

# **BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH**

517 Glensford Drive  
Fayetteville, NC 28314

# **2010 CONSTITUTION**

**INCLUDING**

**COVENANT  
ARTICLES OF FAITH**



[www.bereanbaptistchurch.org](http://www.bereanbaptistchurch.org)

## Table of Contents

<b>Articles</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>I.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>Articles of Faith</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Our Covenant</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Officers</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>Duties of Officers</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>Meetings</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>IX.</b>	<b>Ministry of Education</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>X.</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>XI.</b>	<b>Ordination</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>XII.</b>	<b>Tax-Exempt Provisions</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>XIII.</b>	<b>Indemnification</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>XIV.</b>	<b>Binding Arbitration</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>XV.</b>	<b>Designated Contributions</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>XVI.</b>	<b>Missions</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>XVII.</b>	<b>Amendments Adoption</b>	<b>22 23</b>

# CONSTITUTION

## *Preamble*

Reposing our faith wholly in the Lord Jesus Christ for our Salvation; believing in the teaching and practices of the Baptists based upon the verbally-inspired Word of God; holding the distinctive principles for which Baptists have ever stood; we, therefore, banding ourselves together as a body of our government, plan of worship and service, do present the following Articles. We hereby rescind all previous action contrary thereto.

## **Article I ~ Name**

The name of this church shall be Berean Baptist Church, Unaffiliated.

## **Article II ~ Purpose**

1. This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes as the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building, maintaining and operating of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, day care centers, camps, nursing homes, and cemeteries, and any other ministries that the Church may be led of God to establish.

2. The Church shall also ordain and license men to the Gospel ministry; evangelize the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; educate believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; maintain missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country; and engage in any other ministry that the Church may decide, from time to time, to pursue in obedience to the will of God.

## **Article III ~ Articles of Faith**

The following comprise the Scriptural beliefs of this church and its members:

1. **The Bible: God's Word.** We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21), and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life (I Cor. 2:13; 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:17). The King James Version shall be the official Bible used by the church.

2. **God the Creator.** We accept the Genesis account of creation (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:2-3) and believe that man came by direct creation of God and not by evolution (Col. 1:16, 17; John 1:3; Rev. 4:11). We believe in one God who is Creator of heaven and earth; who is Spirit, light, love, truth, eternal, almighty, infallible, unchangeable, infinitely wise, just, holy; and that God eternally exists in Three Persons: Father, Son (John 10:30; I Cor. 8:6) and Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2; II Cor. 13:14).
3. **Jesus Christ: God's Son.** We believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, the Eternal Word manifested in flesh. We believe that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:30-35), and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son (John 1:1-2,14,18; 3:16; Phil. 2:5-8). We believe that our Lord arose from the dead, according to the Scriptures, and in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:20; Acts 2:32), and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which, at the return of Christ, will be given to all resurrected believers (I Cor. 15:23, 42-45; Phil. 3:20-21). We believe that our Lord ascended to heaven (Heb. 1:3), is seated at His Father's right hand (Heb. 1:13) assuring us of the perfection of His work of redemption, and that He now as Head over all things to the Church (Eph. 1:22-23) is engaged on behalf of the saved as Intercessor (Heb. 7:25) and Advocate (I John 2:1)
4. **The Holy Spirit.** We believe that the Holy Spirit, being the third Person of the Godhead, convicts men of sin (John 16:7-11), regenerates (John 3:6), indwells (John 14:17; Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 3:16; 6:19), baptizes (I Cor. 12:13), seals (Eph. 1:13; 4:30), and sets believers apart to a holy life; and that He keeps and empowers believers day by day (Rom. 8:2,4,12,14). We believe that He is the Teacher of the Word of God and our Guide for daily life (I John 2:20-27; I Peter 1:1). We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry (Rom. 12:3-8; I Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12). We believe that the signs of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary (I Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22). We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing.

