

# **CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

## **Calvary Baptist Church of Silver Springs Shores**

### **Preamble**

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

### **I. Name**

This body shall be known as the Calvary Baptist Church of Silver Springs Shores.

### **II. Objectives**

To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to people in the community and the world in Jesus' name.

To be a church with the purpose of being Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

### **III. Statement of Basic Beliefs**

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and the basis for our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement found in its "Articles of Faith." We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper. (See Article IV of the Bylaws.)

### **IV. Church Covenant**

Understanding that church membership involves being accountable to live in a manner consistent with Scripture we pledge ourselves to, and freely adopt, the Church Covenant of Calvary Baptist Church of Silver Springs Shores as a general summary and expression of what it means to live the Christian life as fully committed followers of Jesus Christ in personal holiness and in mutual love and accountability.

### **V. Polity and Relationships**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (See Article I of the Bylaws.) All internal

groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified by church action.

This church is autonomous and subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation common among Baptist churches.

Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches and the Sunshine State Fellowship of Regular Baptist Churches. If these associations should waiver from their present biblical stand, this church, in standing true to the Word of God, could no longer fellowship with these associations.

## **BYLAWS**

### **I. Church Membership**

#### **Section 1. General**

This is an autonomous 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.

#### **Section 2. Admission**

The membership of this church shall consist of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, who have been baptized in water by immersion, who take the Holy Bible as their rule of faith and practice, and who subscribe to our Articles of Faith, and our Covenant and agree to be governed by this constitution.

Every candidate for admission into the church, by baptism experience or letter, shall give testimony of their Christian experience to the pastor, deacons and church family.

The deacons and pastor being satisfied that the candidate is eligible for church membership shall recommend the same to the church. Candidates shall be received by three-fourths majority vote of membership present, providing at least one week notice of such action has been given to the church family.

Members of another church of like faith and practice, who temporarily reside in this area, may come under the watch-care of this church by applying for "Watch-Care Membership." They will meet all the same qualifications and agree to the same standards as members but will not be permitted to vote or hold elected office in the church.

Those individuals who desire to unite with the church in membership but who have not reached the age of majority (18 years of age) will be accepted as "associate members. They will meet all the same qualifications and agree to the same standards as members but will not be permitted to vote or hold elected office in the church. After reaching the age of majority (18) they will be granted "full" membership with all the rights and privileges thereof.

### **Section 3. Privileges of Members**

Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting.

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

### **Section 4. Duties of Members**

The duties of members are set forth in general terms in the church covenant.

Frequent reading of the Church Covenant is recommended.

### **Section 5. Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- (1) Death of the member.
- (2) Transfer to another church of like faith and practice.

Any person in good standing shall be entitled to and granted a letter of dismissal to any Baptist Church of like faith and practice. The letter shall be granted only to the church with which the member wishes to unite. Open letters will not be granted.

- (3) Exclusion by action of this church.

Any member who for a period of at least three months absents themselves from the regular services of the church shall forfeit their right of membership until reinstated by the church. If this absence is without justifiable reason they shall be notified of their covenant violation by the deacons at the place of last known residence. In determining this covenant violation the deacons shall take into consideration the age, vocation, health and location of the offending member, as well as his conduct toward the church, pastor, and officers. If there is no response upon the part of the member within three months of the date of notification they shall be excluded from the membership by a two-thirds majority vote of the church membership present, provided at least one week notice of such action has been given to the church family.

Members who have been excluded due to church discipline (see section 6 below) may be restored to active membership upon recommendation of the pastor and deacons after the disassociated member has given acceptable evidence that the issues which precipitated their exclusion have been resolved biblically.

- (4) Removal upon request or proof of membership in another church.

### **Section 6. Discipline**

The purpose of church discipline is not punitive but restorative. It will be the goal of the church's leadership and membership to draw the troubled member back into fellowship with their Lord and their church family.

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 that 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 accordance with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present 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.

## **II. Church Officers and Committees**

All who serve as officers of the church and those who serve on church committees shall be members of this church.

### **Section 1. Elected Officers**

The officers of the church shall be: Pastor, Deacons, Clerk, Treasurer and Financial Secretary. The Pastor shall serve, for corporation purposes, as the Corporate President.

### **Qualification of Elected Officers**

No one shall be elected to office who has not been a member of this church for at least six months.

No one who has not demonstrated unquestioned Christian character, loyalty to the Word of God, dedication and devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the spiritual welfare of the church shall be considered for an elected office. In light of 1 Timothy 3 the home and family relationships must be considered, as well as individual qualifications.

They must be Christians given to prayer and testimony and should be faithful and diligent in attendance and participation in both regular and business meetings of the church.

No one who is, or becomes, an active member of a secret society shall be permitted to hold office in this church.

Any person nominated as candidate for any of these positions listed, who does not meet the proper qualifications should make that fact known prior to the election so that another candidate may be sought before the election.

Anyone elected to an office that violates the conditions of this constitution will forfeit their office by action of the church. That office, being declared vacant, will be filled by election in a constitutional manner at the earliest possible business meeting. The elected officer will complete the term of the officer they replaced.

