



CONSTITUTION

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Preamble

Having received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, we band ourselves together as a body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and adopt for our government and plan of worship and service the following articles:



Article 1

NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1. Name

This church shall be known as BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH of the town of Greene, New York and shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, Article 10 of the Religious Corporation Laws. This church may also have campuses in different locations.

Section 2. Mission Purpose Statement

Believing that Berean Bible Church has been raised up by God to make disciples, it is our purpose to be an instrument of the Lord to impact our community of Greene, and ultimately the whole world, with the life-changing message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, without partiality or prejudice. (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). We are committed to leading people to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, teaching believers the Biblical disciplines of the Christian life, and equipping believers to serve with their God-given gifts and talents under the leadership of the Elder Team. (Eph. 4:11-16; II Tim. 2:2).

Through inspirational worship, fervent prayer, practical teaching, caring benevolence, loving fellowship, and consistent outreach, we anticipate God's blessing in the salvation of the lost and the spiritual maturing of believers which will result in the growth of the church, locally and universally.



Article 2

DOCTRINE: WHAT WE BELIEVE

The Bible

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the foundation of the faith and practice of Berean Bible Church. We believe that every word in the original writings of the Holy Scriptures is inspired of God and without error.¹

¹2 Timothy 3:15-17, 2 Peter 1:19-21

God

We believe there is one God who exists in three distinct persons.¹ God the Father is an invisible spirit who is all-knowing, all-powerful, and everywhere present.² God the Son became human when he was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.³ Known as Jesus Christ, he lived a perfect life, purchased our redemption through his death, certified his divine power by his physical resurrection from the dead, and ascended to heaven to be exalted at God's right hand and become our intercessor and advocate.⁴ God the Spirit is our helper, sealing our salvation, indwelling us, equipping us for service, and guiding us into truth.⁵

¹Matthew 28:19; ²1 Timothy 6:15-16; ³Luke 1:30-35; ⁴Philippians 2:5-11, Hebrews 7:25, 1 John 2:1-2; ⁵John 14:16-17, 16:7-11

Angels

We believe that angels were originally created as holy, sinless, spiritual beings, but that one sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan.¹ Some of the angels followed him in his opposition to God and fall, while others continued serving God and being his messengers.² Satan is a fallen angel who is the originator of sin, who rules as the unholy god of this age, and who is destined to the judgment of eternal justice in the lake of fire.³

¹Colossians 1:16, Isaiah 14:12-17; ²2 Peter 2:4; ³Ephesians 2:2, 6:11, Revelation 20:10

Humans

We believe that humans were created in the image of God, but in Adam all humanity fell into sin with the result that all people are sinners, hopelessly sinful in themselves apart from the grace of God.¹ All human life is sacred and created by God in his image.² Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including preborn babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as biologically male or female, and these two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. God created marriage to be exclusively the union of one biological man and one biological woman.³ All sexual activity and expression must be within the bonds of monogamous, heterosexual marriage (see BBC's Policy Statement on Sexuality).

¹Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:10-19; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1 2Psalm 139

³Mark 10:6-7

Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God offered to humans by grace and received by personal faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins.¹ All who are born of the Spirit through faith in Christ can have assurance of salvation and are eternally secure in Christ, being kept by God's power.²

¹Romans 5:1, Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-9; 2 John 1:12, 10:28-29, 1 John 5:13

The Christian Life

Christians are called to a holy life of service and testimony in the power of the Holy Spirit, who bestows divine enabling gifts for service upon all who are saved.¹ Some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healing were temporary.²

We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the biblical ordinances of the church for all believers in Christ. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to show in symbolic form his or her faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in the believer's death to sin and resurrection to a new life.³ The Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's death until he comes.⁴

¹Romans 6:11-14, 12:6-8; ²1 Corinthians 13:8-10; ³Matthew 28:18-20; ⁴1 Corinthians 11:23-28

The Church

We believe that the church, which is the body and bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism composed of all believers in Christ.¹ All believers are baptized into the one body of Christ by the Holy Spirit at the moment they trust Christ as Savior.² The establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures.³ A local church is a group of baptized believers in Christ who have organized themselves to worship God and make disciples locally and globally.⁴ The officers of a local church are elders and servant-leaders whose qualifications are clearly defined in the Scriptures.⁵