5. **Satan: the Fallen One.** We believe there is a personal devil, a being of great cunning and power (Job 1:6-7; Ezek. 28:11-19; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matt. 4:1-11) who is “The prince of the air” (Eph. 2:2), “The prince of this world” (John 12:31), and “The god of this age” (II Cor. 4:4). We believe that he can exert vast power but only so far as God suffers him to do so and that he shall ultimately be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone and shall be tormented day and night forever (Rev. 20:10).
6. **Man and His Sin.** We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God (Gen. 1:26) that he fell through sin (Gen. 2:17); that he, as a consequence of His sin, lost his spiritual life (John 6:53), becoming dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1-3; I Tim. 5:6), and that he became subject to the power of the devil (I John 3:8). We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature (Gen. 6:5, John 3:6; 5:40), has been transmitted to the entire human race of man (Ps. 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9) the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and, hence, that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially corrupt in body, mind, and soul (Rom. 3:10-19; 8:6,7).
7. **God’s Salvation of Mankind.** We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins (1 Peter 2:24; 3:18) according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice (John 1:29; II Cor. 5:14; Heb. 10:5-19), and that all who believe in Him (Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9,10) are justified on the ground of His shed blood (Romans 3:25-26; I John 1:7). We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior are instantaneously born again of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-8) and thereby become the children of God (John 1:12, 13; 3:16; 5:24; 14:16; Romans 8:16). We believe in the eternal security (John 10:28, 29; 8:31; 13:1; 17:11) and everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the eternal conscious punishment of the lost (Matt. 25:41; Mark 9:42-48; Rev. 20:11-15). The preservation of all believers rests upon the finished work of Christ, the promises of God (Phil 1:6; Heb. 7:25; I Peter 1:5; 1 John 5:4, 18; Jude 24), the gracious election, and the sovereign predestination of God (Romans 8:28-39).
8. **The Church:**
- a. **Composition:** We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:16-18; Titus 3:7) is composed solely of those who have been redeemed (Titus 2:14) and washed in His blood (Rev. 1:5) and regenerated (Titus 3:5) and sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14). We believe that they are saved to worship and to serve; and that they should seek to live a holy life by separating themselves from and forsaking all that might dishonor God, cast discredit on His cause, or weaken their testimony (Titus 3:12).
  - b. **Mission:** We believe that it is the responsibility and privilege of all who are saved to seek to win others to Christ, to the “Uttermost part of the earth” (Acts

1:8); that God has given the Church a Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations (Matt. 28:19-20) so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21). As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us (2 Cor. 5:20).

- c. **Ordinances:** We believe that Christ instituted the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:19, 20) to be observed until He comes (I Cor. 11:23-26). We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 10:47; 19:5) in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior. It pictures our death to sin and resurrection to a new life and that it is a prerequisite to church membership (Acts 8:36-39; John 3:23; Matt. 3:16; Col. 2:12). We believe that the Lord's Supper is the showing forth of His death until He comes again and should always be preceded always by self-examination (I Cor. 11:23-38).
- d. **Civil Law:** We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the Church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members (I Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32). We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander.
- e. **Gender Roles:** We believe that God intends marriage to last until one spouse dies (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3). Remarried or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the Church and be greatly used of God for Christian service; they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon (I Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6). We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God (Gal. 3:28) but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home (Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 3:4-5, 12) and church (I Tim. 2:8-15). The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church.
- f. **Giving:** We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10) but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the Church (Acts 4:34-37; I Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1Tim. 5:17-18), the relief of those in need (1 John 3:17), and the spread of the Gospel.

- g. **Intimacy:** We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 26:8-9; I Cor. 7:1-16; Heb. 13:4). We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex (Gen. 19:5,13; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; I Cor. 5:1; 6:9; I Thess. 4:1-8). We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24; Mk. 10:6-12; Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:10). We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society (Deut. 6:4-9). The husband is to love the wife as Christ loves the church (Eph. 5:21-33). The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ (Eph. 5:22-23; Phil 2:10, 11).
- h. **Sanctity of Life:** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being (Gen. 1:26-28; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24, 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44; Acts 17:28). Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth, or population control, or the mental well being of the mother are acceptable. We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention (Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Job 3:16; Matt. 5:21). Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus, we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God (Ex. 20:12). Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal or over-zealous treatment.
- i. **Parenting Responsibility:** Children are an heritage from the Lord (Ps. 127:3-5). Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example (Col. 3:18-21; I Pet. 3:1-7) and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction (Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Eph. 6:1-4).
- j. **Alcohol:** We believe that Christians may cause a weaker brother or sister to stumble or be offended by the consumption of wine, beer, and other alcoholic beverages, (Rom. 14:21, 1 Cor. 8:9) and that being intoxicated is forbidden (Eph. 5:18, 1 Cor. 6: 9b.-10, 11:21) and is a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:21, 1 Pet. 4:2-3). Drunkenness brings reproach to the cause of Christ and has negative effects on the human body, the family, and the body of Christ. We base this position on the words of our Lord Jesus who tells us that being intoxicated may keep us from being ready for His imminent return (Luke 21:34) and numerous Biblical passages that prohibit drunkenness because of the negative effects of alcohol such as the following: physical and emotional suffering, strife, and sorrow (Prov. 23:29-30); poverty (Prov. 21:17, 23:21);

