

APRIL 24, 2016



BYLAWS

BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH
1210 CHAMBERS ST.
EUGENE, OR 97402

ARTICLE A – CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership Qualifications

Membership within the church is based upon an accurate understanding and personal trust of the completed work of Jesus Christ for salvation. This understanding and trust is initially expressed in baptism by immersion. Upon baptism by immersion, one will be accepted into the membership of the church under the regular procedures set forth in these bylaws. In addition, Members shall have completed all of the requirements of membership as defined in the policies set forth by the Elders.

Individuals will be received into membership after unanimous recommendation by the Elders and majority vote of current members present at any called meeting of the church as outlined in Article E, Section 2 of the bylaws.

Section 2. Membership Responsibilities

Membership within a local church carries both privileges and responsibilities. Members of the church are accountable to each other. Through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, members should desire to stir one another up:

1. to joyfully submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues (Psalm 119; [2 Timothy 3:14-17](#); [2 Peter 1:19-21](#)).
2. to faithfully attend corporate worship, regular meetings, and various opportunities offered by the church for spiritual growth, fellowship, and relationship building ([Hebrews 10:23-25](#)).
3. to personally cultivate the practice of spiritual disciplines ([Luke 18:1](#); [Acts 17:11](#); [1 Corinthians 9:24-27](#); [Ephesians 5:1-21](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:12-22](#)).
4. to obediently participate in the ordinances of baptism and communion ([Matthew 28:18-20](#); [Luke 22:19-20](#)).
5. to generously steward the resources God has given each Member through sacrificial, cheerful, and voluntary financial giving, service, and participation in community ([Matthew 25:14-30](#); [Romans 12:1-2](#); 2 Corinthians 8-9; [1 Peter 4:10-11](#)).
6. to thoughtfully walk in holiness in all areas of life and by God's grace, striving to put certain attitudes and actions to death while stimulating love and good deeds through the Spirit ([1 Peter 1:13-16](#), [4:1-3](#)).
7. to unashamedly practice chastity unless married and, if married, complete fidelity within heterosexual and monogamous marriage. Sexual purity involves: abstaining from adultery, homosexuality, fornication, and pornography ([Romans 13:11-14](#); [1 Corinthians 6:15-20](#), [10:8](#); [Ephesians 5:3](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:1-8](#); [Hebrews 13:4](#)).
8. to intentionally preserve the gift of marriage and agree to walk through the steps of marriage reconciliation at Berean before pursuing divorce from his or her spouse ([Matthew 19:1-12](#); [Mark 10:1-12](#); [Luke 16:18](#); [1 Corinthians 7:10-11](#)).
9. to humbly submit to the biblical procedures for church discipline where sin is evident in another, the hope of such discipline being repentance and restoration (1 Corinthians 5; [2 Thessalonians 3:14-15](#); [Hebrews 12:5-6](#)).

10. to respectfully obey the Elders and other appointed leaders of the church, diligently striving for unity and peace within the church ([Ephesians 4:1-3](#); [Hebrews 13:17](#); [1 Peter 5:5](#)).

Section 3. Membership Rights

Every member should expect spiritual care by the Pastor(s), Elders, other appointed spiritual leaders of the church, and from the other members of the church.

All members eighteen (18) years of age and over shall be eligible to vote on all church matters requiring a vote and should exercise this right by participating in its business meetings. Members of this church have no property rights and shall be entitled to no personal claim to its assets.

Section 4. Membership Classification

Any individuals who have been received into this church through normal action, as specified under Article A of these bylaws, is considered a full member without classification. Because of the nature and meaning of church membership, this church will not maintain an inactive membership list and no one will be permitted to retain member status outside of the guidelines in Article A, Section 5 of these bylaws.

1. **Associate Members:** are students or other persons living temporarily in the area who desire the spiritual fellowship and care of a local church without terminating membership in their home church. Associate Members are expected to fulfill the responsibilities in Article A, Section 2 of these bylaws, but are not eligible to vote, hold office, and have no property rights or any personal claim to the church's assets.
2. **Homebound Members:** are individuals who may live within an area where they would be able to attend, but are unable due to physical limitations. Homebound Members are expected to fulfill as many of the responsibilities in Article A, Section 2 of these bylaws as physically possible, but are not eligible to vote by proxy, hold office, and have no property rights or any personal claim to the church's assets.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

Termination of membership shall be on the unanimous vote of the Board of Elders. Membership lists shall be maintained and reviewed regularly.

