

APRIL 24, 2016



## CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH  
1210 CHAMBERS STREET  
EUGENE, OR 97402

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# CONSTITUTION

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Berean Baptist Church  
Eugene, Oregon  
Amended 4/24/2016

Accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, the Holy Bible as the verbally inspired Word of God, and seeking to carry out the Great Commission as recorded in Matthew 28: 18-20, we adopt the following articles:

## **ARTICLE I- NAME AND INCORPORATION**

The name of this organization, a non-profit corporation, shall be "Berean Baptist Church of Eugene, Oregon."

## **ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

Our purpose is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. In fulfilling this purpose, we believe that as we regularly meet together for worship, discipleship, and relationships, we grow in our passion to make and multiply other disciples of Jesus Christ and thereby, spread God's fame for the good of all peoples.

## **ARTICLE III - DOCTRINAL STATEMENT**

### **Scriptures**

We believe the Bible is God's absolute, objective truth for all people for all times.<sup>1</sup> It is without error in concept or detail in the original writings.<sup>2</sup> It is breathed out in its entirety by God, divinely preserved, and, therefore, trustworthy.<sup>3</sup> We believe the Holy Spirit superintended human authors so that, through their individual personalities and literary styles, they composed and recorded God's Word.<sup>4</sup> It is God's written revelation, complete in the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments.<sup>5</sup> It is the supreme authority in all matters to which it speaks and is sufficient for life, conduct, and practice – understandable by every believer.<sup>6</sup> We believe Scripture must be understood through the literal, contextual, grammatical, and historical method of interpretation, and applied under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup>

### **God**

We believe in the one personal, transcendent, immanent, living God – the creator, sustainer, and sovereign ruler of all things.<sup>8</sup> He is self-existent, immutable, and works all things according to the counsel of His will in order to bring glory to Himself.<sup>9</sup> God's foreknowledge is exhaustive and not dependent on human decisions and actions.<sup>10</sup> He eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup> They execute distinct but harmonious roles in creation, providence, redemption, and consummation.<sup>12</sup> They are equal in nature, attributes, and perfections.<sup>13</sup> The holy triune God is worthy of our worship, confidence, and obedience.<sup>14</sup>

### **The Father**

We believe in God the Father: one in essence with the Son and the Spirit.<sup>15</sup> He is an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in all His attributes.<sup>16</sup> He is the creator, sustainer, and sovereign ruler of all things through His Son Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup> We believe that He concerns

Himself perfectly in the affairs of humanity.<sup>18</sup> His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with the redeemed.<sup>19</sup> Everything He does is in accordance with His perfect will, though His sovereignty does not eliminate or minimize human responsibility.<sup>20</sup> The Father adopts as His own, through Jesus Christ, all those He calls to Himself.<sup>21</sup>

## **The Son**

We believe in God the Son: one in essence with the Father and the Spirit.<sup>22</sup> He is the one and only eternal Son of God, the preeminent revelation of God.<sup>23</sup> At the right time He emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-slave.<sup>24</sup> He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary as Jesus, the Christ – fully God and fully man.<sup>25</sup> We believe in His sinless life, His voluntary submission to His Father’s will that culminated in His substitutionary death on the cross, His burial, and His bodily resurrection.<sup>26</sup> He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father.<sup>27</sup> His death on the cross atoned for our sin and satisfied the righteous demands of the holy God.<sup>28</sup> He is the Mediator between God and man.<sup>29</sup> He is Prophet, Priest, and King; the Head and Savior of His Church; the Heir of all things; the Judge of all the world; and the exact representation of God the Father.<sup>30</sup> We believe in the personal return of Christ for His Church and in the establishment of His Kingdom on earth.<sup>31</sup>

## **The Holy Spirit**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit: one in essence with the Father and Son.<sup>32</sup> He was sent by God the Father and God the Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.<sup>33</sup> The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ and implements Christ’s work of redemption and baptism.<sup>34</sup> He regenerates, baptizes, seals, gifts, and indwells all believers at conversion, progressively sanctifying, and securing them in Christ forever.<sup>35</sup> The Spirit fills, leads, comforts, and intercedes for believers, empowering them for godly living and service.<sup>36</sup> His presence is evident by the fruit of the Spirit and the building up of believers into the body of Christ, the Church.<sup>37</sup>

## **Humanity**

We believe that humanity, male and female, is sacred in God’s eyes and was uniquely created by Him, in His image and for His glory, to exercise dominion over the earth and to enjoy a relationship with Him forever.<sup>38</sup> Every human being is directly responsible to God in matters of faith and life.<sup>39</sup> After sin entered the world, humans still possess the image of God, though tainted by sin.<sup>40</sup> God’s will for humanity is that they love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love their neighbors as themselves.<sup>41</sup>

## **Family**

In God’s design for humanity, life begins at fertilization.<sup>42</sup> He established the institution of family through the union of one natural-born man and one natural-born woman in a marriage covenant for life.<sup>43</sup> His design for the continuance of humanity is through the procreation and discipleship of children within the marriage union.<sup>44</sup> Marriage is to be an example of the relationship between Jesus Christ and His Church.<sup>45</sup>

## **Sin**

We believe that sin is any action, inaction, or attitude that is contrary to the nature or Word of God, which constitutes a rejection of His authority, resulting in alienation from God.<sup>46</sup> Sin entered the world when Adam, representing humanity, disobeyed God.<sup>47</sup> As a result of the one sin of Adam, his descendants – the whole human race – are separated from relationship with God, spiritually dead, and therefore in a fallen state. Being sinners by nature and choice and utterly unable to remedy their lost condition, humanity is in need of salvation.<sup>48</sup>

## **Salvation**

We believe that salvation is a gift of God, received by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone.<sup>49</sup> Salvation is motivated by the love of God demonstrated through His sovereign election in Christ, purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross, and received by faith apart from any human merit, works, or ritual.<sup>50</sup> Regeneration is effected through the work of the Holy Spirit in God's elect.<sup>51</sup> All who repent and believe in Jesus Christ are forgiven of all their sins, justified in God's sight by the merit of Christ's righteousness, adopted into His family, sealed by the Holy Spirit, and have equal access to God.<sup>52</sup> As a result, the progressive sanctifying work of salvation leads to a newness of life that is evidenced by righteous living, good works, and biblical social concern, or God's corrective discipline.<sup>53</sup> The consummation of salvation is that those who have accepted God's gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ shall be resurrected and glorified.<sup>54</sup> They shall receive their inheritance in the Kingdom of their Father, whom they shall see and enjoy throughout the ages.<sup>55</sup>

## **Church**

We believe that the New Testament Church is composed of all persons who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit since the day of Pentecost following Christ's resurrection.<sup>56</sup> We believe that the Church is the spiritual body of Christ, of which He is the Head.<sup>57</sup> We believe that this body expresses itself in local assemblies in which believers are in a covenant relationship.<sup>58</sup> Biblically that relationship is expressed corporately through hearing the Word of God proclaimed, engaging in worship, practicing the two ordinances of believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper, building up each other's faith, holding each other accountable through biblical love and discipline, and engaging in local and world evangelization.<sup>59</sup> Biblically designated officers must meet the biblical qualifications for their office and submit to the headship of Christ, emulating His servant leadership.<sup>60</sup> We believe the function of eldering is reserved for biblically qualified males.<sup>61</sup> Each local church is to choose, support, and submit to those who function as elders.<sup>62</sup>

## **Angels**

We believe God created angels as spirit-beings possessing power and intellect, to worship and serve Him and to minister to believers.<sup>63</sup> Satan is a fallen angel who masquerades as an angel of light.<sup>64</sup> The scope of Satan's power is subject to God's will.<sup>65</sup> By subjecting Adam and Eve to temptation and sin, Satan has extended his rebellion against God, which he continues by deceit, seduction, and destruction.<sup>66</sup> While Satan and his demons are powerful, they are subject to Christ's authority and judgment.<sup>67</sup> Satan and his demons have been defeated for eternity by Jesus Christ through His death on the cross and victorious resurrection, sealing their everlasting damnation.<sup>68</sup> At the time of final judgment, they will be consigned to eternal separation from God in the Lake of Fire.<sup>69</sup>

