

**CONSTITUTION
AND
BY - LAWS**



**CHURCH OF THE
OPEN DOOR**

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“Igniting a Passion for Christ”

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

PREAMBLE

"Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." I Corinthians 1:3

We, members of the body of Christ, desiring that the Word of the Lord have free course and be glorified, do set forth as the object of this Church: the edification of Christians through the teaching of God's Word; the salvation of souls; the worldwide proclamation of God's saving grace expressed in the shed blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary; the promotion of godly worship; and the defense of "the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints," Jude 1:3 (NIV) until He comes.

Article I Name

The name of this organization, incorporated as "Church of the Open Door of Shiloh," shall be known as Church of the Open Door of York.

Article II Belief

We believe in God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, three in one, one in three, co-equal. We believe that the Bible is the very Word of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We believe in God the Father Almighty, as manifested by Jesus Christ, perfect in thought, word, and deed, Who was born of the virgin Mary, Who gave Himself a ransom for the remission of the sins of the world, especially to them who believe, who were "not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ". We believe the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead in bodily form, and is exalted at the right hand of God the Father to intercede for those who put their trust in Him having all

authority in heaven and on earth, and that He will come again in like manner as His disciples saw Him go away; that this second coming is personal, premillennial, and imminent. We believe in the Holy Spirit as a person, through Whose ministry, on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection, men are regenerated and baptized into the body of Christ. We believe that all men are lost apart from this regeneration and are already condemned to eternal punishment, whereas, the saved even now possess eternal life.

Article III Ordinances

(1) Baptism

We affirm that salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ apart from any works such as baptism. Nevertheless, we believe that where individuals who are convicted of the need of baptism, in obedience to the Scriptures, and who profess faith in the Lord Jesus, the preferred method of baptism is by bodily immersion in water after salvation.

(a) In the event that bodily immersion is not possible or could endanger the individual, a more appropriate method of baptism may be selected by the officiating Pastor with the approval of the recipient desiring baptism.

(b) The officiating Pastor has the discretionary right to deny baptism for any cause.

(2) Lord's Supper

We believe that the elements, the bread and the cup, are emblems representing the body and the blood of Christ and are in no way altered in substance or form during the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is to be celebrated as a memorial of Christ's death according to His command and must not be taken in an unworthy manner (I Cor. 11:23-32). The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of each month unless changed by the elders because of a

special church event or holiday. This Church shall welcome to the Lord's Table any member of the Body of Christ.

Article IV Membership

(1) Any born-again Christian at least 12 years of age who makes a confession of personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, and who wills to live a righteous life, may be admitted into the membership of this Church in accordance with the provisions of this Article IV. A member must be 17 years of age in order to vote.

(a) Those requesting membership will complete the current "Membership Application", and give written testimony of their faith in Jesus Christ and how the prospective candidate member came to that saving knowledge.

(b) Prospective member candidates will be met by two members of the Church Council referred to in Article VII below, either on or off the church campus, at which time the prospective member candidate shall give testimony, in either written or oral form, concerning his or her salvation.

(c) The prospective member candidate shall meet with at least four members of the Council, or former Council members, sitting as a membership committee called for this purpose, and the prospective member shall give testimony concerning faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and their willingness to live a righteous life, after which the membership committee shall make a recommendation in favor of, or in opposition to the prospective member's admission or rejection to membership. A favorable majority vote of the membership committee will allow the prospective members name to be presented to the Congregation.

(d) The prospective members name shall be presented to the congregation members for an oral vote of acceptance. Upon receiving an affirmative vote of acceptance, "yea versus nay", the prospective member shall be admitted into the membership of this Church.

(e) Anyone desiring membership in this Church must accept our Preamble and our Belief, as set forth in Article II above, as that which is taught at Church of the Open Door."

(2) Termination of membership: membership in the Church may be terminated as hereinafter provided by request, by joining another church, by exclusion, detrimental behavior, or by death.

