

# Constitution & Bylaws of Berean Bible Church, Broken Bow, Nebraska

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## Constitution & Bylaws of Berean Bible Church, Broken Bow, Nebraska

These constitution & bylaws exist to provide clarity to those inside and outside the church about who we are, what we believe and value, and how we operate, including bylaws for the governance and operations of the Berean Bible Church (BBC), located in Broken Bow, Nebraska.

**I. Name:** The name of this organization is Berean Bible Church. 'Bereans' were New Testament era residents of a town called Berea. In Acts 17:11, these people were commended for their devotion to searching the Scriptures to make sure what was being taught to them was really 'in the book.' We believe that God's Word, the Bible, is the one true complete Word of God, and are committed to using it as our guide and standard for truth and living.

## II. Doctrinal Statement

We hold our beliefs regarding the nature and character of God, the person and work of Jesus Christ, the need for salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone, and the authority and reliability of Scripture as primary doctrine. Individual believers who love Jesus Christ and believe that the Bible is God's Word may differ on secondary matters. For the sake of unity and clarity of teaching, we believe it is important to state clearly where the BBC stands doctrinally.

Christians who share our commitment to Jesus and the Bible and wish to partner with the BBC in pursuit of Christ's mission may have reservations or differing personal views regarding secondary issues. We welcome these brothers and sisters in Christ into our fellowship with the understanding that doctrinal unity is critical to the mission of our church. We ask that all leaders and members of BBC submit to the following doctrinal statement of beliefs regardless of reservations or differences they may personally hold regarding secondary issues.

### **BIBLE**

We believe the Bible, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety, is the only divinely inspired, inerrant, objectively true, and authoritative written Word of God. It is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The divine inspiration of Scripture extends to each word of the original manuscripts, but not to the various copies or translations of Scripture. The Bible should be interpreted literally, grammatically, contextually, and historically. (Deut. 29:29; Matt. 5:17; John 10:35; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 1:21, 3:16)

### **GOD**

We believe there is only one God, the Creator, who is infinite and personal. He exists eternally in three distinct persons, revealed to us in Scripture as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is holy. God is love. God is just. God is all powerful, all knowing and ever present. He is the source of all that is good and is the only rightful object of worship. (Gen. 1:1; Deut. 6:4; Job 42:1-2; Ps. 96:9, 115:3; Prov. 15:3; Isa. 6:3, 43:10-11, 44:6, 45:22, 66:1; Matt. 28:19; John 1:1, 4:24, 5:26, 10:30; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 3:26, 1 Cor.3:16, 8:4; Heb. 4:13; 1 John 3:20, 4:8-10)

### **JESUS CHRIST**

We believe that Jesus Christ is God the Son who has neither beginning nor end. The Old Testament contains numerous prophecies of His coming. He was conceived in the flesh by the

Holy Spirit, born of a virgin named Mary, and is fully God and fully man. Jesus lived a sinless life that perfectly revealed God's love and truth. He died for our sins, was buried, and arose bodily from the dead on the third day. He ascended into heaven and is now seated at the right hand of God the Father as our only mediator, high priest, and advocate. (Gen. 3:15; Ps. 110:1-4; Isa. 9:1-7, 53:1-12; Mic. 5:2; Matt. 1:20-25; Luke 24:27; John 1:1, 17, 10:30, 14:3-6; Acts 1:11, 4:12; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:3-5, 20; Col. 1:16-19; Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 1:3, 4:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:22-24; Rev. 1:18)

## **HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe the Holy Spirit is God, the third person of the Trinity. He is a person, not a force. The Holy Spirit's ministries include convicting all people of sin; calling, regenerating, indwelling, and baptizing believers into the Body of Christ at conversion; setting them apart to a holy life; and guiding, teaching, keeping, and empowering them day by day. The Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts to each believer according to His will for the building up of the church. We believe the primary evidence of the presence and filling of the Holy Spirit is the fruit of the Spirit rather than a miraculous sign. (John 3:5-8, 16:5-15; Acts 1:8, 5:3-4, 16:7-14; 1 Cor. 2:9-12, 3:16, 12:3-13, 13:8-11; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 1:13-14, 5:18; Heb. 2:3-4)