## Last Things

We believe in the sudden, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ and in His Millennial Kingdom.<sup>70</sup> He will return with His saints from heaven with power and great glory, on a day known only to God.<sup>71</sup> We believe that those who have accepted God's gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, at the point of physical death, enter into God's eternal glory.<sup>72</sup> They shall be resurrected and transformed to His body of glory, and they shall receive their inheritance of glory in the Kingdom of their Father.<sup>73</sup> They shall be made fully blessed in the presence and service of God, whom they shall see and enjoy throughout the ages.<sup>74</sup> We believe that all unsaved persons, at the point of physical death, are destined for eternal damnation.<sup>75</sup> They will be resurrected, separated from the righteous, judged, and cast into an existence of eternal punishment where they will be tormented day and night forever and ever when death and Hades is cast into the Lake of Fire.<sup>76</sup> We believe it is imperative for the Church to work and wait in sober watchfulness, that it may be found ready at His coming.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Samuel 7:28; Psalm 25:10; 33:4; 119:160; John 17:17; Titus 1:2-3 <sup>2</sup> John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16 <sup>3</sup> Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21 <sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:12-13; 2 Peter 1:20-21 <sup>5</sup> Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Galatians 1:11-12; Revelation 22:18-19 <sup>6</sup> Isaiah 8:20; Matthew 5:17-19; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 14:17, 37; 2 Timothy 3:15-17 <sup>7</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 2 Corinthians 3:14-16; 2 Peter 1:20 <sup>8</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 83:18; 139:1, 7-10; Isaiah 6:1; 33:10; 40:22; Jeremiah 10:10; Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 3:4; James 2:19 <sup>9</sup> Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:14; Numbers 23:19; Psalm 19:1; 33:9-10; 102:26-27; Psalm 104; Isaiah 14:24; Malachi 3:6; Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11; James 1:17 <sup>10</sup> Romans 8:29-30; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-17; 147:5; John 6:64; Isaiah 40:13 <sup>11</sup> Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:5-6 <sup>12</sup> Genesis 1:1-2; Job 26:13; Psalm 104; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22; John 1:3; 5:17; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Ephesians 2:18; Colossians 1:16-17 <sup>13</sup> John 10:30; 14:23; 17:5, 10; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6 <sup>14</sup> Isaiah 6:3; Jeremiah 2:12-13; Mark 12:30; Revelation 4:11 <sup>15</sup> Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 8:6 <sup>16</sup> Exodus 3:14; John 4:24; 14:7 <sup>17</sup> Genesis 1:1; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 104; Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:17 <sup>18</sup> Psalm 8:4-6; Matthew 5:45; 6:26-32; 10:29-31 <sup>19</sup> Matthew 6:1, 4; 10:20; John 20:17, 21; 17:1; Ephesians 1:2-3; Colossians 1:2-3 <sup>20</sup> Romans 1:18-20; 8:29; Colossians 1:10 <sup>21</sup> John 6:44; Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:5 <sup>22</sup> Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14 <sup>23</sup> John 1:1; 8:58; Philippians 2:5-6; Revelation 1:8 <sup>24</sup> Matthew 1:23; Philippians 2:6-7 <sup>25</sup> Matthew 1:20; 9:2; 12:8; Luke 1:35; John 1:1, 14; 8:58; 10:30; 14:7; Romans 9:5; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 1:15-16; Hebrews 1:3 <sup>26</sup> Luke 19:10; Hebrews 4:15 <sup>27</sup> Acts 1:9; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3; 8:1 <sup>28</sup> Isaiah 53:4-12; Matthew 20:28; Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:1-3; Hebrews 9:13-15; 1 John 2:2; 4:10 <sup>29</sup> John 1:1-14; Hebrews 4:14; 12:24, 1 Timothy 2:5 <sup>30</sup> Psalm 2:6; Acts 3:22-23; Romans 10:9-11; Hebrews 1:3, 8; 4:14; 8:2-5 <sup>31</sup> Psalm 2:6; Zechariah 14:4, 16; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17; Revelation 11:15; 20:4 <sup>32</sup> John 15:26; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 <sup>33</sup> John 16:8-11 <sup>34</sup> John 3:5; 16:14; Acts 1:5; Romans 8:2-16; 1 Corinthians 12:13 <sup>35</sup> John 3:5; 14:17; Acts 19:5-6; Romans 11:29; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 12:4-31; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13; Hebrews 13:5; Jude 24-25 <sup>36</sup> Exodus 31:3; 1 Samuel 16:13; Joel 2:28-29; John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 2:17-18; 4:31; 6:5; 9:31; Romans 8:26; Ephesians 5:18 <sup>37</sup> Romans 5:5; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 2:22; 3:14-21; 1 John 5:4 <sup>38</sup> Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7, 22; 5:1-2; 9:6; Psalm 100:3; 119:73; Isaiah 43:7; 45:12; Acts 17:26; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9 <sup>39</sup> Ecclesiastes 3:17; 12:14; Jeremiah 17:10; Romans 1:20; 3:19; Hebrews 4:13; 9:27; Revelation 20:11-13 <sup>40</sup> Genesis 5:1; 9:6; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10-18, 23; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9 <sup>41</sup> Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:30-31; Romans 13:8-10 <sup>42</sup> Psalm 51:5; 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:31, 34-36, 41, 44 <sup>43</sup> Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Timothy 3:2 <sup>44</sup> Genesis 1:27-28; 9:1 <sup>45</sup> Ephesians 5:22-32 <sup>46</sup> Leviticus 4:27; Matthew 5:28; James 4:17 <sup>47</sup> Romans 5:12, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 <sup>48</sup> Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:23; 5:12-21; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:22 <sup>49</sup> Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24, 28; 1 Corinthians 3:5-7; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:5, 8 <sup>50</sup> John 6:44; Acts 13:48; Romans 4:4-5; 6:23; 8:29-30; 11:5-6; Galatians 1:15; Ephesians 1:3-6; 2:8-9; Philippians 3:7-9; 2 Timothy 1:8-9; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:1-2; 1 John 4:10 <sup>51</sup> John 1:13; 3:3, 5-8; Acts 11:18; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 7:10-11; Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 2:13; Titus 3:5-7; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:1-2; 1 John 4:7 <sup>52</sup> Acts 10:43; 13:39; Romans 1:15-17; 3:24-26; 4:23-25; 5:1-2, 9, 11, 17, 19, 21; 8:1; 10:9; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 2:13-14; Titus 3:5-7 <sup>53</sup> Acts 11:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 5:21; 7:1; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:26-27; Philippians 2:12-13; 3:12-16; Colossians 1:28-29; 3:5-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; Hebrews 12:7-11, 14; 2 Peter 1:3, 5-8; 3:18 <sup>54</sup> John 5:25-29; Acts 24:14-15; Romans 8:17; 1 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 John 2:25; Revelation 20:5-6 <sup>55</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Revelation 21:6-7; 22:3-5 <sup>56</sup> Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 12:27; 2 Corinthians 6:16 <sup>57</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:27; Colossians 1:18 <sup>58</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:27 <sup>59</sup> Matthew 18:15-17; 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; John 3:22; 4:1-2; Acts 2:38, 41-42, 47; 8:12, 36-39; 16:32-34; 18:8; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25; Ephesians 4:11-13 <sup>60</sup> Matthew 20:25-28; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:7-9 <sup>61</sup> Titus 1:5-6; 1 Peter 5:1-3 <sup>62</sup> Acts 6:3-6; 15:22; Hebrews 13:17 <sup>63</sup> Deuteronomy 6:13; 10:20; Matthew 4:10 <sup>64</sup> Ezekiel 28:13-16; Luke 10:18; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Revelation 12:7-9 <sup>65</sup> Job 1:6-7, 12; John 14:30; 16:11 <sup>66</sup> Genesis 3:1-7; Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:18 <sup>67</sup> Philippians 2:10; James 4:7; 1 Peter 3:22; 2 Peter 2:4; 1 John 2:12-14; 5:18; Revelation 20:10 <sup>68</sup> John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Romans 16:20 <sup>69</sup> Revelation 20:10 <sup>70</sup> Mark 13:32-37; Titus 2:13; Revelation 20:2-6 <sup>71</sup> Matthew 24:30, 36; 25:31;