Members can be removed through:

1. voluntary resignation of membership by one in good standing,
2. death, or
3. decision by the Elders as a result of the disciplinary process. Requests by members to remove their membership while subject to the formal disciplinary process, will not be accepted.

Section 6. Church Discipline

Church discipline is the process of correcting sin in the life of the congregation and its members. Church discipline is not punishment. Punishment is retribution towards someone for doing something wrong. As followers of Christ, the church is responsible to carry-out discipline for any member consistently living with unrepentant sinful attitudes and behaviors that are not in obedience to Christ and his word ([John 15:1-11](#)). The purpose of discipline is to encourage the individual to bear fruits in keeping with repentance so that their joy may be full and prove to be followers of Jesus Christ. Any action set forth in policies and procedures is taken to work towards this purpose and not for retribution, but for restoration....[table of examples excluded from web-only]

Section 7. Member Restoration

Restoration to the fellowship of the church occurs when there are signs of true repentance. What true repentance looks like depends on the nature of the sin. Sometimes, repentance is a black and white matter, as with a man who has abandoned his wife. For him, repenting means returning to her, plain and simple. Yet sometimes repentance doesn't mean conquering a sin completely so much as demonstrating a new diligence in waging war against the sin, as with a person caught in a cycle of addiction.

Section 8. Church Disruptions

Any person deemed by a member of the staff or Elder Board to pose a physical or psychological threat to any person or to the church, or to be causing, about to cause, or capable of causing disruption to the religious services and activities of the church, shall be considered a trespasser on church property and may be ejected summarily. No church employee or Elder shall incur any liability for acting in good faith in the interests of the church pursuant to this section.

ARTICLE B – CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Overview

Jesus Christ is the Head of the church. Under His headship, the church is Elder-led. This Elder leadership is congregationally affirmed. Those who have been affirmed as leaders have Biblically-granted authority, responsibility, and accountability. The goal of church government is to provide a context out of which Christian ministry, by the people of God, best flourishes.

Section 2. Organization

1. Elder-led

Those who function as Elders are biblically-qualified males. The Elders have the responsibility and the authority to lead the congregation in discerning the mind of Christ for all the decisions of the church and shepherding the church members in those decisions.

2. Congregationally-affirmed

The final earthly authority rests with the church members as it corporately seeks God's will. The church members affirm the leadership of the Elders and contribute to seeking the mind of Christ as it is revealed in the Scriptures.

ARTICLE C – BOARD OF ELDERS

Section 1. Overview

The qualifications for the office of Elder are established in [1Timothy 3:1-7](#) and [Titus 1:5-9](#). Specifically, an Elder is chosen when he is recognized for his high spiritual character, his proven household management, and his demonstrated leadership in the church. The office of Elder will only be filled by biblically-qualified, naturally-born males who are members of the church as set forth in the bylaws under Article A.

Section 2. Responsibilities

Include, but not limited to:

1. Devoting themselves to prayer and the Word of God.
2. Governing and leading the church.
3. Teaching the Word of God both publicly and privately.
4. Protecting the church from false doctrine.
5. Administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's table.
6. Caring for the spiritual needs of the church both individually and corporately.
7. Examining prospective members, ensuring that they understand and believe the gospel.
8. Overseeing the process of church discipline and restoration.
9. Overseeing the work of the Deacons and other ministry leaders.
10. Examining, training, and mentoring potential Elders.
11. Scheduling business meetings, providing a moderator for them, and ensuring that the reporting and recording of official church business is performed.
12. Establishing and evaluating policies, procedures, and practices for the church, making adjustments as necessary.
13. Evaluating the church ministries, making adjustments as necessary.

Section 3. Organization & Election

The Elder Board shall organize itself however it determines to be best in order to achieve the mission of the church. The Elders are equal in authority, but may be specialized in function in order to carry-out proper oversight.

