



Berean
Baptist Church

Constitution
March 26, 2008

BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH OF PORTAGE

Preamble

Placing our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation, accepting the Holy Bible as our sole and perfect rule of faith and practice and believing in the historic teachings and practices of Baptists, we therefore band together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, adopt for our government, our plan of worship and service the following Constitution and By-Laws, and rescind all previous action contrary thereto.

Constitution and By-Laws

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be Berean Baptist Church of Portage, Michigan.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be:

- A. To worship God, to glorify Jesus Christ and to submit to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
- B. To teach and instruct believers in the Holy Bible and to develop in them consistent Christian character.
- C. To evangelize the lost (those without a saving relationship with Jesus Christ).
- D. To encourage edifying Christian fellowship.
- E. To promote and support effective worldwide missionary endeavors which are in accord with the doctrinal statement of this church.

ARTICLE III

Character of Government

This church acknowledges:

- A. The Lord Jesus Christ as its head.
- B. The Holy Bible as its infallible guide.
- C. The Holy Spirit as its teacher.

is church is not accountable to any ecclesiastical body. The government of this church is vested in its active membership and thus is congregational in form.

ARTICLE IV Covenant

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior; and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; we do now as in the presence of God most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We pledge by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of His church, to promote its prosperity and spirituality, to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We pledge to maintain family and personal devotions, to train our children according to the Word of God, to seek the salvation of our relatives, friends, acquaintances, and to walk prudently in this world. We will be just in our dealings, faithful in our pledges, exemplary in our deportment and zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior. With dependence upon the Holy Spirit, we will abstain from any food, alcoholic beverage, or activity that may hinder our testimony or cause harm to another's faith in Christ.

We pledge to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation.

We further pledge that when we leave this church, we will as soon as possible unite with a church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE V
Doctrinal Statement

We believe that the Holy Bible teaches:

A. Verbal Inspiration of the Bible

We believe the Holy Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, to be verbally inspired of God in the original manuscripts; infallible, inerrant and God-breathed, a perfect rule of faith and practice.
(II Timothy 3:16, 17; I Corinthians 2:13; II Peter 1:16-21).

B. The Trinity

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are one in essence and attributes, yet distinct in office and activity.
(Genesis 1:26; Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 3:16 & 17; I Corinthians 8:6; II Corinthians 13:14; I John 5:7).

C. The Father

We believe that God the Father is coequal and coeternal with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, and yet is Father in His relationship within the Trinity and in His relationship with those who receive Jesus Christ as Savior. He orders all things after the counsel of His own will and, in so doing, concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men. He hears and answers prayer. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent; and He is the object of our worship and praise.
(Psalm 65:2, 139:1-24, 147:5; Matthew 5:45, 6:24-34; John 14:6; I Timothy 2:5).

D. The Lord Jesus Christ

We believe that God the Son, who has always existed, became a man (without diminishing His deity) by virgin birth through Mary (John 17:5; Luke 1:34, 35). He lived a sinless life and, as the infinite God-man, took upon Himself the sins of all men, died in their place and satisfied God concerning the sins of all believers.
(John 8:46; II Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:6).

We further believe in the literal, physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He then ascended and was exalted to the right hand of God as the great high priest of all believers.
(I Peter 1:3; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 4:14-16).

E. The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is a divine person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He is the supernatural agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ and indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption.
(John 16:7-11; I Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13-14).

We believe the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth and that it is the privilege and duty of all believers to be controlled and led by the Holy Spirit.
(John 16:13; I John 2:27; Romans 8:14; Ephesians 5:18).

F. Man

We believe man was created in the image and likeness of God, but in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and of himself is utterly unable to remedy his lost condition.
(Genesis 1:26, 27; Romans 3:23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12).

We believe that the Holy Bible defines marriage as a covenant relationship between one man and one woman.
(Gen 1:26-28; Gen 2:18-24; Eph 5:22-31; 1 Tim 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).

G. Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ apart from works. Christ's precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of sins. There is no eternal hope apart from the cleansing of the blood of Christ.
(Ephesians 2:8-10; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:18, 19).

