

# **CONSTITUTION**

## **Calvary Fellowship** **A Nonprofit Organization**

Revised May 31, 2015

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Corporation and Affiliation**

This church will be incorporated under the name of Calvary Fellowship Church of West Chester. It will also be known as Calvary Fellowship Downingtown or Calvary Fellowship (CF).

The Elders will serve as the Trustees in the capacity required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

This church will at times hereafter retain the right to associate and disassociate itself with and from any denomination or fellowship, which is in agreement with the Articles of Faith of this church. This church will retain its autonomy in order to give its allegiance first of all to God and His Word. At no time will the properties or assets of this church become the properties or assets of another organization.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **Dissolution Clause**

No part of the net earnings of the corporation will benefit any individual or corporation to which they may be members.

The said corporation does not contemplate pecuniary gain or profit, incidental or otherwise, to its members. Upon dissolution, the assets of the corporation will be distributed by the Elders to such organization(s) and for such purposes as in the judgment and discretion of the Elders will best accomplish the general purposes of this corporation provided that any such organization(s) will qualify as exempt under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **Statement of Essential Doctrine**

**We believe** the Holy Scriptures, all 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, to be verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life, and that they will be used to settle all matters not specifically addressed in this statement of faith.

2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21

**We believe** in only one living and true God, eternally existing in three distinct, equal, and fully divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each member of the Godhead works together and is holy, sovereign, all-knowing, all-powerful, and present everywhere.

Deuteronomy 6:4; John 14:16

**We believe** that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, lived without sin, and is fully God and fully man. Galatians 4:4; Philippians 2:5-11

**We believe** that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death which is separation from God; that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and are therefore sinners in thought, word, and deed, subject to God's righteous wrath, and in desperate need of a Savior.

Romans 5:12; Romans 6:23

**We believe** that the Lord Jesus Christ died and fully paid the penalty for our sins as our substitute to make atonement before God. He was raised from the dead on the third day and justifies all who believe on Him by faith alone. Salvation is found in none other than Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:3-5; 1 John 2:2

**We believe** in two ordinances of the church as given in scripture: water baptism and the Lord's supper. Water baptism is the public testimony of a believer's salvation identifying with Jesus. It is found in scripture to be an initial act of obedience of a Christ-follower. It declares faith in Jesus to all who are watching and is not a means of salvation. The Lord's Supper is a remembrance of the Lord's death "til He comes."

Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

**We believe** God has given every believer the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of our salvation. The Holy Spirit enables us to live a holy life and uses us to accomplish His purposes in the world by gifting us to serve His church.

Ephesians 4:30; Galatians 5:22-25

**We believe** in the imminent, visible, and personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ and in His literal reign of 1,000 years on earth.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 22:20

**We believe** in the bodily resurrection of the just and unjust, the eternal blessedness of the saved in a literal heaven, and the eternal punishment of the lost in a literal hell.

Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:46

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Membership**

#### **Becoming a member**

- A. Requirements
  1. Members will be age 18 or older.
  2. Members will successfully complete a Membership process and are faithful attendees of Calvary Fellowship.
  3. Members will sign a Statement of Commitment which will serve as a formal record of membership and will submit to church discipline in accordance with the scriptures.
  4. Members will be excited about the direction of the church and agree with the Constitution.
  5. Members will be interviewed and should give evidence of the following:
    - a. Faith in Jesus Christ alone as their personal Lord and Savior.
    - b. Faithful attendance at CF.
    - c. Faithful service at CF.
    - d. Faithful financial contribution to support the ministries of CF.
- B. Membership from other churches
  1. Letters transferring members from CF to another church will be granted.
  2. Members of another church will not be received into membership of CF by letter of transfer from a previous church but must complete the requirements of membership as stated above.

## Removal

Names of members may be removed from the Membership role for one or more of the following reasons:

- A. Request of member
- B. Death
- C. Inactive role for six months
- D. Disciplinary action

## Restoration

Any person who has been excluded from membership at CF may be restored to membership upon evidence of repentance and reformation, and on the unanimous recommendation of the Elders.

## ARTICLE V

### Administration

#### Business Meetings

- A. Church business meetings are held annually. Any additional meetings are at the discretion of the Elders.
- B. The business meeting of the church will continue if 20% of the members are present on the day appointed for the meeting.

#### Senior Pastor

- A. Qualifications
  1. Every candidate for the office of Senior Pastor must be a man meeting the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 5:1-4, and Titus 1.
  2. He must be in agreement with the Constitution.
- B. Responsibilities
  1. It is the responsibility of the Senior Pastor to preach the whole counsel of God, to administer the ordinances, and to look after the spiritual welfare of the pastoral team, and to lead the direction of the church as a whole.
  2. He, along with the elders, has the responsibility for the oversight of the church. He serves as an elder.
  3. Hiring of Pastors: Every candidate for the office of Pastor must be a man meeting the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-4; and Titus 1. The candidate for a Pastoral staff position will be recommended by the Senior Pastor for approval by the Elders.
  4. Hiring of non-pastoral staff: All other staff employees will be hired by the Senior Pastor or by his designee. The Senior Pastor will provide direct supervision of all employees. He may delegate portions of his supervisory power, but will retain final responsibility for all staff.
  5. The Senior Pastor will have the prerogative to release any staff person except a pastor, which would require approval by the elders.
- C. Search Team
  1. The Pastoral Search Team will consist of at least five members: two elders selected by Elders and at least three congregational members, chosen by the Elders.
  2. It will be the duty of the Pastoral Search Team to investigate prospective candidates. When the Team is satisfied with the suitability and availability of a man, they will recommend him to the Elders. If the Elders concur, the elders will invite the man as a candidate. At this time the responsibilities of the Pastoral Search Team are completed.
  3. The Elders will take the recommendation of the search team and, after an interviewing process, will vote to invite or dismiss the man as a candidate. Subsequently, arrangements must be made to present the candidate to the congregation. After presenting the candidate, the elders will call a meeting to give the members of CF the opportunity to affirm the recommendation of the elders. The results of this affirmation will be announced at a future time.

#### Elders

Elders will lead based on direction set forth in a separate document entitled "Elder Guidelines."

- A. Qualifications
  1. A man who meets the qualifications as set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
  2. An active member and in agreement with the Constitution.

**B. Responsibilities**

1. Elders hold a position of leadership and are the final authority in the church under Christ to oversee and protect the staff and body from distracting and ungodly influences.
2. They discharge their duties as set forth in the Scriptures, particularly passages such as Acts 20:17-38, 1 Peter 5:1, and Hebrews 13:17.
3. They evaluate the Senior Pastor and encourage him in the work of the Lord.

**C. Selection**

1. New Elders are selected by the elders.
2. New Elders are affirmed by the congregation at the annual business meeting.
3. It is at the discretion of the Elders to replace any Elder who vacates his position prior to his term being completed.

**Deacon**

Deacons will accomplish their ministry through guidelines set forth in a separate document entitled "Helps Ministry Guidelines."

**A. Qualifications**

1. A man or woman who meets the qualifications as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-12.
2. An active member and in agreement with the Constitution.

**B. Responsibilities**

1. Deacons execute a servant's role.
2. They will be in full agreement with the church direction, being sober in life, having a good reputation, and being able to comfort the oppressed.
3. They carry out the helps ministry and administer the helps funds.

**C. Selection**

1. Deacons are selected by the Elders.
2. New deacons are affirmed by the members of CF at the annual business meeting.
3. It is at the discretion of the Elders to replace any deacon who vacates his/her position prior to a term being completed.

**ARTICLE VI**

**Amendments**

**Constitution**

Changes to the Constitution will be made following unanimous vote by the Elders. The approved amendment(s) will then be presented to the congregation for affirmation.

**Articles of Faith**

The Statement of Essential Doctrine will at no time be amended so as to alter the meaning intended by its authors in their historical context.