## **HUMAN RACE**

We believe that both man (Adam) and woman (Eve) were created in the image of God to enjoy a personal relationship with Him. As a result of deliberate disobedience, they fell from their sinless state, and they and all their descendants became sinners. Consequently, no one can save himself or herself, and apart from the grace of God in Jesus Christ, all are condemned to eternal torment. All humans still bear the image of God and are therefore intrinsically valuable, but all humans are now broken image-bearers, in need of the restoration found in Christ. God distinguishes between the sexes, equally valuing men and women, who both reflect His image. God ordained marriage to be between one man and one woman as part of his design that some roles within the family and the church be distinctly male or female. (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18-25, 3:1-24; Matt. 19:3-9; John 3:16-18, 36; Rom. 2:12-16, 5:12-21, 6:23, 7:14-21; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:9-10; Jas. 3:9; Rev. 20:13-15)

## **SALVATION**

We believe we are saved solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ alone. This salvation was purchased through the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ who, by shedding his blood for sin, offers salvation as a free gift to every person without distinction. God is sovereign over salvation and yet each person is fully accountable for his or her response to the gospel. The person who has trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior is eternally secure, and can enjoy the assurance of salvation as guaranteed by Christ's victorious resurrection. We believe that at death those who have trusted in Jesus enter eternal glory and those that have not enter eternal torment. (Matt. 25:46; John 1:12, 3:16, 10:27-28; Acts 16:31, 20:20-21; Rom. 3:21-28, 8:31-39, 10:9, 12-15, 17; 1 Cor. 15:3-4, 17-22; Eph. 1:7, 2:4-9; Phil. 1:6; Heb 2:14; 1 John 2:2)

## **SANCTIFICATION**

We believe that every believer has been set apart with a perfect standing before God. As believers yield themselves to the Holy Spirit, they will experience spiritual growth in holiness but not perfection in conduct in this life. Believers will battle the world, the flesh and the devil, but living by faith in Christ results in transformation of the heart and authentic righteous living.

Future rewards are determined primarily by what motivates Christian behavior. Those whose behavior is an outflow of finding their identity in Christ will be rewarded. (John 15:1-8; Rom. 6:13-19, 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 3:8-15, 10:13; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; 5:10; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph 2:1-3; Phil. 1:6, 3:12; 1 Thess. 4:3; Heb. 10:10)

## **CHURCH**

We believe that Christ is the Head of the Church, which is His body, established to bring God glory. All who have trusted in Christ as Savior are members of this body. Christians should commit themselves to worship, prayer, instruction, fellowship, stewardship, and service in a local church. The church is responsible to represent Jesus Christ in the world through godly living and evangelism. All believers are commanded to participate in two church ordinances: believers' baptism, by immersion if possible, and the Lord's Supper; the bread and cup symbolizing Christ's body and blood. (Matt. 26:26-29, 28:18-20; Acts 1:8, 2:41-42, 8:35-39; Rom. 12:9-13; 1 Cor. 11:23-34, 12:12-13; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Eph. 3:6-11, 4:11-13; Col. 1:18; Heb. 10:23-25; 1 Pet. 2:9-10)

## **SATAN**

We believe that Satan was created as an angelic being. Rebelling against God, he became the author of sin, our adversary and accuser, and the great deceiver of the nations. He was defeated by Christ's death and resurrection but continues to wield power in this world under God's sovereign control. In the end, he will be completely overcome by the Lord Jesus Christ and suffer eternal punishment in the lake of fire. (Gen. 3:1,15; Job 1:6-12; Matt. 4:3-11; John 8:44; 1 Cor. 15:24; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:1-2; Col. 2:13-15; 1 John 3:8, 5:19; Rev. 12:7-12, 20:10)

## **FUTURE EVENTS**

We believe in the imminent, bodily, personal return of Jesus Christ. On a day known only to God, Jesus will return for his Church. God will reunite all human souls with resurrected, imperishable bodies. This will be followed by the final judgment of the wicked into the lake of fire and eternal life for God's children in a new heaven and a new earth, restoring all creation to a joyful, God-honoring state. (Matt. 24:27-36; John 5:28-29; 14:3; Acts 1:7, 11; Rom. 8:1, 18-25; 1 Cor. 15:20-26, 35-57; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Col. 1:19-20; 1 Thess. 4:15-5:3; Rev. 11:15, 19:11-21:5).