H. Eternal Security

We believe all people who have truly come to reliance upon the work of Christ for their salvation will never become less than sons of God (John 1:12; 10:27-30). The reality of one's conversion experience will be indicated by a continuing godly life. Christian liberty and security are never a basis for indulgence of the flesh.

(Romans 13:13, 14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-14).

I. Heaven and Hell

We believe that Heaven is a literal place prepared for all born-again believers. All those who die in Christ will be immediately eternally present with Him (John 14:1-6; II Corinthians 5:8). Hell is a literal place of eternal punishment for all who will not receive Christ as personal Savior.

(Matthew 25:41; Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 21:8).

J. Devil and Demons

We believe Satan is a fallen angel in active opposition to God's program in all its aspects. Satan is aided by a host of evil spirit beings called demons. Their design is to destroy believers, their homes and their churches. Every believer is subject to their attack but may be victorious through Jesus Christ.

(Ephesians 6:11, 12; I Peter 5:8).

K. Creation

We accept the Genesis account of creation literally and believe that man came by direct creation of God not by any form of evolution.

(Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1:16, 17; John 1:3)

L. Church

We believe in the universal church, the body of Christ, which is comprised of all believers from Pentecost to the Rapture. The local church is a body of believers, baptized by immersion, who have joined together for work, worship, the observance of the two ordinances (baptism and communion) and the worldwide proclamation of the Gospel.

(Ephesians 4:12-16; Acts 2:41, 42, 46, 47; I Corinthians 12:13; Romans 6:3, 4; I Corinthians 11:23-31).

M. Baptism and Communion

We believe in baptism of the regenerate by immersion. Baptism does not save but is an act of obedience to the clear command of Christ. It is a public testimony to one's faith in Christ as personal Savior. It pictures the participation of a believer in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, which leads to newness of life.

(Romans 6:1-5; Matthew 28:19, 20).

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic ordinance, picturing Christ's body broken for our sins and His blood shed for our redemption. It is not a saving ordinance. It promotes personal holiness by a regular remembrance of His death and His future coming for His saints.

(I Corinthians 11:23-28).

N. Spiritual Gifts

We believe God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts. The gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today. Speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament was completed and their authority became established.

(I Corinthians 12:4-11; II Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12).

Each believer has at least one spiritual gift. Examples would include evangelist, pastor-teacher, exhortation, administration, helps, giving.

(Romans 12:6-8; I Corinthians 12:8-11).

We do not believe in the gift of healing (divine healers). We do believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and the afflicted.

(John 15:7; James 5:14-16).

O. Separation of Church and State

We believe in the separation of church and state: The government should not dictate beliefs. We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society. Those in government offices should be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; but, when their laws are in conflict with the gospel and its proclamation, Jesus Christ is to be obeyed.

(Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:19, 20; Romans 13:1-7).

P. Separation

While we believe in evangelization, we believe in separation to God from sin and from unrepentant believers. All the saved should live in such a way as not to bring reproach upon their Savior or their church. We believe in separation from religious apostasy (false teaching or organizations and institutions holding to false doctrine).

(II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; II Timothy 3:1-5; Romans 16:17, 18;
I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; II Thessalonians 3:6; I Corinthians 5).

Q. Future Things

We believe in the personal, imminent, pre-tribulational and pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for all believers at the Rapture. We believe also in His subsequent return to earth after the tribulation with His saints to establish His millennial kingdom (a reign of 1,000 years).

(I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:1-6;
I Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9).

We believe that the souls of the believers are, at death, absent from the body and immediately present with the Lord. There, in conscious bliss, they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord.

(Luke 23:43; Revelation 20:4-6; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21;
I Thessalonians 4:16, 17).

We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when spirit, soul and body are reunited. They shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious judgment.

(Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:11-15; Mark 9:43-48).

ARTICLE VI
Baptist Distinctives

We adhere to the historic Baptist beliefs. The combination of the following beliefs constitutes a summary of the distinctives of Baptists.