¹1 Corinthians 12:12-13; ²Romans 8:9; ³Matthew 16:13-19; ⁴Acts 1:24:1-47;⁵ ¹Timothy 3:1-13

The Future

Everyone spends eternity somewhere. Death for humans is just an open door into eternity.¹ Those who have been reconciled back to God by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior will spend eternity in a very real place called Heaven.² Heaven is a place with no sin and is filled with God's splendor.³ Those who refuse God on earth, either passively or actively, will spend eternity in a very real place called Hell.⁴ The Bible explains Hell as a place of God's wrath, filled with eternal suffering, torment, shame, guilt, and pain.⁵ We believe in the imminent return of Jesus Christ and look forward to the inauguration of his eternal reign.⁶

¹Hebrews 9:27; ²2 Corinthians 5:8; ³Revelation 21:1-7;

⁴Revelation 21:8, Acts 2:41-47; ⁵Matthew 13:49-50; ⁶1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 2 Peter 3, Revelation 22:1-5

Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Practice

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of humans, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of BBC's faith, doctrine, policy, and discipline, our Elder team is BBC's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application. In essential beliefs we have unity. In non-essential beliefs we have liberty. In all beliefs, we show love.¹

¹Romans 14, 1 Corinthians 13:2, Ephesians 4:4-6



Article 3

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Reception of Members

All applicants for membership who have received by faith the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, who have been baptized by immersion, fulfilled the membership policy of BBC, and who have upon examination been approved by two-thirds of the full Elder Team shall be received into membership of this church. This examination shall include a statement by the applicants of their agreement with the doctrinal statement and of their commitment to the policies of this church in order to be approved for membership.

Section 2. Duties of Members

- A. All members are urged to attend the regular gathering of the church, pray and read the Bible regularly, and to assist in the winning of the lost to Christ. All members are urged to attend and participate in all business meetings of the church.
- B. Since systematic and proportionate giving is clearly set forth in the Scriptures (Malachi 3:8-11, 1 Corinthians 16:2), members shall be encouraged to give as God prospers them to the work of this church and its missions enterprises.
- C. Every member shall be encouraged to honor and esteem the church leadership; to pray for them; to submit to scriptural authority; to cooperate with them in the work of the church; and to manifest a tender regard for their reputation. (Hebrews 13:7, 17).
- D. Members are also urged to cultivate and cherish love for all people in the church, and show this love by seeking to promote their spiritual growth.
- E. Members shall be expected to be loyal to this church and its worldwide ministry; to stand behind it in every way, and to work with it faithfully in its endeavors.

Section 3. Inactive membership

- A. Members who have not attended the church for a period of six months shall be contacted by the Elders or their designees. Inactive members shall, upon a recommendation and by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Elder Team, be transferred from the Active Membership Roll to the Inactive Membership Roll of the church.
- B. After remaining on the Inactive Roll for a period of six months, if the inactive member is not returned to active status he or she may be removed from the rolls by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Elder Team.
- C. Any individual on the Inactive Membership Roll shall not be granted privileges of voting.

Section 4. Discipline of Members

The discipline of church members shall be under the charge of the Elders, and shall be conducted in accordance with Matthew 18: 15-17, Romans 16:17, 1 Corinthians 5:11, 13, 1 Thessalonians 5:14, 2 Thessalonians 3:11, 14, 15, Titus 3:10.

- A. A member under discipline is deemed to be so by 2/3 vote of the Elder Team after being approached to deal with sin which is bringing reproach to the Lord's name and work.
- B. A member under discipline shall be notified in writing. He or she may attend the gathering of the church, but may not have opportunities to serve the Lord in the church, and must not vote in any business meeting until restored to fellowship. The Elders may call a meeting of members to inform about the general nature of the sin, give a general description of the process and refusal to repent. The members may be asked to pray for and plead with the offender to repent and be restored. Personal visits, telephone calls, and letters are examples of what it means to plead with them.

- C. DISMISSAL. The following shall be sufficient cause for dismissal from the membership of this church: (1) recanting one's previous expressed agreement with the doctrinal statement; (2) causing dissension and strife among the brethren; (3) bringing reproach to the Lord's name and work, and/or (4) other speech or action deemed unacceptable by the Elder Team. A member may be dismissed from the membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Elder Team after sufficient notice is given to the person whose dismissal is proposed. Dismissal shall not be proposed until due admonition has been given by the Elder Team, and after sufficient effort has been made to effect his or her restoration (Galatians 6:1). These actions may be communicated to the church membership.
- D. RESTORATION. If at any point during this process the offender demonstrates repentance then notice to that effect may be made to the membership so that the church may rejoice and gently restore the repentant believer to the fellowship of the church. Persons who have forfeited their membership in the Church may be restored to membership in accordance with the regulations which govern the reception of new members.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

- A. BY TRANSFER. Members of good standing shall be granted, upon written request, a letter of transfer to an evangelical church of their choice. Termination of membership shall be by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Elder Team.
- B. BY REQUEST. Any member may have his or her name removed from the membership by making a written request to the Elder Team.
- C. BY EXCLUSION. Inactive members may be removed from membership according to Article III Section 3 of this Constitution. Members under discipline may be removed from membership according to Article III Section 4 of this Constitution.



Article 4

GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Spiritual Leadership

This church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as its head, the Holy Scriptures as the infallible guide in the matter of faith, church order, and discipline; the Holy Spirit as its teacher; and is neither accountable to nor under the jurisdiction or supervision of any other ecclesiastical body.

Section 2. Congregational Authority

Under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, the government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose its voting membership.

Section 3. Executive authority

Executive authority in all matters of this church is vested by the membership in the Elder Team. The Elder Team shall have oversight of the spiritual life and direction of the church. Elders will have authority over the staff, leadership teams, and ministry team leaders.



Article 5

OFFICERS

Section 1. Board of Elders

- D. ELECTION: The Elder Team shall consist of a minimum of three (3) men, and each man shall be individually elected from the membership. Each Elder shall serve indefinitely unless he chooses to resign or is removed by proper procedures as defined in Article V, Section 1, d. of this Constitution.
- E. SELECTION: Each year, the Elders shall choose a minimum of one trainee to mentor and train during the year. Trainee recommendations are also accepted from the membership. The Elders may then present the trainee(s) at a congregational meeting for approval to fill an Elder vacancy, requiring a 2/3 majority vote.
- F. ORGANIZATION: All business of the Elder Team shall require a quorum of greater than fifty percent (50%) and shall be conducted by majority vote unless otherwise specified in this Constitution. At the first meeting of each year, the Elder Team shall elect the following officers from its members:
- The Vice-Chairman
1. CHAIRMAN. It shall be the duty of the Chairman to preside at all meetings of the Elder Team. He shall have the authority to sign all legal documents and papers on behalf of the Elder Team and church congregation.
 2. VICE-CHAIRMAN. The Vice-Chairman shall exercise the powers of the Chairman in the absence of said Chairman.
 3. SECRETARY. The Secretary shall keep complete and accurate minutes of the proceedings of the Elder Team meetings. He shall conduct official correspondence; preserve all papers, letters, and documents coming into his hand, delivering same and the records kept by him to his successor, as well as issue such notices as provided for in this constitution.

- G. TERMINATION: Any member of the Elder Team, including a Pastor, may resign, or he may be dismissed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members at any duly called congregational meeting. By a 2/3 vote of the Elder Team, a recommendation to dismiss an Elder shall be presented to the congregation.
- H. MEETINGS: The Elder Team shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called at any time by any member of the Elder Team. All members of the Elder Team have equal voting privileges in all meetings of the Elder Team.
- I. DUTIES: The Elder Team shall oversee the spiritual life and direction of the church. They shall have executive authority over all matters of the church but shall delegate to the Servant-Leader Team and other church members as needed. Other duties of the Elder Team shall be in accordance with those duties found in their Berean Bible Church job description. The Elder Team shall define and/or approve all job descriptions.

Section 2. Servant Leader Teams

- A. ELECTION. Servant Leader Teams shall consist of Campus Leaders selected and approved by campus Leaders. Servant-Leader members shall serve indefinitely.
- B. TERMINATION: Any member of Servant Leaders may resign, or may be dismissed by their campus pastor/director.
- C. DUTIES. Servant Leaders shall assist the campus pastors/directors in the caring and serving ministries of the church. Other duties of Servant Leaders shall be in accordance with those duties found in their Berean Bible Church job description.

