

Calvary Baptist Church – Constitution and Bylaws

Article I - General

Section I - Name

The name of this church shall be called Calvary Baptist Church, in Preston, Connecticut.

Section 2 - Purpose

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building of churches, parsonages, schools chapels, radio stations, TV stations, rescue missions, print shops, daycare centers, and camps; the evangelizing of the unsaved by proclaiming the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Holy Scriptures, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and foreign country

Article II - Statement of Faith

Section I - Beliefs

Concerning the Scriptures:

We believe in the Holy Scriptures, and accept fully the writings of the Old and New Testaments as the very Word of God. We believe that the word of God is verbally inspired in all parts, our infallible and authoritative rule of faith and practice. 2Tim.3:16, 2Pet.1:21

Concerning the True God:

When believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Jn.1:1-2; I Tim.3:16, Mt.3:16

The Father is recognized as God, I Pet. 1:2 and is all the fullness of the Godhead invisible. John 1:18

The Son is recognized as God, Heb. 1:8 and is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested in the flesh, Jn.1:14

The Holy Spirit is recognized by God Acts 5:3-4 and is the fullness of the Godhead acting upon man, convicting him of sin, Jn.16:12-15

Concerning Jesus Christ:

We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ. We believe in His virgin birth, His sinless life, His shed blood for the atonement, His death, His descent into hell, His bodily resurrection, His ascension into Heaven, our Intercessor, and coming King.

Mt.1:18, Rom.5:6-11, Rev.1:18, 6:6

Concerning the Holy Spirit:

We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin and by His indwelling enables Christians to live a godly life. We believe the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, abides in the believer forever, the Spirit of Truth, our Teacher (John 14), our Guarantee of salvation by His seal of promise (Eph 1:13). He will reprove the world of sin, righteousness and of judgment. And "He shall glorify Me". Jn. 15; 16:14

Concerning the Fall of Man:

We believe that all men are by nature and choice sinful and lost and have within themselves no possible means of salvation. Gen.3, Rom.3:10-19

Concerning Salvation:

We believe in salvation by grace through faith; that salvation is the free gift of God, not by any virtue or works of man, but received only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: that all believers possess the gift of eternal life, a perfect righteousness, sonship in the family of God, and the divine guarantee that they shall never perish. Eph.2:8:9, Jn.3:16, Rom.8:28:29

Concerning Satan:

We believe in the existence of Satan, the deceiver and God of this present world; that he was defeated and judged at the cross, and therefore his final doom is certain. Rev.12:9, Jn. 16:11, II Cor.4:4

Concerning the Rapture of the Church:

We believe in the pre-tribulation of the church. Christ will return for His Bride, the Church, before the seven-year tribulation, (the 70th week of Daniel). IThes.4:16-17, ICor.15:51-57

Concerning the Second Coming:

We believe in the Second Coming of Christ; that His return from heaven will be bodily, visible, and glorious. Jesus will set up His Kingdom after the tribulation period and reign for a thousand years on earth, from the New Jerusalem. Rev.21

Concerning the Resurrection:

We believe that the spirits of the saved at death go immediately in Heaven; at the rapture (IThes. 4) their bodies will be raised, their works will be judged (ICor.3), and rewards determined.

That the spirits of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hell until the Great White Throne judgment, at which time their bodies will be raised from the grave, judged and cast into the Lake of Fire, the place of final and everlasting punishment. Rev.20:11-15

Concerning the Priesthood of Believers:

We believe in the priesthood of all believers, that Christ is our Great High Priest, and through Him every born-again person has direct access into God's presence without the need of a human priest, Heb.8. That the believer has the right and the responsibility to personally study and receive interpretation of the Scriptures guided by the Holy Spirit, IIPet.1:20

Concerning the Local Assembly of Believers:

We believe that the New Testament Church is a living organism of born-again baptized believers, corporately worshipping God through Spirit and Truth. This is done through preaching, music, prayer, and practicing Scriptural ordinances and actively engaged in fulfilling the Great Commission. Acts 2, Jn. 4:23-24, Mt. 28:18-20.

Concerning the Ordinances:

We believe that the two Scriptural ordinances given to the local church are baptism by immersion of believers only, and the Lord's Supper, to be partaken of by obedient Christians. Acts 2:41, ICor. 11:23-26

Concerning Music:

We believe that music should reflect the character of God. The word "new" in the Greek is "kainos" meaning something like which has never been heard before.