sexual immorality (Gen. 9:21, Rom. 13:13); a disregard for the work of the Lord (Is. 5:12); error in judgment (Prov. 20:1, Is. 28:7); loss of friendships and relationships (1 Cor. 5:11); and punishment from God (Matt 24:49-51). Based on an objective analysis of all that the Word of God presents concerning alcohol, the church encourages its members, by the grace of God, to adopt a personal total abstinence standard. Furthermore, BBC believes the medicinal and purifying aspects of wine are no longer necessary for life in the twenty-first century. Pastors (1 Tim 3.3), deacons, teachers, supervisors, directors, and employees of the church are prohibited from consuming any alcoholic beverage based on the spirit and intent of Lev. 10:9 and Prov. 31:4-5.

- k. **Civil Authority:** We believe that civil government is of Divine appointment for the interests and good of human society and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored (Matt. 10:10; 22:21; Rom. 13:17; 1 Peter 2:17), and obeyed (Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-14) except in things opposed to the Word of God - the Bible (Ex. 18:21, 22; II Sam. 23:3; Psalms 72:11; Acts 4:19, 20; 5:20; 23:5; Rev. 10:16).
- l. **Church Unity:** We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions.

9. **End Times: The End of the Beginning.** We believe in our Lord's personal, imminent and pre-millennial return for his redeemed ones (John 14:1-3; I Cor. 15:51-52; Phil. 3:20; I Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14) followed by His coming in glory to judge the rebellious and to establish His millennial reign on earth. (Zech. 14:4-11; Matt. 24:29-31; II Thess. 2:7-10)

These Articles of Faith do not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Articles of Faith accurately represent the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, are binding upon all members.

## **Article IV ~ Our Covenant**

As a bond of unity among us, Berean Baptist Church accepts for its members the following covenant:

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

We fully realize that the strength to uphold this covenant comes from the grace of God our Father, the shed blood of God the Son, and the power of the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit.

We promise to actively pursue personal holiness; to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church's spiritual growth and unity; to faithfully abide by the doctrines and behaviors outlined in this church's Articles of Faith; and to give cheerfully of our time, talents, and finances for the support of this ministry and its missionaries.

We further promise to faithfully attend the church's worship services, to maintain personal spiritual disciplines; to teach our children the Word of God; to share the gospel with our relatives and acquaintances; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements; and to avoid all gossip. We promise that we will love and pray for each other and in times of distress help one another.

We promise to endeavor to obey the commandments of our Lord Jesus and to abstain from anything that would cause our fellow brother or sister in Christ to stumble or that will bring reproach to the name of Jesus Christ.

We further realize that if we should fail to live up to the promises we have made, our brothers and sisters in Christ will always strive for our reconciliation and spiritual restoration. However, if we partake in a sustained and unrepentant violation of an Article of Faith, we will be brought under church discipline in accordance with the Church Constitution.

We make this covenant with each other for the express purpose of glorifying God as the visible representation of the body of Christ.

## **Article V ~ Membership**

1. **QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP:** Upon a majority vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, membership shall be extended to all who have had and whose lives evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior; who renounce sin; who endeavor to live a consecrated life wholly unto the Lord; who fully subscribe to the Statement of Faith contained herein; who enter into the church covenant contained herein; who agree to submit to the authority of the church and its leaders as set forth

herein; who have completed the membership class; and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- A. By baptism by immersion; or,
- B. By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith; or,
- C. By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion; or,
- D. By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon majority vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the Church membership of the sin or sins involved, and satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the Pastor (or the Board of Deacons if the office of Pastor is vacant).

