

# **CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF SHADY SHORES BAPTIST CHURCH**

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## **CONSTITUTION**

### **PREAMBLE**

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the church 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.

### **ARTICLE I. NAME**

This body shall be known as the Shady Shores Baptist Church (hereafter the “church”) of Shady Shores, Texas. The principal office shall be located at 401 West Shady Shores Road, Shady Shores, Texas.

### **ARTICLE II. NON-PROFIT STATUS**

The church is organized and shall be operated exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended, unless any law shall be repressive in scope and/or nature, that it is our duty to democratically oppose on the basis of the right of free exercise of religious beliefs and peaceable assembly. The church is formed for any lawful purpose or purposes under the laws of the State of Texas, including any purpose described by Section 2.002 of the Texas Business Organizations Code.

### **ARTICLE III. PURPOSE**

The focus and mission of this church is to be led by the Holy Spirit to share the gospel of Jesus Christ, to train all in Biblical truth and to include each one in a community of faith and fellowship. Regular meetings are held for worship of, and teaching about, Almighty God.

### **ARTICLE IV. STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis of our statement of faith. This church is committed, as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, to share the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Marriage is a biblical institution established by God as described by Scripture. We believe the biblical definition for marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment. Accordingly, this church's pastors and staff will not officiate in same-sex unions or same-sex marriages, nor will its property or resources be used for such purposes.

## **ARTICLE 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 membership. All organizations created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable to the church. This church is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist Churches. Shady Shores Baptist Church will voluntarily cooperate with and support the Denton Baptist Association, Baptist General Convention of Texas, and Southern Baptist Convention, provided such cooperation does not conflict with the church's own best interests.

## **ARTICLE VI. CHURCH COVENANT**

*This covenant represents a goal which the church body should strive to attain.*

Therefore, having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized 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, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, 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 sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to biblically educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, maligning, gossiping, and excessive anger; and to be zealous in our effort to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the admonition of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We, moreover, engage that when we, as members, remove ourselves from this place, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

# **SHADY SHORES BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS**

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## **ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP**

### **SECTION 1. GENERAL**

This sovereign Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ retains unto itself the exclusive right to temporal life of this church. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of the church and the method of accepting members. This church is a theocracy. Its authority is under the leadership of Almighty God through the Holy Spirit. The governance shall be vested in the members. Every active member has the right to a voice in the church's government, plans, and discipline.

### **SECTION 2. CANDIDACY**

A. Any person may offer themselves as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any church service for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and requesting baptism by immersion.
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church.
3. By personal statement, satisfactory to the church, that the person comes from another Christian church and was baptized by immersion as a believer, trusting in the grace of God alone for salvation. Acceptance of a candidate for membership will be contingent upon recommendation by the pastor or by another group as designated by the church.
4. By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion when membership has lapsed, been terminated, been lost, or when no letter is otherwise obtainable. This method is also used as described in Section 6 of this article.

B. Should there be dissent as to any candidate for membership, such dissent shall be referred to the pastor for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of those active church members present shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

### **SECTION 3. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS**

Active members are all current members of the church as of the date of these bylaws, and all members admitted hereafter.

Inactive members are those members who have not attended a regular or special service of the church nor have made any recorded contributions to the church within the last twelve months.

Every active member of the church, who is at least 13 years of age, is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church at a regular or special business meeting, provided the member is present.

Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

#### **SECTION 4. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death of the member
2. Granting of a letter to another Baptist church
3. Erasure (upon request in writing or proof of membership in a church of another denomination)
4. Exclusion by action of the church which is detailed in Section 6 of this article.

#### **SECTION 5. WATCHCARE**

Those Christians who wish to enter into the love and fellowship of the church and will support the objectives of the church but cannot qualify, or choose not to qualify, for membership will be designated as coming under the "watchcare" of the church. These Christians are to be encompassed in all the life and love of the church, except for voting and for holding offices, or positions of doctrinal and/or policy-making responsibilities.

#### **SECTION 6. DISCIPLINE**

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 or designated members of the church 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, which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure should be taken by the pastor and Leadership Team to resolve the problem. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. Should it be determined that the welfare of the church will be best served by the exclusion of a member, the church may exclude such member by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the voting members present at a properly called special business meeting.

Any member who has been excluded may, upon that person's request and evidence of that person's repentance and reformation, and with the endorsement of the pastor and Leadership Team, be restored to membership by a vote of the church. See Section 2, paragraph B of this article.

## **ARTICLE II: CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF**

### **SECTION 1. GENERAL**

All church officers must be members of the church. The officers of this church shall be the pastor, a moderator, a clerk, a treasurer, the Leadership Team, and the trustees.

