

Calvary Baptist Church

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Church Constitution

“A Going Church, for a Coming Lord”

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CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH
of
MOUNT VERNON, INDIANA

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Calvary Baptist Church, do ordain and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

NAME

This organization shall be known as Calvary Baptist Church, Inc. of Mount Vernon, Indiana. It is incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Indiana.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Preface

1. We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, and that every word of the original scriptures was breathed out by God Himself.
2. We believe that Jesus Christ is the unique, eternal son of God, one Person consisting of two natures, human and divine.
3. We believe that by virtue of His incarnation and virgin birth, Jesus Christ is completely man, yet without sin.
4. We believe that Jesus Christ voluntarily sacrificed Himself on the cross in death once for all, on behalf of mankind, bearing the sins of the entire race in His own body.
5. We believe that God created man in His own image.
6. We believe that man is a sinner; fallen from original righteousness and apart from God's redeeming grace, hopelessly lost.
7. We believe that man is justified by faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ; salvation of sinners is a gift only by the grace of God.

ARTICLES

I. Of the Scriptures

We believe that every word of the original autographs (manuscripts) of the Scriptures was verbally inspired (breathed out) by God Himself; that the Scriptures are, therefore, the unique, absolute, authoritative standard of faith and practice, to be studied, proclaimed, obeyed, and defended; that they are to be interpreted literally, historically, and grammatically unless the context clearly indicates otherwise; that every portion is without exception profitable for doctrine and Christian growth; and that all the Scriptures, from first to last, center about our Lord Jesus Christ, in His person and work, in His first and second coming; and hence that no chapter even of the Old Testament is properly read or understood until it leads to Him; and moreover that all the Scriptures from first to last, including every chapter even of the Old Testament, were designed for our practical instruction
(Explanatory)

1. By "SCRIPTURES" we mean that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation which, as originally written, does not only contain and convey the Word of God, but is the very Word of God.
2. By "INSPIRED" we mean that the books of the Bible were written by Holy Men of Old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be.

(Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Joshua 1:8; Psalms 19:7-11; Matthew 12:39-41; Luke 24:27-44; John 5:39, 6:35, 51:58, 10:7, 35; 15:1, 17:17; Acts 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:31, 14:37; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:16, 19-21, 3:15-16; Jude 3-4; Revelation 22:18-19)

II. Of God

A. Existence

We believe in one unique and infinite God, the Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, whose existence, clearly evident from what He has created and innately recognized by the conscience of man, has always been and shall always be.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 44:6; Isaiah 45 :21-22; John 17:3; Psalm 104; Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:25, 35; Matthew 6:26-30; Romans 1:19-20; Genesis 21:33; Deuteronomy 33:27; II Peter 3:8; Psalm 90:2, 4)

B. Spirituality

We believe that God is a Spirit, and as such has no physical body and is an invisible, living and life-giving Person.

(John 4:24, Luke 24:3 9, John 1:18; Romans 1:20; Colossians 1:1; I Timothy 1:17; 6:16, Psalm 84:2; Matthew 16:16, Psalm 36:9; John 5:26)

C. Trinity

We believe that God comprises three distinct Persons in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit coequal in every Divine perfection and fulfilling distinct yet harmonious functions within the Godhead.

(Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:4; John 15:26; John 16:13-14)

D. Transcendence (awe-inspiring, magnificence)

We believe in the infinite and unlimited transcendence of God: in perfection, holiness and immutability; in knowledge, omniscience; in power, omnipotence; and in presence, omnipresence.

(Exodus 15:11; Psalm 99:9; Isaiah 6:3; I Peter 1:15-16; Psalm 102:27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Proverbs 15:3; Isaiah 46:10; Hebrews 4:13; Isaiah 40; Matthew 19:26; Luke 1:27; Ephesians 3:20; Job 42:2; Psalm 139)

E. Immanence (existing in consciousness or the mind)

We believe in the immanence of God, as evidenced by His gracious love for and merciful interaction with the creation, notably with man, demonstrating His trustworthiness; righteousness and goodness, love, benevolence, mercy and grace.

(Psalm 103, Psalm 100:5; John 17:3; I John 5:20; Romans 3:4; II Chronicles 12:6; Ezra 9:15; II Timothy 4:8; Revelation 6:4; I John 4:7-8; Psalm 145:9; Matthew 5:45; Acts 14:17; Ephesians 2:4; James 5:11; I Peter 1:3; Romans 5:21; II Corinthians 12:9; Titus 2:11.)

F. Creatorship

We believe that God directly created out of nothing the universe and all that is in it, including mankind, as literally set down in Genesis 1-2; that all theories of evolution, secular or religious, not only deny observable natural law but also deny the veracity of the Scriptures and undermine the rightful authority of God over His own creation.

(Genesis 1:31; Isaiah 45:11-12, 18; John 1:3; Romans 5:12; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11)

G. Providence

We believe that God providentially oversees the affairs of the universe, both spiritual and physical, sustaining and guiding it according to His predetermined purpose; that on occasion He has used literal miracles to bring about His will (notably in the days of Moses, of Elijah and Elisha, and of Christ and His apostles); that even those things that are inherently bad and evil cannot ultimately thwart His will, but become tools in His hand to bring about the Divine consummation of history.

(Nehemiah 9:6; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3; Psalm 76:10; Acts 4:25-28)

III. Of Christ

A. Person

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the unique, eternal Son of God, one Person consisting of two natures, human and Divine.

(John 1:14,18; 3:16, 18; Hebrews 11:17; I John 4:9)

1. His Deity

We believe that as God the Son, Jesus the Christ is completely God, Possessor of Divine attributes and Agent of Divine works, to be worshipped and honored as Jehovah God Himself.

(John 1:14, 18; 3:16-18; Hebrews 1:8; I John 5:20; John 1:3; Isaiah 42:5, 45:12; Philippians 2:10-11; Isaiah 45:21-23; Matthew 3:3; Isaiah 40:3; John 12:41; Isaiah 6:1ff.; Hebrews 1:10-12; Psalm 102:25-27; Ephesians 4:7-8; Psalm 68:18; Genesis 3:15; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6)

2. His Humanity

We believe that by virtue of His incarnation and virgin birth, Jesus Christ is completely man, yet without sin, able to function as both our mediating Advocate and sustaining Comforter.

(Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14; Romans 8:34; Philippians 2:6-8; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; I John 2:1)

B. Work

We believe that according to the will of the Father, Jesus Christ took upon Himself human nature, laying aside the prerogatives of Deity; that He lived His earthly life without sin or sins, and voluntarily sacrificed Himself on the cross in bloody death once and for all on behalf of mankind, bearing the sins of the entire race in His own body; that in so doing He paid sin's penalty and appeased the wrath of God ("Sufficient for all; efficient for some."); that He rose again bodily from the grave to die no more and is exalted to the right hand of God the Father to reign forever; that only in Him, by virtue of His exalted Person and vicarious (substitutionary) work, can man find salvation from sin and death.

(Isaiah 53; Mark 10:45; John 10:11; Romans 5:8; II Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:8-11; I Peter 3:18; I John 2:2; I Corinthians 15:3-8; Matthew 28; Mark 16:1-14; Luke 24; John 20; John 14:6; Acts 4:12)

IV. Of the Holy Spirit

A. Deity

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God, coequal with the Father and the Son, as demonstrated by His attributes, works, and association within the Trinity.

(I Corinthians 2:10; Psalm 139:7; Hebrews 9:14; Genesis 1:21; II Peter 1:21; Luke 1:35; John 16:8; John 3:5-6; Titus 3:5; Romans 8:26-27; II Thessalonians 2:13; II Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:30; Matthew 28:19)

B. Personality

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person of the Godhead and as such possesses the attributes of personality.

(Acts 5:3, 9; 7:51; Matthew 12:31; I Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 4:30; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14)

C. Work

1. Within the Godhead

We believe that the Holy Spirit participated in the creation of the universe; that He empowered the writers of Scripture to pen the very breathed-out words of God, that He bears witness to the truth; and that He testifies of Christ and brings honor to Him.

(Genesis 1:2; II Peter 1:19-21; John 16:13-15; John 15:26)

2. In relation to believers

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the agent of the new birth, that He baptizes all true believers into the body of Christ, indwelling, sanctifying them, and thereby sealing them unto the day of full redemption, that He intercedes for and gives gifts to each believer, empowering, guiding, and teaching them; that the true test of His control is not how spiritually gifted a person is, nor what supernatural experience he or she enjoys, but that the person honors Christ as Lord, living in love toward the Church and in obedience to the Scriptures.

