

CONSTITUTION

OUR CHURCH:

Udenominational and in fellowship with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

OUR THEME:

Jesus Christ and Him crucified, who is over all, God blessed forever.

OUR OBJECTIVE:

The salvation of the lost and the perfecting of the saints.

OUR HOPE:

The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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. The Holy Scriptures.

We believe that "All Scripture is God-breathed," by which we understand the whole of the book called the Bible. We do not take this statement in the sense in which it is sometimes said that the works of human genius are inspired, but in the sense that the Holy Spirit gave the very words of the sacred writings to holy men of old. His divine inspiration is not in different degrees, but extends equally and fully to all parts of these writings, historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic, and to the smallest word and inflection of a word, provided such a word is found in the original manuscripts (Mk. 12:26, 36; Acts 1:16, 2:4; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21).

Section B. The Godhead.

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and, that these three, are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and are worthy of the same homage, confidence, and obedience (Mt. 28:19-20; Mark 12:29; Jn. 1:1-4; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor.13:14; Heb.1:1-3; Rev.1:4-6).

Section C. The Father.

We believe that God is a Spirit (Jn. 4:24), who is limitless (1 Ki. 8:27; Acts 17:28), eternal (Ps. 90:2), self-existent (Ex. 3:14), unchangeable (Mal. 3:6), omnipotent (Rev. 19:6), omniscient (Ps. 147:5), omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-11), holy (1 Pet. 1:15-16), righteous (Jn. 17:25), loving (1 Jn. 4:8), good (Ps. 100:5), truthful (Dt. 32:4; Jn. 14:6), and sovereign (Eph. 1:11; Rom. 8:28-29).

We believe that God the Father, understood as the first person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own sovereign purpose and grace (Eph. 1:3-11; Rom. 8:28). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Isa. 43:7; 48:11; Eph. 1:11). He is the Creator of all things (Gen. 1:1-31; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9), and to Him is due all glory (Rom. 11:36). In His sovereignty He is not the author of sin nor does He approve it (Hab.1:13; Jas. 1:13); nor does He violate the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (Jn. 3:16; Lk. 13:3; 1 Pet. 1:17).

The Fatherhood of God involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with created mankind. As Creator, He is Father to all men (Acts 17:29; Eph. 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Rom. 8:14-15; 2 Cor. 6:18; Gal. 3:26; 4:6). He saves from sin all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (Jn. 1:12; Eph. 1:5; Heb. 12:5-9).

Section D. The Person and Work of Christ.

We believe in the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe that the Scripture, from first to last, centers about our Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work, and in His first and second coming. Therefore, no chapter, even of the Old Testament, is properly read or understood until it leads to Him. Moreover, we believe that all the Scripture from first to last, including every chapter of the Old Testament, was designed for our practical instruction (Mt. 1:23; Lk. 24:27,44; Jn. 5:39; Acts 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11; 15:4).

Section E. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is not an influence but a divine person, the source and power of all acceptable worship and service. He is our abiding Comforter and Helper who never departs from the Church nor from the weakest saint. He is ever present to testify of Christ, seeking to occupy us with Him and not with ourselves nor with our experiences (Jn. 7:38-39; 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:9; Phil. 3:3).

Section F. The Creation and Fall of Man.

We believe that man, originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, fell from his high and holy estate by eating the forbidden fruit. As the consequence of his disobedience, the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted, so that his moral nature was not only grievously injured by the fall, but he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins and subject to the power of the devil (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; Jn. 5:40; 6:53; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 Jn. 3:8).

Section G. The Total Depravity of Man.

We believe that this death, or total corruption of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone excepted. Hence, every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature that not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad, being enmity against God and incapable by any educational process whatever of subjection to His law (Gen. 6:5; Ps. 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; Jn. 3:6; 5:12-19; 8:6-7).

Section H. The Necessity of the New Birth.