## **Electoral Procedures**

The nominating committee will consist of the pastor and deacons. They will nominate qualified candidates for each office and approach these proposed nominees in order to determine their willingness to serve if elected. The list of nominees for all elected offices will be submitted to the church no less than two (2) Sundays prior to the election date. Church members are encouraged to speak to the pastor and deacons regarding any candidates they wish to propose during this process. The pastor and deacons will announce their intentions to form a slate of nominees for church office no less than two Sundays prior to their meeting as a nominating committee so that members wishing to make appropriate suggestions may do so. No nominations will be received from the floor.

The nominee or nominees receiving the largest number of votes of members present and voting shall be declared elected. Deacons and unopposed nominees require three-fourth majority vote to be elected.

In the event more deacons are nominated than offices open, a preliminary ballot shall be cast by the members present to determine the names that will appear on the official ballot. The number needed receiving the highest number of votes shall be the deacon nominees.

The election of all officers of the church shall be by written ballot.

## **The Pastor**

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given.

A Pastor Selection Committee shall be organized by the church at a regular or special business meeting to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for a choice. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. A quorum of 51% of voting members is required for the election of a new pastor.

The pastor shall give the church not less than thirty days notice of intent to resign. The church shall give the pastor not less than thirty days notice of dismissal, except where moral or doctrinal issues are involved, in which event he may be dismissed immediately.

Upon resignation or dismissal, the church will compensate the pastor with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation unless he has resigned or been excluded from office due to gross misconduct, in which case any compensation given will be at the discretion of the church. Any compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days.

The Pastor may likewise be dismissed at a special or regular meeting of the church at which at least fifty percent plus one of the voting members are present, provided notice of the meeting and

pending action has been given from the pulpit on the two Sunday mornings immediately preceding the date of the meeting. A three-fourths majority vote of the members present at said meeting shall be necessary for his dismissal. The vote shall be by written ballot.

### **Ministerial Staff**

The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. These staff members will give evidence of a personal call of God to ministry and shall be recommended to the church by the pastor and deacons and called by church action.

Ministerial staff members may resign by giving at least a 30 days notice to the church. The church may vote to vacate such positions upon recommendation of the pastor and deacons, and the compensation conditions will be the same as for the pastor, except that the amount shall relate to the individual's compensation.

### **Non-Ministerial Staff**

Non-ministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The pastor and deacons shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of non-ministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate, with the consultation of related committees of the church.

The salaries and vacations of all ministerial and non-ministerial staff will be reviewed and determined at least once a year. The amount of compensation and vacation will be recommended by the deacons to the congregation after consultation with the appropriate officers and committees. The chairman of the deacons will preside over congregational meetings whenever salaries or staff vacations are being reviewed or acted upon.

### **The Deacons**

The church will elect scripturally qualified men to the office of deacon. These elections will be by ballot at the regular or special business meetings of the church.

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. As such, it will be the duty of the deacons to engage actively in all spiritual and physical work of the church. They shall seek out such members as need special help and encouragement, inquire into the fitness and qualifications of applicants for membership, visit the sick, prepare and distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper, as well as, advise and aid the pastor in all matters relating to the spiritual interest of the church.

The deacon's term of office shall be three (3) years. A deacon having been elected to two consecutive three-year terms shall not be eligible for re-election for one year.

The deacons will annually elect a chairman for the ensuing year. The deacons will also appoint a secretary from their number who shall keep minutes of their meetings in a permanent record. A quorum shall consist of a majority of currently elected deacons. The deacons will hold meetings at such time and place as it may deem advisable and for the best interest of the church. It

shall make a report of its work quarterly and at the annual meeting, and at any other regularly called business meeting, when so directed by the church.

The deacons will also act as trustees to serve as the legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters.

As trustees, the deacons will acquaint themselves with the laws of the state pertaining to churches and church property, and assure that the church faithfully complies with such rules and regulations. They will exercise general oversight of all church property and make recommendations to the church concerning needed improvements to the church plant. The deacons will be responsible to insure that regular maintenance and repairs are cared for whenever needed.

In the absence of a pastor, the deacons will be responsible to secure speakers for the regularly scheduled church services. They will work in cooperation with the pastoral selection committee and will interview pastoral candidates, and recommend candidates for the pastorate when necessary.

The deacons, together with the pastor, will constitute the discipline committee.

The deacons will have full jurisdiction in the administration of the "Deacon's Fund", i.e., "Good Samaritan Fund".

The deacons will authorize, by appointment, two (2) of their number to sign checks in the absence of the financial secretary and/or treasurer.

### **The Church Clerk**

The church shall elect annually, from its membership, a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church. The clerk shall provide the pastor and/or deacons with a transcript of the minutes of each church business meeting.

The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, termination, or death, together with a record of baptisms and marriages. The clerk shall issue letters of termination of membership voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing all official correspondence of the church.

The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.

The clerk's term of office will be one year.

