

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

Proposed amendments/changes are numbered and identified in bold, underlined and italicized text

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Calvary Baptist Bible Church Peoria, IL, in orderly manner do hereby establish the following principles by which we mutually agree to be governed in the affairs of our church.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization as incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois, shall be Calvary Baptist Bible Church of Peoria, IL.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of this local church shall be:

- A. To carry out the great commission of Christ, as given in Matthew 28:19 and 20.
- B. The administration of the ordinances of the New Testament, baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion).
- C. To edify the saints of God through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God as set forth in the Articles of Faith of this church.

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

ARTICLE III – ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. **The Scriptures** – We believe the Bible, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments only, to be the Word of God; that it was written by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit so that their writings, in the original, were supernaturally and verbally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be. They are the complete and final revelation of the will of God to man, and so are the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. God has providentially preserved His Word for all generations. Psalm 19:7-11, Psalm 119:89; Proverbs 30:5-8; John 17:17; Romans 15:4; II Timothy 3:16-17; I Hebrews 4:12; Peter 1:23; II Peter 1:19-21.

2. **The True God** – We believe in the existence of the one, and only, living, personal, triune God, as revealed in the Bible; Creator of the universe and man in six literal days, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – who are eternal in being, identical in essence, equal in power and glory and having the same divine attributes and perfections, though exercising them in their distinct offices. Genesis 1:1-3; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14.
 - a. **God the Father** – We believe in God the Father perfect in holiness, boundless in love, infinite in wisdom, measureless in power. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayers, saving from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ, His Son. Exodus 15:11; Exodus 20:2 and 3; Psalm 83:18; Psalm 90:2; Psalm 147:5; Acts 5:30-32; Revelation 4:11.

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

- b. God the Son** - We believe in Jesus Christ, God the Son, pre-existent with the Father, begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary: sinless in nature and life, both God and man, infallible in His teaching, making atonement for the sins of the world by His substitutionary death on the cross. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His ascension into Heaven, and His perpetual intercession for His people. We believe that the promise of His second coming includes: first, “The Blessed Hope” of the believer, namely, the personal pre-millennial and pre-tribulation return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ to rapture His church according to; second, His return to earth with His saints to set up His millennial reign. Luke 1:35; John 8:58, John 10:30, I Corinthians 8:6; Philippians 2:5 and 6; I Thessalonians 4:13-1; Revelation 19:11-16, Revelation 20:1-6.
- c. God the Holy Spirit** – We believe in the deity and personality of God the Holy Spirit. We believe that He came from God to convince and convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and to regenerate, seal, sanctify, indwell, teach, guide, comfort and empower those who believe in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit directs us to focus on Christ, not on ourselves or our experiences. John 14:16 and 17; John 15:26 and 27; John 16:8-11; John 16:13; Ephesians 1:13 and 14; Romans 8:14-16.
- 3. Man** – We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he willfully sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also that spiritual death which is separation from God. We believe that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and in the case of those that reach moral responsibility, become sinners in thought and deed by choice. Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; Romans 5:19; Ephesians 2:1-3.

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

4. **Satan** – We believe in the personality of Satan, that he is the unholy god of this age, the prince of all the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. Matthew 4:1-3; Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:14-17; Revelation 20:1-3 Revelation 20:10.
5. **Salvation** – We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who by faith and repentance receive Him as their personal Savior. They are justified on the grounds of His blood shed on Calvary and His resurrection from the dead being born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby become the children of God. John 3:3-8; Romans 3:25 and 26; Romans 5:6-11; Romans 10:12 and 13; I Timothy 2:5; I Peter 2:24.
6. **The Church** – We believe in the visible church which is a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized upon a credible confession of faith, and associated for worship, word and fellowship. We believe that these visible churches were committed for perpetual observance, two ordinances: the baptism of believers by immersion and the Lord's Supper (Communion). We believe that the church must continually be committed to discipleship in all of its aspects, including the evangelization of new believers, and the continual edification of all who follow Christ. It is expected of all believers that they will join themselves to a local body of believers in love, and obedience to the cause of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-14; Ephesians 5:23 and 24, Colossians 1:18; I Corinthians 12:12-17; Matthew 28:19 and 20.
7. **Last Things** – We believe that at the last day Christ will descend bodily from Heaven, and bodily raise the dead from the grave to final retribution and reward; that a solemn separation will take place; that the wicked will be sentenced to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy and glorification; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of man in heaven or hell, on the principles of righteousness. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9; Revelation 20:11-15; Revelation 21:22-27.

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

- 8. Church and State** – We believe that every human being has direct relations with God and is responsible to God alone in all matters of all faith; that each church is independent and autonomous, and must be free of any interference by ecclesiastical or political authority; that, therefore, the church and state must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from the dictation and patronage of the other. Any effort to re-define marriage or any other relationship in a way contrary to Scripture will not be condoned or accepted. We will not recognize any marriage relationship save that between a man and woman. I Peter 2:13-17; Genesis 2:21-25; Romans 1:18-27.