We believe that because of this universal depravity and death in sin, no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless born again, and that no degree of reformation, however great; no attainment in morality, however high; no culture, however attractive; no humanitarian and philanthropic schemes and societies, however useful; no baptism or other ordinance, however administered; can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven. Only a new nature imparted by the Holy Spirit through the Word is absolutely essential to salvation (Isa. 64:6; Jn. 3:5,18; Gal. 6:15; Phil. 3:4-9; Tit. 3:5; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23).

Section I. Salvation Accomplished by Christ.

We believe that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was made to be sin and a curse for us, dying for us. We believe that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolution, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, or of all the churches that have existed since the days of the apostles, can add in the very least to the value of that precious blood or to the merit of that finished work which was wrought for us by Christ, who united in His person true and proper divinity with perfect and sinless humanity (Lev. 17:11; Mt. 26:28; Rom. 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet.1:18-19).

Section J. Eternal Security.

We believe that it is the privilege not only of some believers but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures to be assured of their salvation the very day they take Him to be their Savior. This assurance is not founded on any fancied discovery of their own worthiness, but wholly on the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience (Lk. 10:20; Jn. 6:47; Rom. 8:33-39; 2 Cor. 5:1,6-8; 2 Tim.1:12; 1 Jn. 5:13).

Section K. The Believer's Standing.

We believe that Christ, in the fullness of the blessing He has secured by His obedience unto death, is received by faith alone, and that the moment we trust in Him as our Savior we pass out of death into everlasting life, being justified from all things. We are accepted before the Father according to the measure of His acceptance, loved as He is loved, having His place and portion, and linked with Him in spiritual oneness forever (Jn. 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 4:6,13; 1 Jn. 4:17; 1 Jn 5:11-12).

Section L. The Walk of the Believer.

We believe that we are called with a holy calling to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, and so to live in the Spirit that we should not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. The flesh, being the "old man" in fallen Adam, is still in us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage and needs to be kept constantly in subjection in the place of death (separation from control) in Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence to the dishonor of His name (Rom. 8:12-13; 13:14; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 Jn. 3:5-9).

Section M. The Church

We believe that the Church is composed of all who are united by the Holy Spirit to the risen and ascended Son of God, that by the same Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, and thus being members one of another, we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently: Mt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:32-47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Col. 3:14-15.

Section N. The Church Ordinances.

We believe that two ordinances or directives have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42).

Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is symbolic of the beginning of the Christian life and is the holy and beautiful testimony of a believer affirming personal faith in the crucified, buried, resurrected, and ascended Savior. This spiritual union with Christ in death to the old life in Adam and resurrection to a new life in Christ is illustrated by water baptism (Rom. 6:1-11; Gal. 2:20; Col. 2:11-12). It is also a sign of identification with the Body of Christ, the Church (Acts 2:41-42). The Lord Jesus has commanded His Church to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:19).

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the ordinance or directive proclaiming the continual commemoration of the death of Christ until He comes, and should be always preceded by worshipful self-examination for sin (1 Cor. 11:23-32). We also believe that even though the elements of communion are only symbolic of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is to be a blessed time of fellowship with the risen Christ.

Section O. The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts.

We believe that the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts on all believers for Christian service and the edification of the Church. These spiritual gifts are to be exercised according to biblical guidelines (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

We believe the church age was initiated through the ministry of the apostles and prophets, and was accompanied by sign-gifts* to confirm their message. However, we do not practice, teach, encourage, or endorse sign-gifts for this present age (1 Cor. 12:28-31; 13:8-10; 14:1-28; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:19-22; Heb. 2:3-4).

We believe that God hears and answers prayer in accordance with His own will for the healing of the sick and afflicted (Jn. 14:13-14; 15:7; 1 Jn. 5:14-15).

*These sign-gifts are apostleship, healing, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophesying, words of knowledge, and miracles.

Section P. The Eternal State.

We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass into His presence immediately at death, and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming, when soul and body reunited will be associated with Him forever in the glory. The souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited will be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (Lk. 16:19-26; 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6:7; Rev. 20:11-15).

Section Q. Eschatology - The Doctrine of the Last Things.