(John 3:5-7; Titus 3:5; II Corinthians 5:17; Mark 1:8; I Corinthians 12:13; John 14:16-17; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; Romans 8:16; II Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; Romans 8:26) (Romans 12:6-8; I Corinthians 12:8-11; I Peter 4:10-11; Acts 4:31; Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:16,25; Romans 8:14; I Corinthians 2:12-13; I Corinthians 12:1-11; 14:16-17, 26; Galatians 5:22-6:1)

3. In relation to the world

We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; that He restrains the evil one in the world until God's purpose is fulfilled.

(Genesis 6:3; John 16:7-11; II Thessalonians 2:6-7)

4. In relation to gifts

i. We believe that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor his gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up in the faith.

(John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; I Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18)

ii. We believe in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers.

(I Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12; Hebrews 2:1-4)

iii. We believe that there were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message; and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message. Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers. We believe that no one possess the gift of healing today but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted.

(Hebrew 2:3-4; I Corinthians 13:8-14:12; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10,12; Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; James 5:13-16; I John 5:14-15).

V. Of Man and his Fall

We believe that God created man in His own image and is, therefore, unique among all God's creation; that in Adam man willfully sinned against God, thus forfeiting his original innocence and alienating the entire race from God and eternal life; that every man from Adam's fall onward is a sinner by birth and by choice, utterly incapable apart from God of escaping his sinful condition or its rightful eternal punishment.

(Genesis 1:26; 2:7; 3:1-19; 9:6; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Psalm 51:5; 58:3; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10-23; 5:12, 17-19; I Corinthians 15:21-22; James 3:9)

VI. Of Angels

A. General characteristics

We believe that angels are spirit beings, created by God to serve as His ministers; that although some rebelled against God and thus are forever wicked and doomed, they all were created sinless and pure; that their ministries and ranks differ, but they are not to be worshipped; that their strength, appearance, and travel are beyond human capabilities; that they are immortal and do not marry; and that their proper abode is in heaven.

(Job 38:4;7; Hebrews 1:14; Psalm 104:4; Jude 6; Genesis 1:31; Revelation 19:10; II Peter 2:11; II Thessalonians 1:7; Luke 20:36; Matthew 22:30; Mark 12:25; Jude 6)

B. Holy (un-fallen) angels

We believe that the good angels (those that kept their first estate) are the spirit ministers of God: as such they proclaimed the birth of Jesus Christ and His resurrection, as well as protecting and strengthening Him; they take interest in Christians' prayer and witnessing and give aid in danger and death; and they also execute God's providence toward and judgment on the nations.

(Luke 1:26-33; 2:13; Matthew 28:2,6; Matthew 2:13; 4:11; 26:53; Luke 22:43; Hebrews 1:14; I Corinthians 4:9; I Timothy 5:21; Luke 15:10; Acts 12:7; Luke 16:22; Genesis 19:13; Daniel 10:21; Matthew 13:39; Acts 12:23; Revelation 8,9, 16; 14:6-7)

C. Fallen angels

1. Satan or the Devil

We believe in one literal, personal Devil, once a holy angel with God, who led the angelic rebellion against God and, hence, against His creation; that the Devil is the accuser of the brethren, the destroyer of men's souls, the god of this world, whose network of demons (fallen angels) carry out his battle against God and man; that just as he cannot exceed the prescribed limits of God on his activity, so he also will not ultimately succeed, but will be rendered inactive for the thousand years of the millennium and then, subsequent to one final rebellion against Christ, be cast into the lake of fire to burn forever in utter torment.

(Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Luke 10:18; John 8:44; Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; Job 1 and 2; Revelation 12:9-10; I Thessalonians 2:18; II Corinthians 4:4; 11:14-15; I Peter 5:8; Matthew 25:41; I John 3:8; Revelation 20:1-10)

2. Demons

We believe that when Satan rebelled against God, a great number of angels followed in his sin; that they are confirmed in unrighteousness, some chained in darkness awaiting their final judgment and others free to aid Satan in his efforts to thwart the purposes of God, inflicting disease and pain, possessing humans and animals, opposing God's children, promoting immorality, and spreading false doctrine; that they are nonetheless under the sovereign control of God, who can use them to carry out His own purpose; and that their doom in the lake of fire is sure.

(Daniel 10:10-14; Revelation 16:13-16; Ephesians 6:11-12; Matthew 9:33; 12:22; Acts 8:7; Mark 5:8-14; I Timothy 4:1-3; I Samuel 16:14; II Corinthians 12:7; Matthew 8:29; 25:41)

VII. Of Salvation by Grace

We believe that the salvation of sinners is a gift only by the grace of God; that it is received by turning from sin unto God through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work.

(John 1:12; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 9:24-25; 10:19; 12:24; I Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 1:5)

VIII. Of the Necessity of the New Birth (regeneration)

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again by the Spirit of God; that it is instantaneous, and not a lengthy process; that the new birth makes one that is dead in trespasses and sins a partaker of the divine nature and of eternal life, the gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of The Holy Spirit in connection with Divine Truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience by faith in the Gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and newness of life.

(John 1:12, 13, 3:1-8, 33; Romans 6:23; Acts 16:3-33; II Corinthians 5:19; Ephesians 2:1-9; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:3)

IX. Of Justification

We believe that justification is the judicial act of God whereby He declares one to be righteous, thereby pardoning his sin and that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done or ever will do, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood is His righteousness imputed to us.

(Acts 13:3, 9; II Corinthians 5:18-25; Romans 5:1, 8-11; Ephesians 1:7)

X. Of Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is an act and a process by which God sets apart all believers from sin and the world unto Himself, thus conforming them to the image of Jesus Christ, which transformation shall be made complete at the return of Christ for His saints.

(Romans 8:29; I Corinthians 1:2; Hebrews 10:14; Ephesians 1:3-4; 4:11-13; I Thessalonians 5:23-24; Philippians 1:6; 3:21; I John 3:2; Jude 24)

XI. Of Election

We believe that Election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be discovered by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to learn about it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence. This election in no way negates neither the responsibility of sinners to repent from sin and turn to God nor that of saints to proclaim the gospel of Christ to every person.

(Exodus 33:18-19; Isaiah 42:16; Jeremiah 31:3; Hos. 12:9; Matthew 20:15,16; Luke 18:7; John 6:37-40, 44, 65 10:16, 15:15-16; Rom. 3:27, 4:16, 8:28-30, 9:11, 15-16, 23-24, 10:8-17, 11:5-6, 28-29, 32-36; Acts 1:24, 13:48, 15:14; Eph. 1:3-14, 16, 4:1; Col. 3:12; Phil. 3:12; I Cor. 3:5-7; 4:7, 9:22, 15:10; 2 Tim. 1:8-9, 2:10; I Thess. 2:12-13; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; I Pet. 1:1-2; 2 Pet. 1:10-11, 2:9, 5:10; I Thess. 1:4-10; ; Heb. 6:11; James 1:17-18; I John 4:19; Revelation 22:17)

XII. Of Eternal Security (Perseverance)

We believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the merit-less on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever. We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son.

(John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16–17; 17:11; Rom. 8:29; 1 Corinthians. 6:19; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1–2; 5:13; Jude 24)

XIII. Of Assurance

We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children love for the Father, gratitude, and obedience.

(Luke 10:20; 22:32; 2 Corinthians. 5:1, 6–8; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 10:22; 1 John 5:13)

XIV. Of the Church

A. Definition

1. The Universal Church

We believe that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church, the bride of Christ, of which Christ is the head; that the formation of the church, the body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture; and that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age.

*(Acts 2:1-21, 38-47; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; II Corinthians 11:2;
Ephesians 1:22, 2:11-3:6, 4:15, 5:23-32; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 19:7-8)*

2. The local church

We believe that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit's direction by the Word; that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel and that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; and that on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, and of benevolence, the will of the local church following the Word of God is final.

(Leviticus 27:32; Malachi 3:10; Acts 15:22; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13, 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians 8:23, 24; Ephesians 5:23, 24; Colossians 1:18; 1 Peter 5:1-4, Jude 2, 3)

B. Separation

We believe that the Scriptures demand of the Church, corporately and individually, separation from this world's unrighteous system, repudiation of those that teach false doctrine and that spread discord among the brethren, and corrective disassociation from professing brethren that are flagrantly disobedient; that the carrying out of these Scriptural directives is fundamental to the spiritual integrity and survival of the church and of the individual believer; and that those professing Christian groups or individuals that refuse to obey these commands are erring brethren and should be treated as such.

(Deuteronomy 13:1-3; Matthew 7:15-20; Romans 16:17; Acts 20:28-30; Galatians 1:8-9; Ephesians 5:11; I Corinthians 5; II Corinthians 6:14-18, 11:13-15; I Timothy 1:3-7, 20, 6:3-5; II Peter 2:1-3; II Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15; I John 2:15-17, II John 9-11)

C. Officers

We believe that its scriptural offices are those of pastors (elders or bishops) and deacons whose qualification, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures.

