

# **Constitution Of Calvary Baptist Church**

## **Preamble**

We declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in a decent and orderly manner. This Constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of the body in relation to other churches and organizations.

## **Article I**

### Church Name

This body shall be known as Calvary Baptist Church. The primary offices will be located at 3321 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Bay City, Texas 77414.

## **Article II**

### Mission

We strive to bring seekers of God into a full fellowship with Him and to mobilize them for a meaningful ministry in the church and a life mission in the world in order to magnify God.

### Purpose

Calvary Baptist Church exists to: allow opportunities to exalt the Savior, proclaim salvation to non-believing individuals, connect them with other believers, teach them to grow in their faith, and to honor God's call on our lives.

### Motto

Passionately loving God - Compassionately loving people

## Article III

### Articles of Faith

#### 1. **The Essentials We Believe:**

##### a. **About God**

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

##### b. **About Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice for the sins of people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

##### c. **About the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer spiritual gift(s) when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

##### d. **About the Bible**

The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of errors.

##### e. **About Human Beings**

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme objects of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "SIN". This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life. There is a readiness to sin factor that exists in all of us.

##### f. **About Salvation**

Salvation is God's free gift to us, but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith, we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

g. **About Eternity**

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God's love, grace, mercy and goodness is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

2. **Non-Essential Beliefs:**

- a. **Different Views about the "Second Coming of Christ".**
- b. **Different views about the ordinary and extra-ordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit.**
- c. **Different views about predestination and election.**

3. We subscribe to the "Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 as our broader statement of faith with scriptural reference.

**Article IV**

Government

The government of Calvary Baptist Church is vested in its members. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization. It recognizes the needs for mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist Churches. This church will cooperate with and mutually work with the Colorado Baptist Association, the Texas General Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

**Article V**

Nonprofit Status and Liquidation

This church is not organized for profit. In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the church, all of its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be paid over and transferred at the direction of the trustees to the Colorado Baptist Association, the Texas General Baptist Convention, or to the Southern Baptist Convention.

## Article VI

### Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and on profession of our faith; having been baptized by immersion 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 this covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and to spread the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, exemplary in our behavior; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

# CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS

## Article I

### Church Membership

#### A. Qualifications:

Membership of Calvary Baptist Church shall consist of people who have made a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who, having been scripturally baptized by immersion, and are in agreement with the Articles of Faith, and Covenant of the church.

#### B. Reception:

Membership in the church may be attained by majority vote of the church in one of the following manners:

1. By scriptural baptism by immersion after profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
2. By transfer of church letter from another Baptist Church.
3. By a statement of faith of their prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism by immersion in another evangelical church of like faith and practice.
4. By restoration to the church membership following disciplinary action.

#### C. Termination:

Membership shall be terminated in one of the following ways:

1. Death of the member,
2. Transfer by letter of recommendation to another Baptist church,
3. Exclusion by action of this church,
4. Erasure upon request or proof of membership in another church.

#### D. Member Responsibilities:

1. Candidates for membership and new members should attend a church membership class to learn and understand the privileges and responsibilities of members to God and the church.
2. Members shall have the right to a voice and vote in church transactions as follows:
  - a. Members must be 18 years or older to participate in a vote involving financial commitment of the church (e.g. building, new pews, carpet, vehicles, yearly budget, etc.).
  - b. All members are eligible to participate in votes involving non-financial decisions of the church (e.g. amend the constitution, new Pastor, new youth Pastor, etc.).
3. It shall be the duty of church members to uphold the Articles of Faith, Constitution and Bylaws, and Covenant of the church.

# CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS

## Article II

### Church Officers

#### A. Pastor

1. The qualifications for Pastor shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. His training, skills, and experience are required in this area of leadership.
2. Responsibilities:
  - a. The Pastor shall be responsible for: preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.
  - b. He shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.
  - c. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all church committees, except the Pastor Search Committee.
  - d. He shall secure pulpit supply in times of his absence.
3. The Call:
  - a. A Pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs.
  - b. Once the vacancy occurs, a Pastor Search Committee shall be nominated by the church to seek out a suitable Pastor. The committee shall receive Pastor nominations from the membership at large. If suitable nominations are not received from the membership, the Search Committee shall seek outside sources. This committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination.
  - c. The Pastor Search Committee will recommend only one candidate at a time.
  - d. At least one week notice shall be given to members prior to a vote for the Pastor. The election for Pastor shall take place as follows:
    - i. An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those voting is necessary for confirmation.
    - ii. Members are entitled to vote. Members must be present to vote with the exception of absentee ballots that are confirmed by the deacons.
4. Terms of Service:
  - a. There shall be a written mutual contract/agreement made between the Pastor and the church.

## CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS

- b. The chosen Pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least thirty (30) days notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.
- c. The church may declare the office of Pastor to be vacant as follows:
  - i. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose. This meeting should only take place after the church has followed the principles outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 and/or the church has sought help through mediation.
  - ii. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the Deacons.
  - iii. The moderator for this meeting shall be the Deacon Chairman.
  - iv. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by ballot. An affirmative vote of a majority of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant.
  - v. Except in cases of gross misconduct by the Pastor, the church will compensate the Pastor with not less than one month of the Pastor's annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate, and the compensation shall be paid in not more than thirty (30) days.

### B. Other Ministers

- 1. The church will outline the responsibilities of the minister called.
- 2. The Call
  - a. Ministers shall be chosen and called as deemed necessary by the church.
  - b. A Minister candidate may be recommended by the Pastor and Deacon Committee, or a Search Committee may be appointed by the church. This recommendation will serve as a nomination.
  - c. Only one candidate will be recommended at a time.
  - d. At least one week notice shall be given to members prior to a vote for the candidate. The election for the Minister shall take place as follows:
    - i. An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those voting is necessary for confirmation.
    - ii. Members are entitled to vote. Members must be present to vote with the exception of absentee ballots that are confirmed by the deacons.

# CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS

## 3. Terms of Service

- a. There shall be a written mutual contract/agreement made between the Minister and the church.
- b. The chosen Minister shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least thirty (30) days notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.
- c. The church may declare the office of the Minister to be vacant as follows:
  - i. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose. This meeting should only take place after the church has followed the principles outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 and/or the church has sought help through mediation.
  - ii. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the Deacons.
  - iii. The moderator for this meeting shall be the Deacon Chairman.
  - iv. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by ballot. An affirmative vote of a majority of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant.
  - v. Except in cases of gross misconduct by the Minister, the church will compensate the Minister with not less than one month of the Minister's annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate, and the compensation shall be paid in not more than thirty (30) days

## C. Church Staff

This church shall employ or call staff as needed.

1. Staff members, other than Minister(s), shall be approved for employment by the Pastor and Deacons.
2. A written job description and mutual contract/agreement will be prepared when the need for church staff is determined.
3. Required background checks will be performed.

## D. Deacons

1. There shall be as many Deacons as the church deems necessary.
2. When elected to serve, Deacons shall meet the scriptural qualifications outlined in Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Deacons shall attend and actively support all phases of the church program, tithe their income, and cooperate in spirit.



## CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS

### 3. Election

- a. One month prior to the election of Deacons by this church body, notice of such election shall be announced. The Deacon body shall recommend to the church the number of Deacons to be nominated. This recommendation will not be binding. Nominations will be received from the congregation. The Pastor and active Deacons shall act as a screening committee to compile a list of those receiving nomination. The Pastor and Chairman of the Deacons will then interview those men nominated, and who appear to be qualified, to explain the qualifications and expectations, and secure a commitment from those willing to serve. Nominees may be set aside for deaconship by a 75% majority vote of the church. Following election by the church of an un-ordained man selected as a Deacon, the church shall call for his ordination at the earliest possible date.
- b. An individual previously ordained by another church of like faith and order may be recognized by this church. A deacon joining from another church shall not be nominated to serve until a member of this church for one year.

### 4. Terms of Service

- a. After serving a period of five years, Deacons shall rotate off the active body of Deacons and remain so for a period of at least one year. After one year of inactive service, Deacons shall be eligible for re-activation by the Deacon body to another term of office. The Deacons will determine how to initiate the rotation process.

### 5. Duties

- a. The essential nature of the Deacon's office is to shield the Pastor and protect him so that he may fulfill his duty in prayer and ministry of the word, setting him free for his sacred ministry.
- b. The Deacons should serve the table of the Pastor, not jealously, but seeing that it is adequate and that his salary is paid promptly and regularly; should faithfully and prayerfully support the Pastor in his public ministry; justly appreciate his high calling; and honor him by regarding him as the ambassador of the Lord, serving him with understanding hearts.
- c. The Deacons shall serve the table of the Lord, providing for the church ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper; accept their responsibility for guarding and guiding formative and corrective church discipline; restore disturbed fellowship and preserve peace; take an active part in the church leadership, being the best informed and the most forward-looking group in the church; be a growing Christian, and informed churchman, faithful in attendance upon regular church services; also, a constant advocate by practice of the maintenance of New Testament stewardship, coupled with the honored obligation and basic function of winning others to Christ, and a tither.

## CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS

- d. The Deacons are problem solvers, people servers and Pastor helpers.
- e. The Deacons shall be zealous to guard the unity of spirit within the church in the bond of peace and harmony.
- f. They shall serve as a council of advice and confer with the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church.
- g. They are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations with all members of the church. This clause does not delegate to the Deacons the right of authority over members of the church, but these relations are to be advisory in nature only.
- h. In any period when the church is without a Pastor, unless the church shall otherwise provide, the Deacon body will arrange the temporary pulpit ministry and take counsel with reference to securing an Interim Pastor. While a member of the Deacon body may be a member of the Search Committee, the Deacons shall not conflict with the work of the committee. The Deacon Chairman shall not chair the Search Committee. At no time shall any person occupy the pulpit of this church that is not in sympathy with our Southern Baptist work.

