

# *Constitution of the BCC Federation*

*Adopted by the Constitutional Assembly on November 21, 2021.  
Last revised on July 25, 2022.*

## **Chapter 1 – Basis of Faith. Objectives. Legal status etc.**

### **Article 1.1 – About this Constitution**

This Constitution is the BCC Federation's legal basis and, in the case of conflict, takes precedence over the BCC Federation's bylaws or other resolutions or regulations.

The Constitution shall be adopted in both English and Norwegian. In the event of a conflict of interpretation, the Norwegian version shall prevail.

### **Article 1.2 – The BCC Federation's Basis of Faith and objectives**

#### **1.2.A Basis of Faith**

The BCC Federation's Basis of Faith is based on the Bible as the Holy Scriptures, provided through inspiration from God, containing everything a person needs for their salvation, and has the Bible as its authority and basis.

We believe in God the Father, the Almighty, the creator of heaven and earth.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Father before time, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born into the world of the Virgin Mary.

We believe that the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, will teach us and remind us of all that Jesus has commanded us.

We adhere to the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed.

The BCC Federation's Basis of Faith is further based on the teaching, the values, and the Christian content that Johan O. Smith represented, especially as it appears in his articles in the publication *Skjulte Skatter (Hidden Treasures)*, his surviving letters and his books published by Stiftelsen Skjulte Skatters Forlag.

The BCC Federation's Basis of Faith is described by the Elders in the publication "Basis of Faith – Brunstad Christian Church".

### 1.2.B Interpretation or changes of the BCC Federation's Basis of Faith

In matters pertaining to faith and doctrine where there is doubt as to how the Bible or the BCC Federation's Basis of Faith is to be understood, the BCC Federation adheres to the one that the leader of the Elders finds that Johan Oscar Smith had, as it appears in his articles in the publications *Hidden Treasures* and his other letters and publications published by Stiftelsen Skjulte Skatters Forlag. If his publications and letters do not provide sufficient clarity, the leader of the Elders shall determine what is the BCC Federation's understanding of the Bible.

Article 1.2.A and 1.2.B may only be amended through resolution by the Elders with subsequent approval by the Assembly of Representatives with the same majority vote as for amendments to this Constitution. Within the boundaries of 1.2.A and 1.2.B, the publication "Basis of Faith – Brunstad Christian Church" may be amended through resolution by the Elders.

### 1.2.C Objectives

The objectives of the BCC Federation are to:

- promote the Christian faith, as set out in the BCC Federation's Basis of Faith, among all people and teach those who want to, to keep all of Jesus' commandments.
- further the framework conditions for Christianity and its standing in society.
- provide children and young people with a positive and healthy Christian environment, and create good framework conditions for children and young people's personal, spiritual, and social development.

### Article 1.3 – Name, structure, and legal status

The BCC Federation is a Christian, non-profit and charitable federation (non-financial association) with limited liability, registered in Norway and subject to Norwegian law, consisting of members who are independent legal persons, and which (i) share the BCC Federation's Basis of Faith and objectives, (ii) recognize this Constitution and the bylaws of the BCC Federation and (iii) recognize the authority of the Elders and the Assembly of Representatives.

The BCC Federation has four types of members: BCC Federation churches, BCC Federation children's and youth organizations, BCC Federation joint initiatives and BCC Federation associate members. Members have no ownership of the assets of the BCC Federation.

### Article 1.4 – Internal dispute resolution

Disputes related to the BCC Federation shall be resolved with final effect within the organization itself (internal dispute resolution).

## Chapter 2 – Organization membership

### Article 2.1 - Types of membership

The BCC Federation has four types of membership:

*Members with representatives:*

1. **BCC Federation churches:** local churches or regional/national associations of churches.
2. **BCC Federation children's and youth organizations:** local, regional, national, or international organizations or associations of children's and/or youth organizations.