(Acts 14:23, 6:5, 6, 15:23, 20:17-28; I Peter 5:1-4; I Timothy 3:1-7, 8-13)

D. Mission

We believe the mission of the Church is to evangelize the world, from local neighborhoods to the farthest reaches of the earth, and to make Christian disciples of those that believe, baptizing them in Christ's name and providing them the thorough and demonstrative teaching of the Word of God.

(Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8)

XV. Ordinances

We believe that the New Testament enjoins two ordinances and only two: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

1. Baptism

We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a Church membership; and to the Lord's Supper.

(Matthew 3:6, 16, 29:19; Romans 6:3-5; Acts 8:36-39; Colossians 2:12; John 3:23)

2. Lord's Supper

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of our Lord's death until He comes, by the sacred use of broken bread and drink from the fruit of the vine as symbols of the price He paid for us; that this commemoration should be preceded always by solemn self-examination; and that it is open to all true believers in right standing with God.

(Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:17-20; I Corinthians 11:23-34)

XVI. Of the Resurrection and Priesthood of Christ

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and in his ascension into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest interceding for us.

(Matthew 28:6-7; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6, 39, 51; John 20:27; Acts 1:9-11; I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 2:17; 5:9-10; 7:25; 8:6; 12:2; I John 2:1; Revelation 2:1)

XVII. Of the Last Times

A. Rapture

We believe in the pre-tribulation, pre-millennial return of Christ, an event which can occur at any moment, and that the dead in Christ will be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord Jesus in the air prior to the tribulation and millennium.

(I Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54; Philippians 3:20-2; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; II Thessalonians 2:1; Revelation 3:10)

B. Millennium

We believe in a literal thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ upon this earth which begins immediately after Christ's Second Coming, during which Satan shall be bound and believers shall serve as administrators of Christ's kingdom. We believe that Satan shall be loosed to mount a final unsuccessful rebellion against Christ and His people and shall be cast into the lake of fire, where the man of sin and the false prophet are, to burn forever.

(Zechariah 14:3-4; Revelation 20:1-10).

C. Judgment

1. Judgment Seat of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ shall judge His people to reward them for their earthly works as to their sincere worth in furthering His kingdom; that He will not judge them for their sins, due to their having been judged in His own body on the cross, but that He will judge them for rewards or the loss of them.

(Romans 14:10; II Corinthians 5:10)

2. Tribulation Judgment

We believe in a literal seven-year tribulation, during which God shall pour out judgment on the earth. We believe that the man of sin shall reign over most of the civilized world, aided by the false prophet; that he shall persecute Israel and those that have accepted Christ during this period, especially during the last three and a half years; and that both he and the false prophet shall be cast into the lake of fire after their unsuccessful battle of Armageddon against the Lamb of God, returning from heaven with His holy ones to set up His millennial kingdom.

(Revelation 6-19)

3. Great White Throne Judgment

We believe the unbelievers of all ages whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life shall be sentenced by Christ to burn in torment forever in the lake of fire.

(Revelation 14:9-11; Revelation 20:11-15)

D. Eternal State

We believe that the redeemed of the ages, in glorified bodies, shall dwell with the triune God forever, to serve and to enjoy Him in perfect peace and happiness.

(Revelation 21-22)

XVIII. Of the Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and are sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem and shall eternally dwell in His glorious heavenly presence; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the lake of fire, commonly referred to as hell.

(Genesis 18:23; Proverbs 14:32; Malachi 3:18; Matthew 25:35-41; Luke 16:25; John 8:21; Romans 6:17-18, 7:6; I John 5:10; Revelation 20: 14-15)

XIX. Of Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed: except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth. In this connection we stand firmly for the separation of the church and state.

(Exodus 18:21, 22; 2 Samuel 23:3; Psalm 72:11; Daniel 1:8-15, 3:17-18, 6:10-11; Matthew 10:28, 22:21, 23:10; Romans 13:1-7; Acts 4:19, 20, 5:29; Philippians 2:10, 11; 1 Timothy 2:1, 2; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 14, 17; Revelation 11:16)

XX. Of the Family

We believe that the Bible specifically places man and woman in a Biblical, God-commanded relationship and that God instituted the marriage relationship between man and woman; and the creation of the Biblical family. We therefore hold that it is totally against the command and teaching of the Word of God to in any way change or pervert this order. Thus we must Biblically conclude that homosexuality, lesbianism and any other contra-biblical relationships are contrary to the Word of God and we do not accept these as alternate life-styles.

(Genesis 2:23-24; Romans 1:18-32; Ephesians 5:22-23)

COVENANT

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized (immersed) in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We agree, therefore, as the Holy Spirit directs us, to walk together in brotherly love; to exercise Christian care and watchfulness over one another; to remember each other in prayer; to participate in one another's joys and sorrows; to cultivate courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense and always ready to make reconciliation, being mindful of the Scripture's teaching, to secure it without delay; to encourage one another unto love and good works; and to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together.

We propose to strive for the advancement of the Calvary Baptist Church in grace, knowledge, and holiness; to be faithful in attendance at the regular services; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; to sustain its worship, ordinances, and doctrines; and to contribute cheerfully and liberally to the financial support of its ministries.

We further propose to maintain personal and family devotions; and to educate our children in the Word of God, bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; and to avail ourselves of the great privilege of prayer for one another and for all men. Finally, we will undertake to walk circumspectly and watchfully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to refrain from gossip, backbiting, and excessive anger; to maintain a clear separation from all religious apostasy and all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations [*"Abstain from (all appearance / every form) of evil."* I Thessalonians 5:22]; endeavoring by example and by word to win souls to Jesus Christ, for whose glory and by whose power we live. And, to make Christ first in all things both spiritual and temporal (worldly.)

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP

I. Definition:

The membership of this church shall consist only of those who have professed personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and have subsequently been scripturally baptized and who subscribe to the Statement of Faith, Covenant and By-laws of this church.

II. Admission to membership:

A. Persons wishing to become members of the church shall notify the pastor of their desire. Upon such notification they shall become candidates.

B. Each candidate shall meet with the membership committee (consisting of the pastors and deacons) to give testimony of their personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, their scriptural baptism or to make arrangements to be baptized. Each candidate shall also express their willingness to abide by the Statement of Faith, Covenant and By-laws of this church.

C. Candidates for membership shall be baptized by this church or give testimony to their previous baptism by immersion, following salvation (or when appearing before the membership committee, provide a letter of recommendation from another church of like faith and order). Any candidate, who has not yet been baptized, may not be received into membership until after baptism.

D. Each candidate shall attend new member classes conducted by the pastors or deacons. This requirement may be waived by the membership committee, if during the meeting required in the preceding paragraph, the candidate demonstrates evidence of their understanding of the terms and conditions of the Statement of Faith, Covenant and By-laws of this church.

E. Each candidate shall be approved by a majority vote of the members upon recommendation of the membership committee. This vote may only be taken at a regularly scheduled church meeting or at a meeting called specifically for this purpose (*see Government, Section B.*) This action shall make the candidate a member of this church. Special provisions apply to members under eighteen (18) years of age (*see Membership Section V.B below.*)

F. Each new member shall receive the right hand of fellowship, immediately following the reading of the church Covenant by a member of the membership committee. (This may be done either immediately following the meeting at which the vote was taken or at the next regular communion service of the church. The appropriate time shall be determined by the pastor.)

III. Duties of Members

In order that persons applying for church membership may be informed as to the duties of members, they shall read the church's constitution (Statement of Faith, Covenant and By-laws) and shall subscribe to it, both in letter and spirit at all times.

MEMBERSHIP

IV. Privileges of members

- A. Shall be eligible to hold office and leadership positions in this church.
- B. Shall be eligible to vote at a business meeting of this church.
- C. Shall be eligible to teach on a regular basis in this church.

V. Members

A. Full membership (good and regular standing):

- 1. Regularly attending the services of the church.
- 2. Giving evidence of a life that adheres to the church Covenant and Statement of Faith.
- 3. Giving evidence of real interest in the material welfare of this church.

B. Associate membership

An associate membership roll shall be maintained for those who desire the fellowship of this church.

An associate member shall not be entitled to hold any office or vote in church matters.

- 1. Associate membership will be granted to those under the age of eighteen (18) years. At the first meeting of the membership committee following a members eighteenth birthday, the committee shall review the present status of any such member. Written notice of the committee's action shall be provided to the member.
- 2. Associate membership may be granted to temporary residents who retain membership in a church of like faith and practice, such as students, teachers, retirees, military personnel, missionaries, etc. who are living in our area for only part of the year. They will be received in the same manner as regular members. As Associate members they will come under the watch care of the church while residing in the area.
- 3. Associate membership may be granted, upon written request to the membership committee, to members in good and regular standing (such as missionaries, other Christian workers, and those temporarily called away due to employment or schooling) and those members whose physical and/or mental condition has made it impossible for them to attend services for the previous six months. (Those having become Associate members by this provision may be reinstated to good and regular standing simply by attending services on a regular basis for a one month period. At that time full membership privileges will be restored. Written notice of the committee's action shall be provided to the member.)