(a) Termination by request. Any member desiring to terminate his or her membership in the Church by request shall make this request by letter to the Council of the Church. Any member so requesting termination of membership in the Church shall be automatically released from such membership unless the Council votes to deny the request for disciplinary causes.

(b) Termination by joining another church. When a member of this Church joins another church, such member shall be automatically released from membership in this Church.

(c) Termination by exclusion or voluntary disinterest. Any member showing a voluntary disinterest in fellowship by neglecting the "assembling of themselves together" at the stated meetings of the Church for a period of 6 months, shall be contacted by personal visitation (unless impossible or impracticable) by the pastoral staff, any members of the Council, or by anyone designated by the Council, concerning such member's disinterest. If, after the contact, the member in question continues to be absent from the stated meetings of the Church for any continuing period established by Council in its sole discretion on a case-by-case basis, the Council may vote to terminate such member's membership in the Church; provided, however, that if the member in question continues to be absent from the stated meetings of the Church for a continuing period of one year from the date of contact, such member shall be automatically released from membership in the Church.

(d) Termination for detrimental Behavior. The Council may discipline any member by withdrawal of membership for breach or neglect of the provisions of these By- Laws or for

conduct detrimental to the interests of the Church and the cause of Christ. Such discipline shall follow the letter and spirit of the rule as found in Matthew 18:15-17. If, after the visit or other contact by first one and, if necessary, then two or three members of Council, discipline is still necessary, the Council as representatives of the Church shall send written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, to such member inviting such member to appear before Council for a hearing with respect to the specific conduct or course of contact in question. After a full hearing shall have been granted to such member, the Council may vote to withdraw such member's membership in the Church and the Congregation shall be informed at a subsequent Business Meeting.

(e) Termination by death: Upon the death of any member, his or her name shall be automatically removed from the membership roll.

(3) Any member whose membership in the Church has been terminated pursuant to the requirements of this Article may be readmitted according to the provisions of Section (1) of this Article IV.

Article V Meetings

(1) The regular scheduled services of worship shall be every Lord's Day, and a mid-week meeting unless otherwise scheduled.

(2) The Annual Business Meeting of the Church shall be held no later than March 1st of each year, at which meeting there shall be delivered a written report from officers, organizations, and standing committees of the Church. In addition, the Council shall present to the members of the Church at such meeting a report, verified by the Lay-President of the Council and the Church Treasurer, or by a majority of the members of Council, showing in appropriate detail the following:

(a) The assets and liabilities, including the trust funds, of the Church as of the end of the fiscal year (which shall be the calendar year) immediately preceding the date of the report.

(b) The principal changes in assets and liabilities, including trust funds, during the year immediately preceding the date of the report.

(c) The receipts and disbursements during the year immediately preceding the date of the report.

(d) The number of members of the Church as of the date of the report, together with a statement of increase or decrease in such number during the year immediately preceding the date of the report, and a statement of the place where the names and addresses of the current members may be found.

(3) Regular Business Meetings

(a) A Regular Business Meeting of the Church shall be held no later than the second Sunday in November of each year, at which meeting nominations for the Council shall be presented to the Congregation, and at which meeting the Congregation shall have the right to nominate additional names for the Council, all in accordance with the provisions of Section (6) of Article VII below.

(b) A Regular Business Meeting of the Church shall be held on the first Sunday in December of each year, at which meeting the Congregation shall elect/affirm Elders in accordance with the provisions of Section (6) of Article VII below and shall vote upon the Annual Budget for the forthcoming year.

(4) Special Congregational Meetings of the Church may be called by the Senior Pastor, by the Council, or by the written request to Council of at least 10% of the total eligible voting members.

At any time, upon written request of any person or persons who have duly called a special meeting, which written request shall state the object of the meeting it shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to fix the time of the meeting, which shall be held at such date and time as the Recording Secretary may fix, not less than five nor more than 60 days after the receipt of the request, and to give due notice thereof. If the Recording Secretary shall neglect or refuse to fix the date and time of such meeting and give notice thereof, the person or persons calling the meeting may do so.

Every notice of a special meeting shall state briefly the purpose or purposes thereof, and no business, other than that specified in such notice and matters germane thereto, shall be transacted at any special meeting without further notice to members not present.

(5) Notice of every meeting of the members, whether annual, regular or special, shall be given either

(a) to each Regular Member of record entitled to vote at the meeting, at least five days (ten days in the case of any annual or special meeting at which there is to be considered any matter arising under Chapter 79 of title 15 of the Consolidated Pennsylvania Statutes (i.e., any amendment to the Articles of Incorporation of the Church, any merger or consolidation, any voluntary sale, lease or exchange of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church, any division, any conversion, or any voluntary dissolution of the Church)) prior to the day named for the meeting; or

(b) in lieu of any written notice of a meeting of members required to be given by this Article V, persons authorized or required to give notice of a meeting of members of the Church may give notice of such meeting by announcement at any two regular church services held during different weeks within 30 days prior to the time at which such meeting of members will be held. In any case where notice of a meeting is given by announcement, the first such notice shall be given at

least two weeks prior to the meeting, and a notice shall also be given at the last service preceding the meeting.

(6) At any Annual, Regular or Special Congregational Meetings of the Church, the presence of Members entitled to cast at least one-third of the votes which all Members are entitled to cast on the matters to be voted on at the meeting shall constitute a quorum. However, the following members will not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum if they are not present at a properly called meeting: servicemen, students, missionaries, shut-ins and any member living outside a radius of fifty (50) miles from the Church.

(7) Except as otherwise specified in the Articles of Incorporation of the Church or these By-Laws or provided by statute or specified by Council in its sole discretion with respect to any particular matter to be voted upon, the acts of a majority of the Members who vote shall be the acts of the Members.

(8) A three-fourths affirmative vote of the Members who vote shall be necessary at a Congregational Meeting in order to:

(a) Amend the Constitution and By-laws; or

(b) Call a Senior Pastor

(c) Permit Church Elder Council to add a paid Pastoral staff position.

Article VI Finances

(1) The ministries of this Church shall be supported primarily by free-will offerings.

(a) No program or activity of this Church may be financed by fund raising activities, including, without limitation, the sale of any items or service for financial gain, the sale of any tickets, chances, or merchandise, and similar types of activities.

(b) In the event the Church sponsors a program or activity that involves a cost for those in attendance to participate, the Church may ask or require that the participants cover some or all of the costs associated with that program, ministry event, or activity.

(2) An Annual Budget and a list of the individual missionary support levels for the coming year shall be presented to the Congregation at the Regular Business Meeting of the Church held on the first Sunday in December of each year. A two-thirds affirmative vote of Members who vote shall be required to approve the annual budget.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in Section (6) of this Article VI additional expenditures not provided for in the Annual Budget which do not 2% exceed of the budgeted regular offerings for any one item or the amount 4% of the budgeted regular offerings for all such additional expenditures in any one year may be made by or as directed by the Council without Congregational approval; provided, however, that if, in the sole discretion of the Council, additional expenditures not provided for in the Annual Budget are required to be made at any time before a Congregational Meeting can be called and held in accordance with the provisions of these By-Laws in order to approve them, and which additional expenditures are necessary, in the opinion of the Council, in order to repair, replace or protect property of the Church which has been damaged or destroyed or is under imminent threat of being damaged or destroyed due to any emergency or disaster, then such additional expenditures may be made by or as directed by the Council without Congregational approval, regardless of the amount of such additional expenditures.

(4) Except as otherwise provided in Sections (3) and (6) of this Article VI, a two-thirds affirmative vote of Members who vote shall be required in order for the Congregation to approve additional expenditures not provided for in the Annual Budget which exceed the amount listed in section 3 of this Article VI.

(5) All individual missionary expenditures included within the total amount budgeted for missions in the Annual Budget approved in December of each year shall be subject to approval by the Congregation at that same meeting. A two-thirds affirmative vote of Members who vote shall be required in order to approve such expenditures; provided, however, that the following expenditures, disbursements and goals may be made or set by the Faith Missions Committee appointed by the Council pursuant to Article VIII below:

(a) The cost of living increases to missionaries already being supported by the Church;

(b) The disbursement of any surplus fund or funds reserved for discretionary expenditures and included within the total amount budgeted for missions up to 0.5% per need; of the regular budgeted offering.