The Inspiration and Authority of the Holy Bible
Individual Soul Liberty
The Sovereignty of God
The Priesthood of all Believers
Separation of Church and State
Regenerate Church Membership
Two Offices: Pastor and Deacon
Two Ordinances: Baptism and Communion
The Independence and Autonomy of the Local Church

ARTICLE VII
Membership

Section 1. ELIGIBILITY

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, who have then been baptized by immersion, who subscribe to the views of faith stated in the doctrinal statement of this church, and who are not under discipline from another church of like faith and order.

Section 2. APPLICATION

All applications for membership shall be made to a pastor and/or a deacon. All applicants shall meet with a minimum of two deacons following completion of the membership class. The deacons will make diligent inquiry into the spiritual eligibility of the applicant; and, if found satisfactory, will so recommend to the church.

Section 3. ADMISSION

When a favorable recommendation has been made, the church shall vote upon the application. Members may be received into the church at any regular or business meeting of the church by receiving a majority vote of those present and voting. Admission may be through transfer, experience or baptism. After positive action by the church, each new member shall receive the Right Hand of Fellowship in a public service.

Section 4. DUTIES

- A. Members will strive to keep their covenant responsibilities. They will honor and highly esteem their pastor(s), pray for him (them) regularly, and assist him (them) in carrying out the ministry of the church. Members will endeavor to preserve the unity of the church; and, if at any time they find themselves opposed to the fundamental doctrines of this church (as described by the Doctrinal Statement), they will not seek to disrupt its fellowship but will quietly withdraw from its membership.
- B. Members of the church are expected to attend its meetings, to be involved in its ministries, to guard its good name in the community, to contribute regularly and according to their ability for the expenses of the church, and to notify the church office of any change in address, e-mail, or phone number.

- C. Support shall be through free will offerings. The use of offering envelopes by members is encouraged to facilitate bookkeeping. The financial secretary will annually provide givers who use numbered offering envelopes with IRS recognized receipts.

Section 5. REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

Removal from membership shall be upon recommendation of the deacons and the majority vote of the members present at a regularly constituted business meeting.

- A. Members in good standing may be removed by letter of transfer to the fellowship of another Baptist church of like faith and practice upon written request of a Baptist church. Their names shall then be removed from the membership roll.
- B. Members in good standing who withdraw from this church to unite with a Bible-believing church, other than as stated in Section 5. A. may be granted a certificate of Christian character. Their names shall then be removed from the membership roll.
- C. Members who fail to attend at least one regular service of the church for a period of six months will have their names removed from the roll of the church after review by the deacons.
- D. Removing a member's name shall be done only after the deacons have endeavored to contact the member, have ascertained the reasons for non-attendance, and have made a reasonable effort to restore such a member to active interest in the church.

Section 6. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

Discipline of members shall be at the discretion of the pastor(s) and the deacons in the spirit of Galatians 6:1 and Matthew 18:15-19.

- A. The pastors and deacons shall oversee all church discipline issues and shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of a member's duties. If a pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not serve as one who sits as an overseer. The pastor and deacons shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
- B. All church members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, they are to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore their brother or sister. Before going, they should first examine themselves. When they go, they should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
- C. If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, either a pastor or a deacon, is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
- D. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, the pastors and deacons, as the church representatives Biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during this hearing, the pastor(s) and/or deacons shall recommend, during a regularly scheduled service, that the members of the church, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.
- E. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B), (C), and (D) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action.
- F. No matter may be heard by the pastors and deacons or the church unless the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.

- G. If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, all contact with him from that point forward (except by family members) must be for the sake of restoration.
- H. The procedures provided in this section are based on Matthew 18:15-20; Romans 16:17-18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:1-11; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 10-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

Section 7. RIGHTS

All members in good standing will have equal voting rights. Members of this church have no property rights and, upon termination of membership, shall be entitled to no interest in the assets.