2. DUTIES OF A MEMBER: On becoming a member of BBC, in addition to the Church Covenant, each one further covenants to love, honor, and esteem the Pastors, to pray for them and to recognize their authority in the spiritual affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the Church; to support the Church in prayer, tithes, offerings and with other financial support as the Lord enables; and, in accordance with Biblical commands, to support through a life-style affirming the beliefs and practices of the Church.

3. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP: This congregation functions as a body under the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the Pastor as the under shepherd with the counsel of the Board of Deacons. Membership in this Church does not afford those individuals with any property, contract, or civil rights based on principles of a democratic government. The internal affairs of this Church in ecclesiastical matters shall be determined exclusively by the Church's own rules and procedures. The Pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this Church. The membership of the Church has certain limited areas of exercising a vote. Members are encouraged to bring important matters to the appropriate pastor or deacon for discussion and consideration by the leadership of the church. Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church has certain limited areas to exercise a vote. Members may not vote to initiate any church action, rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and the board of deacons.

Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a

suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons), be treated as a trespasser.

A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church meetings, provided he shall have made a written request upon the church and the church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date.

A. A member may not, under any circumstance, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church, the list of names and addresses of the church members, or the accounting books and financial records of the church.

B. The church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and material for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

#### 4. DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER:

A. As necessary, the Pastor shall form a Disciplinary Committee consisting of himself and the Board of Deacons. These men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of the Church Covenant. If the Pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not be a member of the Discipline Committee.

B. 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, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.

C. If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, either a deacon or the Pastor 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. The Pastor or a member of the Pastor's staff shall not be accused unless there are two witnesses. (Matt. 18:16, I Tim 5:19-20) The steps outlined in sections (B) and (C) must be followed.

E. The discipline committee shall hear a matter if the steps outlined in sections (B), (C), and (D) have been taken to seek confirmation, repentance, and restoration. No matter may be heard by the Discipline Committee or the Church unless the steps outlined in sections (B), (C), (D), have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.

F. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in sections (B), (C), (D), and (E) 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.

G. If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the Church membership, all contact with him from that point forward must be for the sake of restoration (except family members).

5. TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP: Members, not under the disciplining process of Number 4, may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church.

6. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP:

A. The membership of any individual member shall be automatically terminated without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the Church in the preceding six months. (Members deployed overseas shall be exempt from this provision.) Upon good cause being shown to the Pastor, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the Pastor. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member states that he or she is actively involved in any conduct described in Article III 8g, III 8h, or files a lawsuit in violation of Article III 8d. A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastor.

B. No member of this Church may hold membership in another church. If any member unites in membership with another church, that person is automatically terminated from membership in this Church.

## **Article VI ~ Officers**

1. CHURCH OFFICERS: The Church officers are Pastor (See Article VII, 1), deacon (See Article VII, 2), Director (See Article VII, 3), Church Clerk (See Article VII, 4), treasurer (See Article VII, 5). One person may hold two or more offices, except that of Pastor. The Pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may, in consultation with the Deacons, appoint other Church officers, subject to a confirmation vote of the Church membership.

2. DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS: As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the church clerk shall serve as secretary of the corporation; the treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the corporation; and the chairman of the Board of Deacons shall serve as vice president of the corporation.

3. ELIGIBILITY FOR CONTINUANCE IN OFFICE:

A. All church officers shall affirm their agreement with the statement of faith (as set forth in Article III) annually in the presence of each other.

B. All Church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the

Pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their offices.

C. Only Church members are eligible for election or appointment to any Church office or position.

4. TERMS OF OFFICE: The length of terms of office shall be as follows:

A. The relationship between the Pastor and the Church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The severance of the relationship between the Pastor and the Church may be considered at any regular Church administration meeting, provided notice to that effect shall have been given from the pulpit to the Church two Sundays prior to said regular Church administration meetings. A two-thirds majority of the members present and voting shall be required to decide the matter. Disciplinary removal of the Pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Article V.

B. The term for Deacons and Directors shall be 3 years. The Deacons will serve on a rotational basis. The members of the church will recommend deacons for the next term to the Pastor. The Deacons will recommend Directors for the next term to the Pastor. The Pastor will take nominations from those recommended before the church in any of the quarterly business meetings. A majority vote is required to elect a deacon or director. Any first term deacon will be ordained.

C. A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the Pastor, may be filled at any regular Church administration meeting.

D. All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

A. By recommendation of the pulpit committee (Board of Deacons), a two-thirds majority vote of the members present on the church property shall be necessary to elect the Pastor.

B. Deacons shall be elected during any quarter of the year.

C. The church shall elect three men to serve as directors. The directors must be ordained deacons (active or inactive).

D. The Church Clerk and Treasurer shall be elected annually by a three-quarters majority vote by the Board of Deacons.

6. PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF:

A. The Pastor shall supervise all officers and staff. They are to operate under his direction.

B. All Church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the Pastor who, in consultation with the Deacons, has the sole authority to hire, appoint, or dismiss the same.

C. The Pastor shall establish and maintain, in consultation with the Deacons, staff

benefits and policies to include severance benefits in writing. A member of the Pastoral staff may not conduct outside meetings which cause him to miss more than 10 (ten) church services at Berean annually without the consent of the church.

## **Article VII ~ *Duties of Officers***

### **1. THE PASTOR (PRESIDENT OF THE CORPORATION):**

A. The Pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God as the Lord leads him. He shall administer the ordinances of the Church, act as moderator at all Church meetings for the transaction of Church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the Church, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the membership.

B. The Pastor shall serve as the president of the corporation. He shall publicly inform, or cause to be informed, all newly elected officers of the particular function and the responsibilities of their respective offices. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the Church and perform such other duties as generally appertain to such a position. The Pastor, in consultation with the Board of Deacons and the church staff, shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry that God has given him. All appointments for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof including time and place and the use of property belonging to the Church for purposes other than the stated appointments shall be under the control of the Pastor.

### **2. THE BOARD OF DEACONS:**

A. The chairman of the Board of Deacons shall serve as the vice president of the corporation. He shall oversee the auditing of the church finances (by a firm unaffiliated with the Church) anytime there is a change in Pastors and at anytime the Pastor or Board of Deacons deems it necessary. He will present the auditor's report at the first church administration meeting following completion of the audit.

B. The Board of Deacons shall be an advisory team for the Pastor. The Board of Deacons shall assist the Pastor in such manner, as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the Church, in conducting the religious services, and in performing all other work of the Church. They shall make provision for the observance of the ordinances of the Church. They shall, if requested by the Pastor, consider applications for Church membership. They shall assist the Pastor in visitation and all other evangelistic efforts of the Church. They shall provide the pulpit supply and act as leaders for Church meetings if the office of Pastor is vacant. The Board of Deacons shall advise and assist the Pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the Church's various ministries as requested by the Pastor. The Board of Deacons shall act as the Pulpit Committee.

C. The Board of Deacons shall assemble and elect, from their own number, a chairman and a secretary annually.

3. DIRECTORS: The Directors shall exercise only the following specific powers:

A. To oversee the purchase, lease, or acquisition of real and personal property on behalf of the corporation, and to accept real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest.

B. To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of; to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the Church/Corporation if it is valued in excess of \$1,000; to oversee the borrowing of money and incurring indebtedness for the purpose and the use of the Church/Corporation; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the Church/Corporation, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to approve corporate signers for the repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges.

C. To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the Church/Corporation, if such action is mandated by a vote of the Church membership.

4. THE CHURCH CLERK (SECRETARY OF THE CORPORATION):

The church clerk shall work in conjunction with the administrative staff of the church to ensure that the business of the church is done decently and in order. He shall serve as the secretary of the corporation. In conjunction with the administrative staff he shall ensure that the following guidelines are followed:

A. Certify and keep at the office of the church, the original constitution or a copy, including all amendments or alterations to the constitution;

B. Keep at the place where the constitution or a copy are kept a record of the proceedings of meetings of the board of deacons, with the time and place of holding, the notice of meeting given, the names of those present at the meetings;

C. Sign, certify or attest documents as may be required by law;

D. See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. (In case of the absence or disability of the secretary, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the Pastor or by the chairman of the Board of Deacons.);

E. Be custodian of the records of the church, including the membership roll, baptisms, and certificates of ordination, licenses and commissions;

F. See that the reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed;

G. Exhibit at all reasonable times to proper persons on terms provided by law the bylaws and minutes of proceedings of the Board of Deacons or the minutes of the meetings of the church members;

H. Keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical interest and give a report at the annual church administration meeting of the status of the church membership roll in the past year;

I. Keep all records at the office of the church and deliver them to any successor

upon leaving office.

