



Calvary Church Constitution

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Constitution

We the members of Calvary (Udenominational) Church do ordain and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

ARTICLE I

Organization

The organization shall be known as Calvary (Udenominational) Church, of Grand Rapids, Michigan. This church shall be, and remain, an independent and autonomous organization.

ARTICLE II

Purposes

The purposes of this Church are:

1. To stand unequivocally for the fundamentals of the Faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures.
2. To present the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ at home and abroad.
3. To teach the Holy Scriptures for the edification of those who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
4. To do all things in the name of and for the honor and glory of our God, the King of Kings and Lords of Lords, and our Savior Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE III

Statement of Doctrine

Section A. Revelation.

We believe that in addition to his general revelation in nature, God has revealed himself in all the words of the Old and New Testaments. These well-preserved and infallible books contain no errors in the original writings and are our final authority in faith and life. These sacred texts lead us to Jesus Christ, the fullness of God's revelation, and enable us to rightly interpret God's active engagement in humanity, nature, and history (Romans 1:20; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Matthew 5:18; 2 Peter 3:16; 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:14-15; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 15:4).

Section B. God.

We believe in one holy, sovereign, and all-knowing God who eternally exists in three coequal persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father directs and sustains all things through his Son and by his Spirit. The Son is the mediator through whom God creates, governs, and redeems the world. The Spirit accomplishes the works of God, bringing honor to the Son who glorifies the Father, so that God is perfectly satisfied within himself. This triune God who from love and for his glory created all things out of nothing and pronounced them good will bring all things to perfection (Psalm 73:25-26; 1 John 4:7-8; 1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 99:9; Psalm 139:1-18; 1 Timothy 2:5; John 14:16-17; 2 Peter 3:9; James 1:17; Psalm 18:30).

Section C. Humanity.

We believe that God created Adam and Eve in his image so that he might love them and they might love him and glorify him. However, our first parents lost their original righteousness when they fell for Satan's temptation and rebelled against God's revealed will. Now every human is born with Adam's sinful nature so that we are depraved, alienated from God, spiritually dead and physically dying. Our sin has corrupted God's good creation, bringing discord and disaster to society and nature. The world would immediately perish if not for God's common grace, which restrains sin and preserves creation so that God's special grace can save it (Genesis 1:26-31, 3:6, 3:17-19; Psalm 8:4-5, 51:5; Matthew 5:16; John 3:16-21; Romans 3:10, 5:12; Acts 17:27-28).

We believe that all who are reborn and adopted into the family of God are called to be holy as God is holy, and are to present their bodies as a living sacrifice to God. This means that our lives will reflect the fruit of the Spirit (e.g., love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control), and that we will turn away from the sinful patterns of the "world" and desires of our hearts (e.g. sexual immorality (i.e., all forms of sexual behavior outside of marriage which the Bible reserves exclusively for unions of one male with one female), shameful lusts, greed, depravity, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossip, slander). Genesis 2:20-24, Leviticus 18:1-23, Romans 1:24-32, Romans 12:1, 1 Corinthians 1:1-7, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 5:9, 1 Peter 1:16.

Section D. Jesus Christ.

We believe that the Son of God became human to save the world. Our Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man, one person in two natures, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus is the promised Messiah of Israel who obeyed God perfectly; atoned for our sins by shedding his blood in our place and on our behalf; arose bodily and triumphantly over Satan, sin, and death; and ascended to heaven where he reigns over all things at the Father's right hand, intercedes for his people, and sends his Spirit to gift, fill, and lead his church (Matthew 1:18; Luke 24:50-51; John 1:1; John 1:14; John 3:17; John 10:30-33; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Colossians 2:9; 1 John 2:2; 1 Peter 2:24).

Section E. The Holy Spirit.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a fully divine person who is sent by the Father and the Son. He convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment; and persuades us through the proclamation of the gospel to confess Jesus as Lord and abides within us as our comforter, helper and guide. He is God's empowering presence with us and the down payment ensuring our future glory (Matthew 10:20; John 14:16-17; John 15:26; John 16:7-8; Acts 5:3; Romans 8:14; Romans 8:16; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Galatians 4:6; Titus 3:5).

Section F. Salvation.

We believe all who repent of their sin and trust solely in Christ's finished work of atonement, salvation, and redemption are united with Christ, justified by his death and resurrection, reborn and adopted into the family of God, forgiven of all their sin, indwelt and illuminated by the Spirit, empowered for Christian service, kept and assured of their salvation, and added to the church (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:21-31; Ezekiel 11:19; John 6:44-45; John 10:27-29; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:37-38; Romans 8:9-11; Romans 8:15-17; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 1:18-20; 2 Timothy 1:8-9).

Section G. The Church.

We believe that the one, holy, and universal church is the body and bride of Christ. The Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost to establish the church. The true church consists of all New Testament believers in heaven and on earth who have been justified by grace through faith in Christ and is manifest in local churches that assemble in the name of the Lord. The local church gathers to worship God and

experience his presence through the preaching of the word, prayer, fellowship, testimonies of grace, the public reading of Scripture, the exercise of spiritual gifts, and the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper (Calvary Church practices believer's baptism). The church proclaims the gospel of Jesus' life, death and resurrection to a sinful world and is an agent of God's blessings to the world, which must hear the good news in order to be saved. The church makes disciples of Jesus who embody the kingdom values of loving neighbor, serving those in need, and caring for creation and so anticipate the final redemption of all things after Christ's return (Matthew 16:16-18, 28:19-20; Matthew 18:20; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 2:14-22, 4:10-13, 5:29; Colossians 1:18).

Section H. Angels and Demons.

We believe that angels are spiritual beings created by God to serve and worship him. The righteous angels are God's messengers who promote his rule and protect his children by battling Satan and the fallen angels who joined his rebellion. Satan and his demons are the sworn enemies of God. They gained a foothold in this world when Eve, then Adam fell as a result of Satan's temptation, but they have been defeated by Christ and will be forever punished in the lake of fire (Isaiah 6:1-7, 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Romans 16:20; Hebrews 1:14; 2 Peter 2:11; Revelation 4-5, 20:10).

Section I. The Return of Christ.

We believe in the personal, bodily and premillennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus will gloriously rapture his church at any moment. He will return to bring his kingdom to completion by delivering this world from Satan's power and handing it to the Father. He will raise the dead physically for final Judgment; send the lost to everlasting, conscious punishment; and live forever with his redeemed people in the joys of the renewed creation (Daniel 7:15-28, 9:24-27; Matthew 24:4-29; Mark 13:32, 9:48; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, 15:42-49; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Titus 2:13; Revelation 20:7-10, 21:3-4).

ARTICLE IV Membership

Section A. Qualifications.

Persons desiring to unite with this Church will qualify for membership by:

1. Confessing and possessing the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
2. Accepting in its entirety the Statement of Doctrine contained in Article III of this Constitution.
3. Agreeing to be governed by this Constitution.
4. Being approved by the Elders as to their Christian experience and the basis of their salvation.

Section B. Announcement of New Members.

The names of all new members shall be communicated to the congregation.

Section C. Types of Membership.

The membership of this Church will consist of three groups; namely, active membership, associate membership, and inactive membership.

1. **Active Membership.** Active Membership shall consist of such Christians as have been received in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and who are not members of any other church.

2. **Associate Membership.** Associate membership shall be extended to the following:

- a. Those who meet the spiritual qualifications of Active Membership, but who are not permanent residents of this area, such as students and missionaries, who may hold regular membership elsewhere.

b. Those who no longer have residence in this area but still desire to hold their membership in this Church.

They shall be permitted to teach a Sunday school or adult class and participate in similar ministries. They shall have the right to attend the congregational meetings of the Church, but shall not have the right to vote.

3. Inactive Membership. Inactive membership shall consist of those who have come under disciplinary action of the Church.

