

# Constitution of Parkway Baptist Church

*5600 Virginia Parkway, McKinney, Texas*

## **Preamble:**

- Whereas we, the members of Parkway Baptist Church, having searched the Scriptures under the guidance of His Spirit, do hereby organize ourselves in accord with the laws of the State of Texas governing non-profit organizations and adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the standards set forth in the Baptist Faith & Message (2000 Edition).

- *The following articles shall be deemed adopted upon a two-thirds vote of the church membership present and voting at regular business meeting, Sunday, August 30, 2009, held at 5600 Virginia Parkway, in McKinney, Texas. The Parkway Baptist Church Constitution/Bylaws adopted Wednesday, April 12, 1995, are hereby abolished.*

## **Article 1 – Name**

The name of this church is Parkway Baptist Church. It is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Texas. It is presently located at 5600 Virginia Parkway, McKinney, Texas.

## **Article 2 – Purpose**

- This church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities.

- This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:

- Worshipping Him;

- Equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study;

- Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and

any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture;

- Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work, local, domestic, and international;
- Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion;
- Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers;
- Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ; and
- Calling fellow churches to biblical faithfulness and purity through instruction and encouragement about the nature of the local church.

## **Article 3 – Membership**

### **Section 1 – Qualifications**

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the elders deem appropriate.

### **Section 2 – Admission of Members**

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

### **Section 3 – Duties and Privileges of Membership**

In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the

church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church who are members of this congregation; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

#### **Section 4 – On Church Discipline**

- Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in [Matthew 18: 15–17](#) and the example of scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

- Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, deposition from office, and excommunication (see [Matthew 18: 15–17](#); [2 Thessalonians 3: 14–15](#); [1 Timothy 5: 19–20](#); [1 Corinthians 5: 4–5](#)).

- The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see [Proverbs 15: 5](#); [29: 15](#); [I Corinthians 4: 14](#); [Ephesians 6: 4](#); [I Timothy 3: 4–5](#); [Hebrews 12: 1–11](#); [Psalm 119: 115](#); [141: 5](#); [Proverbs 17: 10](#); [25: 12](#); [27: 5](#); [Ecclesiastes 7: 5](#); [Matthew 7: 26–27](#); [18: 15–17](#); [Luke 17: 3](#); [Acts 2: 40](#); [I Corinthians 5: 5](#); [Galatians 6: 1–5](#); [II Thessalonians 3: 6, 14–15](#); [I Timothy 1: 20](#); [Titus 1: 13–14](#); [James 1: 22](#));

- For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (see [Proverbs 13: 20](#); [Romans 15: 14](#); [I Corinthians 5: 11](#); [15: 33](#); [Colossians 3: 16](#); [I Thessalonians 5: 14](#) [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; [I Timothy 5: 20](#); [Titus 1: 11](#); [Hebrews 10: 24–25](#));

- For the purity of the church as a whole (see [I Corinthians 5: 6–7](#); [II Corinthians 13: 10](#);

Ephesians 5: 27; II John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21: 2);

- For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (see Proverbs 28: 7; Matthew 5: 13-16; John 13: 35; Acts 5: 1-14; Ephesians 5: 11; I Timothy 3: 7; II Peter 2: 2; I John 3: 10); and

- Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5: 11; I Kings 11: 2; II Chronicles 19: 2; Ezra 6: 21; Nehemiah 9: 2; Isaiah 52: 11; Ezekiel 36: 20; Matthew 5: 16; John 15: 8, 18: 17, 25; Romans 2: 24; 15: 5-6; II Corinthians 6: 14-7: 1; Ephesians 1: 4; 5: 27; I Peter 2: 12).

### **Section 5 – Termination of Membership**

Termination of membership shall be recognized by the church following the death or voluntary resignation of any church member. Membership may be terminated as an act of church discipline at the recommendation of the elders and with the vote of two-thirds of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members.

## **Article 4 - Meetings**

### **Section 1 – Worship Meetings**

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day, and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

### **Section 2 – Members' meetings**

- In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- There shall be a regular members' meeting at least once a quarter, at some time apart from a public worship service agreed upon by the membership.
- An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.
- Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be

understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present.