We believe that the world will not be converted during the present dispensation but is fast ripening for judgment, and there will be a fearful apostasy in the professing Christian body. Therefore, the Lord Jesus will come in person to rapture the Church, followed by a tribulation period, followed by the millennial age, when Israel will be restored to their own land, and the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord. This personal and premillennial advent is the blessed hope set before us in the Gospels, for which we should be constantly looking (Lk. 12:35-40; 17:26-30; 18:8; Acts 15:14-17; 2 Th. 2:3-8; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Tit. 2:11-15).

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 ~~Church Board~~*Elders as to their Christian experience and the basis of their salvation.

~~*(5. The Church Board consists names of the elders and deacons and hereafter is referred to as 'Church Board')~~

~~Applicants whose examination is satisfactory will be notified by the Church Clerk (or his designated agent) of admission to membership. Applicants admitted to membership will be requested to present themselves at a worship service designated by the Church Clerk (or his designated agent), at which service such applicants shall publicly affirm their membership commitment and be publicly acknowledged as all new members shall be communicated to the congregation.~~

Section B. Types of Membership.

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

1. 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 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 ~~class or~~ Adult Sunday Class and participate in ~~a similar~~ ministry ministries. They shall have the right to attend the business congregational meetings of the Church, but shall not have the right to vote.

~~1.~~ 3. INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP shall consist of ~~the~~ following:

~~a.~~ Those who have been absent from the services of the Church for a period of 6 months or more without giving a satisfactory reason for such absence.

~~b.~~ 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 and the senior pastor shall seek to restore the Inactive Membership to Active Membership. If this has not been accomplished after 12 months on the Inactive Membership, ~~they~~ their membership may be ~~dropped from~~ terminated by the ~~membership roll~~ Elders.

Section C. 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 D. 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 ~~1-Cor.~~ I Corinthians 16:2 (also see V, EF, 2).

Section E. 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.

~~"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:17).~~

~~"If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless" (Jas. 1:26).~~

~~"It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall" (Rom.14:21).~~

~~"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23).~~

~~"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievancees you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God" (Col. 3:12-16).~~

~~"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore come out from them and be separate,' says the Lord. 'Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty.' Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God" (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). The foregoing Scripture from 2 Corinthians plainly teaches that Christians should not marry or have other entangling alliances with unbelievers. The following Scriptures prohibit divorce, except for two causes, marital unfaithfulness (sexual immorality) and desertion:~~

~~"I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness (sexual immorality), and marries another woman commits adultery" (Mt.19:9).~~

~~"To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace" (1 Cor. 7:12-15).~~

Editorial Note: the scripture quotes and references have been removed from this section as they seem to be duplicative of but less comprehensive than the matters addressed in "Other Guidelines and Policies" as set forth in the Constitutional booklet.

Section F. Restrictions.

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

Section G. Termination of Membership.

1. Disciplinary

See ARTICLE VII, ~~Section A, 2 (a), (b), (c).~~

2. Voluntary

If a member desires to withdraw membership, a letter should be written to the Church Clerk so that the ~~Church Board~~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. 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. 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 truthfully share any or all relevant facts with a pastor, or the Elders of any other church(es) or Christian ministries, 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 ~~elected~~selected officers, the ~~Church Board~~Elders, the Deacons, committees, and employees in accordance with all provisions of this Constitution.

Section A. ~~Business~~Congregational Meetings.

The Church membership may be called together for the transaction of any business by a two-thirds majority vote of the ~~Church Board~~Elders, notice of such meetings having been given on each of two Sundays preceding said meeting. The annual businesscongregational meeting of the Church will be held ~~in the third full week of~~not earlier than September 15 and not later than September 30 each year, at which time the minutes of the previous businesscongregational meeting(s) will be read, Elders and Deacons will be ~~elected~~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.

~~100~~One hundred active members present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business providing the membership is over ~~500~~five hundred; otherwise, one-fifth of the active membership shall constitute a quorum.

It will be the right of any member or number of members to petition the ~~Church Board~~Elders and be granted a hearing at a regular ~~Church Board~~Elders meeting. If, following a hearing with the ~~Church Board~~Elders, a group of members desires a special businesscongregational meeting, such meeting will be called by the ~~Church Board~~Elders upon written request of ~~25 percent~~10% of the active membership. Notice of said meeting will be given from the pulpit, or published in the Church bulletin on each of two Sundays immediately preceding said meeting. No question may be voted on at this meeting unless stated in the notice of said meeting.

Section B. Voting.

Voting at businesscongregational meetings will be restricted to active members ~~18~~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 businesscongregational meetings may vote by absentee ballot by obtaining an official ballot from the Church office. The ballot ~~is to~~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 ~~Church Board~~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. Election of Church Board Members.*~~

~~At the annual meeting the Church Board will submit nominees for the office of elder and deacon for the ensuing 3 years. All nominees must be members in good standing of this church for a period of 2 years immediately preceding the election, and must meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9. The slate of nominees is to be printed in the Church bulletin on 2 Sundays immediately preceding the annual meeting. Members of the congregation may also nominate from the floor provided the nomination is accepted by two-thirds vote by acclamation of the active members present. There will not be less than nine elders, one-third of whom shall be elected annually. There will not be less than nine deacons, one-third of whom shall be elected annually. After an elder or deacon has served his 3-year term, he shall not be eligible for reelection or appointment to the Church Board until 2 years have elapsed. The Church Board will have the power to fill any vacancies by a two-thirds majority vote of the Church Board, voting by ballot.~~

~~At the election of Church Board members, a candidate must receive a majority vote to be elected. In the event that a second ballot is necessary, all names will be eliminated except sufficient names to fill the vacancies plus one. Elimination of names will begin with the candidates receiving the lowest number of votes.~~

~~The newly elected board members will begin their terms of service on the first Tuesday of December each year, at which time the retiring terms of present board members will end.~~

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 and Deacon.

At the annual meeting the Elders will submit the names of men as nominees for the office of Elder and Deacon for the ensuing three years.

- All nominees must meet the Biblical Qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9.
- Nominees must be active members of Calvary Church for two years prior to the annual congregational meeting.
- 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.
- Nominees should have a history of service at Calvary Church.
- Calvary Church has interpreted "being of one wife" (I Timothy 3:12) as not having had a divorce for non-biblical reasons after conversion, but we do not interpret this reference to exclude any qualified single man.

The slate of nominees is to be printed in the church bulletin two Sundays 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.

The congregation will be asked to approve each candidate by secret ballot. The ballot will provide three choices for each candidate.

- (a) I support this candidate for the position for which he has been nominated.
- (b) I have strong objections to this candidate serving in the position for which he has been nominated.
- (c) 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% negative votes (the selection labeled "(b)" in the options above), his name will be withdrawn from consideration. (In determining the percentage, the number of ballots cast for options (a) or (b) above, for that candidate will be divided by the total number of ballots cast for him.) Ballots in which option (c) above is selected will not count as a ballot for that person. The results of this affirmation vote will remain confidential.

The Clerk and at least one other Elder will place each of the remaining names in two containers (one for Elder and one for Deacon candidates) that allow for suitable randomization.

These containers will be brought back to the annual meeting. A congregational member selected by the Chairman will draw out of each container the number of names equal to the open positions. The people whose names are drawn will constitute the newly selected Elders and Deacons.

There will not be less than twelve Elders and twelve Deacons, of which one-third will be selected annually.

The newly selected Elders and Deacons will begin their terms of service on the first Tuesday of December 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. ~~The Church Board~~Elders.

1. **Elders**General Responsibilities. The Elders, ~~together with~~ including the Senior Pastor, shall comprise the governing body of the Church. The Elders, including the Senior Pastor, will care for the spiritual welfare of the congregation, and shall perform all duties ascribed to them in other parts of 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.

