

**CONSTITUTION
OF THE
CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH OF
KNOX INDIANA**

PREAMBLE

We do declare and establish this constitution for the purpose of:

1. Preserving and making secure the principles of our faith.
2. Governing this body in an orderly manner, consistent with the principles set forth in the Bible.
3. Assuring liberties of each individual member and freedom of action of this body with relation to other churches.

Article 1

Name and Relationship

1. This church shall be known as Calvary Baptist Church Knox, Indiana.
2. This church was established in 1941 under the name of United Baptist Church.
3. This church shall be known as a Southern Baptist Convention Church **voluntarily** cooperating with the Northwest Indiana Baptist Association, the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, and the Southern Baptist Convention.
4. Any changes to this constitution may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of all members present of the church entitled to vote. All administrative policies shall be established and maintained by the Elders of the church.

Article 2

Statement of Faith

1. The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. 2 Timothy 3:16 says all scripture is breathed out by God. We believe the Holy Bible itself, as the infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, and is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of church doctrine, policy, practice, and discipline, our church elders are the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

2. This church adopts the "Baptist Faith and Message" (as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention on June 14, 2000) as a guideline of our belief and practice.

3. We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of this local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the members and the local community, that it is imperative that persons employed, who volunteer, or represent this local church body in any way agree to this and conduct themselves accordingly.

Article 3

Church Covenant

1. This church adopts the following "Covenant" to bind her membership.

The church covenant is a voluntary agreement by members of Calvary Baptist Church whereby they endeavor to conduct their lives in such a way as to glorify God. Every member should study it carefully, refer to it often, and seek to live by it. It generally outlines the obligation of church membership.

The Calvary Baptist Church Covenant is as follows:

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of both the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit to: carry out the commission and commandments of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ as

set forth by the Scriptures with the purpose of the heart, being love for God and love for others before ourselves.

Article 4

Vision Statement

1. This church adopts the following “Vision Statement” as her purpose for existing.

To Exalt the Lord, To Equip the Saints, and To Evangelize the Lost.

Vision (seeing as God wants us to see) is crucial for the people of God. It is through vision that we know and stay aware of who we are, why we are here, and where we are going. Without vision, a church will end up in a maintenance program maintaining the status quo. This results in a church going nowhere (Proverbs 29:18).

To Exalt the Lord...

We will meet at Calvary Baptist Church at the appointed times for corporate worship of the Lord and for instruction in righteousness and holy living. Our members will be given the truths of God’s Word on a regular basis and encouraged to grow in their day to day living according to the principles stated in the Scriptures. All attitudes and actions are to be led of the Spirit of God by the Word of God.

To Equip the Saints...

Each believer is given Spiritual gifts “that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever amen” 1 Peter 4:11. At Calvary Baptist Church the teaching of God’s Word, as led by the Spirit of God, will aid each believer in the development of their personal, daily walk with the Lord, helping each other to discern the gifts that God has entrusted to him for the advancement of the Church of Jesus Christ through the local body of believers at Calvary Baptist Church. As each believer begins to recognize his gifts, he will be fitted to a ministry that will best utilize those gifts for Kingdom purposes.

To Evangelize the Lost...

(Matthew 28:19) Calvary Baptist Church will strive for the evangelization of the residents of the area we are responsible for. This will be accomplished by encouraging each believer to be a light in the world that God has placed him in, whether it be at work, school, family or neighborhood setting. Calvary Baptist Church will also have unified church efforts giving opportunities to bring together unsaved people to hear the message of Jesus Christ.

Article 5

Government

1. The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it and is guided by the Church Elders in all areas of church polity. (Elders being defined as “Under Shepherds or Pastors” as defined in 1 Timothy Chapter 3 and Titus 1).
2. All groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable to the church Elders, unless otherwise specified by church action.
3. This church, as an autonomous body, is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist Convention churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the local association, the state convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.
4. As a local church, the style of government will be elder-led and congregational, submissive to the Word and Will of God as best understood and congregationally affirmed. (Heb. 13:17) The offices of the church will be Elder and Deacon.

Article 6 Membership

The Calvary Baptist Church shall receive members as follows: Any person may become a member upon professing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and scriptural baptism.

A. Responsibility of membership: The responsibilities of church membership are summarized in the church Covenant as follows:

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, we do now in the presence of God and this church 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

1. To exhibit the fruit of the spirit in all our activities and relationships; (Gal 5:19-26)
2. To endeavor by all that we do, say or think to be devoted to prayer, watchfulness, thankfulness, wisdom and grace so that “you may know how to answer everyone”; (1 Peter 3:15-16, Colossians 3:17, 23-24).
3. To walk together in Christian love, purity and unity so that the outside world will know we are committed followers of Jesus Christ; (John 13:34-35, Colossians 3).
4. To submit to and pray for the servant leadership of the church (Hebrews 13:17-18).
5. To serve the family of believers with God’s gifting. (1 Peter 4:10-11).
6. To contribute, as the Lord directs, to the financial support of the Church, the relief of

the needy and evangelism of all people. (1 Corinthians 16:1-4, 2 Corinthians 9).

7. To seek God's kingdom first through regular Bible reading, prayer, regular public worship, fellowship and service. (Matthew 6:33)

8. To strive by example, and by prayer, to lead friends, neighbors, and work associates, to a personal faith in Jesus Christ. (Colossians 4:2-6)

B. Discipline of Members: The purpose of church discipline is to **affect** a return to a Biblical standard of conduct and doctrine in a member who errs (Galatians 6:1) to maintain purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6) and to deter sin (1 Timothy 5:20).

Any member of this church who teaches or insists on holding false doctrine, or persistently conducts himself or herself in a manner inconsistent with Biblical teaching, or persists in disturbing the unity or peace of the church, shall be dealt with as follows, according with Matthew 18:15-18:

1. It is the duty of any member of this church, who has knowledge of an erring member's heresy or misconduct, to warn and correct the erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.

2. If the erring member does not heed this warning, the warning member shall again go to the erring member, accompanied by one or two other members **who have witnessed the heresy or misconduct themselves**, to warn and correct, seeking repentance and restoration.

3. If the erring member refuses to heed the warning, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Elders, who, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall tell it to the church encouraging the congregation to pray for the repentance and restoration of the erring member.

4. If the erring member refuses to heed the warnings of the Elders and the church, he or she shall be dismissed from the church pursuant to the Scriptures and treated as an unbeliever. There shall be no appeal of the discipline process or the dismissal to any court. The congregation shall be encouraged to pray for the repentance and restoration of the erring member. It is clearly understood that the discipline process will continue to conclusion, even if the erring member leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership.

5. In the event that an erring member, who has committed a public offense as exemplified in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, is unable to be reached or contacted after several reasonable attempts by the Elders, **the church will have the right** to act upon the offense of said member as quickly as possible, given the circumstances that would lead to the disruption of the unity of the church body.

C. Termination of Membership: Membership may be terminated in one of four ways:

1. By physical death;
2. By transfer: When it is requested, the Elders may grant to a departing member in good standing, a letter of dismissal to the fellowship of another church. No letter may be given to a member who is at the time under the corrective discipline of the church. The Elders may refuse to grant a letter of transfer to any church, which is in their judgment disloyal to the gospel. (Jude 1:3)
3. By exclusion: If a member **habitually** absents himself from the stated meetings of the church without valid reason, or if due to relocation he ceases to maintain a vital contact with the church, he may be excluded from membership. No member will be excluded from membership while hospitalized, in a nursing home, in the military stationed away from the locality of the church, or homebound due to ongoing illness, unless by their own request. If an excluded member applies again for membership, the procedures set forth will again be followed. (“**Habitually**”, as defined by the Elders of the church, is a pattern in which a member’s attendance with Calvary Baptist Church, results in only one or two times per yearly quarter.
4. By dismissal as a final step of church discipline in strict accordance with the Scriptures.

D. Privileges of Membership: All members of Calvary Baptist Church are thus entitled,

1. It is a privilege of membership to have a voice in all public affairs of the church.
2. It is a privilege of membership to have a vote in all public affairs of the church.
3. No member shall be entitled to vote by proxy, **unless** the member is hospitalized, in a nursing home, in the military stationed away from the locality of the church, or homebound due to ongoing illness.
4. It is a privilege of membership, to use Calvary Baptist Church facilities, under the guidelines set forth by the church.

Article 7

Offices and Officers

1. The Biblical offices in the church are that of Elders and Deacons.
2. In addition, our church recognizes various director roles and administrative roles, to help facilitate corporate worship and the day-to-day affairs of the church.
3. Officers shall be called to office by vote of the membership of the Church as provided for under this section of the constitution.
4. All Officers must be members of the church in good and regular standing prior to their nomination.

Calvary Baptist Church shall have the following as Officers of the church:

(a) Senior Pastor

1. Election of Senior Pastor

Election of Senior Pastor shall be by $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active members present at a called meeting after the candidate has been interviewed by the Church Elders privately and subsequently the church publicly.

1. The candidate must meet the requirements of the Bible for the office of pastor found in First Timothy 3 and in Titus 1 before being considered as a candidate for Senior Pastor.

(a) Associate Pastor

1. Election of Associate Pastor

- 1- Election of Associate Pastor shall be by $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active members present at a called meeting after the candidate has been interviewed by the Elders privately and subsequently the church publicly.

- 2- The candidate must meet the requirements of the Bible for the office of pastor found in First Timothy 3 and in Titus 1.

(a) Youth Pastor

1. Election of Youth Pastor

- 1- Election of Youth Pastor shall be by $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active members present at a called meeting after the candidate has been interviewed by the Elders privately and subsequently the church publicly.
 - 2- The candidate must meet the requirements of the Bible for the office of pastor found in First Timothy 3 and in Titus 1.
- (a) Deacon(s)

1. Election of Deacon(s)

- 1- Deacons will be elected based upon the needs of the church. The number shall be such as the church deems necessary to carry out the business of the church.
- 2- Election of Deacon shall be by $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active members present at a called meeting after the candidate has been interviewed by the Elders privately and subsequently the church publicly.
- 3- The candidate must meet the requirements of the Bible for the office of deacon found in Acts 6:1-6 and First Timothy 3:8-13.
- 4- The ordination of deacon is a permanent appointment. (Unless candidate cannot execute the responsibilities of the office.) However, the term of election and service is 2 years.

(a) Music Director

1. Election of Music Director

- 1- Election of Music Director shall be by $\frac{3}{4}$ votes of active members present at a called meeting after the candidate has been interviewed by the Church Elders privately and subsequently the church publicly.
- 2- The candidate should have demonstrated capable musical skill as well as an ability to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leadership during worship.
- 3- The term of election is 3 years.

(a) Treasurer

1. Election of Treasurer

- 1- Election of Treasurer shall be by $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active members present at a called meeting after the candidate has been interviewed by the Church Elders privately and subsequently the church publicly.
- 2- The candidate must be of trustworthy character and should show some personal financial management skill. Preferably a professional financial background, and shall demonstrate good fiscal responsibility.
- 3- The term of election is 2 years.

(a) Clerk

1. Election of Clerk

- 1- Election of Clerk shall be by $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active members present at a called meeting

- after the candidate has been interviewed by the Church Elders privately and subsequently the church publicly.
- 2- The candidate should have demonstrated capable organizational skills and be willing to handle all the administrative tasks of the church.
 - 3- The term of election is 3 years.
- (a) Trustees
1. Election of Trustees
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- 1- Trustees will be elected based upon the needs of the church. The number shall be such as the church deems necessary to carry out the business of the church.
 - 2- Election of Trustees shall be by $\frac{3}{4}$ votes of active members present at a called meeting after the candidate has been interviewed by the Elders and Deacons privately and subsequently the church publicly.
 - 3- The candidate should have demonstrated capable organizational skills and be willing to handle all that is required to maintain the church property.
 - 4- The term of election is 3 years.

Article 8

Stewardship and Missions

Calvary Baptist Church shall make an annual budget that will include all the local objectives, and support of missions, as sponsored by the Northwest Indiana Baptist Association. Also, the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

The church shall endeavor to enlist the membership to share in the support of all objectives.

Calvary Baptist Church shall practice and support missions from its own local community to the ends of the earth.

Article 9

Church Meetings

Worship Services – The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning and other times as the Holy Spirit directs and guides the Elders. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The Senior Pastor shall direct the services with the assistance of the Church Elders.

Special Services – Revival services and any other church meeting essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be placed on the church calendar, and /or in the church bulletins.

Regular Business Meetings – The church shall hold a regular business meeting at least once a year, for the purpose of handling business, hearing reports, and approval of all budgets.

Special Called Business Meetings – The church may conduct called business meetings of special nature and significance. A 14 day notice must be given to the membership. The notice shall include the subject, the date, the time and place.

- a. Quorum – The quorum consists of at least 15% of the Active membership roll. All business meetings whether a special called business meeting, annual business meeting, or regular business meeting requires a quorum of 15 % of the active membership roll to be present to conduct the meeting.
- b. Parliamentary Rules – “Roberts Rules of Order, Revised”, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.
- c. Moderator – The Senior Pastor or a Church Elder can serve as moderator. All matters brought before the church shall be decided by a simple majority vote of active members present except where designated differently by the constitution.