- B. In addition, Berean Bible Church of Broken Bow holds the following doctrinal distinctives which are consistent with and supplemental to the above doctrinal statement:

## **RAPTURE & MILLENNIUM**

On a day known only by God the Father, Jesus will rapture His Church to deliver it from the judgments that God will pour upon the earth. After this terrible period, the Lord Jesus Christ will return in glory to establish His Millennial Kingdom on the earth. (Matthew 24:15-31; 36-44; 1 Corinthians 15:50-57; 1 Thess. 4:13-5:3; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-20:10)

- C. Marriage, Gender, Sexuality, Human Life Statements:

## **STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image of God. (Gen. 1:26-27)  
Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the way that God intended for that person to reflect God's image.

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen. 2:18-25) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the Berean Bible Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church’s members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Berean Bible Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking God’s mercy and forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11) We believe that God offers His grace to all people, regardless of past sins, if they respond to His offer of salvation through faith in Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Berean Bible Church.

### **STATEMENT ON SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE**

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps. 139)

### **BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH MARRIAGE POLICY**

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, the Berean Bible Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastors and staff of Berean Bible Church shall only conduct weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Berean Bible Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman

### **III Affiliation**

The Berean Bible Church of Broken Bow, Nebraska is a self-governing local church affiliated with the Berean Fellowship of Churches (BFC), sharing a common doctrinal statement, and subject to the rules and regulations stipulated in the BFC Constitution and Bylaws.

The Berean Fellowship of Churches is an interdependent, collaborative group of churches built upon a solid biblical foundation, placing special emphasis on the authority of Scripture, the supremacy of Jesus Christ, and the importance of advancing the Gospel through personal relationships, church planting, and world missions.

#### **IV. Church Membership**

The membership of this church shall consist of those who are born again in the Lord Jesus Christ, are seeking to be obedient to the teachings of Scripture, and are consistently functioning as a part of this body to fulfill its mission.

##### **A. Qualifications**

1. Confess faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord and demonstrate a regenerated life.
2. Submit to the Doctrinal Statement of this church.
3. Indicate commitment to following Jesus Christ through believer's baptism in water by immersion or giving testimony to this experience. If not baptized, we ask that a prospective member be baptized at the next available opportunity.

##### **B. Procedure for Becoming a Member**

1. A person seeking church membership must read through the Membership Covenant and we recommend, but do not require, that they read through the BBC Constitution & Bylaws.
2. The candidate for membership shall then sign the membership covenant and be examined by representatives of the Elder Board (which may include church staff) to ensure that he or she meets the qualifications for membership.
3. Upon approval by the Elder Board the candidate shall be accepted for membership.

##### **C. Members will comply with the following Membership Covenant:**

#### **Membership Covenant**

As a member of the Berean Bible Church I...

- A) Will walk in brotherly love and will work and pray for the unity of the Holy Spirit in our church.  
(John 13:34-35, 17:20-21; Romans 12:10; 1 John 4:20-21; Ephesians 4:1-3)
- B) Will, by the power of the Holy Spirit, pursue holiness, and flee from the sinful desires of my flesh.  
(Galatians 5:16-26; 2 Timothy 2:22; James 4:1-3, 4:7; 1 Peter 1:14-16)
- C) Will pray for my church family and will refuse to participate in gossip.  
(Galatians 6:2; Colossians 4:2; James 5:16; Proverbs 20:19)
- D) Will regularly attend Sunday morning services and participate in communion services when I am able.  
(Hebrews 10:24-25)

- E) Will agree to pursue the godly path of reconciliation when I have differences with others. I also agree to be held accountable by the leadership and other members of the church, understanding the nature of restorative church discipline.  
(Proverbs 27:17; Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1; 2 Timothy 2:22; James 5:16)
- F) Will pray for and submit to the leadership of the church.  
(Colossians 4:2-3; Hebrews 13:17)
- G) Will commit myself to live generously, both financially and with my Spiritual gifts.  
(2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 Peter 4:10)

#### D. Removal of Membership

1. If a member joins another church, his or her membership in this church automatically terminates. A letter certifying the member's baptism and membership standing will be sent upon request.
2. Members who develop irreconcilable differences with either the doctrinal position of this church or the policies and procedures described in these bylaws shall quietly resign their membership without attempting to cause any trouble.
3. Members may be removed from membership at the discretion of the Elder Board as the final result of church discipline according to the procedure described in Matthew 18 and in these bylaws. (See below, VII. Church Discipline & Restoration)
4. Members who are absent from church events and activities for six months may be removed from membership after the Elder Board has attempted meaningful contact to discern the reasons for their absence and ascertain their spiritual health.