*Members without representatives:*

3. **BCC Federation joint initiatives:** entities that carry out one or more activities that further the BCC Federation's objectives.
4. **BCC Federation associate members:** entities which have not applied for or do not meet the conditions for another type of membership, but which have been approved as an associate member.

Members are admitted by the Assembly of Representatives following an application filed in line with the conditions and process requirements provided in this Constitution and the bylaws of the BCC Federation.

### Article 2.2 – Conditions to become a BCC Federation church or children's and youth organization

A local church which is a legal person and that carries out church activities based on the BCC Federation's Basis of Faith, or a regional or national association of two or more such local churches, may by application be admitted by the Assembly of Representatives as one of BCC's churches if the applicant meets the following conditions:

- The applicant or its members must have at least 5 individual members
- The applicant's bylaws and organization must meet the requirements set out in the bylaws of the BCC Federation

On the same conditions, a local, regional, national, or international organization that carries out activities for children and young people based on the BCC Federations' Basis of Faith, or an association of such organizations, may by application be admitted by the Assembly of Representatives as a BCC Federation children's and youth organisation.

### Article 2.3 – Conditions to become a joint initiative or associate member

The Assembly of Representatives may establish or admit entities as joint initiatives in the BCC Federation, or grant status as an associate member, provided that the entity carries out one or more activities mentioned in article 2.4 within the BCC Federation's Basis of Faith and objectives.

### Article 2.4 Activities that the BCC Federation and its members can carry out to further the objectives

The BCC Federation and its member organizations can further BCC's objectives through the following activities:

1. Local, regional, or national church activities such as meetings and gatherings, Sunday school, worship and music, child blessing, baptism of believers, communion, Bible instruction etc.

2. Regional, national, or international Christian conferences
3. Media production, distribution, and development activity
4. Physical or digital missionary work
5. Activities and care for children and young people
6. Humanitarian aid and care for the sick, elderly, lonely, poor and others in need
7. Development of volunteers and church leaders
8. Impact investments and ownership in or financing of Christian social entrepreneurship
9. Other activities that further the objectives and that are approved by the Elders and the Assembly of Representatives.

To promote the objectives and carry out its activities, the BCC Federation and its member organizations may, inter alia:

1. Receive inheritance, donations, and grants
2. Receive funding from local, regional, national, or international authorities or bodies
3. Require a membership fee from member organizations, determined by the Assembly of Representatives
4. Accept voluntary and unpaid work
5. Receive returns from impact investments, passive income from physical or financial assets or income from activities that further the objectives of the member organizations.

## Article 2.5 - Rights and obligations related to membership

### 2.5.A – Obligations

Entities that are members of the BCC Federation must:

- comply with this Constitution, the BCC Federation's bylaws, and implement legally adopted resolutions by the Assembly of Representatives and the Elders, and
- carry out their activities based on the BCC Federation's Basis of Faith, and
- contribute to the furtherance of BCC's objectives by carrying out one or more activities mentioned in Article 2.4, and not carry out other activities or further other objectives, and
- pay the at any time determined membership fee for their member category.

Unless otherwise decided by the Assembly of Representatives, the same obligations apply to associate members.

The BCC Federation's joint initiatives cannot establish or have ownership interests in other companies or legal persons without the consent of the Secretariat. The Secretariat may impose conditions for such consent.

### 2.5.B – Rights

BCC Federation churches and children's and youth organizations may:

- make use of all spiritual and practical resources and services made available to them by the BCC Federation and the joint initiatives

- refer to themselves as a “BCC Federation member organization” or equivalent in their local language and can use “BCC” in their own name
- elect representatives with voting rights to the Assembly of Representatives, cf. Article 3.3.B.

