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CONSTITUTION, STATEMENT OF FAITH & COVENANT

of

Calvary Baptist Church

Kalkaska, MI

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

Whereas we, the members of Calvary Baptist Church, incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan, having recognized the need to reconstitute ourselves to more closely conform to God's will for the Church in this age do hereby adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the standards set forth in the Statement of Faith and Covenant.

Article 1 – Name and Character

The name of this church is Calvary Baptist Church and is located in Kalkaska, Michigan. Calvary Baptist Church is an independent local church and is not subject to any outside ecclesiastical authority. No affiliation with other churches or associations shall compromise this autonomy.

Article 2 – Purpose

This church exists by the grace of God and for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities.

This church glorifies God by loving Him and making disciples who obey His commands through the following:

- Worshipping Him;
- Equipping the saints for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ;
- Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching, teaching and personal evangelism;
- Encouraging, supporting, and participating in mission work both locally and globally;
- Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion;
- Encouraging biblical fellowship among believers;
- Loving all people by ministering to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of individuals, families and our community, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Everything Calvary Baptist Church does is founded upon the Truth set forth in the Bible, which is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16)

Article 3 - Meetings

Section 1 – Worship Meetings

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

Section 2 – Members' Meetings

In every meeting members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of Christ.

There shall be a regular members' meeting during the 4th quarter of the calendar year for election of officers, the approval of the church budget and additional business as necessary.

The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be 25% of those members 18 years of age or older. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present.

Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elders. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all Sunday services of the church at least two weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from at least 10% of the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

Article 4 – Membership

Section 1 - Definition

Members of the body of Christ are to be identified and in fellowship with an assembly of Christians which manifests that body in a specific locality. This assembly is commonly referred to as a local church.

The New Testament never portrays membership without emphasizing fellowship. Fellowship encompasses commitment to faithful participation in the worship, study, prayer, ministry, and support of the local church, as well as submission to its spiritual authority, its doctrines, and its discipline. Therefore, such membership is to be entered into with the utmost seriousness and regarded as a solemn obligation, while at the same time it is to be enjoyed as the blessed privilege of the Christian.

Section 2 – Qualifications

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must profess saving faith in Jesus Christ, give satisfactory evidence of having been born again, have been baptized in obedience to Christ following his or her regeneration and wholeheartedly believe in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to be governed by the Constitution of this church, submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Covenant. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership.

Section 3 – Admission of Members

Prospective members must relinquish any other church membership and shall, upon a recommendation by the elders, be accepted by vote of the members at any regularly scheduled meeting of the members.

Section 4 – Duties and Privileges of Membership

In accord with the duties enumerated in the Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to pursue a lifestyle that is pleasing to the Lord (Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 4:1) and participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those who are members of this congregation shall be entitled to lead in the ministries of the church. Non-members may serve with the approval of the elders and for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

Section 5 – Church Discipline

By applying for and accepting membership in this church, each member shall be subject to the care and correction of the elders and the discipline of the church. Discipline by the church may be applied when a member has dishonored the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and opposed the welfare of the church by consistently failing to live a lifestyle pleasing to the Lord and has rejected, or failed to repent in response to, individual private admonition and the admonition of the elders (Matthew 18:15-17).

Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, removal from office, and excommunication (2 Thessalonians 3:6, 3:14-15; Luke 17:3). The purpose of such discipline is first for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (Luke 17:3; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:14). It also serves to give instruction in righteousness to other members, protect the purity of the church as a whole, and insure a good corporate witness to the community (Romans 15:5-6; 1 Corinthians 5:11). Ultimately, it is for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (Ephesians 1:4).

Section 6 – Termination of Membership

The church recognizes the termination of a person's membership following his or her death, after he or she has voluntarily resigned, chooses not to attend for a period of one year or joined with another church.

Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the elders) upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at any regularly scheduled meeting of the members.

Any member who seeks to resign his / her membership while in the process of church discipline will be presented to the church for a vote to terminate his or her membership upon a recommendation of the elders.

Article 5 – Officers

Section 1 – Summary

The biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under this constitution of clerk and treasurer. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section 2 – Elders

The elders shall be comprised of men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure.

Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministries of the church and be responsible for the spiritual direction and care of the church in accordance with Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Peter 5:1-4.

The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. A term of service is normally three years. After an elder, other than the senior or associate pastor(s), has served two consecutive three-year terms, he may only be elected to the office of elder after a minimum one year absence from service as an elder.

If an elder becomes unqualified to fulfill the office, the remaining elders will meet with him and request his resignation. If he refuses to resign, the remaining elders can remove him from the office by a majority vote of the elders. This action will be communicated to the church. If an elder becomes unqualified or unable to fulfill the office, he may seek to voluntarily resign his elder position at any time. After a review, the remaining elders will grant the request.

The elders shall take responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members as well as examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions. The elders are to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share the church's fundamental convictions.

The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist the church in fulfilling its purpose. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of senior and associate pastor. The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment and evaluation of staff members. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of the elders.

The elders shall elect a moderator of elders' and members' meetings. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the state of Michigan, the elders shall elect one of their number to serve as the president of the corporation.

Section 3 – The Senior Pastor

The senior pastor shall be an elder and accountable to the elders. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Article 5, Section 2 and shall be recognized by the church as gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching, teaching and shepherding.

The particular duties of the senior pastor shall be:

- To give himself to prayer and the study of the Word of God;
- To preach and expound the Word of God;
- To oversee the ordinances of baptism and communion;
- To lead in the pastoral care of the congregation, along with the other pastoral staff and elders;
- To act as an ex-officio member of all committees and boards;
- To supervise staff;
- To perform other general pastoral duties as required by Scripture.

In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor, the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

Section 4 – Associate Pastors

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor is that of associate. He may serve as an elder. He may perform the duties of an elder described in Article 4, Section 2. He shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of his regular duties and those which may be specifically assigned to him by the senior pastor with the approval of the elders.

Section 5 – Staff

The elders may hire additional staff to assist with ministries and functions of the church.

Section 6 – Deacons

The deacons shall be comprised of men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of deacon set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7. No deacon shall hold the office of elder during his tenure.

The deacons shall oversee the care of church properties, review monthly the financial condition of the church, approve all expenses and receive, hold and disburse a fund for benevolence. The deacons shall regularly apprise the elders of activities under their oversight.

The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. A term of service is normally three years. After a deacon has served two consecutive three-year terms, he may only be elected to the office of deacon after a minimum one year absence from service as a deacon.

If a deacon becomes unqualified to fulfill the office, the elders will meet with him and request his resignation. If he refuses to resign, the elders can remove him from the office by a majority vote of the elders. This action will be communicated to the church. If a deacon becomes unqualified or unable to fulfill the office, he may seek to voluntarily resign his deacon position at any time. After a review, the elders will grant the request.

Each year the deacons shall present to the church an itemized budget after consultation with the elders. This budget shall be presented for discussion at the annual meeting of the church.

The deacons shall elect a moderator of deacons' meetings.

Section 7 – Clerk

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the pastor, the elders, or the deacons.

The clerk shall be appointed by the elders and affirmed by the congregation to serve a term of two years. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Michigan, the clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation.

Section 8 – Treasurer

The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder or deacon, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such financial institutions as are appropriate. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled.

The treasurer shall render to the deacons annually, or whenever they may request it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and a report on the financial condition of the church. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular financial reports at each members' meeting.

The treasurer shall be appointed by the elders after consultation with the deacons and affirmed by the congregation to serve a term of two years.

Article 6 – Elections

Section 1 – Principles

- Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process.
- Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders.
- All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members.
- The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2 – Selection of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elders or deacons, as well as appointees to serve as clerk or treasurer, shall be presented by the elders in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting for elections and affirmations.

The elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.

All affirmations and elections shall be by secret ballot vote. The moderator shall declare elected all individuals receiving a 75% majority of all votes cast of the quorum present for the offices of elder and deacon. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare affirmed all individuals receiving a simple majority of all votes cast; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.

The individuals elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

Section 3 – Calling of a Pastor

In the calling of any man to the positions of senior pastor or associate pastor, the same process of electing an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the giftedness of any candidate. Before being asked to express its judgment, the church must receive assurance from the elders that they are confident the candidate gives wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Covenant, agrees with the church's Purpose (Article 2), and is suited to the position for which he is a candidate. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as a pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife) must be given at two Sunday morning services prior to the vote at a members' meeting. In the case of associate pastor, his calling must be upon the recommendation of the senior pastor.

Article 7 - Licensing & Ordination

Section 1 - Licensing

Any member who in the judgment of the church gives evidence by his godliness, zeal, and aptness to teach, that he is called of God to the work of the ministry, and having preached or taught in the hearing of the church, may be licensed to the gospel ministry upon the recommendation of the elders with the approval of 75% of the members present at a regular business meeting.

Section 2 - Ordination

If the church desires to ordain a man to the full-time work of the ministry, the church and ordination candidate shall invite pastors and brethren from churches of like faith and order to sit in council with them and advise the church regarding the candidate's theological fitness and preparedness for the ministry. Additionally, the elders shall assess the candidate's personal fitness for the ministry. This council and the elders, after due examination of the candidate and consultation, may advise the church to ordain or refrain from doing so, but the final decision shall rest with the congregation. That decision of the church shall be in the form of a 75% approval vote of the members present at a regular business meeting.

Article 8 - Ministries

The church shall establish ministries as deemed appropriate by the elders to carry out the work of the church. The pastoral staff shall oversee all ministries under the authority of the elders. For the purpose of directing the global mission activities of the church, a Mission Committee shall be appointed by the elders at their first meeting following the annual election. The Mission Committee shall act as an advisor to the elders and promote the work of global missions within the church.

Article 9 - Finances & Property

Section 1 - Financial Support

The ministries of this church shall be supported chiefly through freewill gifts and offerings. Engaging in debt requires approval of the members at a members' meeting.

Section 2 - Property

Documents of all real or personal property and all written contracts shall be executed by the moderator of the elders and the moderator of the deacons.

All property is intended for the sole use of the church and its members within the ministries of the church. Any other use must be consistent with the purpose of this church and approved by the deacons.

In the event of dissolution of the Calvary Baptist Church of Kalkaska, Michigan, all assets are to be dispensed to Christian ministries whose doctrine and purpose are consistent with that of this church.

Article 10 - Insurance Coverage and Indemnification of Ministry Leaders, Employees and Volunteers

Section 1 - Insurance

The church will purchase and maintain liability insurance on behalf of any and all persons who are or were a director, officer, leader, employee, committee member or volunteer of the church (while serving in their capacity as such). Such insurance will be purchased for the purpose of protecting such persons from covered loss resulting in liability asserted against the above individuals in connection with their activities on behalf of the church.

Section 2 - Indemnification Requests

Should any director, officer, leader, employee, committee member or volunteer of the church incur any liability as a result of their affiliation with or service to the church that is not covered by the church's insurance policy, and should such liability result in any out-of-pocket cost to such individual, then such individual may request indemnification from the church. The granting of full or partial indemnification shall be at the discretion of the elder board of the church as set forth in Section 3 herein.

Section 3 - Indemnification Decisions

In relation to any indemnification request that is made pursuant to Section 2 herein, if such request is made by an individual who is not currently serving on the elder board of the church, then the indemnification decision (whether to indemnify the requesting individual, and the dollar amount of such indemnification), will be made by the elder board. Such decision of the elder board will be final. If the indemnification request is being made by a person who is currently serving on the elder board, then the indemnification decision (whether to indemnify the requesting party, and the dollar amount of such indemnification), will be made by the remaining disinterested members of the elder board. A decision on the indemnification request by a majority of disinterested members of the elder board will be final.

Article 11 – Dispute Resolution

The church requires its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether individuals or corporate entities (Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 6:1-8).

Article 12 - Marriage and Gender

We believe that the marriage relationship has been established by God as a union between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31). We believe God has created two distinct and complementary genders, male and female, and each person is created in accordance with God's perfect design (Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4).

All members of Calvary Baptist Church and all individuals involved in ministering in the activities and events of Calvary Baptist Church are expected to uphold this church's position on marriage and gender as set forth in this provision. Individuals and organizations who desire to use Calvary Baptist Church's facilities must also act in accordance with this provision.

Article 13 – Amendments

This Constitution and Covenant may be changed or amended by a 75% vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the changes shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been included in the bulletin and announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

The Statement of Faith may be changed or amended by an 85% vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the changes shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been included in the bulletin and announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

The revised version of this constitution shall become effective January 1, 2018.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. The Scriptures

We believe the Holy Bible, in its original manuscripts, was verbally and completely God-breathed, recorded without error, confirmed by the early church, and preserved supernaturally by the work of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures, as the very Word of God, are the source and gauge of all truth. They are sufficient and authoritative for all matters of salvation and godly living. (Matthew 24:35; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:15-16; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

2. The True God

We believe there is one living and true God, an infinite Spirit, the Creator and supreme Ruler of all that exists. In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons -- the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit -- equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5; Matthew 28:18-19; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Revelation 4:11)

3. God the Father

We believe God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all-powerful, all-loving, and all-wise. He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, trust and love. (Psalms 46:8-10; Isaiah 6:3; Jeremiah 32:27; Romans 11:33; Ephesians 1:11; 1 John 1:5, 4:8)

4. God the Son

We believe Jesus Christ is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father as the unique Son of God. His desire is to do the will of the Father in carrying out the work of redemption. We believe in His virgin birth, His sinless life, His substitutionary death, His physical resurrection, His ascension to glory, His divine intercession for His people, and His return to earth. Jesus Christ is both true God and true man and the necessary mediator between an infinitely holy God and a totally depraved humanity. (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:35; John 1:14; Acts 1:6-11; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 4:15, 7:25; 1 Peter 2:24)

5. God the Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is a divine person and of the same nature as God the Father and God the Son. In His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains Satan, convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment, and bears witness to the truth of the gospel. He is the Agent in the new birth who, at salvation, seals and indwells all believers and baptizes them into the body of Christ. He is the believer's Comforter and Intercessor. We further believe that the sign/revelatory gifts of the Holy Spirit have fulfilled their purpose and are not normative to the work of the Holy Spirit today. (Ezekiel 36:26; John 3:5-6, 16:7-11; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 8:14, 16, 26, 27; Hebrew 2:2-4)

6. Angels and Satan

We believe angels are created beings who minister on behalf of God in the unseen, yet real, world. Satan, the Devil, was created by God as an angel but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of his Creator. He is the unholy god of this age, the ruler of all the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. Demons are fallen angels who have joined Satan in rebellion against God. (Isaiah 14:12-14; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2, 6:12; Hebrew 1:13-14; Revelation 20:1-2,10)

7. Mankind and Sin

We believe humanity was created, male and female, in the image and likeness of God. As image bearers of God, all human beings have intrinsic value apart from their function or contribution to society – regardless of sex, ethnicity, age or social status. By voluntary rebellion the first man, Adam, fell from his sinless state. That sinful nature has permeated every aspect of human life and all persons are sinners by birth and by choice, and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse. (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:24-25,3:1-6; John 3:18; Romans 1:20 & 32, 3:23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:1; Hebrews 9:27)

8. Salvation

We believe because of God's love for humanity and passion for His glory, He made provision for salvation solely through the person and work of Jesus Christ. His call to repentance and faith in Christ is extended to all people and sinners are declared righteous wholly by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. This is made possible because the Son freely took upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place – the Just dying for the unjust. This new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel. The Spirit of God sets apart and conforms the believer increasingly into the likeness of Christ. God also preserves those who have been regenerated so that they will not and cannot lose their salvation. Salvation is completed when the believer receives a glorified body upon the return of Christ. (Isaiah 53:4-6; Matthew 5:17-20; Luke 19:10; John 3:6-8 & 16; Acts 4:12, 17:30, 20:21; Romans 3:24 & 25, 6:22, 8:17, 29-30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:2, 3:1-2)

9. The Church

We believe the true universal church is the community of all believers who have been redeemed by Christ. The local church is the organized gathering of believers who meet for worship, teaching, fellowship and prayer. As the body of Christ, the Church's mission in the world is to continue the work of Christ and make disciples of all nations through the proclamation of the gospel. The two biblical offices of the church are pastors/elders and deacons. The church is given the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism by immersion is the believer's public identification with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. The Lord's Supper serves as a perpetual reminder to the church of Christ's sacrifice. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Colossians 1:18 ; 1 Timothy 3:1-3, 15)

10. Last Things

We believe in the imminent rapture of the Church and pre-millennial return of Christ. At the rapture, the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without experiencing death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. The Tribulation will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and glory to establish His millennial kingdom. At the final judgment, the unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous will dwell forever with the Lord in the New Heavens and the New Earth. (Danial 9:24-27; Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 1:31-33; John 5:28-29, 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 20:14-15, 21:1-5)

COVENANT

Having publicly declared our faith in Jesus Christ and joined together as a local church, we solemnly and joyfully enter covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We commit, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to not be conformed to this world; to pursue by faith a godly life; to share the gospel, to make disciples, to teach the Bible to our children; and to live in anticipation of the return of our Savior.

We further commit to walk together in Christian love seeking not to give offense nor be offended but rather seeking peace; to pray for one another; to aid one another as there is need; and to promote and support the ministries of Calvary Baptist Church with our time, finances and other resources.