

CONSTITUTION

OUR CHURCH:

Undenominational 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 (Undenominational) Church do ordain and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

ARTICLE I

Organization

The organization shall be known as Calvary (Undenominational) 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* as to their Christian experience and the basis of their salvation.

*(The Church Board consists 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 members.

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 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 participate in a similar ministry. They shall have the right to attend the business meetings of the Church, but shall not have the right to vote.

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 may be dropped from the membership roll.

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. 16:2 (also see V,E,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 grievances 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).

.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 can officially acknowledge the withdrawal.

**ARTICLE V
Government**

INTRODUCTION

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

Section A. Business Meetings.

The Church may be called together for the transaction of any business by a two-thirds majority vote of the Church Board, notice of such meetings having been given on each of 2 Sundays preceding said meeting. The annual business meeting of the Church will be held in the third full week of September each year, at which time the minutes of the previous business meeting(s) will be read, elders and deacons will be elected, and other necessary business will be conducted. 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 active members present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business providing the membership is over 500; 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 and be granted a hearing at a regular Church Board meeting. If, following a hearing with the Church Board, a group of members desires a special business meeting, such meeting will be called by the Church Board upon written request of 25 percent 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 business meetings will be restricted to active members 18 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 business meetings may vote by absentee ballot by obtaining an official ballot from the Church office. The ballot is to 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 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 D. The Church Board.

1. **Elders.** The elders, together with the senior pastor, will care for the spiritual welfare of the congregation, and 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 Responsibilities.** The Church Board will assume supervision of sub-organizations and examine all candidates for membership in the Church. Annually, each member of the Church Board 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 as defined by this constitution include, but are not limited to:
 - church policy
 - membership approval of application
 - spiritual welfare, discipline (elders)
 - election 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 committees and appointment of committee members
 - establishment of special committees and appointment of committee members
 - relationships with organizations and committees inside and outside the Church
 - licensing, ordination to ministry (elders)
 - commissioning to ministry.

Section E. Organization of the Church Board.

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

1. Officers of the Church Board.
 - (a) **Chairman.** The chairman will be chosen from among the elders, or the senior pastor may be chosen to perform duties as usually pertain to that office.
 - (b) **Vice-Chairman.** The vice-chairman 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 meetings, shall keep an accurate record of the membership, and shall carry on all necessary correspondence.

(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.

(e) **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall receive and disburse Church funds and shall be responsible to the deacons. He shall make a monthly written financial report to the Church Board, and present a written annual financial report to the membership at the regular annual business 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.

2. *Deacons' Responsibility Regarding Designated Gifts.*

The deacons shall be authorized to set up a special fund for designated gifts within the guidelines of the U.S. Internal Revenue Department. Designated contributions may be used as directed if in keeping with the purpose and policy of this 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.

Ministry leaders must be members of Calvary Church, except by special permission of the Church Board. 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 the Church Board and will provide a list of all teachers and officers annually to the standing committee.

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 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 will be elected by the Church Board. All standing committees must have at least one Church Board member. The Church Board 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.

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 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 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 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. 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 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 meeting, provided that it is presented by a two-thirds majority vote of the Church Board, or after a petition of 25 percent of the active membership has been presented to the Church Board.
 - (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, to be ratified within 30 days by a majority vote of the ballots cast at the business meeting called for that purpose.

Section B. Other Ministerial and Professional Staff.

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

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 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).
 - (c) Non-attendance, as described in ARTICLE IV, Section B, 3, (a). An annual review of the active membership shall be conducted 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.
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. 6:1; 2 Th. 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. 6:1; 1 Cor. 5:6; 1 Tim. 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 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. 6:1; 2 Th. 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 in a regular service of the Church (Sunday, Wednesday, or business 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.

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 a majority vote by secret ballot of the Church Board, or by a petition presented to the Church Board 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.

**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 No. 327, Public Acts of 1931, as amended, of the State of Michigan.

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**

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, having approved such amendments by a two-thirds majority vote of the Church Board, to the members in written form at least 2 weeks prior to the annual or special business meeting, and can be adopted only by the vote of two-thirds of the active membership present.

Other Guidelines and Policies

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

Every Christian believer being freed from the Law, is both privileged and obligated under God to enter into a new and dynamic way of living. By yielding ourselves to God's Spirit within, we are to "walk in Him," thus experiencing the love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance which He alone is able and desirous to produce in our lives (Gal. 5: 16,22).

