

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

BOERNE BIBLE

EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

BOERNE, TEXAS

Amended and Adopted:

August 15, 1982

December 9, 1984

July 10, 1985

April 12, 1989

April 12, 1995

October 11, 1995

November 12, 1997

November 12, 2000

April 20, 2016

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

BOERNE BIBLE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

of

Boerne, Texas

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Boerne Bible Evangelical Free Church of Boerne, Texas, do establish and subscribe to the following Constitution.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of the church shall be Boerne Bible Evangelical Free Church of Boerne, Texas.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be to worship God and glorify Him on earth (Romans 15:5-13).

Jesus Christ, before ascending to His Heavenly Father, gave His followers what is commonly known as The Great Commission: "While going, disciple all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I command you" (Matthew 28:19-20). Therefore, an additional purpose of this church is to help fulfill the command "disciple all the nations." The Scriptures indicate that this is to be accomplished by two means: (1) Evangelism ("while going"), and (2) Edification ("baptizing" and "teaching"). Evangelism is the sharing of Christ with the unsaved, and should occur when the individual church members are going about in the world: "Therefore, those who had been scattered went about proclaiming the word" (Acts 8:4). Edification is the maturing of the church, and should take place when the local church is gathered as a community: "When you assemble ... let all things be done for edification" (Corinthians 14:26); "But speaking the truth in love, we are being fitted together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:15-16).

ARTICLE III - BY-LAWS

By-Laws shall be established to set forth procedures and an organizational structure designed to most effectively carry out the purpose set forth in Article II of this constitution.

ARTICLE IV - AFFILIATION

This church shall not be controlled by any denominational church or organization, but shall be a "New Testament," "Fundamental" body, self-governing, with Christ as its head. This church shall be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America and its branches, and shall send delegates to its conventions, support its missionary efforts, and unite with its efforts to further the message of the Gospel of Christ in the measure that the church itself so decides.

ARTICLE V - STATEMENT OF BELIEF

The members of this church have adopted the following twelve-point statement of faith. We believe:

1. The Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men, and the Divine and final authority for all Christian faith and life.
2. In one God, creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who is unchanging, the same yesterday, today, and forever, is personal, reveals Himself to man, and answers prayers.
3. That Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. Further, He arose bodily from the dead, and ascended into heaven where at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest.
4. The Holy Spirit makes believers children of God in regeneration, and indwells, seals, and baptizes them into the Church, the Body of Christ, at the moment of salvation. The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs at the time when one places his trust in Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and not at a time subsequent to it. The Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts on each believer, and makes a godly life possible by filling (controlling) the yielded Christian. (John 6:8-11, 15:26-27; I Corinthians 6:19, 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30, 4:18; Titus 3:5).
5. That man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is therefore lost, and only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
6. That the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only such as receive Jesus Christ as personal Savior are born of the Holy Spirit, and thus become the children of God.

7. That water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the Church during the present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation. We believe immersion is the mode of baptism which we consider best to demonstrate what occurs spiritually at the moment of salvation. This ordinance is to be administered only after salvation is experienced.
8. That the true Church is composed of all such persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and are united together in the body of Christ of which He is the head.
9. That only those who are thus members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church.
10. That Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of the Church, and that every local church has the right under Christ to decide and govern its own affairs.
11. In the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the life and service of the believer.
12. In the bodily resurrection of the dead: of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord, and of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP

This church shall welcome into its membership any person who will testify of a personal experience of being born again as result of having received the Lord Jesus Christ as his, or her, personal Savior, and whose true faith is reflected in his, or her, daily life. Every member agrees to abide by this Constitution and the By-laws, and to the discipline of this church and its Elders. Each member will be expected to participate in, and contribute to, the edification of the other members of the body of believers. "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (I Peter 4:10). "For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given us, let each exercise them accordingly; if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortations; he who gives, in liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness" (Romans 12:4-8). Each member is encouraged to be either in the process of being disciplined, or discipling another, as a continuation of his or her spiritual maturity.

"... and the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2).