Section 8. WATCHCARE FELLOWSHIP

- A. This is a provision for those of like faith who have only a temporary residence in our city, e.g. students. Persons who come under the watchcare relationship will enjoy all the privileges of membership, with the exceptions of voting and holding elective office. This application process is the same as in Section 2 above.
- B. Watchcare membership will terminate when residence in our locality has ended, when absence of six months indicates lack of interest, or when full membership is extended. Application for transfer to full membership follows the procedures in Section 1 & 2 above.

ARTICLE VIII
Lifestyle Standard for Church Leadership

Whereas, the Church Covenant of Berean Baptist Church clearly defines the Biblical responsibilities of her members regarding matters of personal moral conscience,

And whereas, the Holy Bible clearly indicates that spiritual leadership in the church must be examples to the flock and therefore must be as conservative and cautious as possible regarding matters of personal moral conscience,

And whereas, each local church is bound by the doctrines and teachings of the Holy Bible, and yet each church is unique in its character, conscience, and culture,

The expectation of spiritual leaders at Berean Baptist Church: namely pastors, deacons, and individuals who teach God's Word to our children, teens, and adults, is that they must uphold the Church Covenant of Berean Baptist Church to the highest possible standard.

- Generally, this means that they must display Christ-like humility and a Spirit-driven willingness to avoid sin and to give up certain liberties for the privilege of leading the Church and teaching God's Word.
- Specifically, this includes, but is not limited to, the following expectations:
 - A. Spiritual leaders at Berean Baptist Church shall diligently and genuinely guard their hearts, minds, and testimonies for the glory of God their Savior.
 - B. Spiritual leaders at Berean Baptist Church shall not consume alcoholic beverages or partake of tobacco products. Nor shall they abuse any substance that results in addiction or loss of self-control, observe pornographic material in any shape or form, or be a member of any secret society (e.g. Free Masons) whose doctrines and practices are contrary to the teachings of the Holy Bible.
 - C. Spiritual leaders at Berean Baptist Church shall demonstrate a Christ-like love and godliness in their relationships at home, at church, and in their community.

ARTICLE IX
Senior Pastor

Section 1. QUALIFICATIONS

The senior pastor of this church shall be a man ordained by a Baptist church of like faith. He shall be a believer in, and a preacher of the Gospel and of the basic doctrines of faith as defined by the doctrinal statement of this church. He shall subscribe to the lifestyle standard for church leadership as described in Article VIII.

Section 2. DUTIES

- A. The senior pastor's special duties are, according to the Holy Bible: the giving of himself to prayer, the ministry of the Word, the administration of the ordinances, the pastoral oversight of the flock, and the general guidance of the spiritual and temporal welfare of the church.
(I Timothy 3:1-7; I Peter 5:1-4; Acts 6:4).
- B. In addition to his usual pastoral duties, the senior pastor shall be moderator of all business meetings of the church and of the deacons. He shall be an ex-officio member of all organized groups and committees connected with the church. He shall have the privilege of requesting that meetings of the deacons or committees shall be called when so needed.
- C. Personnel of the church whose work is of a spiritual nature shall be under the direct supervision of the senior pastor.

ARTICLE X
The Call, Dismissal, and Resignation of Personnel

Section 1. SENIOR PASTOR

The pastoral office shall be regarded as a divine appointment and it should not be lightly formed nor rudely severed. The minister shall be chosen by the church as hereinafter provided.

- A. The pulpit committee shall be comprised of the deacons.
- B. The deacons shall make their recommendation to the church after careful and prayerful consideration. It shall be the policy of this church to consider only one ministerial candidate at a time. (A candidate is a minister who has been thoroughly investigated by the deacons and who will be recommended to the church by a majority vote of the deacons).
- C. The minister shall be selected by the congregation in a business session for which announcement has been made either by a public reading of notice at Sunday morning services for two consecutive weeks or by each member being notified by mail at least seven days prior to the selection. The recommendation of the deacons must be accepted by at least a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the qualified members present and voting before a call can be extended. Thirty (30) percent of the qualified voters shall constitute a quorum at this election.
- D. In dismissing a pastor, the above procedure (A, B) shall be followed with the exception that a majority vote of the voting members shall be sufficient. The church shall give notice of dismissal with two (2) month's salary and may dismiss the pastor immediately from all duties and responsibilities.
- E. When a pastor resigns, he shall notify the deacons at least a week prior to public resignation. The church shall be given at least one month's notice of resignation. His resignation must be read during an A.M. service of the church.

