

CALVARY BIBLE CHURCH CONSTITUTION

Article I. NAME

The name of this church shall be Calvary Bible Church of Kalamazoo, Michigan, incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan.

Article II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be to bring glory to God, to further the believer's growth in grace, to promote Christian fellowship, and to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ both at home and abroad for the salvation of lost men, women, and children. The Mission Statement of this church is **to be and make disciples who display and proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Article III. CHARACTER

Calvary Bible Church is an independent local church, not subject to any outside ecclesiastical authority. It shall not at any time be under any denomination, federation or national council of denominations. No affiliation with other churches or associations shall compromise this autonomy.

Article IV. STATEMENT OF FAITH

This article contains a summary of the doctrinal beliefs of Calvary Bible Church. We believe that it reflects the teaching of the Bible, God's inerrant Word. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments constitute our rule of faith and practice. They hold the place of authority in our church and in our lives. It is the responsibility of the Christian to believe the Scriptures and to live according to them. Each believer is guided by the Holy Spirit and is able to understand God's Word. When the Scriptures are silent, or on matters nonessential to salvation, we permit freedom of interpretation if such interpretation does not conflict with the basic teachings of the Scriptures as explained in sections one through fifteen of this Article.

1. The Scriptures

We believe that "all Scripture is inspired by God" (2 Tim. 3:16). We accept the Old and New Testaments (66 books) in their original form as the Word of God and we believe that they are without error or contradiction. The Holy Spirit so guided the writers that what they wrote are the very words of God (2 Pet. 1:19-21; 1 Cor. 2:13). This divine inspiration is true only of the Bible and extends to every part of the Bible and to every word and letter of the original manuscripts (Matt. 5:18; John 17:17). The Bible, not human reason or experience, is the final authority for Christian belief and practice. All the Scriptures center on the Lord Jesus Christ and lead us to Him (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2-3). Furthermore, even though the Church is not bound by the Old Testament Law, all the Scriptures were written for our instruction, encouragement and edification (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).

It is the duty and privilege of every saved person to read and practice God's Word and to faithfully attend a Bible believing and Bible teaching church to be instructed in the truth of the Word and to be fully equipped for the work of the ministry (2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 10:24-25).

2. God

We believe that there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite, eternal Spirit, the Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth. God is absolutely pure, holy, and good and is worthy of all our love, confidence, honor, and obedience (Deut. 6:4; Ps. 83:18, 90:12, 147:5; Jer. 10:10; John 4:24; Eph. 4:6). We believe that in this one God there are three separate Persons who have been revealed as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). These three are equal in their deity and perfection, but they carry out distinct and harmonious functions in the sovereign plan of God (John 5:17-19, 10:30, 15:26; Rom. 8:28-30; 1 Cor. 6:11).

3. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God who became man without ceasing to be God (John 1:1, 14; Phil. 2:5-8). He freely took upon Himself a human nature but without personal sin (Heb. 2:9-18, 4:15). He was conceived miraculously by the Holy Spirit in a virgin woman, Mary (Matt. 1:18-23; Luke 1:26-35). We unreservedly and unquestionably affirm the full deity and full humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ (Micah 5:2; Isa. 7:14, 9:6; Matt. 16:16; John 1:1, 14, 10:30-31, 20:28; Gal. 4:4; Titus 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:1; 1 John 5:20).

We believe that the Lord Jesus paid the full penalty of our sin when He died on the cross as our Substitute (1 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 5:8; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21). He bore our sins in His own body (1 Pet. 2:24; Luke 22:19) and shed His precious blood for the forgiveness of all our sins (1 Pet. 1:18-19; Matt. 26:27-28; Eph. 1:7; Col. 2:13). Christ's death was the perfect, final, and eternal sacrifice, and we can add nothing to it by our own efforts (Heb. 1:3, 10:10-14; 1 Pet. 3:18). The death of Christ is sufficient to save all men (1 Tim. 2:6, 4:10; 1 John 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:19) but is effective and is applied only to those who believe in Christ as their personal Savior (1 Tim. 4:10; John 1:12, 3:16).

We believe that Jesus died and was buried and then arose from the dead in the same body though glorified. The bodily resurrection of Christ was a real event (Matt. 28:1-10; 1 Cor. 15:4-20). We believe that Christ ascended into heaven and that He is now exalted at the Father's right hand (Acts 1:9-11; Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:20-23; Heb. 1:3, 9:24). There He is continually representing His people as our High Priest (Heb. 4:14-16, 10:21-22), Intercessor (Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34), and Advocate (1 John 2:1-2). In the future Christ will return from heaven, first in the air to catch away the Church, and then, after the Tribulation, to the earth to establish His Kingdom.

4. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person, not an impersonal force. He is God, equal in nature with God the Father and God the Son (Matt. 28:19; John 14:16, 17, 15:26-27; Acts 5:3-4). He was active in creation; He restrains sin and Satan in the world; He convicts unsaved men of sin, of the righteousness of Christ, and of the future judgment of sin as the Gospel is proclaimed; He draws men to Christ in salvation; He indwells, seals, guides, teaches, assures, and helps the believer (Gen. 1:1-3; John 3:5-6, 14:26, 16:8-15; Rom. 8:9, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 1:13-14; 2 Thess. 2:7; Heb. 9:14).

We believe that it is the responsibility of every believer to live under the control of the Holy Spirit and to give evidence in his life of the Spirit's presence through obedience and praise to God (Gal. 5:16, 22-23; Eph. 4:30, 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:19; Phil. 1:1). The Holy Spirit's ministry in this age is to glorify Christ in and through the believer (John 16:14) by reproducing the character of Jesus Christ in the believer's life (Gal. 2:20, 4:19).

We believe that today the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to each believer and that He gives special men to the Church (evangelists and teaching pastors) and that these together with the Word of God are sufficient to bring believers to maturity (1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:8-13). We believe that the miraculous sign miracles and gifts, such as speaking in tongues and instantaneous healing, gradually ceased as the New Testament was completed and as its authority became established. These sign gifts are not to be exercised today, either in the church or privately (1 Cor. 13:8-12; Phil. 2:25-27; 2 Tim. 4:20). The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the act of God which places all true believers in this age into the body of Christ, the Church (Acts 11:15-17; 1 Cor. 12:13). It occurs at the instant a person believes in Christ and is not evidenced by external sign miracles or by speaking in tongues. We believe that God does hear and answer prayer regarding those who are sick, in accordance with His will (Phil. 2:26-27; James 5:13-18; 1 John 5:14-15).

5. Man and Sin

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God from the dust of the ground on the sixth day of the creation week (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:7). Man was not in any way the product of an evolutionary development from lower forms of life but was created directly by God and for God (Isa. 43:7; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11). Man was created in unconfirmed holiness but, through sin, fell from that state (Gen. 3:1-19). In Adam, the human race fell (Rom. 5:12-21), inherited a sinful nature (Ps. 51:1; Gen. 5:3), and became alienated from God (Col. 1:21; Eph. 4:17-19). Therefore, all men apart from Christ are totally sinful (Ps. 14:1-3; Rom. 3:10-23; 1 Kings 8:46), wicked, lost, blind, and dead in sin (Luke 19:10; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1; Rom. 8:5-8). As a result, man is,

of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. Man's heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9) and his only hope is salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. Salvation

The salvation of sinful men and women is the work of God and is totally of grace (Eph. 2:8-9; Acts 15:11). Salvation is the gift of God (Rom. 6:23) which is received through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His work on our behalf (John 1:12, 5:24, 3:16, 6:47; Acts 16:31). The moment a person believes in Christ as Savior, that person passes from death to eternal life and stands before God in the righteousness of Christ. The true believer is assured of God's acceptance and love forever because of Christ's work and not because of the believer's efforts (1 John 3:14; Eph. 2:9-10; Rom. 5:1). Salvation is based on the finished work of Christ in bearing the penalty and guilt of our sin. Jesus Christ is the only Savior, and apart from Him there is no salvation (Acts 4:12). Those who do not receive God's free gift of eternal life will perish under the wrath of a holy God (John 3:16-18, 36; 8:24).

7. Assurance (Eternal Security)

The Bible clearly teaches that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are safe and secure in Christ forever (John 5:24, 6:37-40, 47, 10:27-30; Rom. 8:28-39; Eph. 1:13-14, 4:30; 1 Pet. 1:5; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Heb. 13:5). Therefore, it is impossible for a born again child of God to lose his salvation (John 10:28). On the other hand, the person whose life is devoid of Christian character ought to make certain of his calling and election (2 Pet. 1:3-10) and should examine himself to see whether he is in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5). The question, therefore is not whether a saved person can be lost (which is impossible) but whether one who professes belief is truly saved (1 John 2:4, 6, 9).

8. The Christian Life

We believe that the Christian life should be a life of joy and peace and obedience to the Lord who saved us. The believer is free to be guided by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God and is not bound by the Old Testament Law or the rules of legalists (Gal. 5:1, 25). This liberty in Christ, however, is not to be used as an excuse for sin (Rom. 13:13-14; 6:1-13; Gal. 5:13). The grace of God teaches us that we should deny ungodliness and worldly desires and should live sensible, righteous, and godly lives (Titus 2:11-13). Saved people should live in such a way that they do not bring reproach to the name of Christ. Separation from religious apostasy and compromise, from sinful and worldly practices, and from unscriptural associations is clearly commanded in God's Word (2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). If a person is truly saved, he should manifest a life of constant obedience to the Word of God (1 John 2:3-5), a fervent love for other believers (1 John 3:14-19; 4:7, 20) and a daily walk that is characterized by righteousness and Christ-likeness (Gal. 5:22-23; 1 John 2:29; 3:10).

9. The Church

The Church, which is the body and the bride of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23, 5:22-23; 2 Cor. 11:2), is a spiritual organism made up of all born again persons of this present age. The Church Age began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2, 11:15-17) and will be concluded at the rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 4:13-18) at which time the spiritual building will be complete (Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Pet. 2:4-7; Rom. 11:25). Jesus Christ is the Head of the universal Church and of our local church (Col. 1:18). We are members of Christ and members of each other (Rom. 12:5). Therefore, we seek to exalt Christ in every ministry and activity of our church, and we are to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-3; Col. 3:12-17). False teaching and division are to be handled by church discipline (Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 1:10). As believers we are to love each other fervently (Eph. 5:1-4; Rom. 14:13-23; 1 John 3:14).

10. Angels and Satan

The Bible clearly teaches the existence and personality of angels, both holy, elect angels (Luke 2:13, 9:26, 15:10) and fallen angels or demons (Mark 5:1-20; 2 Pet. 2:4). Satan is a personal angel, the author of sin (1 John 3:8; John 8:44; 1 Tim. 3:6), and the open and declared enemy of God and men (2 Cor. 4:3-4; 1 Pet. 5:8).

His defeat was accomplished through the cross of Christ and he and his angels will be eternally punished in the lake of fire (John 12:31; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

11. The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the second coming of Jesus Christ will take place in two phases. The first phase will be personal (1 Thess. 4:13-18), imminent (1 Cor. 15:51-52; Titus 2:13; Rev. 22:20), and pre-tribulational (Rev. 3:10; 1 Thess. 1:10, 5:9-11) coming of the Lord Jesus for His Church. The rapture of the Church is the believer's confident hope. The rapture will be followed by the tribulation period, a period of seven years, during which God pours out His wrath on sinful men (Rev. 4-19). The second phase of Christ's coming will take place at the end of the tribulation period when Christ will return to the earth with His saints to establish His Kingdom (Zech. 14:4-11; Rev. 19:11-16, 20:1-6; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Matt. 24:29-31, 36-51).

12. The Eternal State

At death, the believer goes immediately to be with Christ (Phil. 1:21-23). He is absent from the body but face to face with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:6-8). There, in conscious joy, the believer awaits the first resurrection (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:4-6) when he will be reunited with his resurrected body, to be glorified forever with the Lord. At death, unbelievers go to be in conscious misery (Luke 16:19-26) until the second resurrection when they shall be reunited with their resurrected bodies to appear before Christ at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:15). They will not be annihilated but will suffer everlasting conscious punishment under the wrath of God (Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Mark 9:43-48).

13. Dispensationalism

We believe that God has revealed His will to mankind in progressive stages through the different periods of history. These historical periods are called dispensations. In each dispensation God called upon mankind to believe in Him and to obey His Word. In each dispensation people were saved by grace through faith in God's promises. The **content** of God's revelation, however, has progressively expanded in each dispensation (Eph. 1:10, 3:1-12; Col. 1:24-27; Heb. 1:1-2; John 1:17). We further believe that the promises that God made to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament will be literally fulfilled to Israel in the future Kingdom. We reject both covenant theology (such as teaching which equates the New Testament Church with Old Testament Israel) and hyperdispensationalism (such as teaching which rejects water baptism and/or the Lord's Supper as ordinances for the Church today).

14. Marriage and Divorce

We believe that God's consistent ideal for marriage is that one man and one woman become one flesh for life (Gen. 2:7-24; Matt. 19:5). Marriage is established by a public commitment before God and is fulfilled through a sexual relationship between the marriage partners. This one flesh relationship is of God and is not to be dissolved by man. Furthermore, we believe that God has expressed a consistent hatred for divorce (Mal. 2:13-16; Matt. 19:8) and it is never God's desire for a couple to be divorced. We do realize, however, that we are all sinners and that even Christians will sometimes fail to reach God's ideals (1 John 2:1). If a marriage fails and ends in divorce, the individuals involved should recognize it as sin and must deal with the sin and its consequences biblically. Even in cases where the Bible seems to permit divorce (i.e., when a mate is guilty of sexual immorality—Matt. 19:9, or an unbeliever abandons a believer, 1 Cor. 7:8-18) it is still the result of hardness of heart, an unwillingness to repent of sin or to forgive sin, and a failure to obey God's full will (Matt. 19:8).

Application of Section 14 to Calvary Bible Church:

We realize that God forgives sin and that divorce is not a greater offense than other sins. Yet the Bible is clear in placing certain limitations on the public leadership ministry of those who have been divorced (1 Tim. 3:4-5; Titus 1:6-7). For this reason a divorced man may not become a member of the official boards of Calvary Bible Church. All other public leadership ministries of divorced persons will require the review and approval of the Elders. The performance of marriages involving those who have been divorced will be subject to the discretion of the Pastor **and** must be approved by the Elders after thorough investigation. Violations of the biblical

standards of marriage will be cause for discipline by the Elders, just as violations in any other area of faith or practice would be. At the same time, we as a church believe it is sinful to grieve the Holy Spirit by a bitter or critical attitude against a believer whose past life has been marked by divorce but whose present life is marked by submission to God's will. These guidelines are not intended to be harsh or legalistic. We do, however, sense a need to uphold the biblical standards of marriage in an era of compromise and decay. It is important that all of us remember that our present attitude and desire to please the Lord is of great significance. God will bless a humble and obedient heart.

15. Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ commanded His Church to observe two ordinances. These ordinances do not bring salvation to those who participate in them. We are saved by the grace of God through faith alone. We do believe, however, that these ordinances are an important part of the Christian life.

The first ordinance is water baptism "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). Baptism is the outward expression and testimony of faith in Christ and symbolizes the believer's baptism by the Holy Spirit into one body of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13). Baptism is to be administered by immersion to believers in Jesus Christ.

The second ordinance is the Lord's Supper or communion. The bread and juice used in the communion service are symbols of the body and blood of Christ and serve as reminders to us of His death for our sins (Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-26). The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once a month.

Article V. GOVERNMENT

Section 1.

This church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as its only Head, and receives the Holy Scriptures as the only infallible authority and guide in matters of faith, church order and discipline. The government of this church is vested in the voting members of the body of believers who compose it. As the New Testament teaches that the local congregation is under the direction of a plurality of Elders (Acts 14:23, 20:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-5), within the guidelines and limitations of these articles, all the activities and affairs of this church shall be exercised by and under the direction of the Board of Elders.

Section 2.

The congregation of this church shall affirm the appointment of Elders and Deacons (Article VII), call members of the pastoral staff (Article VIII), approve the purchase and sale of real property (Article X), authorize major indebtedness (Article X), approve an annual budget (Article X), and affirm the addition of new missionaries (Article XI).

Section 3.

Without prejudice to the foregoing generality in Section 1, the Board of Elders, shall have the power to appoint, discharge and oversee advisory boards, advisory committees, administrators and directors for the purpose of carrying out specific functions of the church. They shall establish policies and practices for the church consistent with its purposes, to establish job descriptions and generally conduct, manage and control the activities and affairs of this church consistent with the Scriptures, and with these Articles, as they may deem best. They may delegate such responsibilities as they deem appropriate to staff, Deacons, committees and individuals to free them up with their responsibilities of shepherding and oversight.

Article VI. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.

The membership of Calvary Bible Church consists of persons who confess Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord; who manifest a lifestyle that gives evidence of the reality of their personal relationship to Jesus Christ; who agree and continue to agree with this Doctrinal Statement and Constitution; who are willing to be governed by the Constitution of this church; who are willing to submit themselves to the constituted authority of the church; and who have completed the membership application process.

Section 2.

- A. Active membership is open to believers who have been received in accordance with this Constitution. Except in special situations as determined by the Elders members of Calvary Bible Church may not hold full membership in any other church. Active membership involves the responsibility to be active and supportive members of the congregation. Voting privileges extend to members 18 years of age and older.
- B. Associate Membership is for those who are committed to the fellowship at Calvary Bible Church but who are:
 - 1. Living in this area on a short-term basis (such as missionaries or students) and desire to retain active church membership elsewhere for significant personal reasons.
 - 2. Temporarily a resident outside of the Kalamazoo area.
 - 3. Missionaries commissioned by Calvary Bible Church but resident elsewhere.
 - 4. Individuals who, in the opinion of the Elders, should for some other reason be an Associate Member.

An Associate Member will not have voting or office-holding privileges in this church. Associate members are accepted after an interview with the Elders.

- C. Inactive Membership consists of those members no longer in proximity to the church or who are otherwise unable to participate regularly in church activities. Members of this church who willfully, without plausible reason or excuse absent themselves from the services of this church for a period of six months or more may be removed from the membership of this church after review by the Board of Elders. Such decision by the Elders is final.

Section 3.

Applications for membership shall be referred to the Elders. At least two of the Elders will interview all candidates. The result of the interview will be reported at an Elders' meeting. The names of those accepted by the Elders for membership will be reported in the bulletin for two successive Sundays. Providing, in the opinion of the Elders, no scriptural objections have been brought to the Elders, membership is granted when the right hand of fellowship is extended at a subsequent Sunday Service.

Section 4.

- A. The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin and promoting purity (1 Timothy 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1).
- B. The Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted the local church with the authority and responsibility to discipline members for flagrant sin or serious doctrinal error, with the goal of the restoration of the offender. This discipline is entrusted to the Board of Elders and is to follow the biblical pattern as set forth in Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 2:7-8; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; Titus 3: 10-11; 2 John 7-11. Any member of this church guilty of assenting to doctrine or conduct that, in the judgment of the Elders, is opposed to the teaching of the Word of God, or is opposed to this Constitution, or is threatening to the testimony of this church, or is divisive to the body, shall, if persistent, be subject to church discipline. Discipline will normally occur only after following the said biblical pattern, and after diligent effort has been made to bring the individual to repentance. Discipline will normally involve exclusion from participation in ministry and communion, and dismissal from the fellowship of this church. An individual may be disciplined by the Elders short of dismissal from the fellowship, as they deem appropriate for the specific circumstance (for example, an individual may remain in certain circumstances a member of this church but be denied the privilege of serving in a particular ministry). The Elders will report to the congregation the names of all who have lost membership by reason of church discipline.
- C. The members of this church agree that there shall be no appeal to any court of law because of church discipline or because of public statements made by the elders to the congregation in respect of the

process of discipline. If they deem it necessary, the elders may advise other churches of the action taken.

Section 5.

- A. Members who unite in membership with another church shall forfeit their membership with Calvary Bible Church (except in special situations as individually determined by the Elders).
- B. Members who are disciplined as defined in Section 4 above may be removed from membership as so decided by the Elders.

Section 6.

The Elders will encourage all candidates to consider carefully the scriptural place of the two ordinances of the church. The Elders will also review the church's position on divorce with all candidates who have been divorced or whose spouse has been divorced.

Section 7.

Candidates must be free of membership in oath-bound religious or social secret orders.

Section 8

The Elders shall review and update the membership list annually. The list shall be published annually in the Congregational Reports.

Section 9.

All positions of leadership in this church, including all directors and chairpersons of various ministries and committees, shall be members of this church. All those who teach the Word of God in the ministries of this church shall be members or associate members. All leaders, directors, chairpersons and teachers shall be approved by the Elders. The Elders shall also have the authority to dismiss such leaders, directors, chairpersons and teachers if, in their judgment, there is cause.

Article VII. OFFICERS

Section 1. ELDERS

- A. Qualifications. Elders shall be men who meet the spiritual qualifications as described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. They must be characterized by spiritual maturity as seen in their personal character, their love for people, their ability to discern and communicate God's Word, their personal leadership, and their example to this church. Elders must be active in ministry at this church, regular attenders of all the church's services so far as they are able, and accept the church's Constitution and Statement of Faith.
- B. Appointment and Affirmation. The Board of Elders and the congregation shall have opportunity to recommend men as Elders. The Board of Elders will be responsible to consider prayerfully men who have the biblical qualifications for leadership as defined in Section 1 A. The men nominated by the existing Elder Board to serve as Elders, and who are willing to serve, will be presented by the Elders to the church for affirmation. The congregation must affirm the appointment of individual elders by seventy-five percent vote at the Annual Congregational Meeting of this church. No nominations shall be accepted from the floor. Such Elders will then be recognized publicly.
- C. Organization. The Board of Elders shall consist of ten or more lay members. The exact number of which will be determined by the Elders. Pastors shall serve as members of the Board of Elders. The Senior Pastor shall also serve as an ex-officio member of all other boards and committees.
- D. Duties. The Elders are responsible for the direction of congregation life; all ministries are accountable to them.

The primary concern of the Elders is spiritual oversight, which includes pastoral care and a commitment to "prayer and the ministry of the Word" (Acts 6:4). They are also responsible for the overall direction of the total

ministry of the church. They will prayerfully seek to structure this church's life in a manner which maximizes the involvement of the congregation while maintaining accountability to the Elders.

Section 2. DEACONS

- A. Qualifications. Deacons shall be men who meet the spiritual qualifications as described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. They must be characterized by spiritual maturity as seen in their personal character, their love for people, and their example to this church. Deacons must be active in ministry at this church, regular attenders in all of the services so far as they are able and accept the church's Constitution and Statement of Faith.
- B. Appointment and Affirmation. The Board of Deacons and the congregation shall have opportunity to recommend men as Deacons. The Board of Elders will be responsible to consider prayerfully men who have the qualifications for leadership as defined in Section 2 A. The men nominated by the Board of Elders to serve as Deacons, and who are willing to serve will be presented by the Elders to the church for affirmation. The congregation must affirm the appointment of individual Deacons by seventy-five percent vote at the Annual Congregational Meeting of this church. No nominations shall be accepted from the floor. Such Deacons will then be recognized publicly.
- C. Organization. The Board of Deacons shall consist of ten or more lay members. The exact number of which will be determined by the Elders.
- D. Duties. The Deacons serve under the authority of the Elders with the purpose of freeing the Elders for their shepherding and oversight ministries. Responsibilities will be determined in consultation with the Elders, and regular reporting will be made to the Elders by the Deacons. Without prejudice to the foregoing generality, the Elders may assign the following responsibilities to the Deacons: the particular responsibilities for the finances of this church; maintenance of the physical structures and facilities; purchase and repair of equipment; the upkeep of the property; the benevolent needs of the congregation; supervision of the maintenance manager and the custodians; and all other duties that are assigned to them by the Elders.

Section 3. TREASURER & FINANCIAL SECRETARY

- A. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be Deacons and shall meet the qualifications defined in Section 2 A.
- B. Duties. These men shall oversee the accounting, budgeting and other financial matters of this church. They shall attend the Deacons' Meetings and shall be responsible on a day-to-day basis to the Deacons. They are also accountable to the Elders.

Section 4. JOINT BOARD MEETINGS

To facilitate conducting the ministries and affairs of this congregation, joint meetings of the Elders and Deacons shall be held as determined by the Elders.

Section 5. TERMS OF OFFICE

The term for all lay Elders and Deacons shall be two years. The terms for lay Elders and Deacons (including the Treasurer and Financial Secretary) shall be so arranged that one half of them will expire each year. No lay Elder or Deacon may serve more than three consecutive elected terms. After the absence of one year, an individual may be re-elected.

Section 6. INCOMPLETE TERMS

If an officer resigns or is removed from office before his term ends, the Elders may appoint a qualified church member to function in that capacity until the next annual meeting (such appointment will not be regarded as a term of office for the purposes of Section 5 above).

Article VIII. STAFF

Section 1. SENIOR PASTOR

- A. Qualifications. The Senior Pastor shall be a man of consistent Christ-like character and proven ministry experience. He shall also meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4. He shall also be in agreement with this Constitution including the Statement of Faith and shall meet such other qualifications, such as education and experience, as will be determined by the Board of Elders who will constitute the Search Committee.
- B. Duties. The Senior Pastor shall arrange for and/or conduct all public and regular services of the church, teach the Word of God, be responsible for general oversight of the spiritual welfare of the church, and be responsible for the supervision of the pastoral and office staff. He is accountable to the Board of Elders.
- C. Call. The Board of Elders shall supervise the candidate selection process and recommend a candidate to the congregation. The Senior Pastor may be called upon a favorable vote of three-fourths of the voting members present at any regular or special business meeting, after published announcements for two Sundays preceding the meeting. Upon acceptance of the call, the Senior Pastor and his wife shall become members of this church.
- D. Term of Employment. The Senior Pastor may discontinue his pastoral duties by submitting a letter of resignation to the Board of Elders at least 90 days before the effective date of the resignation (unless waived by mutual consent). The Board of Elders may recommend that the congregation remove the Senior Pastor. If there are grievances or charges against him, the lay Elders will review the matter and make a recommendation to the congregation. In situations of resignation or removal of the Senior Pastor, compensation and severance arrangements will be made by the lay Elders.

Section 2. PASTORAL STAFF

- A. Definition. The titles, duties and responsibilities of positions to be filled by Pastoral Staff shall be approved by the Elders. Such staff shall be accountable to the Senior Pastor.
- B. Qualifications. Pastoral Staff members shall be men of consistent Christ-like character. Other qualifications for a particular position, such as education and experience, will be determined by the Board of Elders who will constitute the Search Committee. Pastors shall also meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4. All members of the Pastoral Staff shall be in complete agreement with this Constitution including the Statement of Faith.
- C. Call. The Board of Elders shall supervise the candidate selection process and recommend the candidate to the congregation. Such members of the pastoral staff may be called upon a favorable vote of three-fourths of the voting members present at any regular or special business meeting, after published announcements for two Sundays preceding the meeting. Upon acceptance of the call, the member of the pastoral staff and spouse shall become members of the church.
- D. Term of employment. Members of the pastoral staff shall serve until terminated by voluntary or elder requested resignation. The member of the pastoral staff may discontinue pastoral duties by submitting a letter of resignation to the Board of Elders at least 60 days before the effective date of the resignation (unless waived by mutual consent). Appropriate termination arrangements shall be made by the lay Elders and the Senior Pastor.

Section 3. GENERAL STAFF

In order to accomplish the work of the church, directors, administrators, office staff, maintenance workers and custodians may be employed as necessary. Procedures related to their selection, employment and termination shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders. This responsibility for maintenance persons and custodians may be delegated by the Elders to the Deacons.

Section 4. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

A description of duties and responsibilities shall be prepared and maintained for each pastoral staff and other church position whether full-time or part-time. Such descriptions shall be approved by the Board of Elders.

Article IX. MEETINGS

Section 1. SERVICES

Regular church services shall be held weekly. Normally these will consist of Sunday services (morning and evening) and the mid-week meeting. The Board of Elders shall have the authority to add or change service schedules as they deem appropriate for the ministry.

Section 2. BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A. Annual Meeting. The annual business meeting of the church shall be held as soon after the close of the fiscal year as is prudent. The date will be determined by the Board of Elders. At this meeting the appointment of Elders and Deacons will be affirmed and other business will be conducted as is needed.
- B. Special Business Meetings. Special meetings may be called by the Board of Elders at any time, provided that a notice of such meeting which states the nature of the business to be transacted is published for two successive Sundays immediately preceding the time of the proposed meeting (the meeting to be held immediately following the close of the evening service on the Sunday of the second announcement).
- C. Quorum. At all business meetings, twenty-five percent of active voting members shall constitute a quorum. Signed absentee ballots may be submitted prior to or at the start of the meeting.
- D. Voting and Approval. Unless otherwise stated in this Constitution, matters presented to the congregation will be accepted only when the number of affirmative votes exceeds a count no less than two-thirds of voting members present.

Section 3. SECRETARY

- A. Appointment. The Board of Elders shall appoint the position of Secretary and report the appointment to the congregation. The Secretary will be appointed for a period of one year, which term may be renewed.
- B. Duties. The Secretary shall keep minutes and accurate records of all business transactions for church congregational business meetings.

Article X. FINANCES AND PROPERTY

Section 1. SUPPORT OF THE CHURCH

This church shall support its ministries only through the free-will gifts and offerings of God's people. This church shall not use such methods as entertainment or outside solicitations to generate income for the support of any of its ongoing functions. For the avoidance of doubt this section is not designed to prohibit concerts and other non-profit events which may be self funding with the approval of the Board of Elders. This section also does not prohibit the sale of books, tapes or other Christian materials on church premises with the approval of the Board of Elders.

Section 2. BUSINESS PRACTICES

- A. Debt. Upon necessity and by approval of the Board of Elders, short term emergencies may be met by borrowing money on bank notes or other accepted sound business methods. Engaging in long term debt (over one year) or any loan that exceeds five percent (5%) of the total annual budget must receive approval of the congregation.
- B. Change of Facilities. In the event that the church shall deem it necessary at any time to change its place of worship to any other location, or to buy, sell, mortgage or transfer any real property of the church, it shall be done by approval of the congregation at a business meeting.
- C. Accounting Systems. The church shall maintain a sound program of accepted accounting procedures and internal accounting controls. Regular reviews or audits of the accounting system shall be performed. An annual budget shall be presented to the congregation for acceptance at the annual meeting.

Section 3. TRUSTEESHIP AUTHORITY

The documents of all property, real or personal, and all written contracts shall be executed by the chairman of the Elders, chairman of the Deacons, the Treasurer, or by such other officer or officers, agent or agents as the Board of Elders may from time to time by resolution designate.

Section 4. LIABILITY OF OFFICERS

Calvary Bible Church (the non-profit corporation as defined by Michigan law) assumes all liability for its officers in the performance of their executive responsibilities. This liability does not extend to those cases of intentional misconduct or knowing violation of the law.

XI. MISSION MINISTRIES

Section 1. MISSIONS COUNCIL

A Missions Council shall act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Elders and direct the missions interests of the church. A Missions Council of five or more members (including at least one Elder) shall be appointed by the Board of Elders. The Elders will appoint the chairman and treasurer of the Missions Council for periods of one year. Council members shall be active members of this congregation. The Council shall maintain the missions policy of this church, subject to the approval of the Board of Elders.

Section 2. NEW MISSIONARIES

Mission organizations and new career missionaries shall be added to the church missionary family only upon recommendation of the Board of Elders and approval of the congregation. Missionaries shall remain a part of the church missionary family until they remove themselves by resignation or by the determination of the Board of Elders.

Article XII. ORDINATION AND LICENSING

Section 1. ORDINATION

The Board of Elders shall have the authority to ordain suitable men into the Gospel ministry. Whenever ordination is granted, an appropriate public service will be held proclaiming such ordination.

Section 2. LICENSING

The Board of Elders may license qualified candidates for the purpose of functioning as a minister of the Gospel.

Section 3. DISCIPLINE

The Board of Elders shall have the authority to discipline, even to the revoking of the ordination or license credentials obtained under this Constitution.

Article XIII. DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of this corporation, all of its tangible assets and holdings shall be distributed to such other existing non-profit [501.c.3] religious corporations as would be in agreement with the Statement of Faith (Article IV). All decisions in this event would be made by a majority vote of the remaining members of this church.

Article XIV. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution may be made by a three-fourths vote of the active members present at any special meeting called for this purpose. All proposed changes in the Constitution must be recommended by the Elders and presented to the church in writing at a special business meeting duly called for this purpose, and such meeting will be not less than one month before the special business meeting duly called to vote on the proposed changes in the Constitution.

COVENANT

Having believed upon Jesus Christ as our Savior, and feeling led by God to join with this local assembly of Christians, we the members of Calvary Bible Church solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We endeavor, therefore, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the growth of this church in knowledge and practical holiness; to endeavor by all means to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, refraining from all bitterness, wrath, clamor and evil speaking; to promote its worship; to sustain its ministries financially; and to evangelize non-Christians both in our community and around the world.

We further endeavor to “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Ephesians 5:21), to watch over one another in brotherly love, to pray for one another, to aid one another in Christian growth, and to admonish and encourage one another. We agree to submit to the authority of the leaders God places over us as unto the Lord, and to submit to the Scriptures on all matters of faith and conduct.

As God enables us, we endeavor to keep this covenant to the best of our ability until such a time as we give up our membership in Calvary Bible Church or until the Lord returns.