

Name: Elizabeth K. Barber

Tell us about your background. Include children attending the school, employment, education, etc.

I have been married to Michael Barber for 20 years. We have six children: Timothy (11th), Lucas (10th), Meredith (8th), Andrew (6th), Joseph (1st) and Judah (Pre-K). Our oldest son has been a student at Liberty Common High School for three years and our other school-aged children have transitioned from our homeschool to Liberty over the last two years. All six are enrolled for 2019-2020.

I graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2000 with a B.S. degree in Business Administration, concentration in Marketing. While a student, I was actively involved in my professional business fraternity, Alpha Kappa Psi. I worked for State Farm in Bloomington, IL for one year before leaving the professional work force in 2001 to move to Colorado and raise our family.

From 2006-2018, I served as the primary educator of our children in our home. This was a highly challenging yet rewarding experience for which I am very thankful. From 2009-2016, I was deeply involved in a local homeschool community (originally Classical Conversations) teaching classes of homeschooled students once a week. Depending on the year, I taught various subjects including memory work, English grammar, writing, geometry, Latin, and philosophy. While I was not and am not necessarily an expert in all of these areas, I take great pleasure in learning new things, so this was a joyful opportunity. I regularly took classes and attended seminars and conferences in the field of classical education most often through the CiRCE Institute (developers of Lost Tools of Writing, used in Liberty's 8th grade composition class) and Classical Academic Press (developers of Song School Latin, used in Liberty's early grades). Additionally, I trained other homeschool moms to serve in a similar capacity and developed programs and curricula as needed (all of these activities further enabled my book addiction, but I'm not complaining!). I recently served on the non-profit board of directors for Centennial Children's Chorus from 2017-2018. I most enjoy learning, connecting with others, and discovering the beauty and meaning that surrounds us.

Please share your thoughts on the role of schools and how it can best provide for excellent education.

I am 100% in favor of school choice. I greatly appreciate our own experiences both homeschooling and at Liberty Common. Because student and family needs are highly individual, students and families are best served through access to a variety of options. I believe society is best served when parents direct their children's education.

Liberty's history demonstrates what motivated and involved parents can accomplish on behalf of their children. Having been intimately involved in fledgling homeschool communities, I have great appreciation for the enormity of such an undertaking and the sacrifices involved particularly by the founders. This also informs my desire to help sustain that effort by serving on the BOD.

Modern education has done all of us a disservice. Liberty has rightly identified key components of excellence and fairness in education for other schools to emulate. Please see my Statement of Philosophy for detailed thoughts on classical education.

Tell us what books you have read on education and education reform.

The Well-Trained Mind by Susan Wise-Bauer introduced me to the realm of education and education reform in 2001. Gracing my shelves and filling my mind since then (though not all of the following have been read in their entirety):

For the Children's Sake Susan Schaeffer Macaulay

Teaching the Trivium Harvey & Laurie Bluedorn

Knowing and Teaching Elementary Mathematics Liping Ma

A Thomas Jefferson Education Oliver Van DeMille

Building Foundations of Scientific Understanding Bernard Nebel, Ph.D.

Nebel's Elementary Education: Creating a Tapestry of Learning Bernard Nebel, Ph.D.

The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture Mary Carruthers

Norms and Nobility: A Treatise on Education David Hicks

The Liberal Arts Tradition Ravi Jain & Kevin Clark

Awakening Wonder: A Classical Guide to Truth, Goodness, and Beauty Steve Turley, Ph.D.

Beauty Will Save the World: Recovering the Human in an Ideological Age Gregory Wolfe

Poetic Knowledge James Taylor

Teaching Children Diane Lopez

The Three R's Ruth Beechick

You Can Teach Your Child Successfully Ruth Beechick

A Biblical Home Education Ruth Beechick

Books Children Love Elizabeth Wilson

The Read-Aloud Handbook Jim Trelease

Honey for a Child's Heart Gladys Hunt

100 Top Picks for Homeschool Curriculum Cathy Duffy

Educating the Whole-Hearted Child Sally Clarkson

The Paideia Proposal Mortimer Adler

Ten Ways to Destroy the Imagination of Your Child Anthony Esolen

Life Under Compulsion: Ten Ways to Destroy the Humanity of Your Child Anthony Esolen