Section 3. Steward Team

- A. ELECTION. The Steward Team shall consist of a minimum of three (3) members and each person shall be selected by Elder Team and elected individually by majority vote of the membership. Stewards shall serve three-year terms and may be re-elected indefinitely. The Financial Secretary is eligible to be a Steward.
- B. ORGANIZATION. All business of the Steward Team shall require a quorum of greater than fifty percent (50%) and shall be conducted by majority vote unless otherwise specified in this Constitution.

At the first meeting of each year, the Team shall elect the following officers from its members:

- 1. CHAIRPERSON. It shall be the duty of the Chairperson to preside at all meetings of the Stewards Team and perform all such duties as prescribed by law (as a legal trustee). He/she shall have the authority to sign all legal documents and papers on behalf of the Stewards Team and church congregation.
- 2. VICE-CHAIRPERSON. The Vice-Chairperson shall exercise the powers of the Chairperson in the absence of said Chairperson.
- 3. SECRETARY. The Secretary shall keep complete and accurate minutes of the proceedings of the Steward Team meetings. He/she shall conduct official correspondence; preserve all papers, letters, and documents coming into his/her hand, delivering same and the records kept by him/her to his/her successor; as well as issue such notices as provided for in this constitution.

C. VACANCIES: Any vacancy on the Stewards Team may be filled by a majority vote of the Stewards. The appointee shall serve until the next annual meeting of

the membership, at which time the appointee is eligible to be nominated and elected to a three-year term.

- D. MEETINGS: The Steward Team shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called at any time by any member of the Steward Team.
- E. TERMINATION: Any member of the Steward Team may resign, or he/she may be dismissed by 2/3 vote of the voting members at any duly called congregational meeting. By a 2/3 vote of the Elder Team, a recommendation to dismiss a Steward shall be presented to the congregation.
- F. DUTIES. The Steward Team shall perform the functions of Trustees in compliance with the laws of the State of New York. Other duties of the Steward Team shall be in accordance with those duties found in their Berean Bible Church job description.

The following shall be elected by the majority vote of the Steward Team: Treasurer/Bookkeeping Service. The Treasurer/ Bookkeeping service shall pay out funds as directed by the Steward Team and by the church membership. He/she shall keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements and shall maintain a file of all supporting documents for payments made.

Section 4. Building & Grounds Teams

- A. ELECTION. The Building & Grounds Team shall consist of people selected and trained by the campus pastors/directors. Building & Grounds members shall serve indefinitely.
- B. TERMINATION: Any member of a Building & Grounds Team may resign, or he/she may be dismissed by their campus pastor/director.
- C. DUTIES. The Building & Grounds Teams shall be in accordance with those duties found in their Berean Bible Church job description.

Section 5. Pastoral Staff

- G. CALLING. Pastors shall be called by a vote of members of the church and shall continue in office as long as both parties are agreed to continue the relationship. The motion to call a Pastor shall come from the membership at a duly convened congregational business meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the voting members present and not abstaining shall be necessary to call a Pastor.

- H. DUTIES. The duties of each Pastor shall be in accordance with those duties found in his Berean Bible Church job description.



Article 6

COMMITTEES

Section 1. Budget Committee

- A. MEMBERSHIP. At least six months prior to the annual congregational business meeting each year, a Budget Committee shall be formed as follows:
 - 1. One member of the Pastoral Staff, chosen by the Elder Team
 - 2. One member of the Elders (Non-Pastoral staff), chosen by the Elder Team
 - 3. Chairperson of the Stewards (to be leader of the committee)
- B. TERM OF OFFICE. The Budget Committee will remain operational until the budget is approved.
- C. DUTIES. The Budget Committee will be established to provide an assessment of an aggregate level of spending the church can support and will reconcile the input from Elders and Stewards against that aggregate level. Any changes required at the aggregate level will be sent back to the appropriate leadership team for reconciliation at the detail level.

