



Constitution of the Beijing Baptist Church Beijing, China

Adopted by the members: October 24, 2010

Amended by members: January 22, 2023

Preamble

We, the members of Beijing Baptist Church (BBC), in decent and orderly manner do hereby establish the following principles by which we all in one accord agree to be governed in the affairs of our Church.

Article 1. Name

The name of this Church shall be Beijing Baptist Church located in Beijing, China.

Article 2. Purpose

This church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities.

This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:

1. Worshipping Him;
2. Equipping saints through Bible instruction and study;
3. Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture;
4. Encouraging, supporting, and participating in gospel outreach: domestic, and international;
5. Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion;
6. Encouraging biblical fellowship among believers;
7. Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs in the name of Jesus Christ, and
8. Defending the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Christian Bible.

Article 3 - Meetings

Section 1 – Worship Meetings

Worship meetings shall be held each Lord's Day, and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

Section 2 – Members' Meetings

In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There shall be a regular members' meeting at least once each year, at some time apart from a public worship service agreed upon by the membership.

The senior pastor, along with any elders, shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church. The elder(s) shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

Provided all constitutional provisions for notifications have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be at least 50% of the current membership. All decisions, apart from selection of officers, changes to the statement of faith, constitution, or church covenant, shall be determined on the basis of a simple majority of the members present.

At any regular or special members' meeting, officers may be elected and positions filled as needed, so long as all relevant constitutional requirements have been met.

Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elder(s), or at the written request, submitted to the elder(s), of fifty percent of the voting membership. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the elder(s) shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of request.

Elders, deacons, and the Treasurer will hold meetings at least bimonthly for the purpose of discussing and implementing plans to address the spiritual needs of the body, making decisions about administrative and church governance matters, and addressing other matters as they arise, in order to enable the sound functioning of the church, including the meeting of its purpose as identified under Article 2.

Article 4 – Church Covenant

Having, as we trust, been brought by the grace of God to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully affirm our covenant with each other.

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a Christian Church, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.

We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends.

We will rejoice at each other's happiness, and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, we are now called to lead a new and holy life.

We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We will, when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

Amen.

Article 5 – Membership

Section 1 – Qualifications

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The elder(s) shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's

profession of faith or such other evidence as the elder(s) deem appropriate. A person may simultaneously become a member of BBC while retaining their membership in their home church outside of Beijing.

Section 2 – Admission of Members

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall submit a written application for membership including a statement of their testimony which will be circulated to the members at least two weeks prior to completion of the membership process. Any member having a concern about admitting the applicant(s) into membership is encouraged to first seek resolution with the applicant(s) and then with the senior pastor or an elder prior to presentation to the congregation if the issue isn't resolved. Prior to presenting the applicant(s) for membership the applicant(s) must first be examined and approved by the senior pastor and elder(s), and then accepted by affirmation of at least 50% of the members.

Section 3 – Duties and Privileges of Membership

In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time and material resources each has received from God.

Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

Section 4 – Associate Membership

From time to time, a Christian brother or sister living in Beijing may wish to join the membership of Beijing Baptist, yet may not hold to the same conviction of believer's baptism by immersion. The associate membership category is open to such a brother or sister, provided they give testimony and evidence of their regeneration and have been baptized by any mode in an evangelical Protestant church.

Associate membership is also open to those who fulfill the requirements for normal membership but are unable to become full members of Beijing Baptist owing to regulations in their home church which prevent the holding of full memberships at two churches simultaneously.

Duties and privileges of associate members are the same as for other members except that while they will be encouraged to participate in members' meetings they will not be eligible to:

- (a) stand for the office of elder or deacon or
- (b) vote on matters of doctrinal change or the appointment of elders and deacons.

Section 5 – Dismissal of Members

By letter: Any member in good standing may request a letter of recommendation to another church of like faith and order.

By exclusion: A member may be dismissed after the exercise of scriptural church discipline.

By extended absence: If a member is absent from 50% of the scheduled worship times in a 6-month period it is the elders' responsibility to follow up and determine the member's current status.

By death.

Section 6 – Discipline of Members

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and the example of scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, deposition from office, and excommunication (see Matthew 18: 15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3: 14–15; 1 Timothy 5: 19–20; 1 Corinthians 5: 4–5).

The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15: 5; 29: 15; I Corinthians 4: 14; Ephesians 6: 4; I Timothy 3: 4–5;

Hebrews 12: 1–11; Psalm 119: 115; 141: 5; Proverbs 17: 10; 25: 12; 27: 5; Ecclesiastes 7: 5; Matthew 7: 26–27; 18: 15–17; Luke 17: 3; Acts 2: 40; I Corinthians 5: 5; Galatians 6: 1–5; II Thessalonians 3: 6, 14–15; I Timothy 1: 20; Titus 1: 13–14; James 1: 22);

For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (see Proverbs 13: 20; Romans 15: 14; I Corinthians 5: 11; 15: 33; Colossians 3: 16; I Thessalonians 5: 14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; I Timothy 5: 20; Titus 1: 11; Hebrews 10: 24–25);

For the purity of the church as a whole (see I Corinthians 5: 6–7; II Corinthians 13: 10; Ephesians 5: 27; II John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21: 2);

For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (see Proverbs 28: 7; Matthew 5: 13–16; John 13: 35; Acts 5: 1–14; Ephesians 5: 11; I Timothy 3: 7; II Peter 2: 2; I John 3: 10); and

Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5: 11; I Kings 11: 2; II Chronicles 19: 2; Ezra 6: 21; Nehemiah 9: 2; Isaiah 52: 11; Ezekiel 36: 20; Matthew 5: 16; John 15: 8; 18: 17, 25; Romans 2: 24; 15: 5–6; II Corinthians 6: 14–7: 1; Ephesians 1: 4; 5: 27; I Peter 2: 12).

Article 6 – Officers

Section 1 – Summary

The biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under this constitution of clerk, treasurer, and the optional position of assistant treasurer. All elders and deacons must be members of this church at least 6 months prior to assuming their responsibilities. The treasurer, assistant treasurer, and clerk must be members or associate members of the church.

Section 2 – Elders

a) Duties of Elders

The elders shall be comprised of both church staff members and men within the membership who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure. Each elder must attest to the Beijing Baptist Church statement of faith (SOF) and practices. Where an elder holds to a difference of belief in good conscience from the BBC Statement of Faith, that difference must be a) disclosed to the other elders and deacons, and b) maintained without causing discord to the BBC church family. This disclosure must be made both during the qualification process for an elder or if a difference of belief should arise during an active officer's tenure of service. The elders and deacons would have the right to exercise discretion in disclosing the 'differences of belief' to the BBC membership.

Subject to the will of the congregation, the elder(s) shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the elder(s) shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock.

The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. The church shall reaffirm this recognition triennially, and the elder may serve a total of two back to back terms of three years after which he will be encouraged to take one year to rest from his role. An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express their concern to an elder and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:17-21. Any elder may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members in accordance with the church.

b) Responsibilities of Elders

The elder(s) shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer or select men to administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The elder(s) are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our core convictions on the essentials of the faith (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:1-5).

The elder(s) may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elder(s) may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the position of senior pastor.

The elder(s) shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.

Each year the elder(s), with the Treasurer, after consultation with the deacons and membership, shall present to the church an itemized budget. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elder(s) and the Treasurer.

Section 3 – The Senior Pastor

The senior pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. The qualifications of the senior pastor are those given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The senior pastor shall serve for an undesignated period of time so long as he retains the support of the membership. However, for practical reasons, the senior pastor is appointed by the church on a fixed term which can be renewed at the end of each term.

Section 4 – Deacons

a) Qualifications for Deacons

The office of deacon is described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons. Deacons shall be elected for the same terms as that for elders. Each deacon must attest to the Beijing Baptist Church statement of faith (SOF) and practices. Where a deacon holds to a difference of belief in good conscience from the BBC Statement of Faith, that difference must be a) disclosed to the other elders and deacons, and b) maintained without causing discord to the BBC church family. This disclosure must be made both during the qualification process for a deacon, or if a difference of belief should arise during an active officer's tenure of service. The elders and deacons would have the right to exercise discretion in disclosing the 'differences of belief' to the BBC membership.

b) Responsibilities of the Deacons

Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration.

The deacons shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the elders at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements only.

The deacons, with the agreement of the elder(s), may establish unpaid administrative positions or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

Section 5 – Clerk

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, determine whether there is a quorum at membership meetings, and to render reports as requested by the pastor, the elder(s), the deacons, or the church.

The clerk shall be nominated by the elder(s) and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year. The clerk's term may be renewed at the conclusion of each term by the congregation.

In the absence or incapacity of the clerk the elder(s) shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk.

Another church officer may also serve as the clerk.

Section 6 – Treasurer

The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church at each member's meeting. The responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the elder(s). The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall render to the elder(s) annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial conditions of the church.

The treasurer shall be nominated by the elder(s) and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year. The treasurer's term may be renewed at the conclusion of each term by the congregation.

A deacon or clerk may also serve as the treasurer. A person (or their spouse) who is in receipt of regular and/or material financial disbursements from the church shall not serve in the office of treasurer.

Section 7 – Assistant Treasurer

The optional assistant treasurer will work in tandem with the treasurer in matters of counting offerings and issuing receipts when the treasurer is not present. Furthermore, the assistant treasurer will assist the treasurer with internal cash audits, bookkeeping, and reporting to the members.

The assistant treasurer shall be nominated by the elder(s) and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year. The assistant treasurer's term may be renewed at the conclusion of each term by the congregation. A deacon or clerk may also serve as the assistant treasurer. A person (or their spouse) who is in receipt of regular and/or material financial disbursements from the church shall not serve in the office of assistant treasurer. For purposes of accountability the treasurer and assistant treasurer cannot be related or married.

Article 7 – Elections

Section 1 – Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles:

Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process;

Nominations should proceed with the support of the elder(s);

All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members;

The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2 – Selection of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. The elder(s) should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. The elder(s) shall interview nominated candidates to ensure they meet the qualifications of the office to which they are nominated. The elders should give at least 2 weeks' notice to the members regarding which candidates will be voted on at the next members' meeting. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elder(s). Member intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elder(s) as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.

Names of nominees to serve as elders, deacons, clerk or treasurer shall be presented by the elder(s) at the membership meeting.

The moderator shall declare elected all men receiving a 75% majority vote of the total membership for the office of elder. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority of all votes cast; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.

The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

Section 3 – Calling of the Senior Pastor

In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential senior pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith, and the Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as senior pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

A committee nominated by the membership shall be responsible for the search and calling of a new senior pastor and the negotiation of the terms of that call. Membership of the committee should, ideally, include (but is not limited to) serving elders and deacons of Beijing Baptist.

Once the committee and membership has elected to call the nominated senior pastor, successful nominee shall be officially called through a letter drafted by the committee. The call letter should contain the terms and conditions under which the senior pastor is being called.

Article 8 – Utilization of church funds

The treasurer is responsible for managing the finances of the church, including the physical and administrative control and disbursement of church funds. The church's funds are to be spent in accordance with the annual budget presented by the elder(s) and treasurer and approved by the membership. Where there are operational requirements to incur ad hoc expenses or expend funds in a manner that deviates from that stipulated in the church budget, the treasurer and elder(s) have authority to authorize that expenditure if they can reasonably judge that there will be no material impact on church finances. However, where the treasurer or elder(s) will be the recipient of such a disbursement, the expenditure must be disclosed to the deacon(s) or the membership in the event that there are no holders of the office of deacon.

Where a material expenditure over and above that approved in the annual budget needs to be incurred, the treasurer is obligated to advise the membership.

Decisions about the expenditure of finances from the benevolence fund will be made by the Elder(s), Treasurer, and Deacons on a case by case basis.

Article 9 – Amendments

The Statement of Faith and Church Covenant may be amended or revised by 75% majority vote of the total membership at any regular Membership Meeting on the recommendation of the elder(s), provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at least two weeks prior to

the members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

Article 10 – Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of this congregation, none of its assets shall go to or for the benefit of any individual or individuals. All assets will go to a non-profit Christian organization that is in general agreement with the Church's Statement of Faith. The membership at the time of dissolution shall select the organization by a majority vote.