ARTICLE VII - LEADERSHIP

The scriptures recognize two offices in the local church: (1) Elders and (2) Deacons. "It is a trustworthy statement; if any man aspires to the office of overseer (elder), it is a fine work he desires to do.... Deacons, likewise ... "(I Timothy 3:1-8). "For this reason, I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you ... " (Titus 1:5). "And when they had appointed elders for them in every church ..." (Acts 14:23). "... he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church" (Acts 20:17). The leadership of this church shall consist of elders and deacons.

SECTION A - ELDERS

The elders are the spiritual leaders of the church. Their spiritual qualifications are: "... men above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money ... one who manages his own household well ... not a new convert. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church". (I Tim. 3:2-7). Also, "the overseer must be ... not self-willed, not quick tempered....loving what is good, just, devout" (Titus 1:7-8).

The functions of the leaders are: (1) "shepherd of the flock of God" (I Peter 5:2), (2) not "lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock" (I Peter 5:3), (3) "teach and exhort" (I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9), (4) "... refute those who contradict (the truth)" (Titus 1 :9), (5) "manage the church of God" (I Timothy 3:5), and (6) "pray for the sick" (James 5:14).

The Scriptures further recognize some who would be called upon to fill more demanding responsibilities, and be financially remunerated for their efforts: "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scriptures says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing" and "The laborer is worthy of his wages" (I Timothy 5:17-18).

SECTION B - DEACONS

The deacons are to be responsible for the physical needs of the church, and to assist the elders: "And the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, 'It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. But select from among you, brethren, seven men ... whom we may put in charge of this task.'" (Acts 6:2-3)

The spiritual qualifications of the deacons are: "... men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6:3); "Deacons ... must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach ... Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households." (I Timothy 3:8-12).

The function of the deacons is not clearly outlined in the Scriptures, other than to fulfill the purpose implied in the meaning of the word itself: "to serve".

ARTICLE VIII - PROPERTY

SECTION A - The church may buy, own, and operate such property as is essential, and necessary to carry out the purpose stated in Article II of this Constitution.

SECTION B - If division occurs within the church, and any group of members decide to withdraw, all property rights are to be retained by those members who most closely adhere to Articles II and V of this Constitution. In case of a dispute as to which group most closely adheres to Articles II and V of this Constitution, a majority vote of the membership of this church shall be conclusive on that issue.

SECTION C - If the church ceases to function and its organization is dissolved, the property shall be transferred to the South Central District Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America to enable said conference to renew the work or use the value thereof to further gospel enterprises.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

SECTION A - Article V shall not be annulled, or amended, except that if needs arise that shall warrant additional paragraphs for clarification without changing, or annulling, the above mentioned Article V. Such paragraphs may be added in the manner provided for amendment to the Constitution.

SECTION B - Amendments to this Constitution shall be introduced through a formal motion at any regular business meeting, but shall not be acted upon until the following regular business meeting, at which a minimum of two-thirds (2/3) of the membership shall be present, and a three fourths (3/4) majority of the members present voting at the meeting shall be required for acceptance, provided, however, that in the meantime, the members have been duly informed of the proposed amendment.

BY-LAWS

OF THE

BOERNE BIBLE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

of

Boerne, Texas

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION A - Application for membership shall consist of the following steps:

1. Verbal application shall be made to the Pastor or any other Elder of the church.
2. The Constitution and By-laws shall be given to the applicant.
3. The applicant shall be interviewed by two (2) or more Elders, at which time he or she shall give his or her testimony of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and agree to abide by the Constitution and By-laws of this church. The interviewers, after prayerful consideration, shall recommend the applicant to the entire Elder Board. The applicant shall be approved only on a unanimous decision of the Elder Board.

SECTION B - New members shall be welcomed into the fellowship of the church and presented to the congregation at the next Sunday worship service following the vote of acceptance by the Elder board.

SECTION C - If a member falls into sin, he or she shall be dealt with according to the following scriptural guidelines insofar as possible:

"Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourself lest you too be tempted."

