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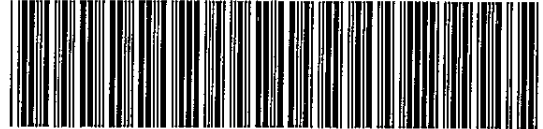
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2/29/04

**ATTORNEY AT LAW**  
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enc.

**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION  
OF  
GULFPORT COMMUNITY CHURCH, INC.**

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We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves for the purpose of forming and organizing a corporation, not for profit, under the laws of the State of Florida, and do hereby adopt and declare the following as the Articles of Incorporation.

**PREAMBLE**

We hereby declare and establish **GULFPORT COMMUNITY CHURCH, INC.** to secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner so to preserve the freedoms and responsibilities of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this Corporation is **GULFPORT COMMUNITY CHURCH, INC.** located in Pinellas County, Florida.

**ARTICLE II – PURPOSES**

The corporation is organized as a church exclusively for religious, charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The general nature and object of the corporation shall be for the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Southern Baptist Convention and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith.

To buy, purchase, own, acquire by gift, devise or otherwise, real and personal property and to build, erect, construct, provide for, maintain and equip suitable buildings, churches and houses for the benefit, use and occupation of this corporation, **GULFPORT COMMUNITY CHURCH, INC** in maintaining and fostering public worship, and the preaching and teaching of the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and for all other meetings and purposes of **GULFPORT COMMUNITY CHURCH**.

To build, construct, erect, maintain and equip schools, mission stations and mission churches, pastor's homes and other such houses or equipment as the corporation finds necessary for carrying on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and for the extension of His Kingdom throughout the earth.

To issue bonds, notes, debentures and evidences of indebtedness, and to secure the same by mortgage, deed of trust or otherwise and to sell, deed or otherwise dispose of its property, whether real or personal.

### ARTICLE III – POLITY & DOCTRINE

Section 1. The governance of this church is vested in the body of baptized believers as provided for in the church bylaws. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes the obligations and privileges of mutual counsel, respect and cooperation which have been common among Baptists and other Free churches since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and so chooses voluntary to affiliate and cooperate in the work and fellowship of Baptist Christian bodies and mission ministries as the church shall see fit.

Section 2. Doctrine: This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in all matters of faith and practice. It takes the Bible alone, as properly understood and interpreted by the informed Christian mind and applied responsibly by Christians acting in the Spirit of Christ, as the standard by which all matters of Christian beliefs and conduct are to be decided.

- a. It holds that true Christianity does not consist of creeds and confessions of faith or in published statements of faith and message, but is essentially the relationship of the mature responsible regenerate believer to God in Christ through the Holy Spirit on the basis of careful study and understanding of the Word of God.
- b. No interpretation of the Bible by any other body or organization shall be imposed upon this church. It shall make its own best informed, conscientious, responsible interpretation and statements of faith, polity, application and practice of the Christian Scriptures.
- c. It shall encourage the freedom of the individual, the freedom and autonomy of the local church the freedom of the larger body of Jesus Christ as expressed in various Christian traditions.
- d. Also, the servant role of leadership within the church, a positive role for the spiritual ministry and leadership of both men and women in the church, responsible and reverent theological education characterized by respect for open inquiry and scholarship, the faithful proclamation of all aspects of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and the principle of a free church in a free state including the necessary corollary of the separation of Church and State is important.

### ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

The qualifications, rights, privileges and duties of members of the corporation shall be stated in the Bylaws of the corporation.

## ARTICLE V – DISSOLUTION

The corporation may only be dissolved by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the members of the corporation at a duly noticed business meeting. In the event that the corporation is dissolved, the trustees shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the assets of corporation to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, or educational purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue law), as the Trustees shall determine. Any assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the county in which the principle office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes.

## ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS/TRUSTEES

The affairs of this corporation shall be managed by a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer, which shall be referred to as "Officers/Directors". There shall always be no less than three (3) directors. The method of election of Officers/Directors shall be provided for in the Bylaws of the corporation.

## ARTICLE VII – PRIVATE INUREMENT

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered to or on behalf of the corporation and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof.

## ARTICLE VIII – POLITICAL ACTIVITY

No activity of the corporation shall attempt to influence legislation, either by propaganda or public speech. The corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (excluding publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

## ARTICLE IX – RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION

The corporation shall have a racial nondiscrimination policy and therefore shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, employees, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

## ARTICLE X – LIMITATION OF CORPORATE POWERS

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

## ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

The Articles of Incorporation may be amended by resolution of the corporation adopted by a majority vote of the general membership of the corporation present at a business meeting called for such purpose. Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation shall be forwarded to the Secretary of State of the State of Florida in accordance with the manner provided for in law.

## ARTICLE XII – CORPORATE INDEBTEDNESS

The highest amount of indebtedness or liability to which the corporation may at any time subject itself shall never be greater than two-thirds (2/3) of the appraised value of the total assets of the corporation.

## ARTICLE XIII – INITIAL CORPORATE OFFICE, INITIAL REGISTERED OFFICE & AGENT

The initial corporate address is P.O. Box 530306, Gulfport, FL 33707-0306. The street address of the initial registered office of the Corporation is 9531 86<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Seminole, Florida 33777. The name of the initial registered agent of the corporation is John Ries, at 9531 - 86<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Seminole, FL 33777.

## ARTICLE XIV – INCORPORATORS

The names and addresses of the incorporators signing these Articles of Incorporation are:

NAME	ADDRESS
John Ries	9531 86 <sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Seminole, FL 33777
Barbara Ries	9531 86 <sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Seminole, FL 33777
Ken Kepner	10488 Hazel Street, Largo, FL 44778
Carol Kepner	10488 Hazel Street, Largo, FL 44778

## ARTICLE XV – DURATION OF THE CORPORATION

The duration of the corporation shall be perpetual unless dissolved according to the laws of the State of Florida.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the undersigned as incorporators and registered agent for the Corporation, so accepting that appointment, execute these Articles of Incorporation on the 13 day of September, 2003.

John Ries  
John Ries, Incorporator

Barbara Ries  
Barbara Ries, Incorporator

Ken Kepner  
Ken Kepner, Incorporator

Carol Kepner  
Carol Kepner, Incorporator

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TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

**STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF PINELLAS**

The foregoing Articles of Incorporation were acknowledged before me by JOHN RIES, BARBARA RIES, KEN KEPNER, and CAROL KEPNER. WITNESS MY HAND and official seal this 13 day of September, 2003.

Clement H. White  
Notary Public, State of Florida



**Clement H. White**  
Commission #DD149794  
Expires: Sep 12, 2006  
Bonded Thru  
Atlantic Bonding Co., Inc.

Registered Agent's Acceptance

Having been named to accept service of process for the above named corporation, I hereby accept appointment as its agent and agree to act in this capacity. I further agree to comply with the provisions of all statutes relating to the proper and complete performance of my duties, and I am familiar with and accept the duties and responsibilities as registered agent for said corporation.

John Ries  
John Ries