

Affiliated Churches Determinations about Alcohol

Open Bible Churches' Official Statement about alcohol advocates abstinence. However, in the spirit of our value, "Accountability without Undue Control," the national board of directors urges affiliated churches' leaders to identify alcohol policies, consistent with Scripture (1 Timothy 3:2-7), that are applicable to the cultures of their churches and communities. The following list of options is intended to assist you in considering and identifying your church policies regarding alcohol. You are not limited to these options. Please submit a copy of your alcohol determinations to your regional office.

OUR CHURCH ALCOHOL POLICIES:

Check those which apply and record them in official governing board minutes

1. Alcohol Policy for Pastor/Pastoral Staff

Credentialed ministers are part of Open Bible's corporate testimony and our church's community testimony. Ministers are called to live holy lives: *Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord* (Hebrews 12:14 NIV). That requires being sober and alert at all times to the lion-like drive of the enemy to devour (1 Peter 5:8).

Great care and sensitivity should be exercised regarding the consumption of alcohol. Public settings where there are people for whom witnessing our pastors consuming alcohol would become a stumbling block in their own faith or quest to break free from alcoholism, call for avoidance of alcohol (Romans 14:13 -23). We ask our pastors to be discrete, exercising sensitivity for others. *You may believe there's nothing wrong with what you are doing but keep it between yourself and God* (Romans 14:22, NLT).

Our pastors should always demonstrate respect for the people to whom they are ministering or with whom they are having fellowship. There may be people in that circle for whom abstinence from alcohol is a strong conviction. We want our pastors to know their audience and relationships, and to err on the side of caution and private freedom.

We ask our pastors to request a trusted friend to monitor and hold them accountable to not: use alcohol to dull awareness, develop a dependency on alcohol, or consume alcohol to the point of impairment. It is important for our pastors to know where to draw the line and stop before ever reaching it in any setting.

Alcohol should never be submitted as a ministry expense. Honor our church by not charging or paying for alcohol as an expense to the church.

Abstinence from alcohol is a condition of pastoral employment with our church. If prospective pastors have previously consumed alcohol prior to assuming employment with our church, we require them to abstain upon assuming employment with our church.

2. Alcohol Policy for Our Church

Because of scriptural exhortations against becoming a stumbling block to people (Romans 14:13-23) and in light of the destructiveness of alcohol to families, individual health, relationships, careers, and public safety, our church chooses to exercise protective wisdom and care by not promoting, serving, or making provision for consumption of alcohol at events or functions sponsored by or under the auspices of our church.

We do not permit outside groups to serve alcohol or permit its consumption in our facilities or on our property.

Under no circumstances will our church include a fermented element in communion, including offering it as an option. This flows from concern for recovering alcoholics, enables participation of children and young people, demonstrates sensitivity to the negative effect alcohol has had upon many families and individuals, and displays a consistent testimony on the part of our church.

Other policies:

Name of Church _____

City/State _____

Date _____

Signed: