, upon resolution duly adopted by that Church filed an application for such membership with the Fellowship and who have been accepted as a Member Church by the Members. Any Member Church is eligible to appoint delegates to represent it at any Members meeting of the Society. Each Member Church may appoint delegates at the rate of **one (1)** per fifty members or major fraction there-of, with a minimum of **two (2)** delegates and a maximum of **five (5)** delegates per Church. Registered delegates are each eligible to **one (1)** vote at any Members meeting of the CABF and may not vote as an individual member. Any member of a Member Church who is of legal age is entitled to hold any office in the Society.
9. **Termination of Membership.** Membership in the Fellowship of any Member shall cease:
 - (a) if such Member fails to pay any fee within 60 days after it is due, provided, however, that such termination of membership shall not prejudice the Member's right to apply for re-admission, or
 - (b) upon death of an Individual Member, or

- (c) upon the dissolution of a Member Church, or
- (d) if the Member resigns by written notice to the Fellowship, or
- (e) if the Member ceases to qualify for membership in accordance with these By-Laws, or
- (f) upon a vote to terminate the Member's membership in the Fellowship being passed by a **three quarters** ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority of the Members of the CABF and by a **three quarters** ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority vote of the Council of the Society, at a meeting duly called and for which notice of the proposed action has been given, provided, however, that the membership of any member of the Council of the Society shall not be terminated unless such member of Council has first been removed as a member of Council of the CABF pursuant to By-Law 28.

10. Attend Meetings. Every Individual Member and member of a Member Church is entitled to attend any Members meeting of the Society. All meetings of Members shall be open meetings.

11. Membership Non-transferable. Membership in the Fellowship is not transferable.

12. Membership Documents. Every Member shall be provided with a copy of the Memorandum of Association, these By-Laws and the Covenant of the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms, which Covenant is Appendix I to these By-Laws. The Covenant expresses the Members' agreed upon way to live and serve together.

FUNDS

13. Funds to be Used for Society Purposes. The income and property of the Society shall be applied solely towards the promotion of its objectives as set forth in the Memorandum of Association, and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred, directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus, or otherwise howsoever by way of profit, to its Members. Provided that nothing herein shall prevent payment, in good faith, of reasonable and proper remuneration to any Member of the Society in return for any services actually rendered to the CABF.

MEMBERS MEETINGS

14. Voting. Every Member, subject to By-Laws 6 and 7, shall have the right to cast the vote or votes set out in those By-Laws applicable to that Member and no more, and there shall **not** be proxy voting. Any Member Church entitled to vote shall designate delegates to cast its votes at any meeting of the Members with each delegate being entitled to cast **one (1)** such vote on behalf of that Member Church. Each individual person present at any Meeting of the Fellowship shall be entitled to cast no more than **one (1)** vote on any motion.

- 15. General or Special Meeting.** A general or special meeting of the Members may be held at any time and shall be called:
- (a) if requested by the chair, or
 - (b) if requested by a majority of Council, or
 - (c) if requested in writing to the Secretary signed by **ten (10) percent** of the Members.

- 16. Notice of General or Special Meeting.** Notice to Members is required for general or special meetings. The notice must:
- (a) specify the date, place and time of the meeting,
 - (b) be given to the Members **seven (7)** days prior to the meeting,
 - (c) be given to the Members by any of the following: newsletters, regular prepaid post, e-mail, telephone, fax and/or other electronic means, and
 - (d) specify the nature of business, such as the intention to propose a special resolution.

The non-receipt of notice by any Member shall not invalidate the proceedings. Notice may be waived for Members meetings with the unanimous approval of all Members.

- 17. Annual General Meeting and Notice.** An annual general meeting shall be held in the fall of every calendar year and notice is required which must:
- (a) specify the date, place and time of the meeting,
 - (b) be given to the Members **thirty (30)** days prior to the meeting,
 - (c) be given to the Members by any of the following: newsletters, regular prepaid post, e-mail, telephone, fax and/or other electronic means, and
 - (d) specify the intention to propose a special resolution.

The non-receipt of notice by any Member shall not invalidate the proceedings. Notice may be waived for Members meetings with the unanimous approval of all Members.