(c) The setting of the Missionary Festival goal; and disbursement of all Festival funds received.

(d) Freewill offerings received and disbursed to visiting missionaries;

(e) The disbursement of funds designated for the support of seasonal mission trips, but provided further, however, that the items set forth in Sections (5) (a) through (5) (e) above shall be subject to approval by the Council.

(6) The salaries or other compensation of any employees of the Church shall be fixed by Council.

Article VII Council and Officers

(1) The Council shall have full power to conduct, manage, and direct the business and affairs of the Church; and all powers of the Church, except those specifically reserved or granted to

the members by statute or by the Articles of Incorporation of the Church or by this Constitution and By-Laws, are hereby granted to and vested in the Council.

(2) The Council shall consist of Elders who, without mental reservations, shall subscribe to the Preamble and Belief as set forth in Article II (Belief) of this Constitution and By-Laws. Elders shall be affirmed or elected by the Members from among the male members of the Congregation who qualify according to I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, and who shall have attained the age of 21 years or over. Every effort will be made to have twelve elders seated on Council. However, in the event that men are unwilling/unqualified to serve as elder, Council may convene with less than twelve elders. Under no circumstances will Council have less than ten sitting elders or more than twelve sitting elders. Except as otherwise required in order to fill vacancies pursuant to the provisions of Section (4) of this Article VII below, four Elders shall be affirmed/elected each year. Each Elder shall serve a term of three years unless otherwise specified pursuant to the provisions of Section (4) of this Article VII below.

Any Elder of the Church may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Lay-President or the Recording Secretary of the Council. Such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

(3) Elders may serve two consecutive three-year terms, if elected/affirmed to office, by the congregation. After two consecutive three-year terms an elder will not be able to serve in the office of elder for at least one year.

(4) When a vacancy occurs in the Council, it shall be temporarily filled by appointment by the Council until the next annual election at which time it will be filled for the unexpired term by the regular procedure.

(5) Nominations for the Elders shall be made as follows: up to two nominations shall be made for each expiring term of office by the Council and the Congregation shall have the right to nominate one more for each expiring term from the floor.

(6) These nominations shall be made at a regular Council Meeting each year and shall be presented to the Congregation no later than the second Sunday in November of each year. It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that all nominees to the office of Elder satisfy the qualifications of Elder as set forth in the Scriptures and in Article VII (2) of this Constitution. The election of Elders shall be held on the first Sunday in December of each year at the Regular Business Meeting.

(a) On the occasion where the number of Council vacancies equals or exceeds the number of candidates on the ballot, each candidate must receive at least 75% approval from the congregation in order to serve on Council.

(7) The regular expiration of the term of office of an Elder shall occur on the 31st of December of the year in which his term is to expire, and his successor shall take office on January 1st of the following year regardless of the date of his installation pursuant to Section (8) of this Article VII below.

(8) All Elders properly elected/affirmed shall be installed by the Senior Pastor or a member of the pastoral staff at the next Sunday morning service following their election, or as soon thereafter as possible.

(9) Manner of Acting and Duties of Council.

(a) Meetings of the Council may be held at such place as the Council may from time to time appoint, or as may be designated in the notice of the meeting.

(b) On the first scheduled meeting in January of each year, the Council shall meet for the purpose of organization,

election of officers, and the transaction of other business unless otherwise scheduled. Notice of such meeting need not be given. Such organization meeting may be held at any other time or place which shall be specified in a notice given as provided in Section (9) (d) of this Article VII for special meetings of the Council.

(c) Regular meetings of the Council shall be held within each month. At such meetings, the Council shall transact such business as may properly be brought before the meeting. Notice of regular meetings need not be given unless otherwise required by law or this Constitution and By-Laws.

(d) Special meetings of the Council shall be held whenever called by the Senior Pastor, the Lay-President of Council or by two or more of the Elders. Notice of each such meeting shall be given to the Senior Pastor and to each Elder by telephone or in writing at least 24 hours (in the case of notice by telephone) or five days (in case of notice by mail or by electronic communications) before the time at which the meeting is to be held. Every such notice shall state the time and place of the meeting.

(e) A three-fourths majority of the members of Council in office shall be present at each meeting in order to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Every Elder shall be entitled to one vote. Except as otherwise specified in the Articles of Incorporation of the Church or these By-Laws or provided by statute, the acts of three-fourths of the Elders present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the acts of the Council.

(f) The Council shall be responsible for ensuring that the regular stated services of the Church and all teaching ministries of the Church are held in accordance with Article II (Belief) and Article V (Meetings) hereof.

(g) The Council shall assist the pastoral staff in the performance of the duties of their offices, particularly in the care

of the sick and needy, in the cultivation of harmony among the members and in the promotion of the general welfare of the Congregation, and in accordance with the Preamble.

(h) All organizations, societies and activities of the Church shall be under the direction, approval and guidance of the Council.

(i) It shall be the responsibility of the Council to insure that the care for the property and facilities of the Church, and associated business affairs are properly administered.

(j) In addition to the members of Standing and Special Committees appointed by Council pursuant to Article VIII below, the Council shall approve the hiring and/or termination of all employees of the Church other than the Senior Pastor who shall only be elected and dismissed pursuant to Section (11) (b) or (11) (c) of this Article VII below

(k) The Council shall provide for pastoral supply during the illness or absence of the pastoral staff, or during a pastoral vacancy, and shall provide for the supply of the pulpit ad interim.

(10) Officers of the Council

(a) The Senior Pastor of the Congregation shall be ex-officio Chairman of the Church Council. In his absence, or at his request, the Lay-President of the Council, may preside in his stead.

(b) The Church Council shall annually select from its number at its organization meeting in January of each year:

(i) A Lay-President, whose duties shall be to preside at the meetings of the Church Council at the request of the Chairman, or in his absence. The Lay-President shall sign, execute, and acknowledge, in the name of the Church, deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts or other instruments authorized by

the Council, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Council or by this Constitution and By-Laws to some other officer or agent of the Church; and, in general, shall perform all duties required of the office of Lay-President, and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Council.

(ii) A Recording Secretary and an Assistant Recording Secretary, at least one of whom shall attend all meetings of the Congregation and of the Council and who shall record the minutes of all meetings of the Council and of the Congregational Meetings in a Record Book provided for the purpose. He shall maintain a current file of all other written business of the Council and of the Congregation; shall see that notices are given and records and reports properly kept and filed by the Church as required by law; and, in general, shall perform all duties required of the office of Recording Secretary, and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to him by the Council.

(11) Pastoral Staff

(a) The Pastoral Staff shall be born-again Christians who, without mental reservation, shall subscribe to the Preamble and Belief as set forth in Article II (Belief) of this Constitution and By-Laws and shall qualify according to I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, and shall exhibit those qualifications as mentioned under Article X Ordination.

(b) The Senior Pastor shall be elected at a Congregational Meeting of the Church called for that purpose, public notice of which shall be given from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays preceding the election and otherwise in accordance with the provisions of Section (5) (b) of Article V above, and a written notice of which shall be posted in the Church Bulletin announcing such meeting. Other members of the pastoral staff whose positions have been authorized by the Congregation shall be elected by Council.

(c) The Senior Pastor shall continue in office until his resignation, removal or other termination. The Senior Pastor may resign at any time, and the Congregation may vote to remove or otherwise terminate the term of office of the Senior Pastor at any time, with or without cause; provided, however, that any such resignation by the Senior Pastor or removal or other termination by the Congregation, shall become effective only after the giving of 60 days' prior written notice (i) by the Senior Pastor to the Congregation in the case of resignation, and (ii) by the Congregation to the Senior Pastor in the case of removal or other termination.