Upon termination of office held, the clerk shall deliver to their successor, or chairman of deacons, all records, files and/or other papers belonging to the church, and shall present the same with all contents complete to the date of surrender of such documents.

## **The Treasurer**

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding period. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by an Auditing Committee or public accountant.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

The treasurer's term of office will be one year.

## **The Financial Secretary**

At each annual meeting the church shall elect from its membership a financial secretary.

The financial secretary shall count all collections of the church with the treasurer, or a deacon; make proper records of the same and remit to the treasurer, obtaining receipt for deposited funds.

They shall keep an itemized record of all money received; they shall keep a confidential record of individual gifts for income tax purposes.

The financial secretary's term of office will be one year.

## **Unelected Offices**

The pastor and deacons may appoint biblically qualified individuals to fulfill other roles and/or offices in the church as are deemed necessary to facilitate the efficient functioning of the church and the completion of the church's stated objectives.

These individuals will serve in these positions until the need is met, they resign, or their services are no longer needed as determined by the pastor and deacons. A job description will be written explaining the specific tasks and goals for each office. This job description will be added to the Church Operations Manual (Section VII). These officers will be responsible to the church for their work, reporting to the pastor and deacons regarding their progress towards their stated goals.

## **Section 2. Church Ministries and Committees**

The pastor and deacons will organize any ministries and appoint any committees necessary for the efficient functioning of the church and the completion of the church's stated objectives. Service on these committees will be based upon the spiritual qualifications and aptitude of the individuals to complete the task set before the committee.

When a ministry or a committee is formed, a job description will be written explaining the specific tasks and goals for each. These ministries and committees will be responsible to the church

for their work, reporting to the pastor and deacons regarding their progress towards those goals. This job description will be added to the Church Operations Manual (Section VI).

These ministries and committees will serve until the church, through her leadership, determines the need for them no longer exists.

It is suggested that the pastor and deacons regularly organize a budget committee, an audit committee, a Christian education committee, and a missions committee.

### **III. Church Ordinances**

#### **Section 1. Baptism**

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received 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. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.

#### **Section 2. The Lord's Supper**

Any professing, born-again believer may receive communion at Calvary Baptist Church. The elements of the Lord's Table shall be unleavened bread and unfermented grape juice. The pastor, or someone appointed by the pastor, and deacons, shall administer the Lord's Supper, the deacons being responsible for the physical preparations.

### **IV. Church Meetings**

#### **Section 1. Worship Services**

Unless other provisions are made, the church will meet together every Sunday for public worship. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The pastor shall direct the services for all the church members and for all others who may choose to attend.

#### **Section 2. Special Services**

Revival services and any other church meetings essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be placed on the church calendar.

#### **Section 3. Business Meetings**

The church shall hold annual business meetings and other meetings as necessary for the effective and efficient functioning of the church. At least one-week notice must be given for business meetings unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. As a general practice the notice shall include the subject, date, time and place; and it must be given in such a manner that all members have an opportunity to know of the meeting.

#### **Section 4. Quorum**

The quorum consists of those members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a regular meeting or one that has been properly called.

## **Section 6. Parliamentary Rules**

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

## **V. Church Finances**

### **Section 1. Budget**

The pastor and deacons and/or a properly formed committee will prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses.

This church is sustained by the regular, proportionate, voluntary gifts of its membership.

### **Section 2. Accounting Procedures**

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the treasurer working in conjunction with the pastor and deacons.

### **Section 3. Fiscal Year**

The church fiscal year shall begin the first day of January and close December thirty-first.

## **VI. Church Operations Manual**

A special committee of the church will develop a church operations manual to include church policies and procedures and organizational charts depicting lines of responsibility in the administration of the church. The manual shall be kept in the church office and made available for use by any member of the church. The church secretary shall maintain the manual. The pastor and deacons or a special committee shall review the manual at least annually, with authority to recommend changes for the church to consider. Any church member or church organization may suggest changes in the manual by submitting them in writing to the pastor or a deacon or the aforementioned special committee. The finished manual and/or any changes to that manual shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the church membership at any duly called business meeting.

## **VII. Amendments and By-laws**

The constitution and by-laws may be amended at any regular business meeting by a three-fourths vote of the members present provided notice of such proposed amendment is given in writing at a previous regular business meeting, and a notice which includes the proposed amendment and the time of the meeting is given at least one month in advance. Fifty-one per cent (51%) of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.

## **VIII. Dissolution**

The church shall have the right to own, buy or sell tangible properties both real and personal in its own name and through properly elected and authorized officers.

No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any persons from the assets, holding or other transactions in which this corporation may become involved.

In event of the dissolution of this corporation all of its debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among its members, but shall be irrevocably dedicated by the deacons to such non-profit religious organizations as are in agreement with the letter and spirit of this constitutional statement of faith, and in conformity with the requirements of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code of 1954 (Section 501-c-3) or any subsequent amendments thereto.

## **IX. Ratification**

This constitution was ratified, passed and adopted by the members of Calvary Baptist Church of Silver Springs Shores on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2007.