- 18. Business at Annual General Meeting.** At the annual general meeting of the Society the following items of business shall be dealt with and shall be deemed ordinary business and all other business transacted shall be deemed special business:
- (a) minutes of the previous annual general meeting and any special meetings held in the interim,

- (b) consideration of the annual report of Council,
 - (c) consideration of the annual financial report of the Society,
 - (d) the appointment of auditors for the ensuing year, and
 - (e) election of Council, as set out in these By-Laws,
 - (f) election of Standing Committees, as set out in these By-Laws.
- 19. Vincent Rushton Lecture and Luncheon.** The Vincent Rushton Lecture and Luncheon may be held each spring at which items of interest will be presented and a speaker invited to deliver a lecture. The exact date, agenda, and speaker shall be arranged by the Program Committee under the direction of the Council. There shall be an open meeting, at which business may be done, held in conjunction with the Lecture and Luncheon.
- 20. Quorum for Members Meeting.** Quorum shall consist of **twenty (20)** percent of Members. No business shall be conducted at any meeting unless a quorum is present to open the meeting and, upon request, before any vote.
- 21. Quorum Not Present.** If a quorum is not present within **thirty (30)** minutes from the time appointed for a meeting:
- (a) convened pursuant to By-Law 15(a) or 15(b), such meeting shall be adjourned to such time and place as a majority of the Members present shall decide and notice of the new meeting shall be given, provided, however, that at the adjourned meeting, the Members present shall constitute a quorum only for the purpose of winding up the Society; or
 - (b) convened at the request of the Members pursuant to By-Law 15(c), such meeting shall be dissolved.
- 22. Chair of Meeting.** The President, or in his/her absence, the Vice-President, or in the absence of both of them, any Individual Member or any member of a Member Church appointed from among those present, shall preside as Chair at Members meetings.
- 23. No Second or Casting Vote.** At Members meeting, where there is an equality of votes the motion shall be lost.
- 24. Adjournment.** The Chair may, with the consent of the meeting, adjourn any meeting. No business shall be transacted at the subsequent meeting other than the business left unfinished at the adjourned meeting unless notice of such new business is given to the Members pursuant to By-Law 16.
- 25. Procedure for Vote.** At any meeting a declaration by the Chair that a resolution has been carried is sufficient unless a poll is demanded by at least **one (1)** Member. If a poll is demanded, it shall be

held by show of hands or by secret ballot as requested by any Individual Member or Member Church delegate.

COUNCIL

26. **Qualification for Council.** Any Individual Member or any member of a Member Church shall be eligible to be elected a member of the Council of the CABF and a member of the Council of the Society shall be an Individual Member or a member of a Member Church.
27. **Council are Directors.** For the purposes of the *Societies Act* of Nova Scotia, the Council and its members are the Directors of the Society.
28. **Members of Council.** The Council shall consist of the Officers of the Society, Editor of the Bulletin, and chairs of committees, and up to four members-at-large, all of whom shall have voting privileges. At the first election of members-at-large following the approval of this by-lay, 2 members-at-large shall be elected for 3 years, 1 member-at-large shall be elected for 2 years and 1 member-at-large shall be elected for 1 year. Thereafter, except where an election is held to fill the unexpired portion of a term, newly elected members-at-large shall be elected for three-year (3) terms. The number of Council shall not be less than **five (5)**. The subscribers to the Memorandum of Association of the Society shall be the first Council and thereby, the first Directors of the Society.
29. **Term of Council.** Members of Council terms shall be coincident with the term of the office they hold.
30. **Vacancy.** If a member of Council resigns his/her position or ceases to be an Individual Member or a member of a Member Church, or the Member Church of which that member of Council is a member ceases to be a Member in the Fellowship, his/her position as member of Council shall be vacated and the vacancy may be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by the Council from among the Individual Members and/or Member Churches.
31. **Removal of Member of Council.** The Members may, by special resolution, remove any member of Council and appoint another person to complete the term of office.
32. **Responsibilities of Council.** The Council shall have the responsibility for making recommendations to general meetings and for the execution of the policies and programs approved by the general meetings. The Council shall be authorized to establish and manage, subject to ratification by the membership, a Policy and Procedures Manual. The management of the CABF is the responsibility of Council.
33. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest.** Any member of Council who has, or could reasonably be seen to have, a conflict of interest, has a duty to declare this interest. The declaration should be made to the Members:
 - (a) upon nomination, and
 - (b) if serving as a member of Council, when the possibility of a conflict is realized.

34. **Interest of Members of Council in Contracts.** Subject to the provisions of any applicable legislation, no member of Council shall be disqualified by his or her office from contracting with the CABF nor shall any contract or arrangement entered into by or on behalf of the Society with any member of Council or in which any member of Council is in any way interested be liable to account to the Society or any of its Members or creditors for any profit realized from any such contract or arrangement by reason of such member of Council holding that office or the fiduciary relationship thereby established, provided that such member of Council withdraws from the decision making on matters pertaining to that contract or interest. The withdrawal should be recorded in the minutes.
35. **No Remuneration of Council.** Members of Council of the Society shall serve without remuneration and no member of Council shall directly or indirectly receive any profit from his or her position as such; provided that a member of Council may be paid reasonable expenses incurred by him or her in the performance of the duties of that member of Council.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

36. **Meetings of Council.** The Council shall meet no less than **four (4)** times each year when Council or the Society deems a meeting is appropriate. A meeting of Council may be held at the close of every annual general meeting without notice.
37. **Notice of Meetings.** Notice is required for all Council meetings, except any meeting held at the close of every annual general meeting, and must:
- (a) specify the date, place and time of the meeting,
 - (b) be given to the members of Council **seven (7)** days prior to the meeting, and
 - (c) be given to the Members by any of the following: newsletters, regular prepaid post, e-mail, telephone, fax and/or other electronic means.
- The non-receipt of notice by any member of Council shall not invalidate the proceedings. Notice may be waived for Council meetings with the unanimous approval of Council.
38. **Quorum for Council Meeting.** Quorum shall consist of fifty (50) percent of the members of Council. No business shall be conducted at any meeting of the Council unless a quorum is present to open the meeting and, upon request, before any vote.
39. **Chair of Council.** The President or, in the absence of the President, the Vice-President or, in the absence of both of them, any member of Council appointed from among the Council members shall preside as Chair of Council.
40. **No Second or Casting Vote.** At Council meetings, where there is an equality of votes the motion shall be lost.
41. **Council Meetings Open.** All meetings of Council shall be open to members of Council and visitors; provided that only members of Council may vote at such meetings of Council.

OFFICERS

- 42. Officers.** The Officers shall be elected by the Members for a **two (2)** year term and shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, and a Secretary. There shall also be a Past-President who shall be determined pursuant to these By-laws and shall be an *ex-officio* voting officer.
- 43. President.** One of the Officers shall be the President. The President shall be responsible for the effectiveness of Council and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Members or Council.
- 44. Past-President.** One of the Officers shall be the Past-President. The Past-President shall be the most immediate former President who has completed at least one term as President, and is willing and able to so serve. The Past-President shall chair the Nominating Committee.
- 45. Vice-President.** One of the Officers shall be the Vice-President. The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the Chair during the absence, illness or incapacity of the President, or when the Chair may request the Vice-President to do so.
- 46. Secretary.** One of the Officers shall be the Secretary. The Secretary shall:
- (a) be responsible for taking minutes of all Council and Members meetings, and
 - (b) have responsibility for the preparation and custody of all non-financial books and records of the Fellowship, including, but not limited to:
 - (i) the minutes of Members meetings,
 - (ii) the minutes of Council meetings,
 - (iii) the register of Members, and
 - (iv) filing the annual requirements with the office of the Registrar, and
 - (c) have custody of the Seal, if any, which may be affixed to any document upon resolution of the Council, and
 - (d) file with the Registrar:
 - (i) within **fourteen (14)** days of their election or appointment, a list of members of Council with their addresses, occupations, and dates of appointment or election, and
 - (ii) a copy of every special resolution within **fourteen (14)** days after the resolution is passed, and
 - (iii) have other duties as assigned by Council.