2. ~~Deacons.~~ ~~The deacons shall administer all business matters of the Church, shall function as trustees in all legal transactions, and shall be responsible for the maintenance of all church property. They shall supervise the benevolent funds of the Church.~~

3. ~~Duties and Specific Responsibilities.~~ The ~~Church Board~~Elders will assume supervision of sub-organizations and ~~examine all~~ will be responsible for examination of all candidates for membership in the Church. Annually, each ~~member of the Church Board~~Elder and Deacon will be required in writing to accept in its entirety the statement of doctrine contained herein and agree to be governed by this Constitution. Other ~~duties and~~ responsibilities of the ~~Church Board~~Elders as defined by this Constitution include, but are not limited to:

- Church policy
 - Membership approval of application
 - Spiritual welfare;
 - Church discipline ~~(elders)~~
 - ~~election~~Selection of church officers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Clerk, ~~assistant clerk, treasurer, assistant~~ Treasurer)
 - Pastoral and non-pastoral staff and related policies
 - Financial, business, and legal affairs of the Church ~~(deacons)~~
 - Establishment of standing ad hoc committees and appointment of committee members
 - Establishment of special committees and appointment of committee members
 - Appointment of Elder representatives to Elder advisory committees
 - Appointment of Deacon representatives to Elder advisory committees
 - Appointment of Elder representatives to staff advisory committees
 - Approval of deacon representatives to staff advisory committees
 - Relationships with organizations and committees inside and outside the Church
- Licensing, ordination ~~to ministry~~ ~~(elders)~~
- and commissioning to ministry.

Section E. Organization of the ~~Church Board~~Elders.

A special ~~board~~Elders' meeting will be called ~~on~~ prior to the first Tuesday of December each year for the purpose of ~~electing from its members~~ selecting the following officers: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Clerk; ~~and~~ Treasurer; Assistant. ~~The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk, and Assistant shall be selected from the Elders. The~~ Treasurer shall be selected from the Deacons. The officers ~~of the Church Board~~ are authorized to make emergency decisions when it is impractical to call a ~~Church Board~~ an Elders' meeting. All ~~such~~ minutes of said meetings will be reported at the following ~~Church Board~~Elders' meeting, and ~~its~~ its decisions will be subject to ratification by the ~~Church Board~~Elders. The responsibilities of the officers are as follows:

1. ~~Officers of the Church Board.~~

- (a) **Chairman.** The Chairman ~~will be chosen from among~~ shall have the responsibility for oversight of all Elder responsibilities and will lead the elders, or meetings of the senior pastor may be chosen to perform duties as usually pertain to that office Elders. The Chairman will be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- (b) **Vice-Chairman.** The Vice-Chairman will assist the Chairman in his duties and will perform the duties of the Chairman in the Chairman's absence.
- (c) **Clerk.** The Clerk shall keep a record of all ~~business that is—transacted at the business and Church Board~~ 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; H; ARTICLE VI, Section A, 1; Section B, 1.
- (d) ~~**Assistant Clerk.** The Assistant Clerk shall assist the Clerk in all duties pertaining to that office. He shall also secure annually the signatures of persons designated in ARTICLE V, Sections D.3; F. and G.; ARTICLE VI, Section A, 1; Section B.~~

~~**Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall receive and disburse Church funds and shall be responsible~~ accountable to the deacons Elders. He shall make a monthly written financial report to the ~~Church Board~~ Elders, and present a written annual financial report to the membership at the regular annual ~~business~~ congregational meeting. He shall submit the books for an annual audit in such a manner as may be directed by the Deacons. ~~By virtue of his office, the Treasurer shall be chairman of the deacons.~~

~~(f) **Assistant Treasurer.** The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in all the duties pertaining to this office.~~

Section F. Deacons.