VI. Dismissal of Members

Termination of membership shall be recommended by the membership committee of pastors and deacons. (The exception is the death of a member, which shall be cause for immediate, automatic removal from the membership rolls.) With the church's approval by majority vote, of those present and voting, dismissal shall be by one of the following:

- A. At the individual's request for transfer of membership to another church of like faith and practice. (At the church's discretion, letters of transfer may be granted any member in good and regular standing at the request of a particular church of like faith and practice.)
- B. At the individual's request for personal reasons.
- C. As a result of church discipline (*see Membership, Section VII.*)

1 Privileges are effective after being a member for a minimum of 6 months, except for Deacons (see BY-LAWS

Sect. IV:4:C:1)

MEMBERSHIP

VII. Discipline of Members:

- A. It is the duty of the church to exercise discipline of any member who persists in sin and

disobedience (*Mt. 18:15-20; II Thes. 3:6, 14*). The purpose of this action is to maintain the purity and testimony of the local assembly and for the restoration of disciplined member to proper fellowship with Christ and the local church (*I Cor. 5:5-7*). The member in question is to be removed from the membership roll (*I Cor. 5:11-13*).

B. Should it become necessary to exclude a member from the membership of the church, the procedure as given in *Matt. 18:15-17* will be carried out by the pastors and deacons.

C. The pastors and deacons shall, by majority vote, make a determination that all reasonable spiritual means of persuasion and prayer have not effected a change in the errant member's actions and that the conduct of the errant member justifies dismissal. Upon making such determination the deacons shall recommend to the members the dismissal of the errant member from the membership of the church. If such a determination is not made the matter shall be dropped and any written record of a recommendation for dismissal shall be destroyed.

D. The content of the pastors' and deacons' written recommendation shall include only the grounds necessary to justify dismissal.

E. At the meeting of the membership for voting on the dismissal, only voting members may be present during consideration of disciplinary dismissal, and passage of the dismissal shall require majority vote of the members present and voting. If the voting members fail to vote for dismissal all written records of the actions taken leading to the vote shall be destroyed. Voting shall be conducted by secret ballot.

F. The attitude of the church toward any person excluded from its membership shall be one of love and prayerful compassion (*II Thes. 3:15*). Forgiveness and restoration shall be speedily granted to a disciplined member who shows true repentance and evidence of a godly life (*II Cor. 2:7*).

CHURCH BY-LAWS

I. Government

The government is vested in the body of believers of which the church membership is composed.

II. Meetings

A. Regular Services

Regular Services (for instruction, worship, evangelism, and fellowship) shall include the following:

1. Sunday services, morning and evening
2. Midweek prayer and Bible study;
3. Baptismal services when needed, usually in conjunction with other regular services.
4. The Lord's Supper, at least once per quarter, usually during a Sunday service; and
5. Special emphasis meetings such as missionary conferences, Bible conferences, evangelistic services, as the pastor senses the Lord's leading. After consultation with the Board of Deacons, the pastor will submit plans and a budget for such meetings for approval by the members at a regular business meeting of the church.

B. Business Meetings

1. Regular Business Meetings

Regular business meetings of the church shall be held in February, May, August, and November, unless otherwise voted by a majority of members of the church at a regular or special business meeting. The February meeting is also defined as the "annual" business meeting of the church. The annual business meeting in February will be held at the time of the evening service on the third (3rd) Sunday. The May, August and November meetings will be held at the time of the midweek service on the third (3rd) Wednesday of the designated months. The time and place of each business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit on at least two (2) Sundays prior to the meeting. Written notice shall be posted in a prominent place in the church during regular services from the date of the first announcement until the meeting.

2. Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings may be called for by the pastor, or by a majority of the deacons, or by a majority of the trustees or by any 10 members in good and regular standing, at any time, provided notice is given in the manner required for regular business meetings. The business topic(s) to be considered at a special meeting shall be clearly and narrowly defined; announced from the pulpit and posted in writing. No unannounced, un-posted business may

be conducted or discussed at a special meeting (*see below; II.B.9 Unauthorized meetings*).

3. Budget Meetings

Budget meetings for adopting the proposed budget or other necessary business shall be held during the regular business meeting in November or at a specially called meeting for that purpose prior to January 1 of the year the budget is to go into effect. The church fiscal year shall begin January 1 and conclude December 31.

4. Election Meetings

Election meetings for the election of officers and workers shall be held during the quarterly (“annual”) business meeting in February. Officers and workers shall assume the responsibility for their positions on the first Sunday in March. The church year for officers, workers, classes, and committees shall commence and end with the first Sunday in March. The church operations year shall begin on March 1 and conclude on February 28 (February 29 in a “leap” year.)

5. Chairman

The pastor shall moderate all meetings described in this section (*II.B Business Meetings*), except for the purpose of meeting for the requirements of investigating the need to terminate the pastor’s service by Church action. In his absence the vice-chairman of the deacons shall serve as moderator *pro tem*. In the absence of both the pastor and vice-chairman of the deacons, then the senior deacon present shall serve as moderator *pro tem*. Should neither the pastor nor any deacon be available to moderate, then the meeting shall be cancelled and rescheduled (*see below; II. B.6 Rescheduling*)

6. Rescheduling

Meetings may be rescheduled by the pastor in consultation with the deacons or by a majority vote of the members.

7. Voting

Members of the church in good and regular standing, and present in person may vote on matters of business that are properly presented at any business meeting, providing the member is eighteen (18) years of age or older. No absentee or proxy votes shall be accepted.

8. Rules of Order

In matters not covered by this constitution, Robert’s Rules of Order shall be the authorized procedure for all church business meetings.

9. Unauthorized Meetings

Action taken at a meeting called or held in a manner other than as set forth in this article is null and void.

III. Offices

A. Organization.

The church offices are to be organized in two major groups: Primary Offices and Structural Offices. Primary Offices include those offices which are vital, as scripturally stated, to the Body of Christ in its spiritual progress and are perpetually required for the function of the church. Structural Offices are those which by reason of organizational necessity and expedience are appointed to carry out necessary duties for the corporate benefit. All office holders must be members in good and regular standing.

B. General Standards for Officers and workers

1. Officers and workers are in positions of respect and example. All those elected or appointed to offices or positions as workers must conscientiously endeavor to live faithfully to the Lord. All officers and workers must be church members living in dedication to the Lord.
2. They shall abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and the abuse of drugs.
3. They shall abstain from worldly practices and amusements that hinder their own spiritual life and testimony or that set a poor example for young Christians.
4. They shall be faithful in personal Bible study and prayer, soul-winning efforts, stewardship responsibilities, and attendance at regular church services unless providentially hindered.
5. They shall set the example in all matters of Christian conduct as set forth in, but not limited to, the church Covenant.

IV. Primary Offices

A. Pastor

1. Qualifications:

The pastor shall be a male having been called of God to preach and meeting the scriptural qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-11. He must believe and without qualification adhere to the Word of God, the church constitution and by-laws, the articles of faith; the spiritual and moral standards set forth in the constitution, and be uncompromising in preaching these truths. Before a man may be considered as a candidate, he shall appear before the Pulpit Committee who shall examine him to determine if he meets these qualifications:

- i. He is in total agreement with the Articles of Faith and Constitution of this church and will continue to support them if called to serve as pastor of this church.
- ii. He must be husband of one wife (never divorced).
- iii. He is to be above reproach.
- iv. He is to be temperate.
- v. He is to be prudent.
- vi. He is to be respectable.
- vii. He is to be hospitable.
- viii. He is to be able to teach.
- ix. He is not to be a user of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages or any type of mind altering or addictive illegal drugs.
- x. He is not to be pugnacious, but gentle and peaceable.
- xi. He is to be free from the love of money.
- xii. He is to manage his own household well.
- xiii. He is not to be a new convert.
- xiv. He is to have a good reputation with those outside the church.
- xv. He has never been convicted of any form of sexual misconduct or child abuse and is not now under any cloud of suspicion or formal charge of the same.
- xvi. He is willing to authorize and give consent to a criminal records check prior to being presented to the church for consideration as pastor.

2. Calling:

In calling a pastor, due notice shall be given by the Board of Deacons, and at a regular or special meeting of the church, an election by secret ballot, shall be held and two-thirds of the members present and voting shall be required to elect.

3. Consideration:

When a pastor is called, the church shall provide the following:

- i. A housing allowance to be determined by the Board, or use of the church parsonage with reasonable and normal expenses as determined by the Board, being paid by the church including the following:
 - a. Property maintenance, except that the pastor will be responsible for routine yard care.
 - b. Water and sewer.
 - c. Gas and electric.
 - d. Base telephone service and all church related tolls.
 - e. Trash disposal.
- ii. A travel allowance as determined by the Board.
- iii. Reasonable and normal office expenses as determined by the Board.
- iv. Workman's compensation as mandated by Indiana State law. Medical and hospitalization insurance allowance to be reviewed annually by the Board. A pastor engaging in part-time self-employment, independent of his church related duties, will be responsible for all insurance related to that employment.
- v. A cash salary, subject to modification if the pastor is part time. (Calvary Baptist Church is an "Electing church" as defined in IRS regulations and does not withhold federal or state taxes from pastor's salaries!)
- vi. Pension costs, not to exceed Social Security costs, as determined by the Board. (The

church does not participate in the Social Security system.)

vii. Vacation time to be established at the time of employment. Subsequent scheduling to be arranged between the Board of Deacons and the pastor.

viii. While recognizing that a pastor's services may be needed at any time, the church also recognizes the sanctity of the family and that the pastor and his family are also human, therefore normal time for family life will be expected.

4. Duties:

In accepting the call to be the pastor of this church, the pastor:

i. Shall have special charge of the spiritual interests of the church, conferring with the deacons as his assistants.

ii. Shall take oversight willingly, and shall by example, teaching, and organization seek to equip the saints for work of ministry as prescribed in Ephesians 4:11-16; II Timothy 3:15, 4:5; and Matthew 28:18-20.

iii. Shall be an *ex-officio* member of all boards and committees of the church. By his choice he may not be in attendance.

iv. His wife shall join the membership of this church within six months after he accepts the call to become the pastor of this church. The vote to call him as pastor will also be the vote to accept him into membership. The pastor's wife shall go through the normal membership procedure.

v. The pastor shall perform the normal services of a Baptist pastor in:

a. Services of worship, prayer, praise and administering the ordinances.

b. Special services or activities as scheduled by the members, and/or Board of Deacons.

c. Officiating at weddings or funerals for members of this church when requested.

Believing that spiritual support by the fellowship of this church with one another in times of weddings and funerals is an important act of Christian love and sharing of burdens, the pastor in discharging his responsibilities of pastoral care and comfort will not mandate fees for such services. But also recognizing the principle of I Timothy 5:17-18, he may accept tokens of appreciation.

d. Making pastoral calls especially to the sick, and others in need of, or those who have requested pastoral counseling. He shall make every reasonable effort to know and become known to each member of this church.

vi. Shall make known scheduled times (office hours) when any member of this congregation can communicate with him. Special or emergency situations take precedence over this responsibility. If the pastor is to be away from the area overnight, he shall leave information of how he may be reached with at least one of the deacons.

vii. Shall consult with the Board of Deacons regarding being absent from any of the regular services of the church for purposes such as speaking at special services and conferences elsewhere. Consideration shall be given to him for missionary trips and attendance at conferences or framing sessions that benefit him and the church. If funds are available, the church may consider assistance in paying for such professional expenses. Any other absences also need to be arranged with the deacons so that the church functions continue properly.

5, Evaluation:

i. Each year before the pastor's anniversary of service to this church, the pastor shall meet with the Board of Deacons to evaluate the spiritual condition of the church, and the pastor's services to the church along with the results of such services. They shall determine the appropriate action(s), (i.e. – change in compensation, hiring of more staff) where necessary for the improvement of the church.

ii. At the fifth such evaluation, consideration should be given as to whether the pastor can make further contributions toward the Christian growth of the church or as to whether, for the betterment of both, pastoral relations should be dissolved. If the recommendation is for dissolution, it shall be presented to the members at a called business meeting for acceptance or rejection by a majority vote by secret ballot of those present.

iii. If a majority votes to dissolve pastoral relations, thirty days notice shall be given by the

church. At its discretion, the Board of Deacons may terminate the pastor's service at any point in the thirty day period, by paying any remaining salary and benefits that would accrue during the period.

6. Termination of office:

- i. By resignation: The pastor may resign at any time and his duties be terminated 30 days from the date of his resignation or at another time mutually agreeable to both the pastor and the church.
- ii. By church action: Any difficulty arising from unsatisfactory service (unfaithfulness to his duties), immorality, apostasy, heresy or a departure from the fundamentals of the faith as contained in this constitution shall be investigated by the deacons. If it is considered by the deacons to be necessary, a special business meeting shall be called. The church shall consider their findings and decide regarding the dismissal of the pastor. A majority vote by secret ballot of members present is necessary to dismiss a pastor. In such cases his pastoral duties shall terminate immediately, and his salary shall cease 30 days from the date of the dismissal.

B. Associate or Assistant Pastors

Associate or assistant pastors may be elected when needed.

1. Qualifications:

Qualifications shall be identical to those of the pastor.

2. Calling:

Calling shall be identical to that of the pastor. Except that no candidate may be presented to the church for calling who does not have the unqualified support of the pastor.

3. Consideration:

When an Associate or Assistant pastor is called, the church shall offer a package of salary and benefits tailored to the needs of the pastor and within the budgetary constraints of the church. The Pulpit Committee shall determine the needs of the candidate prior to his presentation to the church as a candidate.

4. Duties:

For the sake of harmony in serving the Lord, the pastor will have complete oversight and scheduling of work for all Associate or Assistant pastors.

- i. He shall take assignments willingly, and shall by example, teaching, and organization seek to equip the saints for work of ministry as prescribed in Ephesians 4:11-16; II Timothy 3:15, 4:5; and Matthew 28:18-20.
- ii. He shall be an *ex-officio* member of all boards and committees of the church. By his choice he may not be in attendance, unless directed to be present by the pastor.
- iii. His wife shall join the membership of this church within six months after he accepts the call to become a pastor of this church. The vote to call him as a pastor will also be the vote to accept him into membership. The pastor's wife shall go through the normal membership procedure.
- iv. At the direction of the pastor he may perform the normal services of a Baptist pastor in:
 - a. Services of worship, prayer, praise and administering the ordinances.
 - b. Special services or activities as scheduled by the members, and/or Board of Deacons.
 - c. Officiating at weddings or funerals for members of this church when requested and in accordance with the church's wedding policy. Believing that spiritual support by the fellowship of this church with one another in times of weddings and funerals is an important act of Christian love and sharing of burdens, the pastor in discharging his responsibilities of pastoral care and comfort will not mandate fees for such services. But also recognizing the principle of I Timothy 5:17-18, he may accept tokens of appreciation.
 - d. Making pastoral calls especially to the sick, and others in need of, or those who have requested pastoral counseling.
 - v. As directed by the pastor, make known scheduled times (office hours) when any member of this congregation can communicate with him. Special or emergency situations take precedence over this responsibility. If he is to be away from the area overnight, he shall

leave information of how he may be reached with the pastor (or a deacon in the pastor's absence).

vi. He shall consult with the Board of Deacons regarding being absent from any of the regular services of the church for purposes such as speaking at special services and conferences elsewhere. Consideration shall be given to him for missionary trips and attendance at conferences or framing sessions that benefit him and the church. If funds are available, the church may consider assistance in paying for such professional expenses. Any other absences also need to be arranged with the Board of Deacons so that the church functions continue properly.

5. Evaluation:

Each year before his anniversary of service to this church, he shall meet with the Board of Deacons to evaluate his services to the church along with the results of such services. The pastor will provide a written evaluation of his performance. Consideration should be given as to whether he can make further contributions toward the Christian growth of the church or as to whether, for the betterment of both, pastoral relations should be dissolved. The deacons shall seriously consider any such recommendations made by the pastor, and if the recommendation is for dissolution, it shall be presented to the members at a called business meeting for acceptance or rejection by a majority vote by secret ballot of those present. If a majority votes to dissolve pastoral relations, thirty days notice shall be given by the church. At its discretion, the Board may terminate the pastor's service at any point in the thirty day period, by paying any remaining salary and benefits that would accrue during the period.

6. Termination of office:

i. By resignation: The Assistant / Associate may resign at any time and his duties be terminated 30 days from the date of his resignation or at another time mutually agreeable to both him and the church.

ii. If the pastor should resign from the church, all Associate or Assistant pastors are to also tender their resignations unless otherwise asked to remain in the position by the church until another pastor is called who will have the same privilege of approving his Assistant / Associate pastors.

iii. By church action: Any difficulty arising from unsatisfactory service (unfaithfulness to his duties), immorality, apostasy, heresy or a departure from the fundamentals of the faith as contained in this constitution shall be investigated by the deacons. If it is considered by the deacons to be necessary, a special business meeting shall be called. The church shall consider their findings and decide regarding the dismissal of the pastor. A majority vote by secret ballot of members present is necessary to dismiss a pastor. In such cases his pastoral duties shall terminate immediately, and his salary shall cease 30 days from the date of the dismissal.