"And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed,' And if he refuses to listen to them, tell

it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer." (Matthew 18:15-17).

In bringing a matter of discipline to the attention of the church in accordance with Matthew 18:17, the reproving member shall first discuss the matter with the Elders. If the Elders determine, after prayerful consideration, that the member has fallen into sin, and further determine, after appropriate counseling with the member, that the member is unwilling to repent from sin, these Elders upon a unanimous vote shall dismiss such member from membership in the church and shall so inform the congregation. If the dismissed member later repents, with a change of heart and conduct, he may be reinstated into the membership of the church by following the procedures set forth in Section A of this Article I, unless the dismissed member is the Senior Pastor Elder, or a Pastor, in which case he shall not be reinstated as a Pastor, but shall be subjected to a new call as outlined in Article III, Section C, item #2 of the By-laws. If this action involves an Elder (including a Pastor), then this Elder shall be excluded from voting. Any accusation of sin against an Elder shall be presented to the Elders in writing and signed by not less than two witnesses (I Timothy 5:19). After a thorough investigation, a majority of the Elders shall either dismiss the Elder from his position, take other appropriate disciplinary action, or repudiate the accusation.

SECTION D - Any member who has been absent from the church for a period of six months or more without manifesting an interest in being a part of the church may be taken off the membership roll of the church by action of the Elders after attempted contact by the Elders. This policy shall not be used to take away the membership of the sick or shut-ins, or others who cannot attend church for legitimate reasons.

SECTION E - All members of the church who have attained the age of eighteen (18) shall have the right to vote at church business meetings.

ARTICLE II - GOVERNMENT

SECTION A - Congregational Government. The government of this church under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, is vested in the membership of this church, but the governing body of the church shall be the Board of Elders who shall govern within the limitations stated in the Constitution and By-laws, and shall be accountable to the congregation.

SECTION B - Quorum and Voting Requirements. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be twenty percent (20%) of the members eligible to vote except where a greater percentage is specifically required by these By-laws. The majority vote of all members present with voting privileges at any church business meeting shall be final with respect to all matters voted on at such business meeting, unless the Constitution or these By-laws require a greater majority, in which case the vote of such greater majority shall be final. All members shall be able to vote on the church budget. However, no member shall be eligible to vote on any other financial matter in excess of \$500 that directly affects him or her.

SECTION C - Rights of Non-Voting Members. Members under the age of eighteen (18) have the right of address and opportunity to give their counsel at all business meetings.

SECTION D - Meetings. Two regular business meetings chaired by an Elder shall be held each year as follows:

1. Business meeting on the third Wednesday in April.
2. Business meeting on the third Wednesday in October.
3. Annual election and budget meeting on the third Wednesday of April. This meeting shall include the report on the last year's budget and passage of the next year's budget.

SECTION E - Special Meetings. Special church business meetings may be called by the Board of Elders or the Board of Deacons, or by the written petition to the Elder Board of twenty-five percent (25%) of the membership of the church. Special business meetings shall be announced from the pulpit and in the church bulletin at least ten days in advance.

SECTION F - Rules of Order. To the extent Robert's Rules of Order Revised are not inconsistent with the Constitution or these By-laws, Robert's Rules of Order Revised may be invoked at the request of any voting member at any church business meeting and shall be adhered to at such business meeting to the extent so requested.

ARTICLE III - OFFICERS

SECTION A - Elders. (See Article VII, Section A of the Constitution)

1. Number: The Board of Elders shall be composed of not less than three men, including the Pastor.
2. Nominations: Elders shall be nominated by the present Elder Board. An Advisory Committee may be formed by the Elders. Only men who meet the spiritual qualifications set forth in Article VII, Section A of the Constitution will be nominated. The Elder Board will diligently seek out qualified men through interaction with the congregants and the Board of Deacons. The church membership shall be presented with the nominees at least three weeks prior to the election at the Annual Meeting in April.
3. Election: Elders, other than the Pastor, shall be elected by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership present and eligible to vote at the election meeting. Election shall be by secret ballot.
4. Term: Elders shall serve a term of three years, which shall commence May 1 following an Elder's election at the Annual Meeting. The terms of office of the non-Pastor Elders shall be staggered. Elders may serve consecutive terms, by nomination and election. However, they shall not be a part of any nominating committee considering their renomination.
5. Vacancies: Vacancies on the Elder Board may be filled as soon as possible rather than at the regular annual meeting, following the guidelines laid down in Article III, Section A of these By-laws.

