

PROPOSED CHANGES TO LBC BYLAWS (UPDATED)

(Changes are in **bold highlight**)

PROPOSED CHANGE #1

Article 3 – Organizational Structure

Section 1 – Leadership

a. Board of Elders. The board of elders shall oversee the direction of the ministries of the church (Ephesians 4:7-16; I Peter 5:1-7). In accordance with Article 5 of the constitution, the board of elders shall be composed of the pastors and lay elders. **The number of lay elders must be at least equal to the number of pastors.**

Purpose and Intent

Our current bylaws state that the Elder Board must maintain a "majority plus one" of lay elders over pastors. Practically, this means we must always have at least *two more* lay elders than pastors on the board. While the intent was to ensure strong lay representation, this rigid formula creates an immediate administrative challenge regarding leadership recruitment.

Finding men who are members in good standing, biblically qualified, called, willing, and logistically available to serve is a deliberate and prayerful process that cannot be rushed.

The Current Need for Flexibility

This issue is becoming urgent due to our current season of pastoral growth and natural board transitions:

- **Pastoral Growth:** We are thrilled to welcome our new youth pastor, Kyler Gardner, this June. Under the current bylaws, hiring Kyler would legally obligate us to appoint two new lay elders immediately just to stay in compliance.
- **Upcoming Transitions:** One of the lay elders on our current board had to step down a few months ago due to his work schedule. At least one more will be stepping down at the end of the year. Any need for future pastoral hires would trigger the need for even more lay elders.

By adjusting the requirement to **“at least equal to the number of pastors,”** we gain vital structural flexibility. With Kyler’s arrival, we will have four pastors and four lay elders, bringing us into immediate, healthy compliance.

Maintained Safeguards

This change does *not* cap the number of lay elders; the congregation remains entirely free to appoint an unlimited number of additional lay elders as qualified men are identified.

Furthermore, to ensure that a 50/50 split on the board never leads to the pastoral staff overriding the lay leadership, we are pairing this change with a **75% voting threshold**. This guarantees that even if the board is perfectly balanced in number, the pastors can never pass a motion without the support of at least half of the lay elders.

PROPOSED CHANGE #2

Article 4 – Operations

Section 1 – Congregational Meetings

Paragraph d – Affirmation or Approvals. The approval of actions shall be by vote as specified or simple majority when not specified. **To constitute a valid vote, a quorum consisting of a simple majority (more than 50%) of the total active membership must participate. This minimum voter turnout applies to all ballots, regardless of the majority required to adopt the specific motion.** Board and committees may be by consensus or acknowledged affirmation without formalized votes.

Purpose and Intent

There is nothing in the current bylaws requiring a quorum for a vote to be valid, or delineating what constitutes a quorum.

Accountability and Integrity

Adding this statement regarding a quorum prevents a small group of members from being able to make changes that impact the entire church. By requiring a quorum of more than 50% of the current active members to cast a ballot for the issue to pass, we are ensuring the integrity of the process.

PROPOSED CHANGE #3

Article 4 – Operations

Section 1 – Congregational Meetings

Paragraph d – Affirmation or Approvals

1. Elder Board Votes. On votes by the elder board (where both lay elders and pastors are voting) an approval of seventy-five percent is required for the motion to pass.

Purpose and Intent

The current bylaws do not specify a voting threshold for decisions made by the Elder Board. This amendment establishes a clear guideline, requiring a 75% supermajority for any motion to pass. The intent of this high threshold is to foster deep alignment, prayerful unity, and careful deliberation before the board moves forward with major decisions.

Ensuring Accountability and Balance

Because our pastors are paid employees and our lay elders are independent church members appointed directly by the congregation, it is vital to maintain a healthy balance of oversight. This amendment protects congregational governance by ensuring that the pastoral staff cannot pass motions without significant support from the lay elders.

To illustrate how this safeguard works in practice, should this amendment pass:

- **At the Minimum Ratio (Equal Parts Pastors and Lay Elders):** If the board consists of an equal number of pastors and lay elders, a 75% voting threshold means that even if every single pastor votes in favor of a motion, it still cannot pass without the support of at least 50% of the lay elders.
- **With a Larger Lay Elder Representation:** The amendment states that the number of lay elders must be “at least equal to the number of pastors,” allowing the congregation to appoint more lay elders as needed. If the number of lay elders exceeds the number of pastors, the percentage of lay elder approval required to pass a motion increases accordingly.

Outcome

This structure guarantees that the congregation's voice, represented by the lay elders, remains foundational to every governing decision the board makes.

PROPOSED CHANGE #4

Standardizing Voting Terms in Subsections

To eliminate ambiguity across various articles, we are standardizing the language to read "**of the members voting**" for all specific voting thresholds. Because the (proposed amended) main article already requires more than 50% of the total membership to participate for a vote to be valid, this change simply clarifies that the winning margin is calculated from the ballots actually cast.

Purpose and Intent

In the current bylaws inconsistencies exist in how church-wide votes are described. While some sections explicitly state that a motion requires a specific percentage “of the members voting,” other sections omit this phrase. In at least one instance, the term “of the membership” is used, which could be misunderstood to mean that for a vote to pass those approving must constitute the specified percentage of the total active members, not just those voting. The original intent of the bylaws and the historic practice of our church has always been that the approval percentages apply only to those present and voting.

Clarity and Consistency

This is a clarifying update rather than a functional change to our processes. It ensures that the bylaws accurately reflect our actual practices, protecting the church from future procedural confusion or competing interpretations regarding how vote totals are calculated.