C. Deacons

1. Qualifications

i. Deacons shall be male and shall meet the scriptural qualifications of the office set forth in the New Testament (*Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13*), having been full members of the church for at least twelve (12) months.

ii. Due to some difference of opinion as to the meaning of I Timothy 3:12, "Let the deacons be the husband of one wife..."; and the declining view of marriage vows, we as a church do not believe a person that is divorced or married to a divorcee is Scripturally qualified for the position of a deacon.

2. Election and Tenure

i. The pastor and deacons shall present a list of nominees for the office to the members at the annual business meeting. The members shall elect the deacon(s) by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present and voting shall be required to elect a deacon. Deacons can not serve more than two consecutive terms of three (3) years each, but may be reelected after being out of office one (1) year. The number of deacons should be a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of seven (7), with one or two being elected at each annual meeting in order to preserve a continuity of membership on the Board

of Deacons. The needs of the church and the number of men scripturally qualified to serve shall determine the number of deacons. New deacons shall be installed during a dedication service following their election.

ii. Special provision for current “life” Deacons (“grandfather” clause). The current deacons having been elected to serve “life” terms and duly ordained by the church may continue to hold this office for life if they remain members of this church in good and regular standing.

3. Responsibilities

i. The deacons shall assist the pastor in carrying on the work of the church, as is illustrated in Acts 6. They shall relieve the pastor of the responsibilities he delegates to them in order to better meet the needs of the church.

ii. A vice-chairman and secretary shall be elected from among their number at the first deacons’ meeting of the church year. Deacons’ meetings shall be held monthly. The pastor shall be the chairman for all deacons’ meetings. Special deacons’ meetings may be called by the pastor as needed.

iii. Except for the purpose of meeting for the requirements of investigating the need to terminate the pastor’s service by Church action (*see IV.A.6.ii Termination of Pastor by church action*), no deacons’ meetings may be held without the pastor’s presence or his consent to meet without him. Should the office of pastor be vacant, then this prohibition does not apply.

4. Dismissal

Upon submission of evidence of any deacon’s immorality, apostasy, heresy, unfaithfulness to his duties, departure from the Statement of Faith, Covenant or By-laws, or if he no longer agrees with the uncompromising stand of this church, the pastor with the concurrence of three-fourths (3/4) of the other deacons shall recommend to the members that the errant deacon be dismissed from his position as a deacon at a special business meeting called for this purpose. A majority vote of the members present and voting by secret ballot shall be required to dismiss a deacon. At the pastor’s sole discretion, a special election may be called to fill the dismissed deacon’s position.

V. Structural Offices

A. Trustees

1. Election

The Board of Trustees shall consist of six (6) members. At the first election, two (2) shall be elected for three years, two (2) for two years and two (2) for one year. Thereafter, two (2) trustees shall be elected each year for a term of three years. Trustees can not serve more than two consecutive terms of three (3) years each, but may be reelected after being out of office one (1) year.

2. Duties

i. The Board of Trustees shall be entrusted with the temporal affairs of the church in accordance with the articles of this Constitution, and make funds available for repair, upkeep, maintenance, and conservation of the church property within the limits of church income and budget.

ii. A vice-chairman of trustees shall be elected at the first trustees’ meeting of the church year. Trustees’ meetings shall be held monthly. The pastor shall be the Chairman for all trustees’ meetings. (He may delegate this responsibility to the vice-chairman of deacons when necessary.) Special trustees’ meetings may be called by the pastor as needed.

Except for the purpose of meeting to approve an emergency repair of property, no trustees’ meetings may be held without the pastor’s presence or his consent to meet without him or his designated representative. The church clerk will serve as secretary for the Board of Trustees (*ex-officio* member with no voting privilege). The church treasurer shall also be an *ex-officio* member with no voting privilege.

iii. After consultation with the treasurer, the trustees shall have the authority to appropriate discretionary budgeted funds for new equipment, not to exceed \$2,500.00. (An appropriation may not be approved if the treasurer is of the opinion that the expense

would seriously impair the church's ability to meet its' non-discretionary expenses). Either the vice-chairman of trustees' or a majority of the Board of Trustees may approve emergency (unbudgeted) repair of property, etc., not to exceed \$500.00, without vote of the church. The trustees' may approve routine maintenance of property, etc. not to exceed \$100.00 per month, without consultation with the treasurer and without vote of the church.

3. Dismissal

Upon submission of evidence of any trustee's immorality, apostasy, heresy, unfaithfulness to his duties, departure from the Statement of Faith, Covenant or Constitution, or if they no longer agree with the uncompromising stand of this church, the pastor with the concurrence of the deacons shall recommend to the members that the errant trustee be dismissed from their position as a trustee at a special business meeting called for this purpose. A majority vote of the members present and voting by secret ballot shall be required to dismiss a trustee. At the pastor's sole discretion, a special election may be called to fill the dismissed trustee's position.

B. Annually Elected Officers

All annually elected officers shall by definition serve for one (1) year. No annually elected officer may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office, but may be re-elected after being out of office for one year. All annually elected officers are subject to the same dismissal provisions as those for trustees (*see above, Article IV, Structural Offices, Section I.C*).

1. Treasurer

The treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds received by the church and shall disburse as directed by the church body or church boards. The treasurer shall be a non-voting, *ex-officio* member of the Board of Trustees. The treasurer shall be elected at the annual election meeting. He or she is responsible to keep an accurate account of all monetary receipts and disbursements. He or she is to post financial statements monthly and provide them at the regular and annual business meetings. Financial records are to be available to the pastor and deacons upon request, or to others authorized by the pastor, deacons, or a vote of a majority of the members at any business meeting, to examine them. The treasurer and one (1) other person designated from time to time by the pastor and deacons may sign checks. The books of the treasurer shall be audited or examined annually, as deemed necessary by and under the direction of the pastor and deacons. An assistant treasurer may be elected as the need requires.

2. Assistant Treasurer

The assistant shall become familiar with the duties and functions of the treasurer, and shall perform duties as assigned by the treasurer. If the treasurer has served the maximum of two successive terms in office or does not wish to serve a second consecutive term, then the current assistant treasurer should be given first consideration by the nominating committee to fill the office of treasurer at the next annual election. This should be done in order to insure the integrity and continuity of the financial records of the church.

3. Church Clerk

The clerk shall be elected at the annual election meeting. He or she shall take minutes and preserve records of the business proceedings of the church and shall report the records at the regular business meetings. The clerk shall be a non-voting, *ex-officio* member of the Board of Trustees and take minutes and preserve records of their meetings and report the records at the regular business meetings of the church. When appropriate the secretary of the Board of Deacons shall submit written records of decisions and recommendations of the Board of Deacons to the clerk for preservation and reporting at regular business meetings of the church. The clerk shall also maintain the record of the church membership rolls, adding or deleting the names of members at the direction of the church, as well as the membership committee. He or she shall issue letters of baptisms and dismissals and shall preserve on file all communication and written official reports. The clerk shall also maintain custody of the official Corporate Seal of the church. An assistant clerk may be elected when needed.

4. Sunday School Superintendent

i. The Sunday school superintendent shall, under the oversight of the pastor, oversee the educational program of the Sunday school, maintain a list of available teachers and substitutes, and observe the overall organization of the Sunday school, and cause accurate records of attendance and offerings to be kept. An assistant Sunday school superintendent may be elected when needed.

ii. The Children's Church, Vacation Bible School and similar forms of teaching and evangelizing of children shall be under the general supervision of the Sunday school and be considered an extension of its teaching ministry unless the church or Board of Deacons appoint the particular ministry to other leadership.

C. Minister of Visitation

A Minister of Visitation may be elected when needed.

1. Qualifications

The minister of visitation shall be a born again Christian male meeting the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-11. He must believe and without qualification adhere to the Word of God, the Statement of Faith, church Covenant and By-laws.

i. He is to be a member of Calvary Baptist Church.

ii. He is not to be a new convert.

iii. He has never been convicted of any form of sexual misconduct or child abuse and is not now under any cloud of suspicion or formal charge of the same.

2. Calling

In calling a minister of visitation due notice shall be given by the Board of Deacons, and at a regular or special meeting of the church, and election shall be held. Two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting shall be required to elect.

3. Duties

For the sake of harmony in serving the Lord, the pastor will have complete oversight and scheduling of work for the minister of visitation.

i. His duties shall be, but not limited to:

a. Visitation of visitors

b. Visitation of new converts

c. Visitation of the sick and shut-ins (hospitals, nursing homes, etc.)

d. Visitation of new prospects

ii. He is to be available as pulpit filler at the discretion of the pastor.

iii. He may accept invitations to fill the pulpit outside of the church as long as it does not interfere with his normal duties.