Mark 13:32-37; John 14:3; Titus 2:13 <sup>72</sup> John 10:28; Romans 8:38-39; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Hebrews 9:27 <sup>73</sup> Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2; John 5:25-29; Acts 24:14-15; 1 Corinthians 6:14; Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 20:5-6; 21:6-7 <sup>74</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 22:3-5 <sup>75</sup> Hebrews 9:27 <sup>76</sup> Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:25-29; Acts 24:14-15; Revelation 14:10-11; 20:10; 21:8 <sup>77</sup> Matthew 24:42-44; 25:13; Mark 13:33-37; Hebrews 10:25

#### **ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of this church shall consist of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who have been baptized by immersion, who are in agreement with the doctrine and practice of this church, and who have been received into fellowship by regular action of the church as set forth in the bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE V - OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION**

The officers of the corporation shall consist of the Chairman of the Board of Elders who shall be the President and registered agent of this corporation. The Secretary of the Board of Elders shall be the corporate secretary.

#### **ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS**

Meetings of the church will be held for worship, prayer, praise, fellowship, business and any other special purposes as set forth in the bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE VII - CHURCH AUTONOMY**

The government of the church is ultimately vested in its members. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body. Berean Baptist Church maintains fellowship with local, regional, and national Conservative Baptist associations and agencies.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS**

This constitution may be amended by a three-fourths vote of members present and voting at any called business meeting as specified in the bylaws, provided such amendments have been submitted in writing at a previous business meeting.

#### **ARTICLE IX - DISSOLUTION**

All property of the corporation is irrevocably dedicated to church purposes. Upon the liquidation, dissolution or abandonment of the corporation, its assets will be given to the Conservative Baptist Northwest Association, presently located at 1315 SE 20th Ave. Portland, OR 97214.

In the event this organization is unable to accept the assets of this corporation, the distribution of assets shall be determined by the Conservative Baptist Association of America, Wheaton, Illinois.

#### **ARTICLE X - BYLAWS**

The corporation will adopt bylaws for its general administrative practices.

# BYLAWS

## 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. The following passages in Scripture are not exhaustive of discipline, but examples:

<b>PASSAGE</b>	<b>PROBLEM</b>	<b>PROCEDURE</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>
Matthew 18:15-17	The sin of a "brother" (undefined)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Private reproof</li> <li>2. Private conference</li> <li>3. Public announcement</li> <li>4. Public exclusion</li> </ol>	"to gain your brother"
1 Corinthians 5	Sexual immorality Greed Idolatry Reviling (abusive) Drunkenness Swindling (thief)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corporate grief</li> <li>2. Purge from the fellowship</li> <li>3. Do not associate with</li> </ol>	Restoration Corporate purity
2 Corinthians 2:5-11	Unknown	After sincere repentance: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Forgive</li> <li>2. Comfort</li> <li>3. Love</li> </ol>	Obedience Protection from Satan's designs
Galatians 6:1-5	"any transgression"	Restore him <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As a spiritual person</li> <li>2. With meekness</li> <li>3. With introspection</li> </ol>	Restoration
2 Thess. 3:6-15	Laziness Busybody (meddler and gossiper)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take note of them</li> <li>2. Keep away from them</li> <li>3. Warn him as a brother</li> </ol>	Restoration (ashamed into repenting)
1 Timothy 5:19-21	Accusation against an Elder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2-3 witnesses needed to confirm persistent sin</li> <li>2. Publicly rebuke if he is guilty without partiality</li> </ol>	Protection (others would fear)
Titus 3:9-11 Romans 16:17-18	Causing division	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Warn twice</li> <li>2. Have nothing to do with them</li> </ol>	Protection (unity in doctrine)

**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 I 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.