1. Duties. The Deacons shall assist the Elders in performing their responsibilities. The Deacons shall, with the assistance of staff, administer all business matters of the Church and shall function as trustees in all legal transactions. The Deacons shall be primarily responsible for, but not limited to, administering the following:

- Facilities and Operations
- Finance
- Stewardship
- Benevolence
- Programs
- Personnel
- Administration

2. Deacons' Responsibility Regarding Designated Gifts.

The Deacons shall be authorized to set up a special ~~fund~~funds for designated gifts ~~withint~~to comply with the guidelines of the U.S. Internal Revenue ~~Department~~Service. Designated contributions may be used as directed if in keeping with the purpose and policy of ~~this~~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 ~~F. Sub-Organizations, Leadership Requirements~~ G. Organization of Deacons.

A special Deacons meeting will be called on the first Tuesday of December each year for the purpose of selecting from the Deacons, the following leadership positions: Chairman of the Deacons, Vice-Chairman of the Deacons and Clerk of the Deacons. The responsibilities of the Deacon leadership shall be as follows:

- (a) **Chairman of the Deacons.** The Chairman of the Deacons will have the responsibility for the oversight of all Deacon ministries and shall lead the meeting of the Deacons.
- (b) **Vice-Chairman of the Deacons.** The Vice-Chairman of the Deacons will assist the Chairman of the Deacons in his duties and will perform the duties of the Chairman of the Deacons in the Chairman's absence.
- (c) **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.

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 ~~Church Board~~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. ~~This leadership requirement applies to teachers and ministry directors and officers in the Sunday school and also executive officers and adult leaders in other sub-organizations.~~

Section ~~G. Sub-Organizations: Constitutions.~~

~~1. Personnel:~~ All sub-organizations will be accountable to ~~a standing committee of committees or such other organizational structure as defined by the Church Board~~Elders and will provide a list of all teachers and officers annually to ~~the standing~~such committee ~~or other organizational structure.~~

~~2. Constitutions: Any sub-organization that has a constitution, by laws, or policies shall submit them to the standing committee for approval by the Church Board.~~

ARTICLE VI

Ministry

INTRODUCTION

The ~~Church Board~~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 ~~standing~~ committees established by the Elders will be elected by the ~~Church Board~~Elders. All ~~standing~~such committees must have at least one ~~Church Board~~Elder member. The ~~Church Board~~Elders and the senior pastor will also establish all ministerial staff positions. The senior pastor will recommend persons to fill these positions subject to the approval of the ~~Church Board~~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 and the Elders will watch over the spiritual life of this Church. ~~He~~ The senior pastor shall preach and teach the Word, administer the ordinances, and have charge of the Church services. He will be ~~a member of the Church Board,~~ 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 ~~oversee~~be responsible for the oversight of all of the staff of the Church.
2. **Call.** The senior pastor of the Church will be called by a two-thirds majority vote of the ballots cast, providing his name has been presented to the active membership by a two-thirds majority vote of the ~~board~~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 ~~Church Board~~Elders, or after a petition of 25 percent of the active membership has been presented to the ~~Church Board~~Elders.

- c. A majority vote of ballots cast shall be required to terminate the senior pastor's services.

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

Section B. Other ~~Ministerial and Professional~~Pastoral Staff.

1. **Call.** The ~~ministerial and professional~~pastoral staff of the Church, as defined by the Elders, will be called with the consent of the senior pastor, by a two-thirds majority vote of the ~~Church Board~~Elders. The length of time of service will be at the will of the ~~Church Board~~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 ~~ministerial and professional~~pastoral staff will be those as formulated by the ~~Church Board~~Elders. In ministry areas where the ~~Church Board~~ has 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.

1. There are ~~three~~two reasons for discipline
 - a. Doctrinal deviation or heresy ~~(Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Tit. 3:10-11;)~~.

b. Immoral conduct, lying tongue, sowing discord among the congregation, ~~or unrepentant sinful behavior (Prov. 6:16-19; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:9-13; 2 Cor. 6:14-17).~~

~~e. Non-attendance, unbiblical divorce or remarriage, physical or significant emotional abuse, abandonment, or the violation of a Calvary Church policy as described in ARTICLE IV, Section B, 3, (a). An annual review of the active membership shall be conducted~~determined ~~by the senior pastor and the elders, after which those who have been absent for a period of 6 months may be dismissed from the membership, provided that an attempted contact has first been made in an effort to restore them to regular attendance~~Elders.