Section 2. Auditing Committee

- D. ELECTION. The Auditing Committee shall consist of not less than two qualified voting members who are appointed by the Elder Team and assisted by the Stewards. The auditing committee shall be announced at the annual meeting to serve for the following fiscal year.
- E. DUTIES. The Auditing Committee shall audit the books and accounts of the church for the preceding fiscal year and shall make a report at the membership meeting. The auditing committee shall also audit the books and accounts of the church periodically throughout the year

and shall make each report to the Steward Team with a copy to the Elder Team and a copy on file in the church office to be available to any church member upon request.

Section 3. Pastoral Search Committee

- A. MEMBERSHIP. When Elder Team determine that Pastoral staff is needed, they shall form a Pastoral Search Committee as follows:
 - 1. Two representatives from the Elder Team chosen by the Elders
 - 2. One representative from Servant Leader Team chosen by the Pastors/Directors.
 - 3. Two congregational members chosen by the Elders.

The Pastoral search committee shall elect a chairman and other officers as needed.

- B. TERM OF OFFICE. This committee shall function until a new Pastor has come to serve the church.
- C. DUTIES. This committee shall seek a suitable Pastor to be represented to the membership for consideration. Only one candidate shall be voted upon at a time.



Article 7

MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The regular gatherings of the church shall include at least one morning worship gathering each Sunday, and members are encouraged to attend other meetings throughout the week.

The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly in small groups and in larger groups and gatherings as desired (Acts 2:46-47).

Section 2. Annual Congregational Business Meeting

The fiscal year of the church shall begin on April first and end on March thirty first. The annual congregational business meeting of the church shall be held in March. The agenda shall minimally include: approval of previous annual meeting minutes, Steward report, Auditing Committee report, adoption of budget for the ensuing year, and election of Elders and Stewards if applicable.

Section 3. Annual Reports

A summary of the year's work shall be made by a written report from the Staff.

Section 4. Special Meetings

Special business meetings of the church may be called by the Elder Team or Steward Team.

Section 5. Congregational Business Meeting Notification and Quorum

All congregational business meetings shall be announced in Sunday morning service(s) and published in the bulletin for two weeks or longer prior to the called meeting. Greater than fifty percent (50%) of voting members shall constitute a quorum at any called meeting. Quorum shall be based on the roll call taken at the beginning of each meeting. Members voting by absentee ballot shall be included in the quorum.

Section 6. Voting

Active members 18 years of age and older are entitled to vote. A majority vote shall be required for rendering final decision in any matter under consideration except where it is otherwise stated in this constitution. An absentee ballot shall be accepted from any active member if it is submitted in writing to the Elder Team.

Section 7. Parliamentary Procedure

In business meetings, any parliamentary question not covered by this constitution shall be decided by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.



Article 8

BUDGET

As to items not provided for in the budget, the Steward Team must have approval from the membership for any unbudgeted expenditures exceeding 2% of the total budget except in cases for repairs or replacement of existing items whereby the cost of such items cannot exceed 5% of the total budget. The Steward Team is encouraged to set aside money annually to cover the cost of replacing such items so that the cost will not be a burden during any one budgeted year.



Article 9

CHURCH ASSETS

All real estate and personal property purchased by or donated to Berean Bible Church shall be the property of Berean Bible Church and shall be under the jurisdiction of the Elder Team.



Article 10

ORDINATION

Section 1. Application

When a male member of this church or other male applicant desires to serve in Christian ministry, he may make application of ordination. The application shall be considered by the Elder Team.

Section 2. Ordination Council

If the Elder Team feels that the applicant should be ordained to the gospel ministry, the Team may call an ordination council which shall thoroughly examine the candidate as to his call to the ministry, his education, Christian experience and doctrinal belief. The candidate shall be publicly ordained to the Christian ministry upon the recommendation of this council.



Article 11

AMMENDMENTS

If it does not infringe upon the doctrinal principles of this church, this constitution may be altered or amended at a duly announced meeting of the congregation providing the proposed alteration or amendment has been conspicuously posted in written form for at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The meeting to consider alterations or amendments to this Constitution shall be announced in Sunday morning service(s) and published in a public place for two weeks or longer prior to the meeting. A two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of the active membership voting (and not abstaining) shall be required to pass an alteration or amendment.

Revised December 08, 2024

