

CALVARY BIBLE CHURCH EAST BYLAWS

Adopted by Congregational Affirmation on June 25, 2023

Article I. NAME

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

Article II. PURPOSES

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.

As described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue tax code, this corporation is organized exclusively for, and shall be operated exclusively for religious purposes. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this corporation.

Article III. CHARACTER

Calvary Bible Church East is an independent local church, not subject to any outside ecclesiastical authority. No affiliation with other churches or associations shall compromise this autonomy.

Article IV. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith of this church, set forth in a separate document, is incorporated into these Bylaws by reference. The Statement of Faith may be amended in the same way that these Bylaws may be amended.

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. As the New Testament teaches that the local congregation is under the direction of a group of spiritually mature Elders and Deacons (Acts 14:23, 20:17; Phil. 1:1; 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:1-12, 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 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 a Church Council, composed of all Elders and Deacons.

Section 2.

The Church Council 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 individual Elders, Deacons, staff, committees or other individuals.

Section 3.

The Church Council shall seek advice and affirmation from the church membership for the appointment of Elders and Deacons (Article VII), the calling of members of the pastoral staff (Article VIII), the purchase and sale of real property (Article X), the incursion of major indebtedness (Article X), the establishment of an annual budget (Article X), and the addition of new missionaries (Article XI).

Article VI. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.

The membership of Calvary Bible Church East shall consist 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 accept and substantially agree with the Statement of Faith; who are willing to be governed by the Bylaws and Relational Commitments 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 these Bylaws. Except in special situations as determined by the Church Council, members of Calvary Bible Church East 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 East 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 East but resident elsewhere.
4. Individuals who, in the opinion of the Church Council, 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 at least two Church Council members.

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 Church Council. Such decision by the Church Council is final.

Section 3.

Applications for membership shall be referred to the Church Council. At least two Church Council members will interview any applicant. The result of the interview will be reported at a Church Council meeting. The names of those accepted by the Church Council for membership will be reported in the bulletin for two successive Sundays. Providing, in the opinion of the Church Council, no scriptural objections have been brought to the Church Council, membership is granted through public recognition at a subsequent Sunday Service.

Section 4.

Relationships in this church will be guided and governed by the biblical principles set forth in a document entitled "Relational Commitments," which is incorporated into these Bylaws by reference. This document establishes our commitments related to peacemaking and reconciliation, accountability and church discipline, preserving marriages, biblical counseling and confidentiality, and the protection of our children. These Commitments shall apply to members of our church, and may be amended from time to time in the same way that these Bylaws may be amended.

Section 5.

A. Members who unite in membership with another church shall forfeit their membership with Calvary Bible Church East (except in special situations as individually determined by the Church Council).

B. Members who are disciplined as defined in our "Relational Commitments" may be removed from membership as so decided by the Church Council.

Section 6.

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

Article VII. OFFICERS

Section 1. ELDERS

The primary concern of Elders is the spiritual oversight of the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2-3), which includes pastoral care (Heb. 13:17) 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 toward the fulfillment of its mission. Elders shall be men who are active members and meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

Section 2. DEACONS

The primary concern of Deacons is to provide ministry leadership to support and assist the Elders as needed so that the Elders may focus on their ministry of shepherding and oversight. Deacons shall be men who are active members and meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Section 3. ORGANIZATION

A. Church Council. The Church Council, composed of all Elders and Deacons, shall serve as the Trustees and Directors of this corporation and shall meet regularly to conduct business. The Church Council shall consist of no less than five lay members.

B. Chairman. Each year the Church Council shall designate by resolution one lay Council member to serve as Chairman. The Chairman shall be responsible to preside at all meetings of the Church Council, to preside at business meetings of the congregation, to see that meetings are conducted in an appropriate manner, and to sign legal documents for Calvary Bible Church East.

C. Secretary. Each year the Church Council shall designate by resolution one Council member to serve as Secretary. The Secretary shall be responsible to record all minutes of Church Council meetings and to record all minutes of business meetings of the congregation. The Secretary shall have authority to sign legal documents for the church and to serve as a secondary signer of church checks.

D. Treasurer. Each year the Church Council shall designate by resolution one church member to serve as Treasurer. The Treasurer shall assist the Church Council by overseeing the maintenance of the corporation's financial records, the preparation of an annual budget, the recording of contributions, and the distribution of contribution statements. The Treasurer shall have authority to serve as the primary signer of church checks.

Section 4. SELECTION

All active church members shall have opportunity to recommend to the Church Council qualified men to serve as Elders and Deacons. Those approved by the Church Council will be presented to the church for affirmation. The congregation must affirm the appointment of individual Elders and Deacons by seventy-five percent vote at the Annual Congregational Meeting of this church. No nominations shall be accepted from the floor. Such Elders and Deacons will then be recognized publicly.

Section 5. TERMS OF OFFICE

The term for all lay officers shall be two years, with the intention that the terms shall be arranged so that one half of the terms will expire each year. Officers may serve three consecutive terms. After one year of not serving, an individual may be selected to serve again.

Section 6. INCOMPLETE TERMS

If an officer resigns or is removed from office before his term ends, the Church Council 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. PASTOR

A. Qualifications. The 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 these Bylaws including the Statement of Faith and Relational Commitments and shall meet such other qualifications, such as education and experience, as will be determined by the Church Council.

B. Duties. The Pastor shall serve as an Elder and member of the Church Council. He 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 all staff. He is accountable to the lay members of the Church Council.

C. Call. The Church Council shall supervise the candidate selection process and recommend a candidate to the congregation. The 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 Pastor and his wife shall become members of this church.

D. Term of Employment. The Pastor may discontinue his pastoral duties by submitting a letter of resignation to the Church Council at least 90 days before the effective date of the resignation (unless waived by mutual consent). The Church Council may recommend that the congregation remove the Pastor. If there are grievances or charges against him, the lay members of the Church Council will review the matter and make a recommendation to the congregation. In situations of resignation or removal of the Pastor, compensation and severance arrangements will be made by the lay members of the Church Council.

Section 2. PASTORAL STAFF

A. 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 Church Council 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 these Bylaws including the Statement of Faith and Relational Commitments.

B. Duties. Pastoral staff members shall serve as Elders and members of the Church Council. The titles, duties and responsibilities of positions to be filled by Pastoral Staff shall be approved by the Church Council. Such staff shall be accountable to the Pastor.

C. Call. The Church Council 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 Church Council 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 members of the Church Council and 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 Church Council.

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 Church Council.

Article IX. MEETINGS

Section 1. SERVICES

Regular church services shall be held weekly. The Church Council 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 Church Council. At this meeting the appointment of Elders and Deacons will be affirmed, the annual budget will be approved, and other business will be conducted as is needed.

B. Special Business Meetings. Special meetings may be called by the Church Council 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.

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 these Bylaws, matters presented to the congregation will be accepted only when the number of affirmative votes exceeds two-thirds of voting members present.

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 Church Council. This section also does not prohibit the sale of books, tapes or other Christian materials on church premises with the approval of the Church Council.

Section 2. BUSINESS PRACTICES

A. Debt. Upon necessity and by approval of the Church Council, 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.

D. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year shall begin on June 1 and end on May 31.

Section 3. TRUSTEESHIP AUTHORITY

The documents of all property, real or personal, and all written contracts shall be executed by the Church Council Chairman, the Secretary, or by such other officer or officers, agent or agents as the Church Council may from time to time by resolution designate.

Section 4. LIABILITY OF OFFICERS

Calvary Bible Church East (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.

Article XI. MISSION MINISTRIES

Mission organizations and new career missionaries shall be added to the church missionary family only upon recommendation of the Church Council and affirmation 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 Church Council.

Article XII. ORDINATION AND LICENSING

Section 1. ORDINATION

The Church Council 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 Church Council may license qualified candidates for the purpose of functioning as a minister of the Gospel.

Section 3. DISCIPLINE

The Church Council shall have the authority to discipline, even to the revoking of the ordination or license credentials obtained under these Bylaws.

Article XIII. DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of this corporation, all of its tangible assets and holdings shall be transferred to Calvary Bible Church of Kalamazoo. If Calvary Bible Church of Kalamazoo is unwilling or unable to assume ownership of these assets and holdings, they will be distributed to such other existing non-profit [501(c)(3)] religious corporations as would be in agreement with the Statement of Faith. All decisions in this event would be made by a majority vote of the remaining members of this church.

Article XIV. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these Bylaws 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 Bylaws must be recommended by the Church Council 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 Bylaws.