ARTICLE IV – CHURCH COVENANT

1. Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the public confession of our faith, having been 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, solemnly and joyfully enter into a covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.
2. We purpose, 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 attend its services regularly; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to give faithfully of time and talent to its activities; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.
3. We also purpose to maintain personal and family Bible study; to train our children according to the Word of God; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in all our dealings; faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to avoid all gossip, backbiting and unrighteous anger; to abstain from all forms of activity which dishonor our Lord Jesus Christ; cause

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

stumbling to a fellow believer or hinder evangelism; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of Christ, our Savior, and to give Him preeminence in all things.

4. We further purpose to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return; to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy to speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and, mindful of the rules of our Savior, to seek it without delay.
5. We moreover purpose that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church of like faith and order where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word. In the event there is no such church, we shall seek, with the Lord's help, to establish one.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

1. Definition of Membership

A member is one who enters into a covenant relationship with other members of Calvary Baptist Bible Church.

A member is given voting rights, as well as the privilege of serving in leadership as it is appropriate.

2. Reception of Members

- a. By baptism - upon profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and by accepting the Articles of Faith and the Church Covenant, and upon baptism by immersion shall be received into membership.
 - i. Membership is not automatically given to those under the age of 18 and who confess their faith by following in baptism (see section 2 e).
- b. By Letter – Upon receipt and review of a letter from another church of like faith and practice.

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

- c. By Statement – Having already professed Jesus Christ as Savior and having been scripturally baptized (by immersion) by another church of like faith and practice.
- d. By Restoration – Excluded members may be restored to membership upon confession of their error or sin and giving evidence of repentance.
- e. By Confession – Children (upon reaching the age of 18 years) who have confessed their faith and been baptized will meet with the deacons and elders to relate their Christian experience, and verify their intentions to become members of the church. The deacon/elder recommendation will be confirmed by a congregational vote.

3. Procedure for Membership

Every candidate for admission to the church shall relate his or her Christian experience to the deacons and elders of the church and then be recommended for a congregational vote.

4. Dismissal from Membership

- a. By Death - of the individual
- b. By Transfer – A member leaving this church for good and proper reasons may be granted a letter of transfer to unite with another church of like faith and practice.
- c. By Church Discipline – Church discipline is that procedure including Christian teaching, training, admonition, and rebuke both private and public, with the view of helping the individual grow in grace, mature in their individual faith, to break off from worldliness, and live wholly for the Lord.
 - i. At such time that a member shall refuse to receive such help it will be necessary for the church to exclude him or her from membership.

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

- ii. All such cases of church discipline will be handled by the deacons ⁽⁴⁾ and elders, or brought before the congregation when deemed necessary.
 - iii. All matters of church discipline shall be administered according to Matthew 18:15-20.
- d. When a member voluntarily withdraws from the congregation, yet does not seek to follow in obedience by joining with another group of believers (church), they will be exhorted by the church leadership, and their names withdrawn from membership.

ARTICLE VI – ORGANIZATION

1. The government of Calvary Baptist Bible Church is vested in the membership.
2. The officers of this church shall be deacons, elders, secretary and treasurer. The office of secretary and treasurer may be combined at the discretion of the deacons and elders.
3. The procedure and process for identifying and recommending deacons and elders shall be identified in a separate document maintained by both parties.
4. Qualified candidates (by unanimous vote of the elders and agreement by the deacons) shall be recommended to the congregation for approval. Candidates names must be given/announced from the pulpit for two (2) scheduled services prior to said meeting
5. Deacons and elders shall meet on a regular basis to discuss and decide items of mutual interest for the well being of the church.

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

6. Elder(s) -

- a. Elders shall be members that meet the qualifications as found in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and I Peter 5:1-3 having been duly recommended and elected by the congregation.
- b. It shall be the duty of an elder to preach and teach the Gospel, to administer the ordinances of the church, be apt to teach, to shepherd the flock that God has created at Calvary Baptist Bible Church, and to exercise general oversight of the total ministries at the church. Elders may serve in both compensated and non-compensated roles.
- c. An elder shall be called for an indefinite term. Compensated elders may terminate any written agreements or contract with the church upon thirty (30) days written notice by either the elder in question or the church. In circumstances where immoral or unethical activities are suspected, the termination may be immediate.
- d. An elder who is neglectful or indifferent of his office or who evidences a spirit (in the judgment of the other elders and the deacon board) which is not in keeping with the scriptural requirements of that office will be exhorted by his fellow elders per Matthew 18:15-20. If unrepentant, he may be dismissed by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the deacons, elders, and confirmed by the congregation (see Article VII section 6 d).
- e. In the event the church is without a compensated preaching or teaching elder, the deacons and remaining elders shall appoint a pulpit committee. At least one (1) deacon and one (1) elder will be participants in said committee.
- f. All elders shall have equal authority and their decisions shall be:

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

- i. Unilateral or Unanimous: Being of one mind and/or having the agreement and consent of all; or,
 - ii. Consensus Agreement: A decision-making process in which the elders develop, and agree to support, a decision in the best interest of the whole.
7. Deacons –
 - a. Deacons shall be members that meet the qualifications as found in Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-13 having been duly recommended and elected by the congregation.
 - b. The duties of deacons are to be servants to the elders and the congregation of the church. They shall assist the elders in the administration of the ordinances of the church and shall have at heart the spiritual welfare of the members. The deacons shall assist the elders in every way possible as to enhance their God-given ministry among the people.
 - c. The term of office for a deacon shall be three (3) years, at which time they may be re-elected if qualified.
 - d. The Board of Deacons shall consist of the number of men deemed necessary by the elders and the congregation to accomplish sufficiently the work of the deacons of the church, as qualified per the scriptural requirements.
 - i. The number of deacons may increase as the need arises.
 - ii. The deacons shall choose a chairman from among themselves.
 - iii. The deacon chairman will be responsible for chairing any congregational business meetings.
 - iv. The deacon chairman may be removed from office per the next item.
 - e. A deacon who is neglectful or indifferent of his office or who evidences a spirit (in the judgment of the elders and the deacon

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

board) which is not in keeping with the scriptural requirements of that office will be exhorted by his fellow deacons and elders per Matthew 18:15-20. If unrepentant, he may be dismissed

by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the (28)deacons, elders, and confirmed by the congregation (see Article VII section 6 d).

- f. All deacons shall have equal authority and their decisions shall be:
 - i. Unilateral or Unanimous: Being of one mind and/or having the agreement and consent of all; or,
 - ii. Consensus Agreement: A decision-making process in which the deacons develop, and agree to support, a decision in the best interest of the whole.
- g. The secretary and treasurer positions may be combined at the discretion of the deacons and elders and shall be appointed by both.
 - i. The secretary and treasurer may terminate any written agreements or contract with the church upon thirty (30) days written notice by either the deacons or elders. In circumstances where immoral or unethical activities are suspected, the termination may be immediate.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS

1. The church shall endeavor to hold a business meeting each quarter of the calendar year.
2. The annual business meeting shall be held in January of each calendar year.
3. All business meetings will be moderated by the chairman of the deacons or his designee.
4. Notice of all business meetings must be given/announced from the pulpit for two (2) scheduled services prior to said meeting

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

5. Special meetings may be called by:
 - a. Mutual agreement of the deacons and elders.
 - b. At the written request of twenty (20) members of the congregation eligible to vote
6. Any member who has been absent for three (3) consecutive Sundays (prior to the meeting date) without an acceptable reason, is not eligible to vote.
7. Meeting quorum requirements are as follows:
 - a. Twenty-five (25) percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum at any church business meeting.
 - b. In the case of church business, a fifty-one (51) percent majority of the members eligible to vote shall be necessary to carry an action.
 - c. In the case of buying, selling or encumbering property, forty (40) percent of the members eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum and shall require a sixty (60) percent majority vote to carry an action.
 - d. In the case of electing deacons and elders, forty (40) percent of the members eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum and shall require an eighty (80) percent majority vote to carry such action.
8. Except where it is contrary to these Articles of Faith, Covenant and Constitution, ***Roberts Rules of Order*** shall govern the conduct of a meeting.

ARTICLE VIII AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

1. No auxiliary group shall organize without receiving authority from deacons, elders and confirmation by the church members.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

1. These Articles of Faith, Covenant and Constitution may be amended at any meeting, but must be given/announced from the pulpit for two (2) scheduled services prior to said meeting.
2. The amendment(s) must be conspicuously posted within the church building prior to said meeting.

ARTICLE X – DISSOLUTION

1. Upon the dissolution of the church, the membership shall, after payment of all liabilities incurred by the church, dispose of all assets to another church of like precious faith and practice organized under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or of the corresponding provisions of any future United States Revenue Law(s)) as the membership shall determine.
2. No part of the net earnings of Calvary Baptist Bible Church, Peoria, IL shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to: It's members, Officers, Deacons, Elders, Trustees or any other person except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered, and to make payments in the furtherance of the church.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these documents of the church, the church shall not carry out any activity not permitted to be carried out by:

Calvary Baptist Bible Church

2200 West Nebraska Ave. – Peoria, IL – (309) 673-6872

Articles of Faith – Covenant - Constitution

By a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax, under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or of the corresponding provisions of any future United States Revenue Law(s)) as the membership shall determine.

By corporation contributions of which are deductible under Section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or of the corresponding provisions of any future United States Revenue Law(s)).

⁽⁴⁴⁾**By a corporation that conflicts with applicable State of Illinois Revenue Law(s).**

Last Amended and Approved on October 15, 2017

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