
BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH
2024 Proposed Constitution Revisions Q&A

Q: Why is Berean proposing revisions to the church constitution?

A: For the past few years, our elder team has been talking and praying about updating our constitution to make our church even healthier. These proposed changes are not critical, like our 2017 statement of faith revisions. We do think these changes are helpful and will improve our structure and annual meetings.

Q: What changes are being proposed?

A: The proposed changes fall into four categories:

1. Teams: One of our values is to be team-led, and we are led by teams at every level of our church. Currently, the constitution calls our leadership teams “boards”. We would like to update each use of “board” to “team”. As a multisite church, we would also like to update our servant-leader & building & grounds team wording to reflect the teams of ministry leaders (male & female) at each campus. We would also like to clarify the role of our campus pastors/directors in selecting campus leaders.
2. Voting: We would like to make no-excuse absentee voting an acceptable form of member voting. Since our members are now spread across a wide geographic area, we want to make voting more accessible to all, and not require our elders to determine if a member has a “valid” reason for submitting an absentee ballot.
3. Terminology: Our weekly times of worship we call gatherings instead of services to be more biblically accurate and clear.
4. Lord’s Supper: We would like to update our “communion” wording to reflect the normalcy of this being practiced at Berean in small and large groups: whether CLUE meetings, home groups, or large gatherings.
5. Ordination: Clarify that pastoral ministry is not a calling but a desire (1 Timothy 3:1). All believers are called to ministry (Matthew 28:18-20).
6. Annual Meeting: The current calendar year budget makes budgeting a challenge, as our fourth quarter includes our largest giving, but our budget committee must create the following year’s budget without knowing that quarter’s giving. We propose moving our fiscal year to April 1-March 31st. If this proposed change passes in December, we would hold our next annual meeting in March of 2025 to shift into the new annual cycle and vote on an April 2025 - March 2026 budget.

Q: Are these proposed changes final?

A: No. We are publicizing these draft changes early in the year so we can gather your feedback and make changes as needed before our annual meeting in December. We desire your input. Please contact anyone from our [Elder Team](#) or the church office at (607) 656-8413 with questions or feedback.

BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH
2024 Draft Proposed Constitution Revisions

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1. ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team

A. ELECTION: The ~~Board of Elders~~ 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.

B. 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.

C. ORGANIZATION: All business of the ~~Board of Elders~~ 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 ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team shall elect the following officers from its members:

1. CHAIRMAN. It shall be the duty of the Chairman to preside at all meetings of the ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team. He shall have the authority to sign all legal documents and papers on behalf of the ~~Board of Elders~~ 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 ~~Board of Elders~~ 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.

D. TERMINATION: Any member of the ~~Board of Elders~~ 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 Board~~ Elder Team, a recommendation to dismiss an Elder shall be presented to the congregation.

E. MEETINGS: The ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called at any time by any member of the ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team. All members of the ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team have equal voting privileges in all meetings of the ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team.

F. DUTIES: The ~~Board of Elders~~ 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 ~~Board Teams~~ and other church members as needed. Other duties of the ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team shall be in accordance with those duties found in their Berean Bible Church job description. The ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team shall define and/or approve all job descriptions.

Section 2. ~~Board of Servant-Leaders~~ Servant Leader Teams

A. ELECTION. TEAMS. The ~~Board of Servant-Leaders~~ Servant Leader Teams shall consist of campus leaders a minimum of three (3) men and each man shall be selected and trained by the ~~Board of Servant-Leaders~~ and approved by the ~~Board of Elders~~ campus pastors/directors. Servant-Leader members shall serve indefinitely.

B. SELECTION: Each year, the ~~Servant-Leaders~~ shall choose a minimum of one trainee to mentor and train during the year. Trainee recommendations are also accepted from the membership.

C. ORGANIZATION. All business of the ~~Board of Servant-Leaders~~ 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 ~~Board~~ shall elect the following officers from its members:

1.—~~TEAM LEADER~~. It shall be the duty of the ~~Team Leader~~ to preside at all meetings of the ~~Board of Servant-Leaders~~. He shall have the authority to sign all legal documents and papers on behalf of the ~~Board of Servant-Leaders~~.

2.—~~ASSISTANT TEAM LEADER~~. The ~~Assistant Team Leader~~ shall exercise the powers of the ~~Team Leader~~ in the absence of said ~~Team Leader~~.

3.—~~SECRETARY~~. The ~~Secretary~~ shall keep complete and accurate minutes of the proceedings of the ~~Board of Servant-Leader~~ 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.

D. VACANCIES: Any vacancy on the Board of Servant Leaders may be filled by a majority vote of the Servant Leaders along with approval by the Elder Board.

E. MEETINGS: The Board of Servant Leaders shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called at any time by any member of the Board of Servant Leaders.