Section 2. ASSOCIATE PASTORS

- A. Associate Pastors shall be men who are faithful followers of Christ, who demonstrate a call to ministry and who demonstrate giftedness in the area of service that they will render. They will be in full agreement with the doctrinal position of this church and subscribe to the lifestyle standard for church leadership as described in Article VIII.
- B. The procedure outlined above, with regard to the call, dismissal and resignation of personnel will be followed in regard to all other pastoral staff.

Section 3. OTHER PERSONNEL

When there is need for secretarial, janitorial or other full or part-time help, there must be approval by the church for the position and the salary involved.

- A. The secretary may be selected or released by the pastor with deacon approval.
- B. Janitorial staff will be selected or released by the pastor and the Building and Maintenance Committee with deacon approval.
- C. A secretary or janitor is required to give two (2) weeks notice of resignation.

ARTICLE XI
Officers

Section 1. DEACON BOARD

A. Organization

The deacon board shall consist of at least fifteen members elected by the church. One-third (1/3) of the deacon board shall be elected each year for a term of three years. At the conclusion of an elected three-year term, one year must elapse before a deacon is eligible for election to another term. In case of unfilled terms, the deacon board may appoint a qualified man to fill the vacancy until the next deacon election. This appointee will then be eligible to be elected to serve a regular three-year term (in addition to the prior appointed time).

At the annual organizational meeting of the deacons, they shall elect a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary. These officers, in addition to the pastor, shall be the legal officers of the church corporation.

The senior pastor will assign deacons annually to such committees as are needed to effectively carry out the ministry of the church. He will also appoint the chairmen of these committees. These committees shall include (1) Worship, (2) Christian Education, (3) Missions and Outreach, (4) Building and Maintenance, (5) Fellowship and Helps, (6) Student Ministries, (7) Finance.

B. Qualifications

Deacons must subscribe to and believe in the doctrinal statement of this church; this must be re-affirmed annually at the installation of officers. All elected officers must be 21 years of age or older. No divorced person may be considered for the office of deacon. Deacons must subscribe to the lifestyle standard for church leadership as described in Article VIII. The scriptural qualifications of deacons will be found in Acts 6:1-6 and I Timothy 3:8-13. Deacons must be male members in good standing for at least one year prior to nomination.

C. Duties

1. The deacons, under the leadership of the pastor, shall be responsible for all administrative and spiritual functions of the church. They shall minister to the people of this church in order to free the pastor for study and prayer.
2. The deacons shall annually make the following appointments: Church Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and any other offices needed to carry out the ministry of the church effectively.

D. Meetings

The Deacon Committee Chairmen will meet with the Senior Pastor and the Pastoral Staff once a month to review the welfare and business of the church.

All the deacons will meet quarterly with the Pastoral Staff to conduct the business of the church. These quarterly meetings shall be held prior to the church quarterly meetings.

A special meeting of the deacons may be called at the discretion of the pastor, chairman or three deacons. A majority of the deacons must be present to constitute a quorum. The chairman shall preside at any meetings from which the pastor is absent.

E. Guide to Deacon Committees

1. Worship Committee

The Worship Committee shall be responsible for the planning and assignment of necessary personnel to carry out the regular and special services of the church (this includes, but is not limited to ushers, greeters, technical personnel, musicians & instrumentalists.)

The Worship Committee shall be responsible for all arrangements necessary for the observance of communion and baptism.

The Worship Committee shall, with the pastor(s) and staff, determine and promote the ministry of music in the church.

The Worship Committee shall annually submit a budget for worship-related ministries.

The Worship Committee shall be responsible to draft, seek deacon approval for and enforce the policies affecting the Worship processes of the Church.

2. Christian Education Committee

The Christian Education Committee shall be responsible for the correlation of all activities which are educational in nature.

The Christian Education Committee shall determine educational and doctrinal policies, including approval of all teaching materials.

The Christian Education Committee shall implement personnel standards for workers as set forth in the church constitution and shall approve the appointment of all such workers.

The Christian Education Committee shall annually recommend to the deacons such officers necessary to carry out the Christian Education function of the church.

The Christian Education Committee shall annually submit a budget for all education related ministries.

The Sunday School Superintendent, shall be a member of the Education Committee.

The Christian Education Committee shall be responsible to draft, seek deacon approval for and enforce the policies affecting the Christian Education processes of the Church.

3. Missions and Outreach Committee

The Missions & Outreach Committee shall be responsible for the coordinated missionary program of the church.

The Missions & Outreach Committee shall, with the pastor, organize an annual missionary conference or its equivalent.

The Missions & Outreach Committee shall have jurisdiction of undesignated missionary funds, except regular support designated by the church.

The Missions & Outreach Committee may recommend to the church the support of missionaries, mission agencies, schools and social agencies which are in harmony with the doctrinal statement and the purpose of this church.

The Missions & Outreach Committee shall oversee the Women 4 Missions group and all other missionary groups within the church.

The Missions & Outreach Committee shall, with the pastor(s), be responsible for developing the evangelistic program of the church.

The Missions & Outreach Committee shall help to coordinate all outreach programs.

The Missions & Outreach Committee shall annually submit a budget for all missionary support and outreach ministries.

The Missions & Outreach Committee shall be responsible to draft, seek deacon approval for and enforce the policies affecting the Missions & Outreach processes of the Church.

4. Building and Maintenance Committee

The Building & Maintenance Committee shall be responsible for the maintenance of all buildings and property owned, leased, or rented by the Church.

The Building & Maintenance Committee shall, with the pastor, be responsible for the hiring and supervision of church custodians.

The Building & Maintenance Committee shall act as general supervisor for all construction, alterations and property acquisition, except as otherwise designated by the deacons or congregation. Any project involving real estate or building additions must receive the approval of the congregation.

The Building & Maintenance Committee shall, with the pastor(s), handle all requests for use of the church facilities.

The Building & Maintenance Committee shall annually submit a budget for all areas of building and maintenance.

The Building & Maintenance Committee shall manage the building policy manual.

The Building & Maintenance Committee shall be responsible to draft, seek deacon approval for and enforce the policies affecting the Building & Maintenance processes of the Church.

5. Fellowship & Helps Committee

The Fellowship & Helps Committee shall be responsible to oversee all the organized, church sponsored, Fellowship & Helps activities of Berean Baptist Church. Each member will be assigned to a Sunday School Class Fellowship Group wherein frequent fellowship activities will be offered. The Sunday School Class will also be the conduit for all Helps administration and deployment. A deacon will be assigned to each Sunday School class to oversee the Helps process and to be the conduit to other church resources should the scope of help require such help.

The Fellowship & Helps Committee shall oversee the New Membership process including the training, deacon interviewing and the coordination of Sunday School assignment for Fellowship & Helps.

The Fellowship & Helps Committee shall keep up to date rolls of membership and conduct an annual review and update of the rolls with recommendations to the deacons for actions as required per Article VII, Sections 5, 7, & 8.

The Fellowship & Helps Committee shall be responsible to draft, seek deacon approval for and enforce the policies affecting the Helps and Benevolent Fund Administration of the Church.

The Fellowship & Helps Committee shall be responsible to draft, seek deacon approval for and enforce the policies affecting the Fellowship & Helps processes of the Church.

6. Student Ministries Committee

The Student Ministries Committee shall aid the pastor(s) in the administration and coordination of the Student Ministries programs within the overall church calendar.

The Student Ministries Committee shall annually submit a budget for the Student Ministries.

The Student Ministries Committee shall aid in the selection of curriculum for the individual ministries of the Student Ministries.