The BCC Federation’s joint initiatives may:

- apply to the Assembly of Representatives for financial support for their activities
- make use of all spiritual and practical resources and services made available to them by the BCC Federation and the joint initiatives
- refer to themselves as a “BCC Federation organization” or equivalent in their local language and can use “BCC” in their own name
- attend the Assembly of Representatives meetings with their board members and the general manager, but without voting rights

Associate members may, unless otherwise provided for by the Assembly of Representatives:

- make use of all spiritual and practical resources and services made available to them by the BCC Federation and the joint initiatives
- refer to themselves as a “BCC Federation associate organization” or equivalent in their local language but cannot use “BCC” in their own name
- participate with one observer during the Assembly of Representative meetings.

## Article 2.6 - Reorganizations, suspensions, exclusions, resignation

### 2.6.A - Reorganizations and amendments to bylaws

Members are obliged to inform the Secretariat about significant reorganizations as well as amendments to their bylaws before they are executed. The Secretariat determines whether the change requires a new application for membership or other approval by the Assembly of Representatives in order to maintain membership.

### 2.6.B - Suspension and exclusion

The Assembly of Representatives may suspend or exclude a member organization if the member acts in substantial violation of its obligations under this Constitution or other lawful resolutions by the BCC Federation’s bodies, or otherwise acts to the detriment of the BCC Federation or its members. The Secretariat shall ensure a reasonable process.

A decision of suspension must contain the necessary information about the effect of the suspension on the entity’s rights and obligations during the suspension period.

Further regulations regarding suspension and exclusion are given in the by-laws.

### 2.6.C – Resignation

Members may withdraw their membership in the BCC Federation by notice in writing to the Secretariat. Attached to the notice must be a copy of the resolution adopted by a body in the member organization with sufficient authority to withdraw the entity from its BCC Federation membership.

If a resignation notice is received in writing before the ordinary Assembly of Representatives meeting, the member must pay the membership fee for the current year. If the resignation notice is received after the ordinary Assembly of Representatives meeting, the entity must also pay the membership fee for the next year.

## Chapter 3 - The bodies of the BCC Federation

### Article 3.1 - The Elders' Gathering

The Elders' Gathering is held once a year and consists of the elders/leaders of the BCC Federation's churches and associate members who are invited by the Elders.

The Elders' Gathering approves the composition of the Elders. The composition of the Elders is based on biblical principles, cf. Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:28. To be elected to the Elders, it is crucial to have the trust of both the leading elders and the members, as a result of a godly life.

The composition of the Elders is determined as follows:

- The leader of the Elders appoints his own successor with a written pastoral letter and can also choose a person that is not a member of the Elders. The new leader takes over at the time decided by the leader of the Elders or upon the leader's death or if the leader becomes permanently unable to perform his task. The leader of the Elders can also appoint someone who will take care of his tasks if the leader should be temporarily unable to perform them.
- In the event of a change of the leader of the Elders, the election of a new leader shall be submitted to the Elders' Gathering for their approval.
- Other members of the Elders are appointed by the Elders collectively and submitted to the Elders' Gathering for their approval.

### Article 3.2 - The Elders

The Elders are the BCC Federation's supreme authority within matters of faith and doctrine.

The authority of the Elders includes:

- the stewardship of the BCC Federation's Basis of Faith and decisions on the BCC Federation's position on matters of faith and doctrine
- responsibility for the Christian content in productions and conferences under the direction of the BCC Federation and joint initiatives
- responsibility for appointing and dismissing the spiritual leadership in BCC churches and adopting instructions for the leadership
- determination of the target group for the activities of the BCC Federation and joint initiatives
- responsibility for convening the Elders' Gathering

The Elders consist of one leader and at least three ordinary members.

The Elders may not make decisions with direct effect in member organizations, unless otherwise provided for by these entities' own bylaws.

### Article 3.3 – The Assembly of Representatives

#### 3.3.A – The authority of the Assembly of Representatives

The Assembly of Representatives is the BCC Federation's supreme authority within all matters that do not fall within the authority of the Elders.

The Assembly of Representatives may not make decisions with direct effect in member organizations, unless otherwise provided for by these entities' own bylaws.