F. B. TERMINATION: Any member of the Board of Servant Leaders may resign, or he may be dismissed by $2/3$ vote of the Elder Board their campus pastor/director.

G. C. DUTIES. The Board of Servant Leaders shall ~~be to~~ assist the Elder Board campus pastors/directors in the caring and serving ministries of the church. Other duties of the Board of Servant Leaders shall be in accordance with those duties found in their Berean Bible Church job description.

Section 3. Board of Stewards Steward Team

A. ELECTION. The Board of Stewards Steward Team shall consist of a minimum of three (3) members and each person shall be selected by Elder Board the 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 Board of Stewards 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 Board 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 Board of Stewards Steward 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 Board of Stewards Steward 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 ~~Board of Stewards~~ 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 ~~Board of Stewards~~ Steward 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 ~~Board of Stewards~~ Steward Team shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called at any time by any member of the ~~Board of Stewards~~ Steward Team.

E. TERMINATION: Any member of the ~~Board of Stewards~~ 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 ~~Board~~ Team, a recommendation to dismiss a Steward shall be presented to the congregation.

F. DUTIES. The ~~Board of Stewards~~ Steward Team shall perform the functions of Trustees in compliance with the laws of the State of New York. Other duties of the ~~Board of Stewards~~ 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 ~~Board of Stewards~~ Steward Team: Treasurer/Bookkeeping Service. The Treasurer/Bookkeeping service shall pay out funds as directed by the ~~Board of Stewards~~ 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. ~~Board of Building & Grounds~~ Building & Grounds Teams

A. ELECTION. TEAMS. The ~~Board of Building & Grounds~~ Teams shall consist of a minimum of three (3) members and each person shall be people selected and trained by the campus pastors/directors ~~Board of Building & Grounds~~ and approved by the Elder ~~Board~~. Building & Grounds members shall serve indefinitely.

~~B. ORGANIZATION. All business of the Board of Building & Grounds 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 Board shall elect the following officers from its members:~~

~~1. TEAM LEADER. It shall be the duty of the Team Leader to preside at all meetings of the Board of Building & Grounds. He/she shall have the authority to sign all legal documents and papers on behalf of the Board of Building & Grounds.~~

~~2. ASSISTANT TEAM LEADER. The Assistant Team Leader shall exercise the powers of the Team Leader in the absence of said Team Leader.~~

~~3. SECRETARY. The Secretary shall keep complete and accurate minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Building & Grounds 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 Board of Building & Grounds may be filled by a majority vote of the Board of Building & Grounds along with approval by the Elder Board.~~

~~D. MEETINGS: The Board of Building and Grounds shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called at any time by any member of the Board of Building & Grounds.~~

~~E. B. TERMINATION: Any member of the Board of a Building & Grounds Team may resign, or he/she may be dismissed by 2/3 vote of the Elder Board their campus pastor/director.~~

~~F. C. DUTIES. The Board of Building & Grounds Teams shall be in accordance with those duties found in their Berean Bible Church job description.~~

ARTICLE VI – 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:

One member of the Pastoral Staff, chosen by the Elder ~~Board~~ Team

One member of the Elders (Non-Pastoral staff), chosen by the Elder ~~Board~~ Team

Chairperson of the Stewards (to be leader of the committee)

Section 2. Auditing Committee

A. ELECTION. The Auditing Committee shall consist of not less than two qualified voting members who are appointed by the ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team and assisted by the Stewards. The auditing committee shall be announced at the annual meeting to serve for the following ~~calendar~~ fiscal year.

B. 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 ~~Board of Stewards~~ Steward Team with a copy to the ~~Board of Elders~~ 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 ~~Board of Elders~~ the Elder Team determines that Pastoral staff is needed, they shall form a Pastoral Search Committee as follows:

1. Two representatives from the ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team chosen by the Elders
2. One representative from the ~~Board of Servant Leaders~~ a Servant Leader Team chosen by the ~~Servant Leaders~~ Pastors/Directors
3. Two congregational members chosen by the Elders

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings

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

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

Section 2. Annual Congregational Business Meeting

The fiscal year of the church shall begin on ~~January first and end on December thirty-first~~ April first and end on March thirty first. The annual congregational business meeting of the church shall be held in ~~December~~ 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 4. Special Meetings

Special business meetings of the church may be called by the ~~Board of Elders, Board of Servant Leaders, or Board of Stewards~~ Elder Team or Steward Team.

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 ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team and it includes the vote, a signature, and a valid reason why the member cannot be physically present at the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

As to items not provided for in the budget, the ~~Board of Stewards~~ 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 ~~Board of Stewards~~ 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 IX – MEETINGS

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 ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team.

ARTICLE X – ORDINATION

Section 1. Application

When a male member of this church or other male applicant ~~feels that God has called him to the~~ desires to serve in Christian ministry, he may make application of ordination. The application shall be considered by the ~~Board of Elders~~ Elder Team.