The Student Ministries Committee shall be responsible to draft, seek deacon approval for and enforce the policies affecting the Student Ministry processes of the Church.

7. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall be responsible to oversee all the financial transactions of Berean Baptist Church under the authority, direction and approval of the deacon board.

It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee to develop and maintain accounting policies and procedures and to maintain oversight of the accounting process. It is the responsibility of the Treasurer and Comptroller to adhere to these policies and procedures. The Finance Committee is to review the accounting policies, procedures, and accounting transactions annually to help in maintaining accurate accounting records. The results will be presented to the church for approval at the annual meeting.

The Finance Committee shall oversee the offering counting process, including the appointment of counters, the process of counting and the deposit of the funds in the Church's bank account(s).

The Finance Committee shall oversee any investments or mortgages that the Church holds or owes. Recommendations shall be given to the deacons, staff and congregation regarding investment tools and mortgage devices to minimize the expenses.

The Church Treasurer, Comptroller and Financial Secretary are members of the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee shall submit to the deacons and staff an annual overview of the "financial state of the church" along with a forecast/guidance for the upcoming fiscal year.

The Finance Committee, when needed, will seek an outside accounting firm to review financial statements. The results will be presented to the church for approval.

The Finance Committee shall be responsible to draft, seek deacon approval for and enforce the policies affecting the financial processes of the Church.

Section 2. ADDITIONAL OFFICERS

The following officers shall be appointed by the deacons prior to the annual business meeting. They shall not occupy the office more than three consecutive years unless no other qualified person may be found.

A. Church Clerk/Deacon Secretary

1. Term - one year
2. Duties - The Clerk shall keep an accurate and permanent record of all the business meetings of the church, oversee all letters of transfer, keep records of baptism and maintain a membership register in which shall be noted such changes as may occur. The Clerk shall present the minutes at all business meetings. It shall also be the clerk's responsibility to oversee the preparation of statistical annual reports for the church and any associations which require such.

B. Treasurer

1. Term - one year
2. Duties - It is the responsibility of the Treasurer to disperse the funds of the church as directed and to keep a systematic, accurate and orderly account of such transactions. Reports will be made to the deacons monthly and to the church quarterly and annually. Financial statements will be prepared and presented annually. They will be presented to the church for approval at the annual meeting. The Treasurer shall oversee the process to document the offerings in a report each week.

C. Financial Secretary

1. Term - one year
2. Duties - It is the responsibility of the Financial Secretary to keep an accurate record of giving units and report the record of tithes and offerings to each giving unit each January.

D. Sunday School Superintendent

1. Term - one year
2. Duties - The Sunday School Superintendent shall direct the activities of the Sunday School in cooperation with the Christian Education Pastor. Any person in the Sunday School department shall be selected from a list of pastor-approved workers.

Section 3. COMMITTEES OR SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Whenever the pastors and/or deacons find an area of ministry too demanding, they may designate a temporary committee and appoint the chairman. The pastor(s) will be ex-officio member(s). When the purpose for the committee has terminated, the committee will also terminate. (A building committee is an example of such a temporary committee.)

When service opportunities are deemed necessary, which are not spelled out herein, the pastor shall appoint church members in good standing to such jobs upon deacon approval.

Section 4. BONDING

The pastor, chairman of the deacons and those who hold offices described in Article XI, Section 2 under B and C, shall be bonded by the church.

ARTICLE XII
Teachers

James said, “Not many of you should act as teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.” (James 3:1). Because of this, high standards will be maintained for all teachers. ALL teachers must meet these requirements:

- A. Give ample evidence of a warm relationship with Christ as Savior and Lord.
- B. Be in unreserved agreement with the doctrinal position of this church.
- C. Exhibit loyalty to the pastor and deacons of the church.
- D. Subscribe to the lifestyle standard for church leadership as described in Article VIII.
- E. Be in regular attendance at the services of the church.
- F. Be a member in good standing of the church.
- G. Possess a good reputation in one’s home, community, employment or school.
- H. Maintain regular personal devotions.
- I. Teachers in our children’s ministries shall subscribe to the Safe Haven Policy of this church.
- J. Demonstrate the spiritual gift of teaching.