#### 5. THE TREASURER (TREASURER OF THE CORPORATION):

The treasurer shall work in conjunction with the financial staff of the church to ensure that the business of the church is done decently and in order. He shall serve as the treasurer of the corporation. He shall have access to the financial records and shall review receipts and reports as he deems appropriate. In conjunction with the financial staff he shall ensure that the following guidelines are followed:

- A. Deposit all funds in the name of the church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories, as shall be selected by the pastor or the board of deacons;
- B. Receive, and give receipt for all contributions, gifts, and donations to the church;
- C. Disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the church as may be directed by the pastor, the board of deacons, or the budget adopted by the members of the church at the annual church administration meeting, taking proper vouchers for the disbursements;
- D. Keep and maintain adequate and correct accounts of the church's properties and business transactions including account of its assets, liabilities, receipts, and disbursements,
- E. Make all expenditures of the church (except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements) by check, ACH, electronic debit, or other similar means as technology allows;
- F. When and as requested, render to the pastor accounts of all transactions regarding the financial condition of the church;
- G. Present a financial report reflecting the financial status of the church at the regular quarterly church administration meetings and make a general report for the year at the annual church administration meeting;
- H. Keep all church financial records at the office of the church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office.

#### 6. DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS:

- A. The church clerk and treasurer shall prepare a written report of their work annually. All records are the property of the Church and must be stored in the Church office.
- B. All officers shall surrender all records in their possession to the church clerk at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church.

## **Article VIII ~ Meetings**

1. MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP: Unless otherwise determined by the Pastor, the Church shall meet each Sunday for public worship both morning and evening and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer.

## 2. MEETINGS FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION:

A. A quarterly business meeting will be held following the service on the third Sunday night in January, April, July and October. A quorum shall consist of the members present. Church administration meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer for divine guidance and blessing. The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling. For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines, in his sole discretion, that circumstances so warrant. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Article VII 1. (A) and treat the person as a trespasser.

B. Voting by secret ballot shall be used for the item under consideration if requested by any member of the church. In such a case, the moderator will appoint as many tellers as are necessary to count the ballots and make a written report to the Church clerk as soon as possible during the meeting.

## 3. SPECIAL MEETINGS:

A. The Pastor (or deacons if the office of Pastor is vacant or the Pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the Church from the pulpit at least one Sunday and not less than one week prior to said meeting. A meeting to elect the pastor may be called by the pulpit committee (Board of Deacons) at any regular meeting of the Church at least two weeks in advance.

B. Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals may be held as the Pastor deems beneficial.

4. FISCAL YEAR: The fiscal year of the Church shall begin January 1 and end December 31.

## **Article IX ~ Ministry of Education**

The Church believes that its purpose is to provide the members' children with an education which is based upon and consistent with Biblical teachings. The Church believes that the home and Church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To this end, the Church shall engage in ministries in education in keeping with the following dictates:

1. **CHURCH PARTICIPATION:** All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the Church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the Church; however, the Pastor may permit non-Church members to participate in Church educational programs or courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the Church. Tuition and other fees will be charged for Academy and preschool participation.
2. **STAFF MEMBERSHIP:** Administrators shall be members of this Church. Unless approved by the Pastor, all teachers shall be members of this Church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers, engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis.
3. **STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD:** All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of the Church. All staff and faculty must sign a statement of faith before being employed.
4. **UNITY:** All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the Church.
5. **TEACHING:** All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief that conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and a distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.
6. **CHRISTIAN WALK:** All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a life-style consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom.

## **Article X ~ Expenditures**

1. **BUDGET:** The Pastor must present the proposed budget for each year to the congregation following approval of a majority of Board of Deacons. The annual budget for the upcoming year must then be approved by a majority of the members present at a church meeting before the New Year.
2. **ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES:** Any expenditure in excess of \$500.00 and not in the regular annual budget must be authorized by the Pastor (The school Administrator may approve school funds; the Board of Deacons would have this authority if the office of Pastor is vacant.) Any expenditure above \$2,500.00, and not a part of the regular

annual budget, must be presented to the Board of Deacons. In an emergency situation, the Pastor may make an expenditure after conferring with the Chairman of the Deacons. A limit of \$10,000 per fiscal year may be spent outside the regular annual budget without majority membership approval.