Editorial Note: We are removing all the scripture references from section 1, so Elders may pursue discipline for any sinful behavior, whether specifically referenced in the Bible or not.

2. **Procedure for doctrinal or moral discipline.** The discipline of this church in doctrinal and moral matters shall be entrusted to the senior pastor and the Elders. Any disciplinary action that is deemed necessary shall be in the spirit of love and meekness (~~Gal.~~Galatians 6:1; ~~2-Th.~~II Thessalonians 3:14-15).

3. **The Purpose of 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 (~~Gal.~~Galatians 6:1; ~~1-Cor.~~I Corinthians 5:6; ~~1-Tim.~~I 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 ~~must~~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 senior pastor and the Elders. Any disciplinary action that is deemed necessary will be in the spirit of love and meekness (~~Gal.~~Galatians 6:1; ~~2-Th.~~II Thessalonians 3:14-15).
- d. If said erring member refuses to heed the warning of the senior pastor and 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 the bulletin or from the platform, in a regular service of the Church (Sunday, Wednesday, or ~~business~~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, if appropriate and instructional and 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 ~~Church Board~~Elders, or by a petition presented to the ~~Church Board~~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:

1. It has no power to change the constitution nor even pass judgment on it. It must uphold the constitution.
2. It has no power to dissolve the Church nor to dispose of real estate or other property of the Church.

ARTICLE VIII

~~Licensing, Commissioning, and Ordaining~~

~~*Section A. Licensing.*~~

~~As Spirit-filled men are called out from among us to proclaim the gospel of the grace of God, such men may be given a renewable 1-year license to preach and administer the ordinances by a two-thirds majority of the elders, provided that two-thirds of the elders are of the opinion that the candidate has the suitable gifts; and further provided that their judgment is based on actual experience rather than on their hopes of what he may do; and that this experience will have covered a period of at least one year of public preaching.~~

~~*Section B. Commissioning.*~~

~~When a missionary has requested to be commissioned and it has been approved by the missions committee, the request must be presented and approved by a two-thirds majority of the Church Board to become effective~~

~~*Section C. Ordaining.*~~

~~When, in the judgment of the elders, a member, or in special cases a non-member, is called to the Christian ministry (including both the preaching and non-preaching ministries), it will be within the power of the elders to call and conduct a council of ordination after announcing it to the Church. This council will consist of five or more ordained evangelical ministers.~~

~~The council of ordination shall thoroughly examine the candidate regarding his personal Christian experience, call to the ministry, educational training, doctrinal belief, reputation, and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service. The candidate will give evidence of agreement with the provisions of the Church constitution with respect to doctrine, independence of the local church, and scriptural qualifications for church leadership. The council of ordination shall recommend to the elders to proceed with ordination. The ordination will be approved upon a two-thirds vote of the elders.~~

Section D. Power of Revocation.

~~—The elders will have the power to discipline, even to the revoking of the ordination credentials, license, or commission of any minister or missionary ordained, licensed or commissioned under this constitution, if said minister or missionary is found guilty of doctrinal or moral defection after an impartial trial has been conducted in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 13.~~

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

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

Editorial Note: Licensing is not a biblical category but is required by the State of Michigan to perform certain functions.

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, even to the revoking of licensing, ordination, or commissioning credentials of any person licensed, ordained or commissioned by Calvary Church under this constitution. This action could 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 I 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, ~~Article 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 Church may make any change or amendments to the constitution that seem necessary. Such changes or amendments must be submitted by the ~~Church Board~~Elders, having approved such amendments by a two-thirds majority vote of the ~~Church Board~~Elders, to the members in written form at least ~~2~~two weeks prior to the annual or special businesscongregational 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 any material way.

The following pages contain “Other Guidelines and Policies” which are not part of the constitution.

Editorial Note: the constitutional booklet contains various "Other Guidelines and Policies". Because those are not part of the constitution, no evaluation or modification was done to those guidelines and policies.

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