The Assembly of Representatives exercises its authority in Assembly meetings.

The Assembly of Representatives may, among other things:

- a) Approve the invitation and agenda of the Assembly meeting
- b) Choose the chairman and speaker of the Assembly meeting
- c) Choose three representatives who sign the protocol of the Assembly meeting
- d) Review the auditor's statement and approve the BCC Federation's annual accounts and annual report
- e) Elect the auditor of the BCC Federation
- f) Determine the BCC Federation's budget, including grant decisions
- g) Determine membership fees for member organizations
- h) Amend this Constitution and the bylaws of the BCC Federation
- i) Approve or reject applications for membership
- j) Suspend or exclude member organizations
- k) Establish permanent and temporary committees and adopt instructions for these
- l) Elect the members of the Secretariat
- m) Elect the members of the Nomination Committee
- n) Make any other decision that falls within the authority of the Assembly of Representatives pursuant to this Constitution, the bylaws of the BCC Federation or the bylaws of the member organizations

Unless otherwise provided by this Constitution, the bylaws pursuant to which the resolution is adopted or another resolution by the Assembly of Representatives, resolutions are valid if they are supported by at least a 2/3 majority of the votes cast. If a proposal is supported by less than 2/3 of the votes cast, but is supported by a majority of the votes, the same proposal shall be voted on in the first meeting of the Assembly of Representatives in the next term, and the resolution shall be valid if the proposal is supported by a majority of the votes cast in this meeting and with the subsequent approval by the Elders.

A resolution to amend this Constitution, however, requires at least 9/10 of the votes cast. If such a proposal is supported by less than 9/10 of the votes, but is supported by  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the votes, the same proposal shall be voted on in the first Assembly of Representatives meeting during the next term, and the resolution shall be valid if the proposal is supported by at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the votes cast in this meeting and with subsequent ratification by the Elders.

Any amendment to the content of Articles 1.2.A, 1.2.B, 1.2.C, 3.1 and 3.2 as well as this paragraph or resolutions that otherwise alter or are in conflict with the content of these Articles shall be valid only upon the written ratification by the Elders. In addition, decisions by the



Assembly of Representatives on membership matters (admission, rejection, exclusion or suspension) shall be valid only with the written ratification by the Elders.

### 3.3.B - The representatives

The Assembly of Representatives consists of representatives (individuals) elected by and from among the members of BCC Federation churches and children's and youth organizations. The representatives serve for one term, which is from the first day after the ordinary Assembly of Representatives meeting in the year in which they are elected, until and including the ordinary Assembly of Representatives meeting in the following year. Representatives may be re-elected.

Representatives cannot be younger than 23 years. The member organizations must register their representatives with the Secretariat no later than on May 1 in the year the term commences. Member organizations admitted as members after May 1 may elect representatives to the term commencing in the following year.

The number of representatives is first determined collectively for all member organizations resident in a given country by dividing the number of unique individual members in the member organizations (or their subordinate organizations) resident in the given country by 100, rounded to the closest whole number. The number is determined based on the member lists as of December 31 in the year before the representatives are elected.

If the BCC Federation has one or more BCC Federation churches and one or more BCC Federation children's and youth Organizations in a given country, 4/5 of the representatives are designated to the BCC Federation church(es) and 1/5 to the BCC Federation children's and youth organization(s).

The representatives are subsequently divided on a pro-rata basis between the member organizations resident in the country on the basis of their individual member count. Where a member organization is an association consisting of two or more independent subordinate entities with individual members, the member organization may decide to divide its representatives to its subordinate entities on a member count basis (pro rata).

### 3.3.C - Rights in the Assembly of Representatives (right to meet, propose, speak and vote)

Legally elected representatives have the right to meet, propose, speak, and vote in Assembly of Representatives meetings. The representative uses his or her rights according to his or her own conviction of what serves the objectives and the best interests of the organizations, unless the representative has a binding mandate imposed by the members' meeting/annual meeting of the organization that has elected the representative in question.