## **Article XI ~ Ordination**

1. **ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS:** Any member of this Church or its mission churches who gives evidence of a genuine call of God into the work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 may be ordained as a minister of the Gospel.

2. **ORDINATION PROCEDURES:**

A. Following a conference with the Pastor, and upon his approval for ordination of the candidate, the Pastor shall call a council to examine and pass on the qualification of the candidate. The ordination council shall consist of ordained ministers of like faith invited to participate in the examination of the candidate.

B. If the council finds the candidate worthy of the ordination, the ordination council may ordain the candidate on behalf of the Church.

C. The Pastor shall arrange for the ordination service.

## **Article XII ~ Tax-Exempt Provisions**

1. **PRIVATE INUREMENT:** No part of the net earnings of the Church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II (A).

2. **POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT:** No substantial part of the activities of the Church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The Church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

3. **DISSOLUTION:** Upon the dissolution of the Church, the Directors shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the Church, dispose of all of the assets of the Church to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) or the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Directors shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to organizations which agree with the Church's Statement of Faith.

4. **RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION:** The Church shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and therefore shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

## **Article XIII ~ Indemnification**

1. **ACTIONS SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION:** The Church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the Church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

2. **EXPENSES SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION:** To the extent that a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorney's fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

3. **LIMITATIONS OF INDEMNIFICATION:** Any indemnification made under this Article may be made by the Church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 1 of this Article. The determination shall be made:

A. By a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the pastor and deacons who were not and are not parties to, or threatened with, the action, suit, or proceeding;

B. If the described quorum is not obtainable, or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or

C. By a majority vote of the members of the church.

4. **TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION:** Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the

final disposition of the action, suit, of proceeding, as authorized by the Board of Deacons in the specific case, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

5. **EXTENT OF INDEMNIFICATION:** The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the Church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

6. **INSURANCE:** The Church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the Church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

## **Article XIV ~ Binding Arbitration**

1. **SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION:** Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration on any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bringing any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

2. **NOTICE OF ARBITRATION:** In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to these Bylaws or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution. If they do not reach such solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section 1, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to the following two sections.

3. **LIMITATIONS ON ARBITRATION DECISIONS:**

A. Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline as outlined under Article V, Section 4, were followed.

B. Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Article V were followed.

4. ARBITRATION PROCEDURES: The procedures for arbitration shall be as adopted by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

## **Article XV ~ Designated Contributions**

From time to time the Church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. Majority membership approval must be given before funds designated for a specific purpose may be spent otherwise. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the Church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Article II (B).

## **Article XVI ~ Missions**

1. The Pastor, in consultation with the Deacons, shall recommend missionaries to the congregation for support. The missionaries shall be screened carefully and prayerfully. Missionaries shall be doctrinally sound and actively reaching souls. The amount of support and duration of that support shall be under the authority of the Pastor and Deacons after the missionary is approved by a majority vote of the congregation.

2. The church may support other churches, schools, and organizations in their efforts to reach their community. The same process shall be used as is used for missionaries.

3. The church may form mission churches to reach unique groups of people within our community. The members of those churches shall have the same responsibilities and privileges as any other member of Berean. The mission pastor shall instruct his congregation on the Articles of Faith, Covenant, and Constitution.

## **Article XVII ~ Amendments**

This Constitution may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting, at any regular Church administration meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit thirty (30) days before the vote is taken. A three-fourths majority is required to add or change an Article of Faith.

## ADOPTION

This Constitution was adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Church on April 25, 2010. This Constitution supersedes any other constitutions of Berean Baptist Church, Fayetteville, NC.

April 28, 2010

Date

Original Signed

President: Pastor Sean Harris

April 28, 2010

Date

Original Signed

Vice-President: Chairman of  
Deacons Darren Hawk

April 28, 2010

Date

Original Signed

Secretary: Church Clerk Gary Botts

April 28, 2010

Date

Original Signed

Treasurer: Jeff Hylland