



# CONSTITUTION OF CALVARY CHURCH ORLAND PARK

\*Adopted [Insert Date]\*

## Preamble

Calvary Church Orland Park (“the Church”) is incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois as a not-for-profit religious corporation. It exists independently but is voluntarily affiliated with the Kingdom Network for shared mission and mutual encouragement without surrendering governing authority of the Church.

We affirm our historic Reformed heritage, rooted in our Confession of Faith, the Canons of Dort, the Belgic Confession, and the Heidelberg Catechism, and governed by the authority of Scripture alone.

## Part I – Form of Government

### Chapter 1 – The Head of the Church

Jesus Christ is the sole Head and Governor of His Church; all authority exercised within the Church derives from Him. The officers of the Church only mediate His rule by Scripture and Spirit. Church discipline is a spiritual, not civil, process.

### Chapter 2 – Board of Elders

The Board of Elders is the governing council of the Church, and provides overall vision and direction for the Church. The Board of Elders is comprised of men who meet the biblical qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9.

1. The Lead Pastor, also considered an Elder, and a tie-breaking voting member.
2. Election

Candidates for the office of Elder shall be:

- Nominated by the congregation;
- Approval by the Board of Elders in matters of doctrine, character, and gifting; and
- Elected by the congregation by a two-thirds majority vote.

Duties:

- Teach by word and example;
- Protect the Doctrine of the Church;
- Provide spiritual oversight and care to members, with special attention to those who have not yet professed faith in Jesus Christ;
- Teach by word and example;
- Oversee the sacraments and administer the sacraments in certain circumstances;
- Oversee admission for membership;
- Administer Church discipline;
- Oversee Deacons, staff, ministries, and policies;
- Approve the annual budget;
- Appointing a nomination committee for Elders and Deacons;
- Oversee Church property; and
- Provide Congregational care.

2. A Clerk shall be appointed to preserve records and prepare minutes of meetings.

## **Chapter 3 – Deacons**

### 1. Office and Qualification

The office of deacon is one of service and mercy within the church. The Deacons serve as helpers to the Elders. Deacons shall be men who exhibit spiritual maturity and meet the biblical qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8–13 and Romans 16:1–2. They must be members in good standing, possessing a heart for service and compassion for others.

### 2. Election

Candidates for the office of deacon shall be:

- Nominated by the congregation;
- Approval by the Board of Elders in matters of doctrine, character, and gifting; and
- Elected by the congregation by a two-thirds majority vote.

### 3. Duties and Responsibilities

Under the supervision and oversight of the Board of Elders, Deacons shall:

- Provide for the material and practical needs of members, particularly in times of hardship;
- Administer and distribute benevolence funds;
- Provide support for congregational care ministries such as meal trains, home and hospital visits, and transportation needs;
- Assist in the maintenance and stewardship of church facilities and grounds;
- Contribute to budget preparation and implementation in coordination with the Elders and staff; and
- Mobilize teams of volunteers to assist in carrying out these duties and responsibilities.

#### 4. Structure and Oversight

The Deacons shall be comprised of both financial and care Deacons and shall report regularly to the Board of Elders. A chairperson may be appointed by the Deacons and approved by the Elders to coordinate meetings and communications. A Clerk shall be appointed.

#### 5. Distinction from Elders

Their office is distinct from that of Elder and is focused on practical ministry, service, and compassion rather than spiritual governance.

## **Chapter 4 – Church Membership**

### 1. Qualifications:

- Public profession of faith in Jesus Christ and evidence of salvation.
- Baptism (if not yet baptized).
- Alignment with the Church Confession of Faith.
- Submission to Church government and discipline.

### 2. Process:

- Approval by the Board of Elders.
- Presentation to the Congregation.

### 3. Rights and Duties:

- Access to the sacramental and spiritual ministry and care of the Church.
- Obligation to attend, give, and serve.

- Right to vote in congregational business meetings.

## **Chapter 5 – Congregational Participation**

In matters of major importance, the congregation acts by vote:

1. Electing Elders and Deacons (from nominees approved by the Board of Elders).
2. Affirming the Lead Pastor's call.
3. Approving the purchase, sale, or encumbrance of real property.
4. Approving amendments to the Constitution.

Quorum: 25% of active members as reported to the Kingdom network and defined by the Bylaws; Vote requirement: 2/3rds majority of those voting (unless otherwise specified).

## **Chapter 6 – Congregational Meetings**

1. The annual congregational meeting is convened by the Board of Elders.
2. Special congregational meetings may be called by the Board of Elders.
3. Notice of all congregational meetings shall be given at least two weeks in advance.

## **Chapter 7 – Lead Pastor**

1. Nominated by a pulpit search committee composed of persons appointed by the Board of Elders. The nominee must be ordained or ordainable by the Kingdom Network.
2. A nominee shall be examined by the Board of Elders, endorsed and approved by the Board of Elders, and then presented to the congregation.
3. After a 2/3rd majority approval by congregational vote, then a call presented by the Board of Elders to the nominee.
4. Upon accepting the call, the nominee will be installed by the Board of Elders and Kingdom Network.
5. The pastoral relationship may be terminated only by majority approval of the Board of Elders.

## **Part II – Rules of Discipline**

### **Chapter 8 – Definition, Aims & Jurisdiction**

1. Discipline is either administrative (concerned with neglect of duties) or judicial (addressing offense(s) against doctrine or moral standards).

2. Objective evidence is required for administrative and judicial cases.

3. Jurisdiction extends only over members of Calvary Church.

Aim - 1) To restore a church member to right membership standing. 2) Peace and unity of the church.

### **Chapter 9 – Discipline Protocol**

Upon receipt of a formal written complaint, the Board of Elders will follow the following steps, if warranted:

1. Private counsel (Matt 18:15).

2. Correction – With one or two witnesses (Matt 18:16).

3. Formal Proceeding before the Board of Elders – Hearing by elders, decision on action (e.g., suspension, removal).

4. Appeals – As internal structure allows (though no higher level of adjudication exists beyond the Church).

5. Goal – Repentance, reconciliation, and restoration (not punishment).

6. Removal of members may occur for unrepentant sin or neglect of vows.

7. Membership removal is noted in the roll, giving cause and process.

8. Request for removal to evade discipline is not permitted until the process concludes.

### **Chapter 10 – Record-keeping & Confidentiality**

1. All proceedings are confidential and documented by the Clerk of the Board of Elders and stored at the church as a permanent record.

## **Part III – Amendments**

1. Amendments may be proposed by the Board of Elders.
2. Notice of at least four weeks before a congregational meeting.
3. Requires two-thirds vote of members present.
4. Proposals may also originate from members (via petition) for Board of Elders consideration.
5. Changes must be communicated to the congregation within one week of the vote.