Charlotte Mason Companion Karen Andreola

Original Homeschool Series Vol. 1: Home Education Charlotte Mason

Original Homeschool Series Vol. 2: Parents and Children Charlotte Mason

Original Homeschool Series Vol. 3: School Education Charlotte Mason

Original Homeschool Series Vol. 4: Ourselves Charlotte Mason

Original Homeschool Series Vol. 5: Formation of Character Charlotte Mason

Original Homeschool Series Vol. 6: A Philosophy of Education Charlotte Mason

When Children Love to Learn: A Practical Application of Charlotte Mason's Philosophy for Today Elaine Cooper

Consider This: Charlotte Mason and the Classical Tradition Karen Glass

Deconstructing Penguins: Parents, Kids, and the Bond of Reading Lawrence & Nancy Goldstone

Dreamers, Discoverers & Dynamos: How to Help the Child Who is Bright, Bored, and Having Problems in School Lucy Jo Palladino, Ph.D.

Teach Like a Champion: 62 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College Doug Lemov

Repairing the Ruins Douglas Wilson

The Seven Laws of Teaching John Milton Gregory

The Soul of Science Nancy Pearcey & Charles Thaxton

Saving Leonardo Nancy Pearcey

Protocol Matters: Cultivating Social Graces in Christian Homes and Schools Sandra Boswell

Simply Classical: A Beautiful Education for any Child Cheryl Swope

The Latin-Centered Curriculum Andrew A. Campbell

How Dante Can Save Your Life Rod Dreher

The Schools We Need: And Why We Don't Have Them E.D. Hirsch, Jr.

Cultural Literacy E.D. Hirsch, Jr.

The Core Knowledge Series E.D. Hirsch, Jr.

Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong William Kilpatrick

The Core: Teaching Your Child the Foundations of Classical Education Leigh Bortins

The Question: Teaching Your Child the Essentials of Classical Education Leigh Bortins

The Conversation: Challenging Your Student with a Classical Education Leigh Bortins

How have you contributed to Liberty Common School to date?

I have enjoyed volunteering in Joey's Kindergarten and 1st grade classes twice a month for the last two years and also at various events at both schools including Fall Festival, Grandparents Day, and Eagle Games. I have fed our beloved LCHS teachers during Parent-Teacher Conferences and have served on the Teacher Appreciation Week Committee. I thoroughly enjoy participating in parent education events such as Festival of Ideas and the recent Junto.

Tell us of any other skills, talents or access to resources that will help you be an effective BOD member.

My experience as a parent educator gives me valuable insight on educational matters that I hope would allow me to ask good and timely questions as a board member. I have demonstrated a willingness to dig in and learn new things (including Latin!) when my children have needed me to do so. Research comes easily to me. I've spent years exploring curriculum and have had the honor to meet and interact with curriculum providers at CIRCE Institute and Classical Academic Press, for example, so serving on the Academic Advisory Committee would be an obvious place for me to contribute a core competency if needed.

Education runs in my blood. Both of my parents were educators in some form, and my sister has taught for Great Hearts classical academies in Phoenix, AZ, the nation's largest provider of classical campus-based K-12 education. As an educator myself, I desire to support Liberty's amazing staff. I am also passionate about inspiring fellow parents to understand the breadth and depth of the education Liberty provides.

I would enjoy collaborating as a team with like-minded parents. I know how to analyze an issue and exercise creative problem solving. Most importantly, Liberty can trust me to make every effort to be attentive and understand all sides of an issue in order to render wise judgment.

Why do you want to be a member of the Board of Directors?

Why do I want to serve on the Liberty Common Board of Directors? My motivation is best summarized by Thomas Jefferson: "to preserve the blessings of Liberty for ourselves and our posterity." Truly.

Having devoted the last 12 years of my life to education, I would find the board a stimulating place to further my thoughts on education and contribute meaningfully to the school that faithfully serves and blesses our family.

Cultivating young hearts and minds to perceive Truth, Goodness, and Beauty is a noble task. I would be privileged to help uphold the mission of Liberty Common School in providing excellence and fairness in education and propel the vision of Liberty as a model school into the future.