- E. Auxiliary Membership: The Elder Board may develop auxiliary, non-voting memberships for such groups as missionaries, military personnel, college students, and those who have differing opinions on matter of belief but understand the value of being under the authority of a local church.

### V. Church Leadership

#### A. Church Decision-making Authority

1. The Berean Bible Church is Elder-led, with the Elder Board having the final authority regarding the direction and operation of the church. Church members vote on calling a Lead Pastor (See V.C.2.i below).
2. The Doctrinal Statement (Section II above) does not exhaust the extent of our church's beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of the Berean Bible Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Elder Board is the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application for our church family.

## B. Elder Board

1. The Elder Board (hereinafter sometimes referred to as "The Board") shall be the Board of Directors for this corporation and will provide accountability for all organizations, committees, and ministries of the church.
2. The Board will consist of biblically qualified male Elders as defined below, V.B.2.
3. In consultation with the congregation, the Board will select qualified Elders to serve on the Board for a term of six years. At the end of the six year term each non-staff Elder will take a 1-year sabbatical, and at the end of the sabbatical will be eligible to re-join the Elder Board, at the invitation of the serving Elder Board. In special cases an elder's sabbatical year may be pushed back upon Elder Board vote.

There is no limit on the amount of terms an elder may serve. An elder may take an early 1-year sabbatical before completing his six year term and still be eligible to rejoin the board at the remaining board's discretion. When possible elder terms and sabbaticals will be staggered so that there is only 1 elder on sabbatical at a time.

The Lead Pastor and any pastoral staff serving as elders will not participate in Elder terms & sabbaticals. It is recommended that pastoral staff take a church ministry sabbatical every 7 years, during which time they will not actively serve on the Elder Board.

4. The Board will meet regularly to provide spiritual oversight for the church, including conducting the business affairs of the church.
5. When the number of Elder Board members becomes fewer than three (including the pastor) a Provisional Leadership Team will be formed according to article II.H.4 of the Berean Fellowship of Churches' Constitution. This team along with at least one representative from the local church will serve as the Elder Board of this church until an autonomous local Elder Board can be reestablished.
6. A quorum shall exist when two-thirds of the members of the Elder Board are present.
7. Decisions will be by the majority vote of those present unless previously stipulated by the Elder Board. Each member has one vote.

## C. Elders

1. An Elder serves as a shepherd, leader, and teacher in the local church.
2. A man is qualified to serve as an Elder when his life consistently displays the characteristics described in 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, Hebrews 13, and 1 Peter 5. He will be selected for his Christ-like character, giftedness and his sense of personal call to the role.

3. Elders of this church are responsible to the Lord Jesus and accountable to the Board and to the church to shepherd and teach the church as Jesus would. He shall be identified as an Elder as long as he shares in the responsibilities of shepherding the flock until he is prevented from doing so by his death, resignation, or removal by other Elders in the event of heresy, immorality, misconduct, incompetence, or failure to maintain a good testimony.
4. All Elders will agree to the following covenant:

I, (name), ask God for His grace to help me shepherd the Berean Bible Church. I commit to God's assignment to shepherd and guard this flock as an overseer. I understand that this role is not simply advisory, but one of shepherding God's people, guarding sound doctrine and advancing God's mission in this community. I recognize that I will give an account to the living God for my leadership in this church, and so I ask for His help to grow in my love for Him, and grow in a committed love for my church and community.

I commit to seek the Holy Spirit's help in setting an example in godliness, integrity, and repentance, relying on God's grace to live out the character qualities of 1 Timothy 3. I commit to maintain a soft heart before the living God by practicing the spiritual disciplines, intentionally keeping my eyes on Jesus the Chief Shepherd.

I commit to cooperate with the Berean Fellowship of churches, using my influence to further the interdependent mission of the Berean Fellowship.

If at any time I am out of harmony with my fellow Elders or with the Berean Fellowship, I commit to seek reconciliation. If I fail to be reconciled, I will graciously resign immediately, causing no trouble which would damage this church.

#### D. Lead Pastor

##### 1. Responsibilities

- a. The Lead Pastor shall provide spiritual leadership to the church in equipping God's people for the work of the ministry. (Eph 4:11-12).
- b. The Lead Pastor is an Elder of the church and shall be accountable to the Board for the performance of his duties. He serves on the Elder Board as an Elder. He will not be subject to term limits.
- c. He shall have the right to be an ex officio member of all committees and other organized groups within the church.
- d. He shall participate in the BFC Regional Fellowship and the annual BFC General Council meetings.
- e. It is recommended that pastoral staff take a paid church ministry sabbatical every 7 years.

## 2. Calling a Lead Pastor

- a. The Elder Board shall appoint a search team consisting of four to seven church members. The search team must include at least one woman, at least one Elder, and it is recommended that it include multiple people with management and/or hiring experience.
  - b. All discussions of the search committee shall be confidential, as to the names and evaluations of each potential candidate, although they will keep the congregation well informed of their process.
  - c. The team shall review résumés and shall send a copy of these bylaws and the BFC Constitution to each viable candidate.
  - d. The search committee may solicit the Berean Regional Fellowship Leader for names of potential candidates as well as assistance with the hiring process.
  - e. Though many potential candidates may be considered, only one will be chosen, by unanimous vote of the Team, for recommendation to the Elder Board.
  - f. If the Elder Board has a favorable response to his application, résumé, and ministry experience, it may seek the assistance of its Regional Fellowship.
  - g. After receiving input from the Regional Fellowship, if the Elder Board wishes to proceed, it shall extend an invitation to the prospective candidate to visit the church, to meet with the Board, and to preach.
  - h. Upon a unanimous affirmative vote of the Elder Board, the candidate shall be presented to the congregation for a vote of affirmation.
  - i. Upon an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the church members present at a specially called meeting, a call shall be extended to the candidate.
3. A pastor shall serve as long as mutually agreeable between him and the church, provided that he continues to affirm the Pastor's Covenant.
  4. Pastor's Covenant: Throughout his tenure with this church, a pastor will maintain the character and commitments of the following Covenant:

I, (name), ask God for His grace to help me shepherd the Berean Bible Church. I commit to God's assignment to lead this flock through shepherding, teaching, evangelizing, and equipping believers for the work of ministry. I recognize that I will give an account to the living God for my time at this church, and so I ask for His help to grow in my love for Him, and grow in a committed love for my church and community.

I commit to seek the Holy Spirit's help in setting an example in godliness, integrity, and repentance, relying on God's grace to live out the character qualities of 1 Timothy 3. I commit to maintain a soft heart before the living God by practicing the

spiritual disciplines, intentionally keeping my eyes on Jesus the Chief Shepherd.

I commit to cooperate with the Berean Fellowship of churches, using my influence to further the interdependent mission of the Berean Fellowship.

I commit to being sensitive to God's leading regarding the completion of my current ministry assignment, and will graciously resign when I sense God's leading. If at any time I am unable to submit to the authority of this church's Elders or the Berean Fellowship, I ask these Elders to call it to my attention. If I fail to be reconciled I will resign immediately and will quickly and quietly leave the field, causing no trouble which would damage this church.

5. Any pastor not previously ordained shall be licensed or ordained for ministry. Ordination is for a man who has served at least one year as a licensed minister of the gospel and aligns with the Doctrinal Statement. If the pastor was previously ordained, his ordination may be formally recognized and endorsed by the church and reported to the BFC.
  - a. Ordination procedure:
    - i. The BBC Elder Board will assemble an ordination council to examine the candidate's character, doctrine and gifting for ministry. It is recommended that this council include representatives from at least two other BFC churches.
    - ii. The examination will be conducted at the discretion of the ordination council. Upon completion of the examination, a unanimous recommendation of the council will result in ordination for the candidate. This ordination will be granted and held by BBC and recognized by the Berean Fellowship.
6. An Interim Pastor has the same duties and covenant as a Lead Pastor and must be chosen by vote of the Elder Board.

#### D. Deacons & Deaconesses

Deacons and/or Deaconesses will be identified and appointed by the Elder Board to serve according to policies determined by the local church.

#### E. Additional Ministry Staff

1. The Lead Pastor, in conjunction with the Elder Board, may hire/appoint pastoral and non-pastoral staff, whether full-time, part-time or volunteer. These staff members shall be directly accountable to the Lead Pastor.
2. Pastoral staff members must meet the qualifications of an Elder and affirm the Pastor's Covenant. Pastoral staff members are directly accountable to the Lead Pastor and indirectly accountable to the Elder Board. Pastoral staff may serve on the Elder Board at the discretion of the Lead Pastor and the Board.
3. All ministry staff shall abide by these bylaws, and will quietly resign if he/she is unwilling to submit to the authority of the Lead Pastor or Elder Board.

## **VI. Church Meetings**

### **A. Annual Business Meetings**

1. An annual church business meeting will be held for the purpose of presenting information considered necessary by the Elder Board, casting vision for ministry in the coming year, and other necessary items of business.
2. Notice of the date of the annual business meeting shall be publicized at least three Sundays prior to the meeting by public announcement from the pulpit or in written form, either physical or digital.

### **B. Special Meetings**

1. The Elder Board or 25% of the membership may call a special meeting of the church.
2. Notice of the date of the meeting, including its purpose, shall be publicized at least two Sundays prior to the meeting from the pulpit or in written form, either physical or digital.

## **VII. Church Discipline & Restoration.**

God commands all Christians to be held accountable to their church leadership and church family. (Galatians 6:1; Heb. 3:12-13; 10:23-25; 13:17 1 Peter 5:5) This accountability will sometimes require a gentle and prayerful confrontation of sin. The Bible outlines a process of confronting a sinning church attendee, a process here called "church discipline & restoration." The goal of church discipline is restoration of a consistently sinning believer to Christ and the church body.

### **A. Guidelines for Church Discipline & Restoration:**

1. Biblically, each believer is responsible before God to examine his or her own obedience to Christ. (1 Cor. 11:31)
2. In disciplinary actions it is imperative that all parties be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading and follow scriptural guidelines.
3. Church discipline is for specific sins, not for differences of opinion. (1 Cor. 5:1, 11-13; 1 Tim 5:19-21)

### **B. Process for Church Discipline & Restoration of Church Members (Matt. 18:15-20)**

1. The person who is aware of the offense is to be the first to prayerfully and privately confront the sinning member.
2. If the sinning member refuses to repent, the first person is to take one or two witnesses for a second attempt to confirm and clarify the facts.

3. If the matter remains unresolved, it is to be brought to the Elder Board.
4. If the sinning member still refuses to repent, the Elder Board may bring the matter to the attention of the members of the church.
5. When the sinning member repents, he or she should be forgiven, restored to fellowship, and lovingly affirmed by those involved.
6. Restoration to ministry responsibilities shall be at the discretion of the Elder Board.
7. In the event that the sinning person continually refuses to repent, he/she may be removed from membership at the discretion of the Elder Board.

#### C. Discipline & Restoration for Non-members

1. Non-members, are those, other than members, who by attendance or participation identify themselves with the ministries of the Berean Bible Church.
2. They may be disciplined for specific violations of Scriptural conduct that are considered by the Elder Board to be disruptive to the harmonious and effective function of the church. (Matthew 18:15-20)
3. The same steps will be taken as in the preceding policy for members.

### **VIII. Officers of the Church Corporation**

- A. Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary will be appointed annually by the Elder Board from its membership, and they will also fill the roles of President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Corporation. These officers will be granted the authority and responsibilities generally accorded these positions to act on behalf of the Corporation.
- B. The Secretary shall also serve as the church clerk. He shall keep a record of all church business and minutes of any church meetings. He shall be responsible for any correspondence associated with his office.
- C. Treasurer
  1. The Treasurer shall be appointed annually by the Elder Board to oversee receipt and disbursement of funds for church finances. The Treasurer does not need to be a member of the Elder Board.
  2. The Treasurer will provide financial reports, as required by the Elder Board, and prepare for and assure an annual audit or financial review.
- D. In the event of a vacancy in any office, the Elder Board will appoint a replacement to complete the remainder of the term for that year.