In contrast to the "Fruit of the Spirit," there are those things enumerated in the Scripture as the "works of the flesh," hated by God and to be mortified (deadened) by the Christian believer. The following are typical, though not exhaustive: pride, envy, coveting, anger, wrath, hatred, lying, sowing discord, strife, blasphemy, filthy talking, heresy, stealing, drunkenness, extortion, fornication, revelings and adultery (Prov. 6:16-19; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5-9).

We live in a society where moral relativism has supplanted truth, where material gain is not achieved by hard work and thrift, but by dreams of lottery and casino winnings; where alcohol and drugs wreak havoc with individuals and families; where human sexuality is degraded and debased in films, television, videos, magazines, and in some instances through the Internet. It is a society where wisdom and the Holy Spirit are set aside in favor of horoscopes and psychic services.

As a result of this maelstrom of confusion, and because there are many practices that, although not specifically addressed in Scripture, could nevertheless be detrimental to believer's spiritual growth, their families, or even the church, the following principles or guidelines are offered to help in determining the biblical response to disputable matters.

Guidelines with Reference to God

1. Is it forbidden or commanded in the Scriptures? (Mt. 4:4; 1 Jn. 5:3).
 - a. The actual precept
 - b. The potential principle
2. Can God's blessing and help be sought in it? (Ps. 66:18; Isa. 59:1-2; Phil. 4:6-7).
3. Is it to the glory of God? (1 Cor. 6:19-20; 10:31).
4. Can I give thanks to God for it in my life? (Col. 3:17).
5. Is it being done to please God? (Col. 3:23; 2 Tim. 2:4).
6. Can this be done, or can I go there knowing God is watching me? (Zech. 4:10; Heb. 13:5).
7. Does it show my love for God? (1 Jn. 4:20).

Guidelines with Reference to Others

1. Does it advance the cause of Christ? (Rom. 14:16; 1 Cor. 10:30).
2. Does it hinder my ministry and influence for Christ in the lives of others? (1 Cor. 9:19-22).
3. Does it demonstrate love to others? (Jn. 13:34-35; Rom. 13:8,10; 1 Jn. 3:14).
4. Could it cause a weak Christian to stumble? (Rom. 14:13).
5. Does it unite me with unbelievers in an unequal yoke? (2 Cor. 6:14-18).
6. Does it help in drawing others to the Lord Jesus? (1 Cor. 9:22).
7. Does this have any appearance of evil? (1 Th. 5:22).

Guidelines with Reference to Myself

1. Will it hinder or hurt my Christian life? (Gal. 5:25; Heb. 12:1).
2. Does this edify me or bring me down? (1 Cor. 10:23).
3. Will the practice of this enslave me in its bondage? (Rom. 14:7-9; 1 Cor. 6:12).
4. Do I have any doubts about doing this? (Rom. 14:14, 22-23).
5. How will this act or plan be viewed by Christ at the judgment seat of Christ? (2 Cor. 5:10).
6. Would I be ashamed before Him at His coming doing this? (2 Pet. 3:14; 1 Jn. 2:28).
7. Does it conform me to the image of the Lord Jesus? (Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Pet. 2:21).
8. Would I be misusing my liberty in Christ? (Gal. 5:13,16; 1 Cor. 8:9; 1 Pet. 2:16).
9. Do I now have or might I have a guilty conscience? (Rom. 14:5).
10. Am I walking in the Spirit as I do this? (Gal. 5:25).
11. What are my true motives? (1 Cor. 4:5).
12. Might this harm my body in any way? (1 Cor. 6:19).

CHURCH COVENANT

We, then, the members of this church do affectionately welcome you into fellowship with us in the blessing of the gospel, and covenant together, God helping us, that “as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against our souls.”

We will “get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave us.”

As we have opportunity we will “do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers;” that we will “remember our leaders, who spoke the word of God to us;” and we will give “what each one has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Calvary Church Policy on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

I. Statement on Marriage.

From the beginning, God by His wise and loving design has ordained marriage for the propagation of the human race and for the mutual fulfillment of husband and wife. He intended for marriage to be a lifelong union between one man and one woman.

Following the account of Eve’s creation in Genesis 2:18-24 is the beautiful statement: “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”

Referring to Genesis 2:24, Jesus added, “So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate” (Mt. 19:6).

The permanence of marriage is further underscored by the apostle Paul, who wrote, “By law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage” (Rom. 7:2).

Ideally, marriage is to be a permanent union between one man and one woman and is to be broken only by death. It is therefore one of life’s most meaningful and lasting commitments.

II. Statement on Divorce.

Divorce is one of the most prevalent evils in modern society. It is contrary to God’s design for marriage, and except for two conditions, divorce and remarriage is a sin.

God recognized two situations under which divorce and remarriage are allowed, though He neither required nor commanded it. They are: (a) Divorce because of sexual immorality (Mt. 19:9), and (b) Divorce of a believer by an unbelieving mate (1 Cor. 7:12-15). In such situations the spouse who has been sinned against is free to remarry.

A. Sexual immorality or fornication, as set forth in Mt.19:9, is to be understood as any sinful sexual activity such as adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, sodomy, harlotry, incest, or any other sexual perversions.

When there has been sexual immorality, the first course of action should always be to seek repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation rather than initiating a divorce. God will give grace to heal a marriage when the sinning party gives evidence of genuine repentance, and when the partner sinned against is willing to forgive.

B. Divorce between a believer and unbeliever can occur when an unbeliever deserts the believer (1 Cor. 7:12-15). When the unbeliever deserts the believer, the believer may initiate the divorce. It is essential to remember that the Bible merely allows divorce in these two situations but does not command it. These concessions are made because of the sinfulness of human nature.

If a divorce is obtained between two believers on grounds other than defined above, the man and the woman are to remain unmarried or be reconciled to each other (1 Cor. 7:10-11). If one of the parties marries, however, making reconciliation impossible, the other is free to remarry.

III. Statement on Confession and Repentance.

Jesus Christ has paid the penalty for all sin by His sacrificial death on the cross. Therefore, God can and will forgive any sin when the person confesses that sin and is genuinely repentant. Divorce, adultery, fornication, or any other sin that may result in divorce is not unpardonable.

God's provision for forgiveness is clearly stated in 1 John 1:9, which reads, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." Mere acknowledgment of wrongdoing, however, is not enough. Confession must be accompanied by genuine repentance (Rev. 2:5). *Confession* is the acknowledgment of sin, and *repentance* is the turning away from it. The repentant party must give evidence of a changed mind and a determination to live a new life.

IV. Statement on Forgiveness.

God desires that Christians fully forgive a brother or sister in Christ whom He has forgiven. "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted." "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you" (Gal. 6:1; Eph. 4:32).

V. Statement on Service.

God has given to every believer at least one spiritual gift, which He intends for His children to use for the edification of the body of Christ. The apostle Paul said that since believers have "different gifts, according to the grace given us," we should use them (Rom. 12:6).

"Believers (whether divorced or not) who have consistently demonstrated a godly lifestyle and testimony, will be encouraged to serve in the church." (Guidelines for service are noted in Article IV., Section E., and Article V. Sections C. & F).

In terms of leadership, God places higher standards on those who aspire to the office of elder and deacon (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit.1:5-9; James 3:1). In order to maintain the highest level of integrity for the men who hold these offices, the principles of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 shall be prayerfully followed.

Divorce prior to salvation does not exclude one from any level of leadership (1 Cor. 6:9-11; 2 Cor. 5:17). However, it is unlikely that believers who are divorced after salvation can assume the office of elder (including pastor) and deacon. While there may be unusual circumstances where this occurs, it is the practice of Calvary Church to consider only those who have not been divorced after salvation.

Calvary Church Policy on Women and Ministry

All people are special creations made in the image of God and are therefore deserving of respect and honor. Women and men are created different from each other, but are of equal value to God (Gen. 1:26-27).

All people are in need of salvation. Salvation is extended to all on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ alone and they have equal spiritual standing before God as justified and complete in Him (Gen. 3:16; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 2:8-10).

All (believers) are divinely and uniquely gifted to assume ministry roles as responsible members of the Body of Christ. Full use of those gifts is vital and necessary and should be encouraged in order to provide for effective ministry in the church (Acts 2:17-18; Rom. 12; 1 Cor.12; Eph. 4).

Women (believers) are encouraged to be full participants in the life and worship of the Church, except for the governing board of the Church. The early church was governed by multiple, godly male leadership. It is our interpretation that the biblical evidence does not merit changing this pattern.

According to Scripture, the function of the church is worship, evangelism, and edification. All Christians, as members of the priesthood of believers under the new covenant, are called to fulfill this function with godly attitudes and motivations (Mt. 28:19; Eph. 4:12; Tit. 2; Heb. 8:13; 1 Pet. 2:9).