4. Evaluation

Each year in January prior to the annual meeting, the minister of visitation shall meet with the Board of Deacons to evaluate his services to the church along with the results of such services. The pastor will provide a written evaluation of his performance. Consideration should be given as to whether he can make further contributions toward the Christian growth of the church or as to whether, for the betterment of both, the relationship should be dissolved. The deacons shall seriously consider any such recommendations made by the pastor, and if the recommendation is for dissolution, it shall be presented to the members at a called business meeting for acceptance or rejection by a majority vote by secret ballot of those present. If a majority votes to dissolve the relationship, thirty days notice shall be given by the church. At its discretion, the Board of Deacons may terminate the minister of visitation's service at any point in the thirty day period, by paying any remaining salary and benefits that would accrue during the period.

5. Termination of office:

i. By resignation: The minister of visitation may resign at any time and his duties shall be terminated 30 days from the date of his resignation or at another time mutually agreeable to both him and the church.

ii. If the pastor should resign from the church, the minister of visitation shall also submit his resignation unless otherwise asked to remain in the position by the church until another pastor is called who will have the same privilege of approving his minister of visitation.

iii. By church action: Any difficulty arising from unsatisfactory service (unfaithfulness to his duties), immorality, apostasy, heresy or a departure from the Statement of Faith, Covenant or By-laws, as contained in this constitution shall be investigated by the deacons. If it is considered by the deacons to be necessary, a special business meeting shall be called. The church shall consider their findings and decide regarding the dismissal of the minister of visitation. A majority vote by secret ballot of members present is necessary to dismiss the minister of visitation. In such cases his duties shall terminate immediately, and his salary shall cease 30 days from the date of the dismissal.

D. Other workers

1. At such time as the church grows to the point of needing other part-time workers or full-time people associated with the work of the ministry, the church may authorize the Board of Deacons to hire such persons as a pastoral apprentice youth worker, or other such workers. None shall be hired without the pastor's full approval.

2. For the sake of harmony in serving the Lord, the pastor will have complete oversight and scheduling of work for such persons. The Board of Deacons will have the authority to discharge such persons from their position with thirty (30) days notice, and the church reserves the same authority. The deacons shall seriously consider any such recommendations made by the pastor. If the pastor should resign from the church, such persons are to also tender their resignations unless otherwise asked to remain in the position by the church until another pastor is called who will have the same privilege of approving such workers.

VI. Committees Section

A. Membership Committee

The membership committee shall consist of the pastor and deacons. Their duties are defined in the sections on Covenant and Membership.

B. Budget Committee

The budget committee shall consist of the pastor, two (2) deacons, and two (2) trustees, along with elected officers needed by virtue of their office. The budget committee shall prepare a recommended church budget for the ensuing year and submit it to the members for adoption at the November business meeting or at a business meeting called for such specific purpose.

C. Missions Committee

The missions committee shall consist of the pastor and the deacons. They shall screen all missionary applicants and make recommendations to the members for support and for the withdrawal of support. They will minister to visiting missionaries by hospitality and encouragement, and will seek to gather information in reference to the missionaries and their needs.

D. Nominating Committee for Structural offices: A. Trustees; B. Annually Elected Officers

The nominating committee shall consist of the following: the pastor; one deacon, selected by the Board of Deacons; one trustee, selected by the Board of Trustees; and representatives from the adult Sunday school classes. Each adult Sunday school class shall select one member of the class as their representative. (Those selected from the adult Sunday school classes must be church members in good and regular standing, and may not be deacons or trustees.)

Appointments to the committee shall be made not later than six (6) weeks prior to the election of officers. Members may suggest qualified persons by submitting their names in writing to the committee not less than five (5) weeks prior to the election of officers. The committee will review all names submitted and add the names of any persons they wish to recommend. The committee shall contact all persons nominated to determine their qualifications and their willingness to serve if elected. The committee will then recommend all qualified and willing persons to the church for a vote. The committee will provide a list of the offices to be filled and post the list in a prominent place in the church three (3) weeks prior to the election of officers. No nominations will be made from the floor. Voting for officers shall be by secret ballot.

E. Pulpit Committee

The Board of Deacons shall serve as the Pulpit Committee. Their duties are defined in relation to the Primary offices: pastor, associate or assistant pastor, and deacons of the church (*see Article IV, Primary Offices.*) The Pulpit Committee shall also be responsible for selecting

candidates for the Structural office of Minister of Visitation (*see Article V.C, Minister of Visitation.*)

F. Other Committees and Positions

All other committees and positions (e.g., Head usher, Music coordinator, etc.) shall be appointed by the Board of Deacons, who shall determine job responsibilities and qualifications. Any appointed committee chairman shall assist in selecting other committee members.

G. Responsibility

All committees are responsible and answerable to the pastor and the members for carrying out their appointed responsibilities.

VII. Ministries

A. General Requirements

All ministries, departments, organizations, classes, and groups of the church are subject to and shall function in harmony with the members, the pastor, and the deacons. The pastor, deacons, and members may add ministries to the church as the need and opportunity arise. None shall be promoted without the recommendation of the pastor and deacons and the approval of the members at a business meeting properly called. All workers in these ministries are subject to, and must meet and adhere to the standards set forth in the By-laws (*Article III.B General Standards for Officers and workers.*)

B. Other organizations

i. There may be such other organizations as our objective shall demand, such as men's, women's and youth groups, but none shall be started without the consent of the pastor and deacons. These organizations shall be self-governing but finally subject to the control of the church and in full accord with this Constitution and voted church policy.

ii. All youth organizations and activities must have supervision from the adult membership of the church. Such adult or adults must be in good and regular standing on the church membership roll.

iii. All officers and teachers of auxiliary organizations must be members of the church in good and regular standing. The only exceptions to this are invited guest speakers, teachers, evangelists, missionaries, etc. of like precious faith who are in agreement with our constituted position and voted church policy. Students desiring to serve in this local church for the purpose of obtaining Christian service credits as part of their college requirements may do so with pastor and deacon's approval and the understanding that such students are members of a Baptist church of like faith and order, agreeing with our constituted position and voted church policy.

C. Christian School

In the event that the church should have its own Christian School, its board of directors shall be spiritual men of the church, nominated by the pastor and deacons and elected by the members. The pastor shall be board chairman. The school may have its own by-laws and organization, provided they are first approved by the pastor, deacons, and members as consistent with the spirit of the church constitution and by-laws. These stipulations do not preclude the church's cooperation with other churches of like faith and practice in establishing and administering a Christian school that would serve more than one church, provided the school meets the financial support and policy guidelines set forth in Article IX. Any such cooperation must be recommended by the pastor and deacons and approved by the members.

VIII. Literature

Any literature or electronic media that officially represents this church or that is used by any ministry of this church must first be approved by the pastor and deacons.

IX. Financial Support and Policy

The financial needs of this church shall be met by the voluntary tithes, offerings, and contributions of its members and friends. The pastor and deacons must approve any other method of fund raising for the church or its auxiliary ministries. No cake bakes, sales or bazaars, etc. shall be permitted in the name of this church. The pastor and deacons may approve special offerings to be taken apart from those received in the regular services. No church support shall be given to persons or groups that do not subscribe to the Biblical stand set forth in the Statement of Faith and church Covenant.

X. Licensing and Ordination

Any male giving evidence of a Divine call to the gospel ministry and manifesting the gifts and grace belonging to the ministry may be granted a certificate of ordination by the church. He must first state that he accepts without reservation the complete Statement of Faith of this church, and must be recommended by the pastor of this church. The ordination council composed of ordained ministers and deacons (which may be members) selected or approved by the pastor, shall thoroughly examine the candidate in regard to his doctrinal soundness, moral and spiritual qualifications, and personal fitness for the ministry. After satisfactory examination by the council, he shall be recommended to the church for ordination. The candidate's ordination shall require ratification of the recommendation of the council by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of the Board of Deacons and a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting, at a regular or special meeting of the church called for only this purpose.

XI. Adoption and Amendments

A. Adoption

Upon adoption, this constitution bears immediate and complete constitutional authority upon this church.

B. Procedure for Amending

This constitution may be revised or amended at any regular business meeting of the church by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of members present and voting, provided the proposed amendments have been announced at a previous business meeting and have been posted in a prominent place in the church for four (4) Sundays (before and after all services) or mailed to members at least two (2) weeks prior to the vote of the members. No substantive amendment of any nature shall be made in the STATEMENT of FAITH (Preface and Articles I-XX) without three-fourths (3/4) vote approval of members present and voting at a business meeting, provided the proposed amendments have been announced at a previous business meeting and have been posted in a prominent place in the church four (4) Sundays (before and after all services) or mailed to members at least two (2) weeks prior to the vote of the members.

C. Recording of Amendments

The church clerk shall record all amendments to this constitution by appending such amendments to the constitution. All amendments shall be added to later editions of the constitution with the amendment date noted.