### **IX. Church Property**

- A. Titles: This locally incorporated church shall hold titles to all church property, real or personal.
- B. Use: Property held by this locally incorporated church shall be for the use of church ministry consistent with the doctrine, practice, and ministry contained within these bylaws.
- C. Division: In the case of an organizational division of the church, the group of members that abides by the BFC National Constitution and these bylaws shall retain all church property. Should controversy arise as to which group that is, the question shall be submitted to the BFC Board of Directors or its successor, and their decision shall be final. Upon determination by the BFC Board of Directors, all titles for church property shall be conveyed to the group of members retaining ownership.
- D. Dissolution: If at any time there are insufficient members to continue a viable church work and a decision is made to close the church, the ownership and title of all church property, real and personal, shall be transferred to the Berean Fellowship of Churches.
- E. Disaffiliation: This church may vote to disaffiliate from the BFC, as provided in Article V, D of the BFC bylaws.

## **X. Rules of Order**

- A. General Powers: This organization shall receive gifts, bequests and legacies; acquire, buy, hold, improve, rent, lease, mortgage, sell and convey, and otherwise deal in real and personal property as may be necessary to conduct the business of this church and fulfill its stated mission. Appeals for funds may be made as deemed advisable by the Board.
- B. Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of this church shall be July 1 through June 30.
- C. Quorum: A quorum for any meeting of the membership shall be 50% and not less than 10 people of the active membership. A quorum for a duly called meeting of any board or committee shall consist of two-thirds of its membership.
- D. Decisions will be by the majority vote of those present, unless alternately defined in these bylaws or previously stipulated. Each member has one vote.
- E. Parliamentary Guide: In order that "...all things be done decently and in order," Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (of the most recent edition) shall be followed in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws of this church.
- F. "Ex officio" members, meaning "by virtue of office," shall have the right to vote and function in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.
- G. Policies: Each board, committee and auxiliary organization of this church may formulate and maintain its own policies and procedures, which shall be approved by the Board and be in harmony with these bylaws. A current copy of these policies and procedures shall be kept on file at the church office.

## **XI. Limitation of Liability**

- A. No member of the Elder Board of the Berean Bible Church shall be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or other obligations of the Berean Bible Church.
- B. To the extent that a person who is, or was, an officer, employee or other agent of this organization has been successful on the merits in defense of any civil, criminal, administrative or investigative proceeding brought to procure a judgment against such person by reason of the fact that he or she is, or was, an agent of the Berean Bible Church, or has been successful in defense of any claim, issue or matter, therein, such person shall be indemnified against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with such proceeding.
- C. If such person settles any such claim or sustains a judgment against him or her, then indemnification against expenses, judgments, fines, settlements and other amounts reasonably incurred in connection with such proceedings shall be provided by this organization but only to the extent allowed by, and in accordance with state law.
- D. The Board of the Berean Bible Church may adopt a policy authorizing the purchase and maintenance of insurance on behalf of any agent of the organization against any liability other than for violating provisions of law relating to self--dealing asserted against or incurred by the agent in such capacity or arising out of the agent's status as such, whether or not Berean Bible Church would have the power to indemnify the agent against such liability under the provisions of state law.

## **XII. Interpretation and Amendments**

- A. Should the Elder Official Board desire to amend these bylaws, the Board will provide the church membership written notice of the proposed amendment, either physically or electronically, and give the church membership at least 30 days to comment on the proposed amendment. After the time period set aside for congregational comment, these bylaws may be amended upon an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Elder Board at a meeting in which a quorum is present.
- B. Upon adoption of an amendment to these bylaws, a current copy will be provided to the Board of Directors of the BFC.
- C. Matters of clarification and interpretation of these bylaws will be referred to the Berean Bible Church Elder Board.
- D. These bylaws of the Berean Bible Church supersede and replace all prior bylaws.

**XIII. THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFY** that the above bylaws have been approved by the Board of Directors of this church, at a duly called meeting of the Elder Board of the Berean Bible Church, on (month) (date), 20\_\_\_\_, and are adopted for the Corporation.

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Chairman of the Corporation

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Corporation Secretary