The staff of this church shall be those persons employed by this church, i.e., pastor and any associate pastors, Minister of Music, Minister of Youth, paid directors of program areas, nursery, secretarial, and custodial employees. The person or persons serving as pastor, church treasurer, church clerk and the staff positions at the time these constitution and bylaws are adopted shall be considered as elected by the church pursuant to the appropriate provisions of these bylaws.

### **SECTION 2. PASTOR**

#### **A. Role of the Pastor**

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the church, the church officers, staff, and organizations to accomplish the mission of the church.

The pastor is the leader of the pastoral ministries of the church. As such, the pastor will work with the Leadership Team and staff to:

1. Lead the church to engage in fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application.
2. Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers.
3. Care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

The pastor must be an ordained minister of excellent repute. The pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs.

#### **B. Pastor Selection Team**

1. When a pastor search team is needed, each active church member shall be allowed to nominate, in writing, up to five church members, including himself/herself. The nominator must place the nominator's name on the ballot in order to assure only members are offering nominations. Staff members, whether paid or unpaid, and paid employees are ineligible to serve on this team, but may submit nominations.

2. The church treasurer and the Leadership Team chair will collect all written nominations. They will determine who has been nominated and create a list, ordered from most nominations to least nominations. The chair of the Leadership Team will contact, in order, those nominated to verify their willingness to serve. When ten nominated members have been verified as willing to serve, their names will be placed on a written ballot.

3. The ballot will be distributed at the next Sunday worship service to each active member present. Each voting member may mark up to five names of nominees the voter

believes should serve on the team. The voter must place their name on the ballot in order to assure only members are voting.

4. The church treasurer and the chair of the Leadership Team will collect all written ballots, whether marked or not. The five nominees who received the most votes will serve as the Pastor Search Team. The next two nominees who received the most votes will serve as alternates. The alternates will attend as many meetings and functions as possible, but will not vote unless one or more of the five initial team members must be replaced due to their resignation or inability to serve.

5. At the first meeting of the Pastor Search Team, the team will organize themselves, and report to the church any roles or assignments made.

6. Regardless of the mechanics of the search for a pastor, the Pastor Search Team will bring only one candidate before the church at any given time, and no other candidates will be presented until a disposition has been made on each.

7. A majority consisting of 75% or more of the voting members present shall be necessary to elect the pastor.

#### C. Recall of Pastor

The pastor may be recalled by the church at a church meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two weeks' notice to the church has been given. The recall vote shall be by secret ballot and an affirmative vote of 75% or more of the voting members present shall be necessary to recall the pastor at which time the office of pastor shall be declared vacant.

A recall meeting may be called by a written petition signed by not less than one-fourth (1/4) of the active members. The moderator for this recall meeting shall be the church clerk, or in the clerk's absence or refusal to serve, the Leadership Team chair shall call the church to order and preside over the election of an acting moderator. The pastor will not serve as the moderator for this meeting. In the event the pastor is recalled, termination will be immediate and the church may provide severance pay to the pastor of not more than one-twelfth (1/12) of his total annual compensation. Such severance pay is payable within thirty (30) days of recall. In the event the pastor is recalled for gross misconduct, as determined solely by the active voting members of the church, such severance pay shall be considered forfeited.

#### D. Pastor Resignation

If the pastor wishes to resign from his position at Shady Shores Baptist Church, it is requested that at least two weeks' notice be given.

#### E. Supply and Selection of Interim Pastor

During such time as the church is without an elected pastor, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The Leadership Team shall be responsible for obtaining pulpit supply (person to fulfill the preaching ministry of the church).

2. The Leadership Team may offer in nomination to the church a person to be named to the position of interim pastor.

### **SECTION 3. CHURCH STAFF**

The church shall call or employ only such staff members as the church shall need. When the need for staff members is determined, the Leadership Team shall prepare a job description for the staff position. Upon recommendation by the Leadership Team, such staff positions will be created after being approved by the church.

The staff shall operate under the supervision and auspices of the pastor. During any such time as the church is without a pastor, the Leadership Team shall designate a staff member to assume the personnel responsibilities ordinarily assumed by the pastor.

#### A. Ministerial Staff Positions

Ministerial staff members shall be employed by majority vote of those voting members present at a church meeting called for that purpose, upon recommendation of the Leadership Team and pastor. Ministerial staff positions may include but are not limited to Minister of Education, Minister of Music, Minister of Youth, Associate Pastors, etc. These staff members may be terminated by a majority vote of the voting members present at a church meeting called for that purpose, upon recommendation by the Leadership Team and pastor, or upon presentation of a written petition signed by not less than one-fourth (1/4) of the active voting members.

#### B. Non-ministerial Staff Positions

Non-ministerial staff members may be employed and terminated by the Leadership Team upon recommendation of the pastor. Non-ministerial staff positions may include but are not limited to nursery, secretarial and custodial positions, and directors of program areas such as the preschool or children areas.

### **SECTION 4. MODERATOR**

1. The moderator shall be the pastor except when otherwise specified in these bylaws. In the absence of the pastor, the Leadership Team chair shall serve as the moderator. In the absence of both, the church clerk shall call the church to order and preside over the election of an acting moderator.

2. If it is apparent that the church will not resolve conflict on a consensus basis, the moderator will utilize the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order to maintain the spirit of Christian love while presiding, to be fair and courteous with all members, to help members understand parliamentary procedures without embarrassment to them, to encourage full and free debate by leading members to talk through their disagreements, and to respect the minority who has a right to be heard even though the majority must prevail. The moderator will always take the affirmative vote first and then the negative vote second. The moderator may table the business until such time as the church can come together in agreement. The moderator must maintain a neutral position while presiding, but may state his view.

## **SECTION 5. CHURCH CLERK**

The church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall:

- A. keep an accurate record of the proceedings of each business meeting of the church;
- B. shall give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary as prescribed in these by-laws;
- C. shall prepare the annual church letter to the association;
- D. shall keep a register of the names of members with dates of admission, baptism, dismissal, and death;
- E. shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church;
- F. shall preserve on file all official written communications and reports;
- G. shall perform any other clerical duties assigned by the church.

All records of the church are considered church property and shall be filed in the church office. The pastor in consultation with the church clerk, may assign certain duties of the church clerk to a non-ministerial staff member.

## **SECTION 6. CHURCH TREASURER**

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its financial officer. The treasurer shall be elected for a period of one (1) year and shall serve without yearly limit. The Treasurer shall be bonded, the church paying for a bond, a copy of which shall be filed with the church.

Church financial records shall generally be maintained to the maximum extent practical in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Segregation of financial duties to the maximum extent practical to ensure good internal control over church finances is an integral part of the accounting system.

The treasurer and pastor jointly may assign clerical duties of the treasurer to non-ministerial staff or a church member volunteer to help ensure maximum safeguards of the church finances. The Leadership Team should review the procedures on an ongoing basis to ensure such procedures are at all times adequate for the church size and growth.

The following financial functions are the oversight responsibility of the Treasurer, or his/her delegates:

1. Deposit of all church receipts.
2. Payment of all authorized church expenses.
3. Maintenance of accounting records to support all receipts and disbursements.
4. Preparation of all financial reports.
5. Presentation of financial reports at Leadership Team and regular business meetings.
6. Preservation of all financial reports and records as a part of the permanent church records.
7. Making all records available annually for audit (either by an Audit Team and/or outside independent auditors).



## **SECTION 7. TRUSTEES**

### **A. Duties**

Three (3) trustees, elected by the church, will serve as legal officers of the church. They shall hold in trust the church property and shall serve as directors of Shady Shores Baptist Church. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents on behalf of Shady Shores Baptist Church involving the purchase, sale, mortgage, rental, or transfer of property, or to other legal documents where the signatures of trustees or directors are required.

### **B. Selection of Trustees**

The Leadership Team and/or church members may place names in nomination for trustee at a church business meeting. Duly elected trustees shall serve 3-year terms on a rotating basis with one third (1/3) of the trustees being elected each year. A trustee may be reelected to a position when that trustee rotates off if he or she is willing to serve.

Upon adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws, the current trustees shall continue to serve in that capacity until such time as the church has elected its new church trustees. The first group of trustees shall rotate off alphabetically, by the last name, at the end of the first, second and third year.

## **ARTICLE III: TEAMS**

### **SECTION 1. PURPOSE**

The teams of this church shall consist of standing and non-standing teams. Standing teams shall be created to serve specific ongoing needs of the church. A standing team may be dissolved by a majority vote of church members at a business meeting when the church decides that its services are no longer warranted. A non-standing team may be created by the church or the Leadership Team to serve a specific temporary need of the church. A non-standing team shall be dissolved by a majority vote of church members at a business meeting when the team's original purpose has been accomplished. A list of all standing and non-standing teams and team members shall be maintained by the church clerk.

### **SECTION 2. MEMBERSHIP**

Members of all church teams will be chosen from the membership of the church. No team, standing or non-standing, shall consist of less than three (3) members. Church members related to the first degree may not serve simultaneously on the same team where official votes are taken, i.e. Leadership Team, pastor search team, et al.