6. Deacons shall elect a Deacon Chairman.

7. Dismissal of a Deacon from service shall be the responsibility of the Deacon body and Pastor.

8. It shall be the responsibility of the Deacons to ensure voting requirements are consistent with these bylaws.

### E. Treasurer

1. The church Treasurer shall be appointed by the Deacons as the custodian of all moneys of the church and shall disburse these moneys as authorized by the church.

2. The Treasurer shall be responsible for seeing that the offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the church's bank account.

3. The Treasurer shall properly credit each contributor and their offerings.

4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing for distribution an annual "Statement of Contributions" to donors.

5. The Treasurer shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render monthly and annually written reports of this account to the church.

6. The Treasurer's report shall be audited periodically, as recommended by the Pastor/Deacons, by an auditing committee or public accountant.

7. The Treasurer is responsible for keeping donor contributions confidential.

## **CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS**

8. All books, records, and accounts kept by the Treasurer shall be considered the property of the church.

### **F. Financial Secretary**

1. The church Financial Secretary shall be appointed by the Pastor and Deacons.
2. The Financial Secretary shall coordinate payment of church bills with the church Treasurer, balance bank statements, and submit monthly reports to the Deacons.
3. The Financial Secretary is responsible for keeping donor contributions confidential.
4. All books, records, and accounts kept by the Financial Secretary shall be considered the property of the church.

### **G. Trustees**

1. A trustee shall have been a member of the church for at least five (5) years, be of legal age, be a property owner in the local area, and be devoted to carrying out the desires of the church.
2. At least three (3) trustees shall be nominated by the Deacons and elected by the church membership to hold in trust the property of the church.
3. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to borrow, buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents related to church approved activities.

## **Article III**

### Committees

#### **A. Budget Committee**

1. Members of the Budget Committee shall consist of leaders of the church's active ministries; and in addition, at least two (2) church members nominated by the congregation.
2. The Treasurer or Deacon Chairman shall be the leader of the Budget Committee.
3. The committee shall draw up an annual budget for submission to the church during the fourth quarter prior to the start of the fiscal year.
4. The church fiscal year shall run concurrently with the calendar year which begins January 1 and ends December 31.

## **CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS**

5. Any unbudgeted expense exceeding \$10,000 must be approved by a church vote. Any unbudgeted expense exceeding \$2500 must be approved by the Deacon Body. Any unbudgeted expense up to \$2500 may be approved by the Pastor at his discretion. (It is expected that these amounts are amended as needed).

B. Other committees may be formed as needed by the church.

### **Article IV**

#### Church Meetings

A. Business Meetings

1. Business meetings will be held as needed.

- a. Any matters brought before the church for a vote requires a simple majority for approval unless otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws.

B. Sunday School

1. For the study and instruction of God's Word, there shall be a Sunday School divided into departments and graded classes to be conducted under the direction of a Sunday School Director.

### **Article V**

#### Church Ordinances

A. Baptism

1. A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith; who professes Him publicly at any worship service; and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.
2. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
3. Baptism shall be supervised by the Pastor or another ordained minister authorized by the church.
4. Baptism shall be performed as an act of worship during any worship service.

B. The Lord's Supper

1. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers, the body of Christ, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His return.

## **CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS**

2. The Lord's Supper shall be observed quarterly, or as otherwise scheduled.
3. The Pastor and Deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
4. The Deacons shall be responsible for the physical preparations of the Lord's Supper.

### **Article VI**

#### Licensing and Ordaining

##### A. Licensing

1. Any member of the church who has shown by his life and has felt the call to the gospel ministry may, by vote of the membership at a regular meeting, be licensed by the church to the Christian Ministry.

##### B. Ordination

1. The church may ordain men who have been called by the church or at the request of a sister church of like faith and order into full time Gospel Ministry. The church may also ordain men in the Deacon Ministry as the Church may have need.

### **Article VII**

#### Discipline

- A. It shall be the basic purpose of the 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. Redemption rather than punishment should be the guideline that governs the attitude of one member toward another.
- B. Should any unhappy difference arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow in a tender spirit the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, and 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14.
- C. Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the Deacons shall endeavor to resolve the conflict; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the church.
- D. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.
- E. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the church upon evidence of repentance and reformation.

# CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS

## Article VIII

### Amendment

This constitution and bylaws may be amended provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at a church business meeting and then circulated to the membership. Amendments to this constitution and bylaws shall be two-thirds vote of members of the church who are qualified to vote.

### Ratification

This constitution and bylaws is hereby approved and established for Calvary Baptist Church of Bay City, Texas by vote of the membership on \_\_\_\_\_, 20xx.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deacon Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary