

THE CONSTITUTION
of
BEAL HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1 NAME

- 1.1 The name of this church is Beal Heights Presbyterian Church, a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Oklahoma, hereinafter referred to as "this Church."
- 1.2 This Church is a particular congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America, herein after referred to as "the PCA."

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 Beal Heights Presbyterian Church, having come into being under God and being submitted to His inerrant Word, recognizes the Biblical fact that man was created to worship God and that God seeks true worshipers. Consequently, it is the purpose of this Church to provide God-centered opportunities for believers to express their worship of God. To that end, the worship service shall maintain the character of objective worship, framed as a dialogue between God and His people, and incorporating vigorous preaching of the whole counsel of God. Further, the principles of Biblical worship shall be incorporated in every home so that each member of the church shall come to glorify and enjoy God consistently.
- 2.2 The worship service of this church shall incorporate the ordinances established by Christ, the Head, in His Church, which are: prayer; singing praises; reading, expounding and preaching the Word of God; administering the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; public solemn fasting and thanksgiving; catechizing; making offerings for the relief of the poor and for other pious uses; and exercising discipline; the taking of solemn vows, and the ordination to sacred office.
- 2.3 The outgrowth of true worship is true love, and this must be evident here as the Holy Spirit molds Beal Heights Presbyterian Church into a caring, serving community of believers. Therefore, fellowship, prayer, discipleship, service, and support groups will all be fostered and encouraged. Full-orbed worship implies that all the members of the body employ their gifts in the service of God and of one another.
- 2.4 Finally, because the Scripture is covenant-oriented, Beal Heights Presbyterian Church will place great stress on the importance of the family and will not permit "church" work to preempt family life. Nor shall mere activity be the image of this church.

3 DOCTRINE

3.1 This Church is reformed in theology.

3.1.1 This Church holds that the Bible, consisting of sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the inspired Word of God, and is thoroughly infallible and authoritative in its original manuscripts.

3.1.2 Subordinate to the Holy Scriptures, this Church adheres to the Reformed Faith as expressed in the Westminster *Confession of Faith* together with the Westminster *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms* as approved and adopted by the P.C.A.

3.1.3 These documents are incorporated herein by reference and stand as part of this Constitution, as though fully set forth herein.

4 GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

4.1 This Church recognizes Jesus Christ, the one revealed in the infallible written Word of God, as the only preeminent Head of His Church.

4.1.1 It accepts no civil authority in ecclesiastical matters, and it holds to the Presbyterian form of church government.

4.1.2 The elders (session) chosen by the people from their own number shall in conjunction with the pastor(s) exercise government and discipline and take the spiritual oversight of the particular congregation and also of the church generally when called upon so to do.

4.2 Beal Heights Presbyterian Church, being a member of the P.C.A., is subject to the laws pertaining thereto.

4.3 The government of this Church shall be divided into two branches, to be known as the Congregation and the Corporation.

4.3.1 The Congregation shall deal with matters of a spiritual nature. (Amplified in Article I of the Bylaws). The chief responsibility for carrying out the affairs of the congregation shall rest with the session.

4.3.2 The Corporation shall deal with matters of a temporal nature. (Amplified in Article VIII of the Bylaws). All communicant members of the church eighteen years of age and older shall be members of the corporation. The affairs of the corporation shall be administered by a board of directors, but this board shall have no authority other than that delegated to it by the corporation.

5 MEMBERSHIP

5.1 The membership of this church shall be composed of communicant members, non-communicant members, voting members, and associate members.

- 5.1.1 Communicant members are those persons who have appeared before the session and have given a credible profession of personal faith in Christ as their Savior, shall have received the sacrament of water baptism, and have indicated a desire to regularly attend the stated meetings of the church and to work in unity with the other members of the church.
 - 5.1.2 Non-communicant members are those baptized children of communicant members. One or both parents or foster parents must vow in the presence of the congregation to bring up these children in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." These children are not entitled to vote in any meeting of the church.
 - 5.1.3 Voting members are those baptized Christians who have been received by the session as communicant members. For voting in congregational meetings, all voting members may vote. For corporation meetings, only those voting members who are eighteen years of age or older may vote.
 - 5.1.4 Associate members are those people (such as military personnell or college students) who wish to retain their membership in their home church. These persons shall appear before the session and give a credible profession of their faith in Christ as Savior. They shall enjoy all the privileges of fellowship, worship, and service under the supervision of the pastor and spiritual leaders but shall not vote in congregational or corporation meetings and shall not hold elected offices for the congregation or corporation. The home church of the associate member shall be notified of his/her reception as an associate member and will receive notice of baptisms, weddings and funerals involving associate members and their families, and of any need for the administration of judicial discipline.
- 5.2 Membership may be effected by one of three methods: confession of faith, re-affirmation of faith, or transfer of letter, defined as follows:
 - 5.2.1 Confession of faith - if a person confesses Christ and has never been a member in another evangelical church.
 - 5.2.2 Re-affirmation of faith - if a person has previously been a member in another church and now wishes to unite with this church and the mechanics of a transfer of letter are not applicable.
 - 5.2.3 Transfer of letter - if a person has been a member of a sister church a letter of transfer may be requested and granted.
 - 5.3 Periodically, but at least annually, the session shall review the church roll to determine those members who have been regularly absent from worship services to consider appropriate action.
 - 5.4 No inactive roll shall be established.

6 THE OFFICERS

- 6.1 The officers of this church shall be *elders* and *deacons*, in its affairs as a congregation, and *directors*, in its affairs as a corporation.
- 6.2 The elders (ruling and teaching) shall exercise government and discipline and shall take the spiritual oversight of this congregation and church.
- 6.3 The deacons shall be responsible for assistance given to the poor of the congregation and of the community, and may perform such other administrative and charitable duties as may be assigned by the session or congregation.
- 6.4 The directors of the corporation shall ordinarily be the active ruling elders.
 - 6.4.1 The directors shall be empowered to carry out the directions of the corporation concerning the financial and real estate business of the church and any other items required as a not-for-profit corporation of the State of Oklahoma.
 - 6.4.2 The directors of the corporation shall have sole title to its property, real, personal, or mixed, tangible or intangible, and shall be sole owner of any equity in any real estate, or any fund or property of any kind held by or belonging to this church, or any board, society, committee, Sunday school class or branch thereof.
 - 6.4.3 In cases where the number of active elders falls below the minimum number of directors for a not-for-profit corporation as required by the laws of the State of Oklahoma, such elders *emeriti*, active deacons, or other adult male communicant members may serve as directors as appointed by the corporation as need arises.
 - 6.4.4 Non-active elder directors appointed by the corporation shall serve only until such time as the minimum number of active elders is equal to that of the minimum number of directors required by the laws of the State of Oklahoma are attained.

7 DENOMINATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

- 7.1 This constitution and Bylaws shall never contradict the Book of Church Order of the PCA, and any items not expressly covered herein shall be subject to the BCO of this denomination.
- 7.2 This congregation's denominational connection shall be established or disestablished by the Session of this Church, with the advice and consent of the congregation, in accordance with the rules and procedures of the Book of Church Order of the PCA.

8 AMENDMENTS

- 8.1 This constitution can be amended only by a three-quarters vote of those members present and voting at two duly called consecutive meetings of the congregation, which are not less than two weeks apart.
- 8.2 The amendment shall be announced from the pulpit for two consecutive weeks prior to the first congregational meeting and the proposed amendment shall be sent by postal mail in writing to each member of the congregation not less than 10 days prior to the first congregational meeting.