The pattern that emerges from Scripture is clear. When an individual, a company of people or an entire nation is brought to salvation, the new identity is made clear to a listening world by a "new song" that is decidedly different from the old music of the outside world, IICor.5:17.

Music is tricotomus as God is and people are. The Spirit is the melody, the soul is the harmony, or the accompaniment and the body is the rhythm. Music must always be led by a melody with a supporting accompaniment (harmony) and a rhythm that moves the music but that is the least noticeable. Any other order will emphasize the flesh... Paul exhorts the churches to "put off" the old and "put on" the new. Eph.4:22-24, Col.3:4-14, Gal.5:19-23

Concerning Marriage:

- (a) We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman, Gen. 2:24, Rom.7:2, ICor.7:10, Eph. 5:22-23.
- (b) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are all sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. Gen.2:24, 19:5, 26:8-9, Lev.18:1-30, Rom.1:26-29, ICor.5:1, 6:9, IThes. 4:1-8, Heb.13:4
- (c) If a member is found to be living in, or promoting this lifestyle, (as mentioned in the preceding paragraph under letter (b)) their membership would be terminated, after all attempts have been made for restoration

Section II - Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ (i.e. church)

We engage, therefore by aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love: to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness and comfort: to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, disciplines and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children, to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and

courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure without delay.

Article III - Membership

Section I - Reception of Members

(1) Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and being baptized by immersion and holding the views of faith and practice in conformity with those of this church may be received into its membership

Membership by Restoration- Persons who have been members of this church from whom the hand of fellowship has been withdrawn, or whose membership has lapsed due to dereliction on their part, may upon the recommendation of the Pastor, Elders, and Deacons be received into the membership of this church.

(2) All applicants for membership shall appear before the Pastor, Elders, and Deacons for consultation and examination. Applicants recommended to the church by the Pastor, Elders, and Deacons, shall be presented to the church and received into its membership by majority vote of the church members at any business meeting of the church. The candidate(s) shall absent themselves from the meeting at the time of the vote.

(3) Each person seriously interested in church membership shall be given a copy of the Calvary Baptist Church Constitution and By-laws and a current Annual Report.

Section II - Responsibilities of Members:

- (1) To Themselves - It is each member's responsibility to grow in grace and in the knowledge of God's Word and to live a consistent Christian life.
- (2) To the Church - It is incumbent upon each member to support the church as far as possible in all fields of Christian endeavor by his or her attendance and by his or her assistance, both spiritually and materially. Members should be attentive to the needs of others, ready to assist in any way possible; to pray, edify, or give materially for their good.
- (3) To the Pastor and Elders - Members should honor, esteem and pray regularly for them, and manifest a tender regard for their reputation.

Section III - Dismissal of Members

(1) By Transfer - A member transferring from Calvary Baptist Church for good and proper reasons may be granted a letter of transfer from the Pastor, Elder, and Deacons:

- a. Upon request from the member, or
- b. Upon request from a church of like doctrine

(2) By Dual Membership - Should a member of this church become a member of, join, or unite with any other church, his or her membership at this church shall terminate automatically.

(3) By death

(4) By Termination - Should a member become an offense to the church and its good name, by reason of immoral or un-Christian conduct, or by persistent breach of church covenant, the church may terminate membership. Termination may take place only after faithful efforts have been made by the Pastor, Elders, and Deacons to bring such member to repentance and amendment. See sec. 4-4

Section IV - Discipline of Members

- (1) Discipline is that procedure including Christian teaching, training, admonition, and rebuke, with the intent of helping the individual Christian grow in grace, mature in the faith, break off

from worldliness and live wholly for the Lord. Discipline is necessary to keep the church strong and healthy before God. Mt.18:15-17, I Cor.5:1-3

- (2) A member shall be subject to discipline if:
- a. They are involved in public sins or sins known to the church
 - b. They hold and persistently propagate false doctrine
 - c. They show persistent disregard for the Church Covenant

A member under discipline shall be automatically relieved from any office or position, may not speak at business meetings (except at the termination hearing) and is deprived of their right to vote.

Should a member refuse to receive discipline, it will be necessary for the church to initiate termination proceedings in accordance with Section 5.

Section V - Termination of Membership

- (1) For Disciplinary Reasons
- a. Termination is that process whereby a member of the church is removed from the membership for disciplinary reasons. Termination proceedings shall be initiated only after disciplinary actions taken in accordance with Section 4 have failed to bring about repentance in the life of the individual being disciplined.
 - b. The procedure for termination shall be as follows:
 1. The Pastor, Elders, and Deacons, shall sign a written copy of the charges made against a member and shall file the same with the church clerk.
 2. A copy of the written charges filed with the church clerk shall be submitted to the charged member, along with a statement of his right to attend a hearing and answer charges on a specified date.
 3. A special business meeting shall be called for the purpose of conducting a church hearing relative to the charges made against the member. At the conclusion of the hearing the voting members of the church shall vote (by ballot) yes or no for the termination with a simple majority prevailing.
 4. The charged member removed by termination may be received back into the membership only after repentance, public confession, (when appropriate, i.e. delicate matters that would affect the family would not be made public) of the sin(s) that resulted in termination and following the procedure discussed in Article III. Section I (I).
- (2) For Inactive Members - Upon the request of the Pastor, Elders, and Deacons, the church may remove from membership the names of those who have persistently shown no interest in the church, or who have had no contact with the church over a period of (1) year.

Article IV - Organization

Section I - Officers

- (1) The officers of this church shall be Pastor(s), Moderator, Elder(s), Deacon(s), Trustees, Clerk, Sunday School Superintendent, Treasurer, And Vice Moderator
- (2) Officers shall be persons whose personal and spiritual qualities conform to Scriptural standards, and who are members of the church in good and regular standing

Section II - Church Leadership

1. Pastor

- (a.) He shall be one who is in full agreement with the Holy Scriptures (ITim.3:8-15), Statements of Faith, and Church Covenant.
- (b.) He shall faithfully preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and administer the ordinances (Baptism and the Lord's Supper). He shall preside at all prayer meetings and meetings of worship unless otherwise provided. He shall perform all other duties that pertain to his position of leadership. He shall be the ex-officio member of all church boards and committees, with the exception of the auditing and the pulpit committees.
- (c.) He shall be allowed (4) four weeks paid vacation per year.
- (d.) He shall be accountable to the Elders and church leadership.

2. Elders

- (a.) The Elder(s) shall be in agreement with the Holy Scripture, Article of Faith and the Church Covenant
- (b.) The Elder(s) shall be well versed in the Scriptures and mature in the knowledge of God's Word
- (c.) He shall portray faithfulness to the Lord, his family, and to the Church
- (d.) The Elder(s) shall also be responsible for but not limited to:
 1. Shepherding part of the local assembly; youth, elderly, young married, music, etc. This is dependent upon God's leading.
 2. Shepherding consist of visits, calls and ministering.
 3. The elder(s) will meet with pastor monthly.
- (e.) The leadership shall be in full agreement in recognizing an individual who desires the office of an Elder.
- (f.) The elder(s) shall be held accountable to the pastor and other elders.
- (g.) The Elder shall be chosen by the leadership of the church and ordained and ordained according to Titus 1:5

3. Diaconate

- (a.) The deacons shall be in full agreement with the Holy Scriptures, Statement of Faith, and shall be appointed by the Pastor(s), and Elder(s) according to Acts 6:3. They shall meet the qualifications set forth in ITim.3:8-15.
- (b.) Providing qualified men are available, they shall assist in the administration of the church and the ordinances. They shall advise the pastor in all personal matters pertaining to the flock.

- (c.) They shall consider with the Pastor(s) and Elder(s) all applicants for membership prior to making recommendation to the church. They shall visit the sick, aged and distressed members of the church and administer the deacon's benevolent fund as necessary.

Section III - Other Officers

1. Trustee

- (a.) They shall be elected and accountable to the deacons and church leadership.
- (b.) The trustees shall oversee the work pertaining to the grounds, church maintenance, and church cleaning. He will organize a grounds crew to carry out required duties; he will be accountable to the deacons. The trustee will be responsible in making sure the church is cleaned after every special activity.
10.
- (c.) The trustees shall have the charge of the church property. They shall have the responsibility to maintain all facilities in a safe and proper manner and provide routine maintenance for minor repairs. They shall plan, budget and oversee all major repairs. They shall coordinate, review, and implement the following annual business:
 - 1. Town of Preston Fire Marshal inspection.
 - 2. Building and insurance policies
 - 3. Custodial services
 - 4. Snow removal services
- (d.) The trustees shall be responsible for the use of the building and/or property. They shall schedule any extra-curricular functions or activities and provide information to the church clerk to be printed in the bulletin.
- (e.) They shall be notified when any equipment or property is used or removed from the church premises.
- (f.) The trustees shall appoint a person or persons to oversee the care, maintenance, and staffing of the nursery.

2. Moderator:

The moderator shall be elected by the church membership for a term of (1) one year. He shall provide over all business meetings.

3. Vice-Moderator:

The vice-moderator shall be elected by the church membership for a term of (1) one year. He shall preside over business meetings in the absence of the moderator.

4. Church Clerk:

The clerk shall keep an accurate record of all business, and conduct church correspondence. The clerk shall be present at all church business meetings and any committee meetings when specifically requested.

5. Treasurer:

The treasurer shall keep an accurate record of funds received and expended, rendering an itemized account at monthly and annual business meetings. Designated funds shall be expended only for the express purpose for which they were given.

6. Sunday School Superintendent:

The Sunday school superintendent shall be elected annually by the church. The Sunday school superintendent shall administer and supervise the entire Sunday school program.

Section IV - Additional Helps:

- (1) The deacon's shall care for the Lord's Table and assist in the ordinance of baptism.
- (2) Other helps may be elected by the church or appointed by the Pastor and/or Elders with the consent of the church as necessary to carry out the work of the church. No such helps shall be engaged contrary to the spirit and letter of the constitution and by-laws of the church.
- (3) Non-members may serve on various committees. However, they will be under the authority of that committee just as members are.
- (4) Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall assist the treasurer in counting offerings and in any other capacity that he may require concerning financial matters of the church.

Article V - Pastoral Relationship

Section I - Calling a Pastor, when there is a pastoral vacancy

- (1) A special committee consisting of at least seven (7) members to include Elders, treasurer, one (1) deacon and one (1) trustee, shall be selected by the church for the purpose of examining pastoral candidates as practicable when there is a pastoral vacancy.
- (2) The committee shall present a candidate they have selected to the church at a specially called meeting. Notice of the meeting and a brief resume of the candidate shall be presented for two (2) consecutive Sundays prior to his speaking and to be posted on the website.
- (3) The church shall vote on the candidate as soon as possible, but not the same day he speaks. At least (50) fifty percent of the membership must be present (under no condition, no proxy votes). A three-fourths (3/4) majority of those present shall be required to call a pastor.

Section II - Resignation a Pastor

- (1) The presentation of the pastor's resignation shall be read from the pulpit at a Sunday morning service by the pastor. If for any reason he resigns abruptly and leaves the church his severance pay shall be forfeited.
- (2) The church shall be entitled to a notice of not less than thirty (30) days.

Section III - Discharging a Pastor

- (1) The question of dissolving a pastoral relationship shall be considered at any time by the church for either of the following reasons.
 - a. On recommendation of Board of Deacons
 - b. On petition signed by at least fifty (50) percent of the eligible active membership
- (2.) Voting on the question of discharging the pastor shall be done by secret ballot, yes or no for discharge. At least two-thirds (2/3) of the membership must be present (no proxy votes are allowed ever) with a simple majority prevailing.
- (3.) Salary, benefits, and housing allowances shall not exceed thirty (30) days after discharge.

Article VI - Committees:

Section I - Christian Education Department

- (1) The Sunday school program shall be administered by a special committee consisting of the Sunday school superintendent, and all Sunday school teachers. The Sunday school superintendent shall be the chairman of the committee, which will meet quarterly. The function and responsibilities of the committee are as follows:
 - a. Determine curriculum and materials used by the Sunday school classes
 - b. Allocate classrooms based on class size and requirements. Provide necessary classroom materials and teaching aids.
 - c. Develop and execute a training program for teachers.
 - d. Prepare an annual budget
 - e. Periodically evaluate the overall Sunday school program.

Section II - Missionary

- (1) The missions committee shall consist of at least five (5) members who have a burden for missions. This committee will be the link between the missionaries and the body known as Calvary Baptist Church.
 - a. The committee will keep us informed (preferably Wednesday Night) of developments that our missionaries bring to our attention. A prayer list will be made up once a month in relation to the needs of our missionaries.
 - b. The missions committee may at any given time during the year request of the pastor to hear from different missionaries and their work.
 - c. The missionary committee may request to support new missionaries either through a proposed budget or faith promise
 - d. The missions committee will be responsible in organizing, (beds, meals, transportations, etc...) for our missionaries who speak during the mission's conference that will be held once a year. (The missions committee will work hand in hand with the social committee to plan a mission's dinner at the end of the mission's conference.
 - e. The missions committee will meet once a month to plan, coordinate, and update any particulars that concern our missionaries. These would include but not limited to: updating all committee members our missionaries, planning goals, and organizing responses to our missionaries.
 - f. The missions committee shall have a male chairman that will be responsible for all the above things mentioned. They shall either be done by him personally, or delegated to those on the committee.

Section III - Music

- (1) The music committee shall consist of at least five (5) members. They shall be responsible for providing: an organist, pianist, choir leaders, choir, and recommended song books and hymnals for the provision for appropriate God honoring music that is in agreement with the Bible, Eph.5:19, Col.3:1-6.

- a. The committee will also be responsible to follow the commands in God's Word to sing and play God's "new song" as stated in the following Scriptures. Ex.15:1-21, Rev.15:3, Ps.33:3, 96:1-3, 98:1-2, 144:9-19, 149:1-4, Isa.42:8-11, Rev.5:9-14.
- b. The committee will also be responsible to encourage all musicians dress modestly and appropriately when ministering in front of the congregation so attention is not brought to themselves.
- c. The committee will make sure that all who minister in song or instrument are born again and walking with the Lord, especially our guest musicians
- d. The committee will supply all the needed accompaniments for those who minister in song.

Section IV - Finance

- (1) The finance committee shall consist of five (5) members, including one (1) member of church leadership, (1) trustee, the treasurer, the financial secretary, and one other person (member).
- (2) They shall prepare a budget of expenses for the ensuing year for presentation at the annual business meeting.
- (3) They shall appoint two (2) auditors annually to audit the books of the treasurer.
- (4) They shall provide all subscribers with envelopes when needed.
- (5) They shall convene monthly.

Section V - Social Committee

A nucleus of not less than four (4) within this committee would organize and direct the other members in this committee in preparation for said activities.

- (1) All day church dinners
- (2) Father/Son dinner
- (3) The annual business meeting banquet
- (4) Easter Sunrise breakfast
- (5) Working with the missionary committee/missionary conference dinner
- (6) Last minute unscheduled fellowships because of special groups or speakers
- (7) Mother/Daughter setup and program
- (8) Wedding and Baby Showers (if needed)

The committee shall be responsible for the upkeep of the kitchen and to replenish the dry goods and consumable inventory. All functions and activities are subject to the approval of the pastor.

Section VI - Ushers

This committee shall consist of four (4) members. There shall be an elected head usher that will delegate and organize the ushers so that these four (4) will be used throughout the year. They will welcome the congregation, be sure to give out visitor cards, and provide for the physical comfort.

Section VII - Flowers

This committee shall consist of at least four (4) members who are responsible to furnish, arrange, and distribute flowers for church services. Additionally, the members shall assist the pastor in the distribution of flowers for special occasions.

Section VIII - Grounds and Building

The Grounds Committee shall be overseen by the trustee and shall consist of at least three (3) members. Their responsibility shall be to care for the church grounds and building.

Article VII - Meetings

Section I - Worship

- (1) The regular public worship is to be observed on every Lord's Day, morning and afternoon.
- (2) The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once a month at one of the regularly stated services of the church.
- (3) At least one (1) night a week prayer meeting, and Bible study will be held.

Section II - Business

- (1) A quarterly meeting shall be held every second Wednesday of the following months: April, July, and October, with the exception of January.
- (2) Special business meetings may be called by the pastor, Elders, the deacons, or at the written request of ten (10) voting members. Notice of such meetings must be made from the pulpit at two (2) consecutive Sunday morning services and appear in the church bulletin once.
- (3) The annual meeting shall be held the Friday after the second Sunday in January.
- (4) For all routine business, fourteen (14) members, of voting age shall constitute a quorum.
- (5) Voting age shall be eighteen (18) years old.
- (6) Vacancies in office, except pastor, elder or deacon may be filled at any regular business meeting with fourteen (14) voting members present.
- (7) Except where it is contrary to this constitution, *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the conduct of the business meeting.

Article VIII - Amendments

Section I - Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any regularly called meeting by a majority vote with fourteen (14) voting members present, notice of such a change having been announced at least two (2) weeks previously.

This same rule applies in regards to any portion being temporarily or permanently suspended.

This copy of the Constitution and Bylaws (2010) supersedes all other copies and revisions.

For clarification regarding the voting right of an ex-officio member and the moderator, quotations from *Robert's Rules of Order* are quoted below:

"If the ex-officio member is under the control of the society, there is no distinction between him and the other members except where the president is ex-officio member of all committees, in which case it is evidently the intention to permit, not require, him to act as a member of the various committees." P. 210

"If (the moderator) a member of the assembly, he is entitled to vote when the vote is by ballot, ...and in all other cases where the vote would change the result." P. 238