(d) When a vacancy occurs or is in contemplation in the office of the Senior Pastor, the Council shall appoint a committee of 5 members who shall be charged with the recommending of a new Senior Pastor in accordance with the above requirements.

(12) Church Treasurer

The Church Treasurer/ Assistant Treasurer shall be appointed by the Church Council from the membership of the Church.

An Assistant Treasurer, who shall assist the Treasurer in their duties, will be appointed by the Council in the same manner as the Treasurer. Any other assistants to the Treasurer may be appointed and approved by the Council.

The duties of the office of treasurer shall consist of but not limited to the proper recording, banking, deposit, payment, and reporting of all funds received by the Church of the Open Door of Shiloh in such manner as may from time to time be designated by Council. They shall provide a monthly report to the Council as to the financial condition of the Church; shall give a complete report at the Annual Congregational Meeting in accordance with the provisions of Section (2) of Article V hereof; and, in general, shall discharge such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to them by the Council.

Article VIII Standing and Special Committees

The Church Council shall elect as many Standing and/or Special Committees, as the local and general interests of the Church may require. The members of such Committees shall receive instructions from the Church Council and shall give a report of their action to the Council from time to time as directed by the Council. The members of any Standing and/or Special Committees shall serve until termination of their assignment at the direction of the Council.

Article IX Miscellaneous

(1) Special use of the Church Building

All members of the Congregation, and others, at the discretion of the Council, shall be entitled to the use of the Church Buildings in case of marriages, funerals or other special functions.

(2) Parliamentary Procedure

In all cases not determined by the Constitution and By-laws, "Robert's Rules of Order, Revised", shall be the parliamentary law of the Congregation and Church Council.

(3) Amendments

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended or repealed, as provided in Article V hereof. Any proposed amendment or repeal of the Constitution and By-Laws, or a summary thereof, shall be set forth in any notice of meeting at which such action is to be voted upon, whether annual, regular or special.

(4) Any changes to the Preamble and Doctrinal Statement of Belief contained in Article II hereof, of the Church of the Open Door of York shall need a percentage of 85% or greater to pass.

* (Note)

Article X Ordination

(1) When in the judgment of the Church Council, who shall

have made the applicant fully aware of the provisions of this Article X, a man in the membership of the Church of the Open Door of Shiloh is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the power of the Church Council to call and conduct a Council of Ordination if so directed by a vote of the Congregation. At the sole discretion of the Church Council in each particular instance, this Council of Ordination may consist of the members of the Church Council and other members of the Church, or it may consist of a Council of ordained ministers and other members approved by the Church Council. The Council of Ordination shall examine all applicants for ordination in the following areas:

- (a) Christian experience and reputation;
- (b) Call to the ministry;
- (c) Personal character;
- (d) General education and preparation for the work;
- (e) Ability to "rightly divide the Word";
- (f) Agreement with the Doctrinal Statement of the Church; and
- (g) Demonstrated ability in Christian service as outlined in Section (2) of this Article X below.

Upon the completion of such an examination, the Council of Ordination shall vote upon whether or not to approve the ordination of the particular applicant. If the Council of Ordination votes to approve the ordination of the particular applicant, such applicant shall be ordained by the Church.

(2) No one shall be ordained to the ministry who has not served six (6) months as pastor or assistant pastor, missionary, mission worker, youth leader, Bible teacher, or in some definite Christian work in such manner as to convey reasonable evidence of God's call to the ministry.

(a) No one shall be ordained to the ministry who has brought disrepute upon his Christian life and ministry through immorality or ungodly living.

(b) It is the conviction of the Church Council charged in following and obeying God's Word, that ordination in pastoral ministries is reserved for men who meet the qualifications of Article X.

(3) It shall be within the power of the Church Council to call an Ordination Council for the purpose of ordaining a man who is not a member of this Church if so directed by a vote of the Congregation of this Church, but it shall not be a common practice to do so.

These By-Laws were accepted and approved:

December 2, 2012

** (Note) Will need to change the Incorporation Papers since Article II is part of the Incorporation Papers - if Article II is ever changed.*