Furthermore, all teachers are expected to study diligently for their classes, pray for their pupils, seek to grow in teaching skills and make regular calls on their class members and visitors.

ARTICLE XIII
Business Meetings

Section 1. QUORUM

The voting members present at any business meeting called in accordance with the requirements of this constitution shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business, with the exception of calling a pastor (Article X, Section C) when 30% of the qualified voters shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. QUALIFICATIONS FOR VOTING

Only members of this church 18 years old or older, who are not under church discipline, are eligible to vote.

Section 3. RULES

- A. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary manual for this church. If there is any conflict between this constitution and Robert's Rules of Order, the provisions of this constitution shall prevail.
- B. A simple majority vote of qualified and voting members at any business meeting shall be required to pass all items brought before the church unless otherwise stated in this constitution.
- C. All elections of officers, purchase of property and such other matters as deemed wise by the chairman of the deacons or requested by the church body shall be voted on by secret ballot. All other decisions shall be made by voice vote or show of hands.

Section 4. ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Absentee ballots will be permitted for all elections of officers and specially announced business to members in good standing (see Article XIII, Section 2), if due to an unavoidable absence. The request for such ballot must be made to the church clerk by the Sunday prior to the business meeting, and the sealed ballot must be in the clerk's hand prior to the election.

Section 5. SCHEDULE

- A. Three quarterly meetings will be held during July, October and January.
- B. Special business meetings may be called at any time by the pastor, the chairman of the deacons, or a majority of deacons. Prior notice setting forth the time of the meeting and the nature of the business shall be read at two regular services of the church.
- C. The fiscal year of the church shall run from April 1st to March 31st. The annual business meeting shall be held in two parts:
 1. Prior to April 1 to approve the proposed budget for the next fiscal year.
 2. In April there will be annual reports on all financial aspects of the church. A report of the year's work will be made by the pastoral and counseling staff.
- D. Nomination for election to office shall follow this procedure:

The annual election of deacons shall be held the first Wednesday of December. The term of office shall begin on January 1, the year following the election.

 1. In October a primary ballot will be mailed to each member who is qualified to vote.
 2. The results from the primary ballot will be collated and the deacons will present a slate of nominees derived basically from this ballot. All those on the ballot will have given careful, prayerful consent to run for office. The slate of nominees will be posted following the November deacons' meeting.
 3. No nominations to office may be made from the floor.

Section 6. EMERGENCY

In an emergency requiring immediate action, the deacons will act for the church, reporting promptly thereafter under the provisions of Section 5 above.

ARTICLE XIV
Missions

Section 1. POLICY

It shall be the policy of this church to support schools, social agencies, missionaries and mission agencies which are in harmony with the doctrinal statement and the purpose of this church.

Section 2. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Missionaries to receive support shall be members in good standing in a Baptist church of like faith and practice.

Section 3. REPORTING

Each missionary shall be required to report regularly to the church. The deacons will then make a recommendation to this church concerning their support term by term.

Support to each agency shall be reviewed at least every two (2) years.

ARTICLE XV
Auxiliary Organizations

Section 1. APPROVAL

No organization shall be formed, or considered a part of this church's activities, before its sponsors have submitted their plans to the deacons for sanction, and subsequent approval has been granted.

ARTICLE XVI
Properties

Section 1. ACQUISITION

All purchase of property, building of new buildings, or major remodeling of facilities must be recommended by the deacons and approved by the church.

Section 2. DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of this corporation, all of its debts shall be satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members or other individuals, but shall be irrevocably designated by corporate vote prior to dissolution to such other nonprofit religious corporations as are in agreement with the letter and spirit of the articles of faith adopted by this church, and in conformity with the requirements under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

ARTICLE XVI
Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended at any business meeting of the church by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting on the amendment, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment has been given to the members of the congregation or the proposed amendments have been read at two regular A.M. services for two consecutive weeks before the vote is taken.