- A budget shall be approved by the membership at a members' meeting no more than three months nor less than one month prior to the start of the fiscal year.
- At any regular or special members' meeting, officers may be elected and positions filled as needed, so long as all relevant constitutional requirements have been met.
- Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elders, or at the written request, submitted to the elders, of five percent of the voting membership. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

## **Article 5 – Officers**

### **Section 1 – Summary**

The Biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under this constitution of clerk, treasurer and trustee. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

### **Section 2 – Elders**

- The elders shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in [I Timothy 3: 1–7](#) and [Titus 1: 6–9](#). A majority of the active eldership shall be composed of church members not in the regular pay of the church, and no elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure.
- Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in [Acts 6: 1–6](#) and [I Peter 5: 1–4](#), the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock.
- The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance

with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. This recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church triennially.

- An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in [Matthew 18: 15–17](#) and [I Timothy 5: 17–21](#). Any of the elders may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church.
- The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.
- The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of senior and associate pastor. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position.
- The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.
- The elders shall elect a chairman and shall also elect one of their number to serve as moderator of members' meetings. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Texas, the elders shall appoint five individuals to serve as trustees of the corporation. These appointments shall be ratified by the congregation at a members meeting.

### **Section 3 – The Senior Pastor**

- The senior pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.
- His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation set out in Article 5, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 6, Section 3.
- He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the constitution.
- In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

#### **Section 4 – Associate Pastors**

- The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor is that of associate.
- An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.
- His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation set out in Article 5, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 6, Section 4.
- He shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth in the constitution, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the congregation.
- In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the associate pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the oversight of the elders.

#### **Section 5 – Deacons**

- The office of deacon is described in [I Timothy 3: 8–13](#) and [Acts 6: 1–7](#). The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of

service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons.

- Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration.
- A minimum of four deacons, chosen by deacons, will serve with the Treasurer on the Finance Team.
- The deacons shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the elders at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements only.

### **Section 6 – Clerk**

- It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the church.
- The clerk shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year.
- In the absence or incapacity of the clerk the elders shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk.
- For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Texas, the clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation.
- The church clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution shall be available for all church members.

### **Section 7 – Treasurer**

The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder, deacon, or paid church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church at each members' meeting. The responsibility may be delegated with the



approval of the elders. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall render to the elders annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church.

Each year the Treasurer, representing the Finance Team and with the approval of the elders, shall present to the church an itemized budget at a regular members' meeting. This budget shall be presented for discussion and approval. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Finance Team.

The treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year.

## **Section 8 – Trustees**

The trustees serve as legal representatives in all transactions related to the church. They hold legal title to the church property; and they sign all documents related to the purchase, sale, mortgaging, or rental of church property after approval by the church in a members' meeting.

Trustees shall act only as directed by the elders and confirmed by the church in a members' meeting.

Trustees shall maintain an up-to-date inventory of all church property, mortgage loans, and insurance on church property. Such information shall be kept in a safety deposit box with copies filed in the church office for ready reference.

A majority of the signatures of the trustees is required for all legal documents.

## **Article 6 – Elections**

### **Section 1 – Principles**

- The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles:

- Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process;
- Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders;
- All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members;
- The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Section 2 – Selection of Officers**

- The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elders, deacons, clerk, or treasurer shall be presented by the elders at the previous members' meeting (providing that previous meeting occurred at least eight weeks prior), and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.
- The elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.
- The moderator shall declare elected all men receiving a 75% majority of all votes cast for the office of elder. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority of all votes cast; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.
- The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

## **Section 3 – Calling of the Senior Pastor**

In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential senior pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the

man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Baptist Faith & Message (2000 Edition) and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as senior pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

#### **Section 4 – Calling of Associate Pastor**

In the calling of any man to the position of associate pastor, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. However, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential associate pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Baptist Faith & Message (2000 Edition) and Church Constitution. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as associate pastor must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

### **Article 7 – Indemnification**

#### **Section 1 – Mandatory Indemnification**

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

#### **Section 2 – Permissive Indemnification**

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

#### **Section 3 – Procedure**

If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

## **Article 8 – Dispute Resolution**

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see, e.g., [Matthew 18: 15–20](#), [I Corinthians 6: 1–8](#)), the church shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles and the avoidance of suits of law or equity to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities. The elders shall adopt policies and procedures to effect these requirements and aspirations.

## **Article 9 – Amendments**

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

The revised version of this constitution shall be made available to all church members by the church clerk.