XII. Miscellaneous

A. Translations

The church believes that the measure of the value of a translation is its faithful adherence to and clear communication of the words of the original text. We hold that the exaltation of one translation to the disallowance of others for reasons besides these is misled, heretical, and divisive.

B. Charismatic Movement

We reject the charismatic movement because it has made experiences rather than obedience to the Word of God the basis for and test of spirituality. Further, the tongues movement has become the rallying point for the ecumenical church, which unholy alliance we absolutely oppose.

C. Neo-Evangelicalism

We oppose the Neo-Evangelical movement because of its weak stand on the inspiration of the Word of God and its belittling of Biblical separation.

XIII. Church Autonomy

This church, as a corporation, shall be a non-stock, non-profit, and an exclusively religious corporation. It shall not as an entity become an official member of any denomination, convention, fellowship, or other religious body of a compromising nature. This church is an independent Baptist church that is totally self-governing and subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body. This church recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual conviction, counsel, and cooperation with other fundamental churches. It encourages fellowship with those organizations that consistently uphold the truth of God's Word and the spirit of this constitution and by-laws. Such cooperation with churches of like mind and practice shall in no wise sanction any undue influence or jurisdiction over this local assembly.

XIV. Property, Buildings, and Equipment

Decisions relative to the acquisition or sale of real property shall require a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members at a properly called business meeting. All buildings, property, and equipment shall be used only by permission of the Board of Trustees, or by approval of the church at a duly called meeting. The Board of Trustees shall be principally responsible for the use of this church, its functions, and its related activities.

XV. Use of Facilities

A. Members in good and regular standing have the privilege of using the church auditorium for weddings and funerals, and church facilities for receptions. All others must have the approval of the Board of Trustees.

B. All weddings and funerals shall be performed by a pastor of this church. Any exception must be church approved.

C. Wedding policy

i. Weddings will be performed only for a man and a woman who are both believers, seeking to be united in marriage (*II Corinthians 6:14-18*).

ii. Weddings will not be performed if either, or both, of the parties is divorced (*Matthew 5:32, 19:6, 9; I Corinthians 7:10-24*).

iii. Weddings will not be performed if marriage of the parties would violate the letter or spirit of the church's Statement of Faith (see, *Article XX. Of the Family*).

iv. Both parties to the marriage must satisfactorily complete a pre-marital counseling program prescribed by the church pastor who will perform the ceremony.

v. The pastor may refuse to perform any marriage he feels would not be acceptable by his standards. The church may not review his decision.

D. Secret societies shall not be permitted to hold services or to use the church facilities for any purpose.

E. While using the facilities, no individual or group will be allowed use of this church if the behavior and/or conduct of the individual/individuals violates our church covenant.

XVI. The Corporation

A. Officers (This church has been incorporated under the laws of the State of Indiana.)

1. The Chairman of the Corporation shall be the pastor.

2. The Secretary of the Corporation shall be the Vice Chairman of the deacons.

3. The treasurer of the Corporation shall be the treasurer of the church.

4. The trustees of the Corporation shall be the trustees of the church.

5. The above named officers shall perform such legal and business transactions as are particularly designated to them by the laws of the State of Indiana. In the discharge of their duties, they shall act only at the direction of the pastor, deacons, trustees or the body of the church.

B. Dissolution of the Corporation

In the event of the dissolution of this church as a non-profit corporation, the assets of the corporation shall be given and paid over to non-profit organizations of like faith and order, approved by the remaining membership and which would qualify under the provisions of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, amended to February 1, 1992 (or its successor provision) and the regulations attributable thereto. None of the assets or holdings shall be divided among its members or among any individuals or groups not so qualified. The meeting to vote on dissolution shall be carried out according to the guidelines for all other business meeting.

ADOPTED AMENDMENTS

Vacancy in Annually Elected Offices (to be added to end of Section V.B.)

Should a vacancy exist in any annually elected office due to dismissal, resignation or physical inability to fulfill the duties of office, the Board of Deacons may appoint a replacement to serve until the next annual election. Any such appointment is subject to approval by a majority vote at a called or regular meeting of the church not later than thirty (30) days after the effective date of appointment. The process may be repeated if the appointee is not approved by the church.

Adopted: November 2007

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Change of times for Scheduled Church Meetings (II. B. Business Meetings, i.e., 1. Regular Business Meetings and 4. Election Meetings.)

CHURCH BY-LAWS

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II. Meetings

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B. Business Meetings

1. Regular Business Meetings

Regular business meetings of the church shall be held in February, May, August, and November, unless otherwise voted by a majority of members of the church at a regular or special business meeting. The November meeting is also defined as the “annual” business meeting of the church. The annual business meeting in November will be held at the time of the evening service on the first (1st) Sunday. The February, May, and August meetings will be held at the time of the midweek service on the third (3rd) Wednesday of the designated months. The time and place of each business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit on at least two (2) Sundays prior to the meeting. Written notice shall be posted in a prominent place in the church during regular services from the date of the first announcement until the meeting.

4. Election Meetings

Election meetings for the election of officers and workers shall be held during the quarterly (“annual”) business meeting in November. Officers and workers shall assume the responsibility for their positions on the first Sunday in January. The church year for officers, workers, classes, and committees shall commence and end with the first Sunday in January. The church operations year shall begin on January 1 and conclude on December 31.

Adopted: August 2010

(Amendment to replace entire contents of original MEMBERSHIP section.)

MEMBERSHIP

1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Church membership shall be classified as:

- 1) **Active Member (good and regular standing)**: Defined as a member of the church who is actively involved in the church by attending, at a minimum, three (3) worship church services within the past four (4) months, and adheres to the duties of a church member as defined in **3. Duties**.
- 2) **Inactive Member**: Defined as a member of the church who has ***not*** attended, at a minimum, three (3) worship services within the past four (4) months and is not adhering to the duties of a church member as defined in **3. Duties**.
- 3) The deacons shall periodically review the church rolls. Inactive members who have not attended for 12 months and have made no contact with the church during that period shall be referred to the church at the next annual business meeting with a recommendation regarding their membership status. A majority vote of the members present and voting shall be required to accept the recommendation of the deacons. An exception will be made for those who are homebound or infirmed, members of the military or extenuating circumstances, as determined by the Deacons. They will not be moved to inactive status based on attendance.
- 4) Any member of the church whose name appears on the inactive membership rolls may request that his or her name be transferred to the active membership roll by making such request to the deacons after becoming actively involved (as defined above) in the church again. Such transfer to the active membership roll shall be made by the deacons ***effective 30-days*** after the request if the deacons are able to confirm that the member has become actively involved in the church again.

2. Candidacy (Note: This section is **unchanged!**)

Definition: The membership of this church shall consist only of those who have professed personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and have subsequently been scripturally baptized and who subscribe to the Statement of Faith, Covenant and By-laws of this church.

a. Admission to membership:

- i. Persons wishing to become members of the church shall notify the pastor of their desire. Upon such notification they shall become candidates.
- ii. Each candidate shall meet with the membership committee (consisting of the pastors and deacons) to give testimony of their personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, their scriptural baptism or to make arrangements to be baptized. Each candidate shall also

express their willingness to abide by the Statement of Faith, Covenant and By-laws of this church.

iii. Candidates for membership shall be baptized by this church or give testimony to their previous baptism by immersion, following salvation (or when appearing before the membership committee, provide a letter of recommendation from another church of like faith and order). Any candidate, who has not yet been baptized, may not be received into membership until after baptism.

iv. Each candidate shall attend new member classes conducted by the pastors or deacons. This requirement may be waived by the membership committee, if during the meeting required in the preceding paragraph, the candidate demonstrates evidence of their understanding of the terms and conditions of the Statement of Faith, Covenant and By-laws of this church.

v. Each candidate shall be approved by a majority vote of the members upon recommendation of the membership committee. This vote may only be taken at a regularly scheduled church meeting or at a meeting called specifically for this purpose (see Government, Section B.) This action shall make the candidate a member of this church. Special provisions apply to members under eighteen (18) years of age (see Membership Section V.B below.)

vi. Each new member shall receive the right hand of fellowship, immediately following the reading of the church Covenant by a member of the membership committee. (This may be done either immediately following the meeting at which the vote was taken or at the next regular communion service of the church. The appropriate time shall be determined by the pastor.)

3. Duties

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life, to attend regularly the services of this church, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in its organized work.

4. Rights of Members

(1) Every active member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member meets the requirements defined in the section labeled: **BY-LAWS, II. Meetings, B. Business Meetings, 7. Voting.**

(2) Every active member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church.

(3) Every active member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

5. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1) death of the member, (2) admission to membership in another Baptist church, (3) exclusion by action of this church, (4) erasure upon request or (5) evidence of membership in a church of another denomination.

6. Discipline

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a majority vote of the members present and voting is required; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

Adopted: August 2010