- 47. Treasurer.** One of the Officers shall be the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have responsibility for the custody of all financial books and records of the Society, the preparation of the financial report as set out in By-Law 54 for each fiscal year of the Society after the fiscal year end and the budget for the ensuing fiscal year for review by Council, and carry out all other duties as assigned by Council.
- 48. No Remuneration of Officers.** Officers shall serve without remuneration and shall not receive any profit from their positions. However, an Officer may be paid reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of that Officer's duties.
- 49. Execution of Documents.** Contracts, deeds, bills of exchange and other instruments and documents may be executed on behalf of the CABF by the President or the Vice-President and the Secretary, or otherwise as prescribed by resolution of the Council.

COMMITTEES

- 50. Standing Committees.** The Standing Committees of the Fellowship shall carry out the objectives of the Society as set out in the Memorandum of Association of the Society, shall be elected by the Membership and shall be:
- (a) the **Bulletin Committee**, which shall publish, under the leadership of an Editor, a newsletter promoting the events and objectives of the Society;
 - (b) the **Website Committee**, which shall administer, under the leadership of a Webmaster, a website promoting the events and objectives of the Society;
 - (c) the **Nominating Committee**, which shall work under the leadership of the Past President to prepare and publish an annual slate of Officers and other leaders, which shall be presented as nominations at the Annual General Meeting;
 - (d) the **Membership Committee**, which shall maintain the membership records of the Fellowship and oversee the admission or removal of Members;
 - (e) the **Credentials Committee**, which shall maintain the list of Accredited Ministers and oversee the process for granting or removing accreditation by administering requests for CABF credentials, the ordination process, and the recognition of existing accreditation; and
 - (f) the **Program Committee**, which shall provide for the program, organization, and publicity of the Annual General Meeting, Rushton Lecture and Luncheon, and any other General meetings and carry out such other duties as set out in these bylaws
- 51. Composition of Committees.** All committees shall consist of one or more Individual Members and/or members of a Member Church. Council may appoint additional members to committees.

- 52. Additional Committees.** In addition to Standing Committees, Council may appoint committees and define their areas of responsibility.
- 53. Records and Reports.** Documents related to the business of the CABF shall be kept in safe keeping by the chairpersons of the various committees, and when they are no longer required for the transaction of current business, shall be deposited with the Baptist Archives at Acadia University.

ORDINATION, APPOINTMENT AND DISMISSAL OF CLERGY

- 54. Clergy Credentials.** The CABF oversees a process by which a person having a sense of calling and the necessary education may receive the credentials necessary to become accredited by the CABF to perform ministry. For candidates who are not ordained and who hold a Church Licence to Minister, a candidate may apply for a CABF Association Licence to Minister; for candidates who hold the appropriate church and association licenses, the CABF may organize an Ordination Examining council; and for those who have been ordained by a body acceptable to the CABF, a candidate may apply to become accredited by the CABF. In all case, candidates must fulfill the requirements as established in the CABF P&P Manual.
- 55. Clergy Accreditation.** Clergy accreditation is an official declaration by the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms that a person meets the Fellowship's standards to be a CABF Accredited member of the clergy. Clergy Accreditation is a covenant relationship between the CABF and the persons the Fellowship accredits. This allows ministers to meet certain professional requirements and have 'denominational' recognition for employment. It confirms that a minister is in good standing with the CABF and provides the minister with a professional 'denominational' identity. The CABF pledges to provide ongoing support to those who have attained CABF accreditation and who strive to maintain its standards. Accredited clergy agree to on-going participation in the life of the Fellowship, as well as maintaining communication and accountability to the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms. Accreditation by the CABF does not preclude the holding of accreditation by denominational bodies.
- 56. Qualifications for Accreditation.** Clergy Accreditation is granted to individual members of the clergy who:
- (1) successfully complete requirements overseen by the Credentials Committee, which address the following core standards through a process of written papers, interviews, and mutual discernment. (Details of these standards are found in the P&P Manual.):
 - Ordination
 - Ministerial and theological integrity
 - Good standing and accountability within the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms
 - Ability to work in ways that promote equity, collegiality, and diversity

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- Willingness to affirm the Covenant and share the mission of CABF
 - Commitment to sharing the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ
 - Continuing spiritual formation and growth
 - Academic education, self-reflection training, and professional experience

57. Authorization to Conduct Marriages. The Credentials Committee may recommend to the provincial authority that a person be authorized to conduct marriages. The scope and details of this authorization are found in the P&P Manual.

58. Dismissal of Clergy. The Credentials Committee is charged by the Council to create and review from time to time and revise as required, and then to administer and follow a process whereby members of the clergy accredited by the CABF may have that accreditation removed. There shall also be a process and means whereby any decision of the Accreditation Committee may be appealed. These processes as they are created or revised, and approved by Council, shall be communicated to, and subject to approval by, the members at the next succeeding meeting of Members. Details of the procedure are contained in the P&P Manual.

FINANCE

59. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year end of the Society shall be the last day of December.

60. Financial Report. Council shall annually present to the Members a written report on the financial position of the Fellowship. The report shall be in the form of:

- (a) a balance sheet showing its assets, liabilities and equity, and
- (b) a statement of its income and expenditure in the preceding fiscal year.

61. Signing of Financial Report. A copy of the financial report shall be signed by the auditor, if one has been appointed, or by two members of Council if no auditor has been appointed.

62. Filing of Financial Report with Registrar. A signed copy of the financial report shall be filed with the Registrar within 14 days after each annual meeting.

63. Auditor. An auditor of the CABF may be appointed by the Members at the annual general meeting and, if the Members fail to appoint an auditor, Council may do so.

64. Borrowing. The Society may only borrow money as approved by a special resolution of the Members.

65. Members Inspection of Books and Records. The Members may inspect the annual financial statements and minutes of Members and Council meetings at the registered office of the Society with 1 weeks' notice. All other books and records of the Society may be inspected by any member at any

reasonable time within 2 days prior to the annual general meeting at the registered office of the CABF.

- 66. No Loans or Advance of Funds.** The Society shall not make loans, guarantee loans or advance funds to any member of Council or Officer.

STATUTORY COMPLIANCE

- 67. Compliance with *Societies Act* of Nova Scotia.** For so long as the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms is incorporated under the *Societies Act* of Nova Scotia, the CABF shall do all things necessary to comply with that *Act*. If, for reasons of polity or otherwise, the Fellowship cannot comply with that *Act*, the Fellowship may by Special Resolution and satisfying any other requirements of the *Act* or by law, surrender its Certificate of Incorporation.

AMENDMENT

- 68. Amendment, Repeal of Memorandum.** By-Laws or Covenant. The Members may repeal, amend or add to the Memorandum of Association of the Society, or these By-Laws, or the Covenant of the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms by a special resolution at a meeting duly called and for which notice of the proposed action has been duly given. No By-Law or amendment to these By-Laws or amendment to the Memorandum of Association of the Society shall take effect until the Registrar approves of it.

APPENDIX I

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR BAPTIST FREEDOMS

Our Covenant

**Being led as we believe by the Holy Spirit,
and in response to the call of God in Jesus Christ
to be disciples and servants in the world, we as
individuals and churches who cherish historic
Baptist principles, freedoms, and traditions,
humbly commit that in our life together:**

- We will respect and defend the freedom and the responsibility of individuals and local churches to interpret and live the call of God in every aspect of their individual and shared lives, led by God's Spirit, informed by the Scriptures, and without coercion from the state or any ecclesiastical body;
- We will support and uphold one another in mutual respect and love, and remember one another in prayer;
- We will affirm and celebrate participation in the whole Church of Jesus Christ, worshipping and working together to witness to, and to further, the reign of God in our lives and in our world;
- We will create opportunities for exploration of doctrinal, ethical, and social issues, entering into dialogue with one another, and with those beyond our fellowship, in a spirit of tolerance, respect, and love;
- We will make the worship of God primary in all our gatherings;
- We will strive, when we gather, to create times and places of refuge and renewal, health and wholeness, in which all are welcome;
- We will seek to be equitable and to act justly in all our dealings;
- And we will foster partnerships within the Fellowship, and with other people of faith, in order that we might live out the intent of this Covenant freely in community.