The Board of Elders shall preferably consist of at least five members serving three-year rotating terms. After a one-year absence from the Elder Board, Elders may be re-elected to another three-year term and may continue this cycle. The Senior Pastor shall be a permanent member of the Board. Nominees for this Board will be evaluated by the existing members of the Board to determine that biblical qualifications are met. The Elder Board must unanimously agree upon a nominee before recommending him to the congregation. Recommendations may be submitted by church members to the Elders for their consideration.

The election of Elders may be held at any members' meeting of the church. Nominees for the office of Elder should be made known at least four weeks prior to any election. Any

member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified, should express this concern to the Board within 21 days after official nomination.

Section 4. Resignation & Dismissal

An Elder's term of office may be terminated by written resignation with a (30) day notice submitted to the Board of Elders unless other arrangements can be made by mutual agreement of both parties, or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an Elder should be dismissed should express that concern to the Board and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action will be done following the instructions of Jesus in [Matthew 18:15–17](#) and [1 Timothy 5:17–21](#). After a thorough corroborating investigation by the Board, (or appointed committee by them) any Elder may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any members' meeting of the church.

When an Elder is dismissed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, his dismissal will be accompanied by a public rebuke ([1 Timothy 5:20](#)).

A vacancy in the Elder Board because of death, resignation, dismissal or any other cause, will be filled only in the manners prescribed in these bylaws. Such vacancies may be filled as they occur.

Section 5. Accountability

Collectively, The Board of Elders is accountable to the church members. Individually, they are accountable to one another.

Section 6. Meetings & Voting

The Board of Elders should meet as often as deemed necessary to carry-out proper oversight. In addition, they should also meet for dedicated times of prayer and learning. In voting, when unanimity is not required, the Elders should still prayerfully seek it, but may make decisions based on consensus. Once a decision is made, each Elder should positively affirm and submit to the decision that has been reached, being an example to the flock in protecting unity and speaking well of the other Elders.

If unanimously agreed upon in advance, some voting issues may be done through e-mail or in absentia, so long as it is documented in the official minutes.

Section 7. Pastoral Staff

The Senior Pastor is a permanent member of the Board of Elders and is accountable to that Board. Other paid pastoral staff may be nominated for the Board of Elders and be elected by a congregational vote. All paid staff are accountable to the Senior Pastor or to the person he appoints.

The Senior Pastor and other paid pastoral staff may perform weddings for church members only. Exceptions are limited to their extended family or personal friends and may be done with unanimous approval by the Elder Board.

Section 8. Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor is recognized as the under shepherd of Christ's local church and is its spiritual leader. His primary roles are the teaching and preaching of God's Word, prayer, shepherding, leadership, and developing a unified vision for the church.

8.1 Calling & Vote

When the Senior Pastor position is vacant, the current Elder Board will appoint a Pastoral Search Team consisting of Elders and church members, no less than five on the team. Voting requirements shall be done in accordance with the Pastoral Search Team policies and procedures.

8.2 Evaluations & Reviews

1. The Elder Board will evaluate the Senior Pastor annually.
2. The Senior Pastor, or the person whom he may appoint, will conduct annual evaluations of all paid staff members.
3. The Elder Board will review its own performance, or lack thereof, in achieving the goals it has agreed upon, noting those goals that have an influence upon the Senior Pastor's ability to achieve his goals.

8.3 Compensation, Rest, & Professional Development

1. The Senior Pastor will be compensated based on qualifications, experience, job performance, longevity, and various incentives determined by the Board of Elders. Professional and ministry resources for determining fair compensation including salary and benefits, should be consulted.
2. Vacation, days off, personal time, sabbaticals, study breaks, and a leave of absence will be determined by the Board of Elders after discussing the needs of the Senior Pastor with him and granted accordingly.
3. The Senior Pastor is encouraged to further his education and improve his overall skills and leadership. Such opportunities will not count against Section 8.3 #2 as set forth in these bylaws. Opportunities may include: advanced degrees, conferences, workshops, et.al. Expenses may be covered under the general budget or a designated account.

ARTICLE D – BOARD OF DEACONS

Section 1. Overview

The qualifications for the office of Deacon/Deaconess are established in [1Timothy 3:8-13](#). Specifically, a Deacon/Deaconess is chosen when he or she is recognized for their high spiritual character, proven service, and demonstration of walking in the Spirit and wisdom. The office of Deacon/Deaconess will only be filled by biblically-qualified, naturally-born males and females who are members of the church as set forth in the bylaws under Article A.

Section 2. Responsibilities

The duties of the Deacon Board are specifically appointed to free the Elders to pursue the ministry of the Word of God and prayer. The nature of their function is serving rather than authority. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

1. Ministering to widows and problem solving
2. Organizing and Administering various ways for serving
3. Maintaining church-owned facilities and property
4. Distributing benevolence to those in need
5. Managing the church budget and finances

Section 3. Organization & Election

The Deacon Board shall organize itself however it determines to be best in order to achieve the mission of the church under the oversight of the Elders. The members of the Deacon Board are equal in their position, but may be specialized in function in order to carry-out proper service.

The Deacon Board shall consist of members serving three-year rotating terms. After a one-year absence from the Deacon Board, Deacons/Deaconesses may be re-elected to another three-year term and may continue this cycle. Nominees for this Board will be evaluated by the existing members of the Elder Board to determine that biblical qualifications are met. Recommendations may be submitted by church members to the Elders for their consideration.

The election of Deacons/Deaconesses may be held at any members' meeting of the church. Nominees for the office of Deacon/Deaconess should be made known at least four weeks prior to any election. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified, should express this concern to the Elder Board within 21 days after official nomination.

Section 4. Resignation & Dismissal

A Deacon's/Deaconess' term of office may be terminated by written resignation with a (30) day notice submitted to the Board of Elders unless other arrangements can be made by

mutual agreement of both parties, or by dismissal. After a thorough corroborating investigation by the Elder Board, (or appointed committee by them) any Deacon/Deaconess may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any members' meeting of the church.

A vacancy in the Deacon Board because of death, resignation, dismissal or any other cause, will be filled only in the manners prescribed in these bylaws. Such vacancies may be filled as they occur.

Section 5. Accountability

Collectively, The Deacon Board is directly accountable to the Elders and church members. Individually, they are accountable to one another.

Section 6. Meetings & Voting

The Board of Deacons should meet as often as deemed necessary to carry-out and organize proper service to and for the church body. In addition, they should also meet for dedicated times of prayer and learning.

In voting, when unanimity is not required, the Deacons/Deaconesses should still prayerfully seek it, but may make decisions based on consensus. Once a decision is made, each Deacon/Deaconess should positively affirm and submit to the decision that has been reached, being an example to the flock in protecting unity and speaking well of the other Deacons/Deaconesses.

If unanimously agreed upon in advance, some voting issues may be done through e-mail or in absentia, so long as it is documented in the official minutes.

ARTICLE E – MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship

Meetings will be scheduled for worship each Sunday. Except for business meetings, all other meetings will be scheduled as agreed upon for purposes consistent with the overall vision, values, and mission of the church.

Section 2. Business

1. Purpose:
The purpose of congregational business meetings is to vote on prospective church members, elders, deacons, pastoral staff, financial, legal, or property issues that require congregational attention.
2. Schedule of Business Meetings:
The annual business meeting will be held in April. Other business meetings may be scheduled as needed. The Board of Elders or the Senior Pastor may call special business meetings when necessary.
3. Notification of Business Meetings:
All business meetings require a two-week notification.
4. Voting:
All questions shall be decided by a majority vote of the members present and voting unless otherwise specified within the bylaws.

Section 3. Facility Use & Property

The church will use its facility and its property for meetings in a manner that meets the standards named in this church constitution and its bylaws. Furthermore, Berean Baptist Church affirms that all marriage ceremonies performed in the name of this church and any related celebrations or activities allowed in its facilities, shall be for unions that meet the standards named in this church constitution and under the direction of these bylaws and the policies and procedures as set forth by the Elders.

ARTICLE F – AMENDMENTS

The bylaws set forth the general administrative practices of the church. These bylaws may be amended by three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at a called business meeting as specified in the bylaws.