Inactive members shall not have the right to vote or hold any office or position of service in the Church. The Elders shall seek to restore the Inactive Membership to Active Membership. If this has not been accomplished after 12 months of Inactive Membership, their membership may be terminated by the Elders.

Section D. Responsibility.

It is the responsibility of every member, as enabled by God, to attend services regularly, to partake of the Lord's Supper, to spend a portion of each day in Bible reading and in prayer, to be a personal and public witness, to be concerned about winning others to Christ, and to have a willingness to serve in the work of this church.

Section E. Giving.

It is our conviction that proportionate giving is a distinct privilege and positive command given to God's people. We therefore pledge ourselves to contribute systematically to the support of the Church, with such a portion of our income that we believe God desires of us, according to the principle laid down in I Corinthians 16:2 (also see Article V, Section F.3).

Section F. Walk and Conduct.

We will urge upon each other in our daily walk and conversation, loyal obedience to all those precepts laid down in the Word of God. We will warn against immorality and against practices that tend toward immorality. We will also warn against practices that are known to be harmful to the human body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. All members will be expected to live so as not to be a reproach to the Lord.

Section G. Restrictions.

No person holding membership in an oath-bound secret society shall be eligible for membership in Calvary (Undenominational) Church.

Section H. Termination of Membership.

1. Disciplinary.

See ARTICLE VII.

2. Voluntary. If a member desires to withdraw membership, a letter should be written to the Church Clerk so that the Elders can officially acknowledge the withdrawal. However, if the member is going through a disciplinary process with the Elders, the Elders may choose to continue the process to completion, even if the member requests to withdraw his or her membership voluntarily.

3. Elder Action. The Elders may terminate the membership of any member who has been absent from the services of the Church for a period of one year or more without giving a satisfactory reason for such absence.

4. Sharing of Information. If a person's membership is terminated, due to a disciplinary action by the Elders, and/or information comes to light regarding a former member after their membership has voluntarily been terminated, the Elders may share any or all relevant facts with a pastor, or the Elders of any other church(es) or leaders of a Christian ministry(ies), where the former member may choose to attend, join, or volunteer their services.

ARTICLE V Government

INTRODUCTION

The Government of the Church is vested in the active membership and executed through duly selected officers, the Elders, the Deacons, committees, and employees in accordance with all provisions of this Constitution.

Section A. Congregational Meetings.

The Church membership may be called together for the transaction of any business by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elders. Notice of said meeting will be given from the pulpit, or published in the Church bulletin, or other written Church publication, on each of the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of said meeting. The annual congregational meeting of the Church will be held not earlier than ~~September~~October 15 and not later than ~~September 30~~October 31 each year, at which time the minutes of the previous congregational meeting(s) will be read, Elders and Deacons will be selected, and other necessary business will be conducted. Active Members will have the right to express their opinions or ask questions from the floor concerning the Church's activities. The meeting will be governed by parliamentary rules which will be available for inspection in the Church office.

One hundred active members present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business providing the membership is over five hundred; otherwise, one-fifth of the active membership shall constitute a quorum.

It will be the right of any active member or number of active members to petition the Elders and be granted a hearing at a regular Elders meeting. If, following a hearing with the Elders, a group of active members desires a special congregational meeting, such meeting will be called by the Elders upon written request of 10% of the active membership. Notice of said meeting will be given from the pulpit, or published in the Church bulletin, or other written Church publication, on each of the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of said meeting. No question may be voted on at this meeting unless stated in the notice of said meeting.

Section B. Voting.

Voting at congregational meetings will be restricted to active members sixteen years of age and older. All congregational voting, where not otherwise specified, will require a two thirds majority vote in order to pass.

Active members who are unable because of sickness or other acceptable reasons to be present at congregational meetings may vote by absentee ballot by obtaining an official ballot from the Church office. The ballot should be mailed, or brought to the church and must be enclosed in a sealed, unmarked envelope, and that envelope will be enclosed in another envelope bearing the signature of

the voter and presented at the meeting. The Clerk, or a duly designated agent appointed by the Elders will verify the eligibility of the absentee voter and present the inner envelope to the tellers.

Failure to indicate a choice of any item on a ballot will be considered a blank ballot for that item only and will not be counted when compiling the results on that item.

Section C. Selection of Elders and Deacons.

In advance of the annual congregational meeting, the Elders or a nominating committee appointed by the Elders will request from the congregation at large, the pastoral staff, and the current Elders and Deacons, names of potential candidates for the office of Elder or Deacon.

At the annual congregational meeting the Elders will submit the names of men recommended by the Elders [for the office of Elder and the names of individuals recommended by the Elders for the office of Deacon](#), taking into consideration the recommendations of the Deacons, as nominees for the office of Elder and Deacon for the ensuing three years.

1. All nominees must meet the biblical qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9.
2. Nominees must be active members of Calvary Church for two years prior to the annual congregational meeting.
3. Nominees must not have served as an Elder or Deacon of Calvary Church in the previous two years, unless such service consisted of the nominee filling the remaining term of an Elder or Deacon vacancy.
4. Nominees should have a history of service at Calvary Church.
5. In 1 Timothy 3:1-13 [one of the phrase "being of one wife" is used as qualifications that appears a qualification number of times, for both elders Elders and deacons. Deacons alike, is that of being faithful and trustworthy in all areas of life.](#)
 - a. We do not interpret this reference to exclude any qualified unmarried man- [for the office of Elder or any qualified unmarried man or woman for the office of Deacon.](#)
 - b. The nominating committee and the Elders will review each candidate's marital history before recommending ~~him~~[the candidate](#) for the respective office.

The slate of nominees is to be printed in the church bulletin, or other written Church publication, for two Sundays immediately preceding the annual congregational meeting. The published announcement will ask anyone who has serious objections [to a nominee, to contact any Elder or the Chairman.](#) ~~to a nominee, to contact any Elder or the Chairman. The congregation~~ [The membership](#) will be asked to approve each candidate by secret ballot. The ballot will provide three choices for each candidate.

1. I support this candidate for the position for which ~~he has~~[they have](#) been nominated.
2. I have strong objections to this candidate serving in the position for which ~~he has~~[they have](#) been nominated.
3. I do not know a sufficient amount about this candidate's qualifications or character to make a judgment, or I've not heard from the Lord about this person.

The Clerk or a duly appointed representative will oversee the tabulation of the results. ~~If a person receives more than 10%~~ [If a candidate receives more than 10%](#) negative votes (the selection labeled "2" in the options above), ~~his~~[that candidate's](#) name will be withdrawn from consideration. (In determining such percentage, the number of ballots cast for option "2" above, for that candidate will be divided by the total number of ballots cast for option "1" and option "2" above, for that candidate.) Ballots in which option "3" above is selected will not count as a ballot for that person. The results of this approval vote will remain confidential. The Clerk and at least one other Elder will place stones or other objects

corresponding to each of the approved names in two containers (one for Elder and one for Deacon candidates) that allow for suitable randomization.

A congregational member selected by the Chairman will draw out of each container the number of stones or other objects corresponding to the number of open positions. The ~~people~~[candidates](#), whose names correspond to the stones or other objects chosen through this process, will constitute the newly selected Elders and Deacons.

There will not be less than twelve elders and twelve deacons, of which approximately one-third will be selected annually.

The newly selected elders and deacons will begin their terms of service on the first Tuesday of ~~December~~[January](#) each year, at which time the retiring elders' and deacons' terms will end.

The Elders will have the power to fill the remaining term of any elder or deacon vacancy by two-thirds majority vote of the Elders.

Section D. Elders.

1. **General Responsibilities.** The Elders shall comprise the governing body of the Church, [exercising final spiritual authority](#), and shall perform all duties ascribed to them in this Constitution. The Elders shall assume the functions of the Senior Pastor or assign them to other qualified pastors in emergencies or when the Church has no Senior Pastor. The Elders will meet on a regular basis for the purpose of discharging their responsibilities. For purposes of conducting regular business, a quorum shall be two-thirds the number of Elders. In addition to this supervisory "overseer" role, the elders' primary responsibilities are to:

- a. Understand and teach doctrine and confront those who would teach falsehood
- b. Protect the members and staff from falsehood and undue criticism
- c. Care for the spiritual and physical needs of the members.
- d. Lead and set direction for the church while conducting themselves as examples of servant leadership.
- e. Ensure that the pastoral and teaching ministries of the church are receiving adequate financial support.

2. **Specific Responsibilities.** Other specific responsibilities of the Elders include, but are not limited to:

- a. Church policy
- b. Examination of candidates for membership and membership approval
- c. Oversee the spiritual welfare of the congregation and staff
- d. Prayer for the sick
- e. Church discipline
- f. Selection of church officers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Clerk, Treasurer)
- g. Pastoral and non-pastoral staff and related policies
- h. Oversight of the financial, business, and legal affairs of the Church. [The administration of these areas is a responsibility of the Deacons. See: Section F. Deacons, 2. Specific Responsibilities, a.]
- i. Establishment of committees and appointment of committee members
- j. Appointment of Elder representatives to Elder Advisory Committees
- k. Approval of Deacon representatives to Elder Advisory Committees
- l. Appointment of Elder representatives to Staff Advisory Committees
- m. Approval of Deacon representatives to Staff Advisory Committees
- n. Relationships with organizations and committees inside and outside the Church

- o. Licensing, ordination and commissioning to ministry
- p. Supervision of sub-organizations

Annually, each Elder will be required to provide in writing, a statement accepting in its entirety the statement of doctrine contained herein and agreeing to be governed by this Constitution.

Section E. Organization of the Elders.

At an Elders' meeting prior to the first Tuesday of ~~December~~January each year the following officers shall be selected: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Clerk and Treasurer. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk shall be selected from the Elders. The Treasurer shall be selected from the Deacons. The Elders shall take into consideration a recommendation by the Deacons as to whom they believe should be selected as Treasurer. This recommendation will not be binding on the Elders. The officers are authorized to meet and to make emergency decisions when it is impractical to call an Elders' meeting. All minutes of said meetings will be reported at the following Elders' meeting, and its decisions will be subject to ratification by the Elders. The responsibilities of the officers are as follows:

1. **Chairman.** The Chairman shall have the responsibility for oversight of all Elder responsibilities and shall lead the meetings of the Elders. The Chairman will be an ex-officio member of all committees.
2. **Vice-Chairman.** The Vice-Chairman shall assist the Chairman in his duties and will perform the duties of the Chairman in the Chairman's absence.
3. **Clerk.** The Clerk shall keep a record of all matters discussed and decisions made at the congregational and Elders' meetings, shall keep an accurate record of the membership, and shall carry on all necessary correspondence. He shall also secure annually the signatures of persons designated in ARTICLE V, Sections D.2; F.2; H; and ARTICLE VI, Section A.1; Section B.1.
4. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall be responsible for receipt and distribution of Church funds and shall be accountable to the Elders. ~~He~~The Treasurer shall make a monthly written financial report to the Elders, and present a written annual financial report to the membership at the annual congregational meeting. ~~He~~The Treasurer shall cause the books to be submitted for an annual audit in such a manner as may be directed by the Deacons. The Treasurer will be a Deacon and will be an officer of the Church.

Section F. Deacons.

1. **General Responsibilities.** The Deacons shall assist the Elders in performing their responsibilities. The Deacons shall be responsible for serving the physical needs of the Church members and administration of all business matters of the Church. They shall function as trustees in all legal transactions. In performing their duties, the Deacons will utilize the assistance of church staff as appropriate.
2. **Specific Responsibilities.** The Deacons shall be primarily responsible for, but not limited to, administering the following:
 - a. The Church's finances
 - b. The financial health of the Church
 - c. Stewardship Instruction and Advancement
 - d. The Benevolence and Compassion areas of ministry, ensuring they are properly administered and funded. Including ministry to widows, orphans, and the poor and needy.
 - e. The Church's Facilities and Operations

- f. Programs: Ensure that staff and financial resources are available to carry out the programs of the Church as prioritized by the Elders.
- g. Personnel policies, procedures, compensation and benefits for the Church staff.
- h. Approve and monitor procedures and policies to ensure that proper financial accountability, record keeping, asset management, safety, and efficient operations are taking place.

Annually, each Deacon will be required to provide in writing, a statement accepting, in its entirety, the statement of doctrine contained herein and agreeing to be governed by this Constitution.

3. Deacons' Responsibility Regarding Designated Gifts.

The Deacons shall be authorized to set up special funds for designated gifts to comply with the guidelines of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. Designated contributions may be used as directed if in keeping with the purpose and policy of the Church, as interpreted by the Deacons.

Contributions designated for purposes which do not meet this requirement shall be returned to the donor, if possible. Unreturnable gifts shall be disposed of by action of the Deacons.

Section G. Organization of the Deacons.

At a Deacon's meeting prior to the first Tuesday of ~~December~~January each year the following leadership positions will be selected from the Deacons: Chairman of the Deacons and Clerk of the Deacons. Prior to the first Tuesday of ~~December~~January of each year, the Deacons shall recommend to the Elders one of the Deacons to serve as Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be selected by the Elders. The responsibilities of the Deacon leadership shall be as follows:

1. **Chairman of the Deacons.** The Chairman of the Deacons will have the responsibility for the oversight of all Deacon Ministries and shall lead the meetings of the Deacons. In the absence of the Treasurer the Chairman of the Deacons will perform the duties of the Treasurer.
2. **Clerk of the Deacons.** The Clerk of the Deacons shall keep a record of all matters discussed and decisions made at the Deacons meetings and shall carry on all necessary correspondence.
3. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer will be a Deacon, an officer of the Church and the financial manager of the Deacons. The Treasurer shall lead the meetings of the Deacons in the absence of the Chairman of the Deacons.

Section H. Sub-Organizations, Leadership Requirements.

Ministry leaders, teachers, and officers of sub-organizations, must be members of Calvary Church, except by special permission of the Elders. Ministry leaders will be required to sign a statement indicating that they accept, in its entirety, the statement of doctrine in this Constitution, and that they agree to be governed by this Constitution.

All sub-organizations will be accountable to committees or such other organizational structure as defined by the Elders and will provide a list of all teachers and officers annually to such committee or other organizational structure.

ARTICLE VI Ministry

INTRODUCTION

The Elders will establish ministry areas and committees as deemed necessary for the effective functioning of the Church's responsibilities for the spiritual welfare of the congregation. Chairmen of all

committees established by the Elders will be selected by the Elders. The Elders will also establish all ministerial staff positions. The Senior Pastor will recommend persons to fill these positions subject to the approval of the Elders.

All persons who represent the Church in any public capacity or who speak, sing, play musical instruments, or otherwise perform in our public services must be professing Christians whose lives are consistent with their testimony.

Section A. Senior Pastor.

1. **Duties.** The Senior Pastor, together with the Elders, will watch over the spiritual life of this Church. The Senior Pastor shall preach and teach the Word, administer the ordinances, and have charge of the Church services. He will be an elder and he will be an ex-officio member of all committees. He will be required annually to sign a statement of agreement with this Constitution.

The Senior Pastor will be responsible for the oversight of all of the staff of the Church.

The elders are to ensure that the Senior Pastor has adequate administrative staff so his oversight duties do not interfere with his primary responsibilities of preaching and teaching the Word, administering the ordinances, and being responsible for the Church services.

2. **Call.** The Senior Pastor of the Church will be called by a two-thirds majority vote of the ballots cast at a congregational meeting, providing his name has been presented to the active membership by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elders. Church membership will be automatic for the Senior Pastor and his wife on acceptance of the call to minister at Calvary Church.

3. **Termination.** The Senior Pastor's term of office shall be indefinite. Normally, a notice of 60 days will be given to terminate, with remuneration and services continuing through this period, unless otherwise mutually agreed. A vote may be taken by the active membership at any time to terminate the Senior Pastor's services subject to the following:

a. A special congregational meeting may be called for that purpose in accordance with ARTICLE V, Section A.

b. It shall be placed on the agenda of a regular or special congregational meeting, provided that it is presented by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elders, or after a petition of 25 percent of the active membership has been presented to the Elders.

c. A majority vote of ballots cast shall be required to terminate the Senior Pastor's services.

d. In the event of doctrinal and/or moral defection, the Senior Pastor's services may be terminated immediately by action of the Elders, to be ratified within 30 days by a majority vote of the ballots cast at the congregational meeting called for that purpose.

Section B. Other Pastoral Staff.

1. **Call.** The pastoral staff of the Church, as defined by the Elders, will be called upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor, by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elders. If the Church is without a Senior Pastor, pastoral staff may be called by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elders. The length of time of service will be at the will of the Elders. Church membership for the pastoral staff member and spouse, assuming they are both interviewed, will be automatic on their accepting the call. These staff members will be required annually to sign a statement of agreement with this Constitution.

2. **Duties.** The duties of the other pastoral staff will be those as formulated by the Elders. In ministry areas where the Elders have established a committee, the staff and committee will work together to provide direction, leadership, and program formulation.

Section C. Other Individuals.

All persons approved for financial support by the appropriate committee, including short-term missionaries, will be required to sign a statement indicating that they accept in its entirety the statement of doctrine in this Constitution. They may also be required to submit a statement of total income upon request.

The requirements in this section do not apply to individuals whose only financial support from the Church consists of compensation as employees of the Church.

ARTICLE VII
Discipline of Members

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of all discipline shall be to strengthen the local Church by promoting consistent Christian living. Every effort shall be made to restore erring members to fellowship and active membership of the Church.

Section A. Reasons, Purpose, and Procedures.

1. **The Reasons for Discipline.** There are two reasons for discipline:

- a. Doctrinal deviation or heresy
- b. Immoral conduct, lying tongue, sowing discord among the congregation, unrepentant sinful behavior, unbiblical divorce or remarriage, physical or significant emotional abuse, abandonment, or the violation of a Calvary Church policy as determined by the Elders.

2. **The Purpose of and Procedure for Church Discipline.**

The purpose of church discipline is to effect the return to a biblical standard of conduct and doctrine, to restore a member who errs, to maintain purity in the local church, and to deter sin (Galatians 6: 1; 1 Corinthians 5:6; 1 Timothy 5:20). Members of this Church who err in doctrine or conduct will be subject to dismissal based on the principles of Matthew 18:12-18. Before such dismissal, however, the following steps ought to be taken:

- a. It is the duty of any member of this Church who has knowledge of the erring member's heresy or misconduct to warn and to correct such erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
- b. If said erring member does not heed this warning, the warning member will again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct such erring member, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
- c. If said erring member still refuses to heed this warning, it will be brought to the attention of the Elders. These matters shall be entrusted to the Elders. Any disciplinary action that is deemed necessary will be in the spirit of love and meekness (Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15).
- d. If said erring member refuses to heed the warning of the Elders, he or she will be dismissed from the Church. The names of any whose status of membership has been changed shall be reported by announcement, either in writing or from the platform, in a regular service of the Church (Sunday, Wednesday, or congregational meeting), indicating whether they have been placed on the inactive

membership or dismissed from the membership. If said member, after dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement, he or she may be restored to membership.

e. General information regarding the reasons for discipline, dismissal or the termination of a person's membership, even after a member voluntarily withdraws membership, may be shared with the congregation, as determined by the Elders.

Section B. Controversy.

If the internal affairs of the Church should reach a state of controversy and it seems impossible to resolve it peacefully, a board of arbitration shall be called to aid in reaching a point of agreement. The board of arbitration may be requested by at least a two thirds majority vote by secret ballot of the Elders, or by a petition presented to the Elders bearing the names of 25 percent of the active membership to establish the board of arbitrators. Each disputing party will select one layman and one pastor from outside the congregation who subscribe to the statement of doctrine. These representatives of the disputing parties will together select an additional layman and two pastors from outside the congregation who also subscribe to the statement of doctrine. The decision of this board of arbitration will be binding upon the congregation, and its conclusions must be accepted by all with the following exceptions:

- a. It has no power to change the Constitution nor even pass judgment on it. It must uphold the Constitution.
- b. It has no power to dissolve the Church nor to dispose of real estate or other property of the Church.

ARTICLE VIII

Licensing, Ordination and Commissioning

Section A. Licensing

Licensing will serve as a one-year renewable designation to allow men preparing for ordination to perform spiritual leadership duties at Calvary Church or to allow men to serve in contexts where ordained pastoral leadership is not necessarily needed in the foreseeable future.

The candidate shall be interviewed by the Elders regarding the call to ministry, doctrinal beliefs, educational and family information and shall provide testimony of their walk with the Lord.

The candidate for licensing must receive a two-thirds approval of the Elders to be licensed.

Section B. Ordination

Ordination is a lifetime designation recognizing the call to and spiritual gifting of a man for pastoral ministry.

The candidate for ordination is to submit a letter to the Elders requesting approval for engaging in the ordination process. If approval is granted, the candidate is to submit personal profile information, a paper describing his call to ministry, a summary of doctrinal beliefs and a description of ministry experience. He is then to be examined by an ordination council of five or more ordained evangelical ministers. The council is to be appointed by the Elders. If the council affirms that ordination is appropriate, the council is to recommend such to the Elders. If the Elders approve the recommendation by at least a two-thirds majority vote the ordination will be considered affirmed.

Section C. Commissioning

Commissioning is a designation assigned to an individual who demonstrates spiritual leadership, a godly-lifestyle and is serving as a pastoral staff representative at Calvary Church or as a missionary supported by Calvary Church.

The pastoral staff representative is to be recommended as a candidate for commissioning by the Senior Pastor to the Elders.

The missionary is to be recommended to the Elders as a candidate for commissioning by the pastoral staff member responsible for global and community outreach.

The pastoral staff representative or missionary is to be interviewed by the Elders following the submission of a paper outlining personal profile information, the call to ministry, a summary of doctrinal beliefs and a description of ministry experience.

The commission will be granted upon a two-thirds approval of the Elders for an indefinite term which will end if ministry at Calvary Church or support by Calvary Church is completed.

Section D. Power of Revocation

The Elders have the authority to discipline, including but not limited to the revocation of licensing, ordination, or commissioning credentials, any person licensed, ordained or commissioned by Calvary Church under this Constitution. This action may occur if said ministry person is found guilty of doctrinal or moral defection after an impartial examination has been conducted by the Elders in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 13.

**ARTICLE IX
Property**

The title to all property of this church, both real and personal, will be and remain vested in that portion of the active membership that remains faithful to the original purpose stated in ARTICLES I, II, and III of this Constitution.

The title and powers in relation to all property, whether real, personal, or mixed, will be as provided by law in Section 183, Act No. 327, Public Acts of 1931, as amended, of the State of Michigan (MCL 450.183).

In the event of the dissolution of the organization, no part of the assets or earnings shall ever inure to the benefit of any member. Upon dissolution, any and all assets of the organization must be distributed to other nonprofit evangelical Christian organizations that are duly recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as nonprofit and exempt from federal income tax.

**ARTICLE X
Amendments**

Section A. Vote Required

The active membership may make any change or amendments to the Constitution that seems necessary. Such changes or amendments must be submitted by the Elders, having approved such

amendments by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elders, to the active members in written form at least two weeks immediately prior to the annual or special congregational meeting, and can be adopted only by the vote of two-thirds of the active membership present.

Section B. Non-substantive Changes.

The titles used in this Constitution to describe various offices, positions and groups and the terminology used to describe various functions and processes are for convenience only. The Elders, by majority vote, may elect to change such titles and terminology as they deem necessary or appropriate, provided that such changes do not change the substance of such offices, positions, groups, functions or processes in any material way.

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