### **SECTION 3. SELECTION OF TEAM MEMBERS**

Unless otherwise specified in these bylaws, all church officers, church team members, trustees, officers of various places of leadership, etc., shall be elected by a majority vote of the active members present at a regular or special business meeting.

## **ARTICLE IV: LEADERSHIP TEAM**

### **SECTION 1. PURPOSE**

The Leadership Team shall consist of five (5) non-staff church members with one-third of them rotating off each calendar year. An immediate family member of any paid staff member may not serve on the Leadership Team. The member(s) rotating off must remain off the team for one year before being eligible to serve on this team. The team shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations. The primary functions of the Leadership Team shall be to:

- A. Help the church define its mission and define its priorities.
- B. Coordinate studies of church and community needs.
- C. Recommend to the church coordinated plans for ministry.
- D. Coordinate the church's schedule of activities.
- E. Evaluate progress in terms of church objectives and goals.

Any decision, recommendation or policy adopted by the Leadership Team is subject to review by the members of the church and may be overruled by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of active members present at a regular or special business meeting.

### **SECTION 2. MEETINGS**

The Leadership Team shall meet at least monthly with the pastor, staff, other church officers, program directors, and team leaders.

## **ARTICLE V: CHURCH PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS**

The church shall maintain at a minimum the following programs:

1. Bible teaching and church member training,
2. Church leader training and new member orientation,
3. Mission education, mission action, and mission support,
4. Music education, training and performance.

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, and shall report regularly to the church. The church shall elect annually from its membership persons to fill the various offices and places of leadership and instruction within the church organizations.

## **ARTICLE VI: 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.

- A. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- B. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.
- C. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the church shall authorize.
- D. A person who professes Christ shall be baptized as soon as possible.

### **SECTION 2. THE LORD'S SUPPER**

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church and other Christians, through partaking of bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ who died for our sins, until His return.

- A. The church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least four times a year.
- B. The pastor and Leadership Team shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

## **ARTICLE VII: CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 1. WORSHIP SERVICES**

The church shall meet regularly at least on Sunday morning for preaching, prayer, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God. The meetings will be open for the entire congregation and membership of the church, and for all people, and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or as the church may direct under Article II, Section 2 (E) of these Bylaws.

### **SECTION 2. SPECIAL SERVICES**

Revival services and any other meetings which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar and carried out.

### **SECTION 3**

#### **REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Regular business meetings shall be held at least twice annually. An agenda may be published and distributed to the membership prior to a business meeting.

## **SECTION 4. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Special business meetings may be called and held to consider significant matters. A one-week notice with a written agenda must be given to the church concerning the subject, date, time, and location unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical or unless otherwise specified by these By-laws.

## **SECTION 5. QUORUM**

In all business meetings, the quorum shall consist of those active members present, provided it is a regular business meeting or a properly called special business meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII: CHURCH FINANCES**

### **SECTION 1. BUDGET**

The Leadership Team shall annually prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by item the amount needed for all local and other expenses.

It is understood that membership in the church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular proportionate gifts.

### **SECTION 2. HANDLING OF FUNDS**

The Treasurer shall account for all church receipts as set forth in Article II, Section 6.

Deposits of funds shall be made by a designated member of the church. This member must have no other access to church financial record keeping, other than counting, such as check signing or data entry. All funds thus received will be subject to audit as set forth in Article II, Section 6.

All checks written on church accounts must have two authorized signatures.

### **SECTION 3. FISCAL YEAR**

The church fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end December 31 of each year.

## **ARTICLE IX: DISSOLUTION**

Upon discontinuance of this church by dissolution or otherwise, any assets lawfully available for distribution are to be transferred to one or more organizations qualifying as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, by a majority of active members attending a duly called business meeting.

## **ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS**

### **SECTION 1: METHOD**

1. The Constitution may be amended by 75% or more of the active members present at any duly convened business meeting of the church.

2. The by-laws may be amended by 66% or more of the active members present at any duly convened business meeting of the church.

3. A proposed amendment to either the constitution or by-laws shall be presented to the church in writing at any regular or duly called business meeting of the church at least thirty (30) days prior to the date established for voting on said amendment.

4. The proposed amendment shall be printed and posted in the church office at least fifteen (15) days before the proposed amendment is to be acted upon.

5. When an amendment is proposed and has been rejected by the church, that amendment, or any amendment embodying the substance thereof, shall not be proposed again for at least six months from the date of the rejection of such amendment.

### **SECTION 2: EFFECTIVE DATE**

Any amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws shall immediately go into full force and effect from and after their adoption.