Each representative has one vote, except when voting over proposed resolutions pursuant to Article 3.3.A f) (budgets and grants), where the voting power is divided between the representatives based on their member organization's average financial contribution to the BCC Federation's audited accounts of the last three years.

Members of the Elders have the right to meet, propose and speak in the Assembly of Representatives Meetings.

Members of the Secretariat, chairmen of committees, and board members and company managers in the BCC Federation's joint organizations have the right and duty to meet and speak in Assembly of Representatives meetings, and they have the right to make proposals.

The Elders and the Secretariat may also invite observers or speakers.



Associate organizations have the right to appoint one observer who is entitled to meet.

### 3.3.D - Rules for Assembly of Representatives meetings

The Assembly of Representatives may adopt its own rules of procedure. Unless otherwise stated, the following applies:

- Assembly of Representatives meetings are held at the location determined by the Secretariat and chaired by the elected speaker. The Secretariat determines whether the meeting is held as a physical meeting, a digital meeting, or a combination.
- Invitation and case documents may be disseminated digitally to the extent the Secretariat finds it justified.
- Assembly of Representatives meetings have a quorum at 50% attendance by the elected representatives.
- Blank votes are considered as not cast.
- Resolutions must be adopted in both English and Norwegian. In the event of a conflict of interpretation, the Norwegian version shall prevail.
- The Secretariat must be informed of any resolution on a binding mandate and the content of this no later than the day before the Assembly of Representatives meeting.

### 3.3.E - Ordinary Assembly of Representatives meeting

An Ordinary Assembly of Representatives meeting is held every year between June 1 and July 31.

The Secretariat convenes and sends information about the location and time as well as a preliminary agenda to the member organizations and representatives no later than the end of March.

The member organizations must give notice of any cases they want on the agenda no later than the end of April. The Secretariat will send the proposed cases to relevant entities and bodies for assessment and potential elaboration and presentation for the Assembly of Representatives.

The final agenda and supporting documents with proposals for resolutions and any statements from the Elders shall be made available to the representatives and member organizations at least four weeks before the Assembly of Representatives meeting.

### 3.3.F - Extraordinary Assembly of Representatives meeting

An extraordinary Assembly of Representatives meeting may be held at the request of the Secretariat, the Elders or at least 1/3 of the representatives.

The secretariat convenes and sends information about the location and time as well as a preliminary agenda to the member organizations and representatives no later than six weeks before the extraordinary Assembly of Representatives meeting. Extraordinary Assembly of Representatives meetings may only decide on cases on the agenda.

Besides the regulations of this Article, extraordinary Assembly of Representatives meetings follow the same rules as ordinary Assembly of Representatives meetings.

### Article 3.4 – The Secretariat

Between the Assembly of Representatives meetings, the Secretariat is the highest authority within the authority of the Assembly of Representatives and shall safeguard the interests of the BCC Federation between Assembly of Representatives meetings to promote the objectives of the BCC Federation. The Secretariat shall perform the tasks assigned to it under this Constitution, the BCC Federation bylaws and instructions from the Assembly of Representatives.

### Article 3.5 - The Nomination Committee

The Nomination Committee shall propose to the Assembly of Representatives candidates for positions, who are then elected by the Assembly of Representatives.

The Nomination Committee is further regulated in the BCC Federation's bylaws and instructions from the Assembly of Representatives.

## Chapter 4 - Final provisions

### Article 4.1 - Dissolution or other major events

The Assembly of Representatives may, with the same majority as for amendments to this Constitution, decide on the dissolution, demerger or merger of the BCC Federation or decide that the head office shall be in a country other than Norway. The decision is only valid upon the written ratification of the Elders. Upon dissolution, the assets of the BCC Federation shall, after covering liabilities, go to another organization that furthers BCC Federation's objectives, as decided by the Assembly of Representatives.