6. Meetings: The Board of Elders shall meet not less than once a month. The Board of Elders shall conduct joint meetings with the Board of Deacons whenever either Board determines that a joint meeting is desirable.
7. Responsibilities: The following specific means of carrying out the Scriptural functions of Elders as set forth in Article VII, Section A of the Constitution are hereby made the express responsibility of the Board of Elders:
 - a. Visit with members to discuss each member's spiritual needs and to solicit feedback concerning areas of the church's ministry which should be strengthened.
 - b. Visit and minister to sick and bereaved members.
 - c. Counsel members with spiritual needs.
 - d. Pray specifically for each member on a regular basis.
 - e. Counsel and disciple each other, including the counseling and discipling of the Pastor by the non-Pastor Elders.
 - f. Ensure the spiritual direction is always pointing towards Christ and God's vision for the church. In this regard, the Board of Elders shall approve and/or plan special speakers and programs after prayerfully considering the spiritual needs of the church body.
 - g. The Elders shall teach and exhort the members. On a rotating basis each Elder shall bring a message concerning a spiritual need of, or goal for, the church body, or such other message that is of concern to such Elder, at each biennial business meeting.
8. All Sunday School teachers and materials shall meet the approval of the Elder Board. All adult Sunday School classes that contain men will be taught by men. (I Timothy 2:12) In addition, the Missions Committee Chairman, Music Director and all youth group leaders shall meet the approval of the Elder Board.
9. All workers dealing with children under the age of 18 shall have a background check completed before working with the children and there should always be at least two workers and at least one of them should be over the age of 18.

SECTION B - Deacons. (See Article VII, Section B of the Constitution)

1. Nominations: Deacons shall be nominated by the present Elder Board. Only men who meet the spiritual qualifications set forth in Article VII, Section B of the Constitution will be nominated. The Elder Board will diligently seek out qualified men through interaction with the congregants and the Board of Deacons. The church membership shall be presented with the nominees at least three weeks prior to the election at the Annual Meeting in April.
2. Election: Deacons shall be elected by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present and eligible to vote at the annual election meeting. Election shall be by secret ballot.

3. Term: Deacons shall serve a term of two years which shall commence on May 1 following the Deacon's election at an annual meeting. The terms of office of the Deacons shall be staggered to the greatest extent possible. Deacons may serve consecutive terms but must be nominated and re-elected.
4. Number: The number of men on the board of Deacons may be increased or decreased each year in accordance with the availability of spiritually qualified men and the needs of the church body.
5. Vacancies: Vacancies on the Deacon Board may be filled as soon as possible rather than at the regular annual meeting, following the guidelines laid down in ARTICLE III, Section B of these By-laws.
6. Meetings: The Board of Deacons shall meet not less than once a month. The Board of Deacons shall conduct joint meetings with the Board of Elders whenever either Board determines that a joint meeting is desirable.
7. Responsibilities: The primary responsibility of the Board of Deacons is to meet the physical needs of the congregation and shall be responsible for administering aid to congregants who are in financial or physical distress. Deacons shall assist the Elders in visiting congregants, especially those who are sick or shut-in.
8. The Deacons also serve the congregation through prayerfully executing the Annual Budget. The following committees may be used at the discretion of the congregation.
 - a. Finance/Budget
 - b. Building Maintenance
 - c. Fellowship/Hospitality
9. Holding Title: The Board of Deacons shall be the trustees of the church for the purpose of holding title to all of the church property.

SECTION C - Pastor.

1. Search: The search for a Pastor (including an interim Pastor) shall be conducted by the Elders who may form a Search Advisory Committee for their assistance. Said committee should be chosen from non-Pastor Elders, former Elders, Deacons, and members at large.
2. Call: the call of a Pastor (including an interim Pastor) shall be initiated by unanimous approval of the non-Pastor Elders who shall have interviewed the candidate (and his wife). This call shall be consummated by secret ballot at a business meeting with a quorum of one-half (1/2) of the voting membership present. The non-Pastor Elders shall initiate a call only to men who possess the spiritual qualifications set forth in Article VII, Section A of the Constitution. A three fourths (3/4) majority vote of all voting members present at the meeting shall be required before a call can be issued. Public announcement of a business meeting to vote on a Pastor must be given three weeks in advance of such a meeting.

Immediately upon the favorable three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the voting membership present, the non-Pastor Elders shall issue a Letter of Call to the candidate specifying salary, duties, vacation time, housing/travel allowances, conference leave, other compensations, and any other pertinent factors. Said Letter of Call shall be prepared and presented to the members prior to the vote on the Call, and shall be subject to acceptance, rejection, or change, as a majority of the membership present and voting so directs.

3. Duties:

- a. The Senior Pastor shall automatically become a member and Elder of this church.
- b. In the absence of a Senior Pastor, the duties of the Senior Pastor will be shared by the Elders according to the needs of the congregation.
- c. The Senior Pastor shall be primarily responsible for teaching and preaching during the public services of worship.
- d. The Senior Pastor shall assume all the responsibilities of an Elder, and in particular, that of visiting the sick or bereaved members.
- e. The Senior Pastor shall give a report at the biennial business meetings as to the spiritual condition, ministry and outreach of the church.
- f. All other Pastors exclusive of the Senior Pastor shall have duties as specified in their call, and shall be non-voting members of the Elder Board, unless otherwise elected to same.

4. Resignation of the Pastor: The resignation of the Pastor at his own initiative shall be presented by the Pastor to the church at a business meeting not less than two (2) weeks before the termination of his ministry.

5. Dismissal of a Pastor: See Article I, Section C.

SECTION D - Dismissal of Elders, Deacons, or Pastors other than the Senior Pastor. See Article I, Section C.

ARTICLE IV - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these By-laws shall be introduced through a formal motion at any business meeting, but shall not be acted upon until the following business meeting at which a minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the voting membership shall be present. A simple majority of the members present and voting at the meeting shall be required for acceptance. In addition, members shall have been duly informed of the proposed amendment(s) which shall have been included in the Church Bulletin, announced from the pulpit, and posted on the Church Bulletin Board at least three weeks prior to the vote at the business meeting.

ARTICLE V - MISCELLANEOUS

SECTION A - Church Year. The term of all elected offices shall run from May 1 through April 30. The terms of appointed offices shall terminate May 31.

SECTION B - Fiscal Year. The church fiscal year shall run from April 1 through March 31.

SECTION C - Expenditures. The Board of Deacons are hereby authorized to spend such sums as are necessary or advisable to maintain and repair the property of the church up to \$500. Amounts over this amount must be approved by a majority of the members of the congregation at a regular or special called business meeting as provided for in Article II, Section E, for non-budgeted items.

SECTION D - All members shall be able to vote on the church budget. However, no member shall be eligible to vote on any other financial matter in excess of \$500 that directly affects him or her.

SECTION E – Operating Reserve. The church will strive to maintain an operating reserve of no less than four (4) months of operating expenses as contained in the current year’s budget.

SECTION F – Marriage. We believe marriage is intended by God as a life-long covenant relationship between one natural-born man and one natural-born woman. We believe all sexual intercourse outside of marriage is sin.

SECTION G – Sanctity of Life. We believe in the sanctity of life from conception until natural death. We believe God values all life and has a plan and purpose for every person’s life, including unborn life. We believe abortion is sin.

SECTION H – Use of Church Building and Property. Building and property usage shall be restricted to members and other individuals meeting the requirements of membership. Building use must support the purpose and goals of the church as stated in the Church Constitution and these By-laws.