

# Constitution of Calvary Baptist Church of Bastrop, Texas

Adopted August 6, 2023

## Preamble

We do hereby declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner, to maintain the autonomy of this church in freedom of action in relation to other churches and organizations.

## ARTICLE I – NAME

The legal name of the church is Calvary Baptist Church of Bastrop, TX (hereafter referred to as CBC), with its principal offices located in Bastrop, Texas.

## ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

CBC exists to DEMONSTRATE God's love, DECLARE the Good News and DISCIPLE near and far.

## ARTICLE III – GOVERNMENT

The government of CBC, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, shall be vested in the members and administered by the Church Officers as defined in Article B Section 1 of the CBC By-Laws, whose authority is derived from and limited by this Constitution and the By-Laws.

Persons received as members according to the By-Laws shall have equal rights, with a simple majority bearing rule, except on issues as defined in this document and the By-Laws.

This is an autonomous and democratic church operating under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the importance of mutual counsel and cooperation among like-minded churches.

## ARTICLE IV – AFFILIATIONS

CBC shall be in a cooperative relationship with [The Bluebonnet Baptist Association](#), the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. These cooperative relationships are for the purpose of carrying out the gospel mission locally, regionally and internationally, and shall in no way interfere with the autonomous and self-governing nature of CBC.

## ARTICLE V – STATEMENT OF FAITH

CBC declares our belief in Scripture and Scripture alone as the final authority for our faith and practice. We support and affirm the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 edition (Appendix). These tenets are the basis for fulfilling the mission of CBC, but do not necessarily exhaust the extent of our belief through scripture.

## ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

In addition to meeting regularly for worship and teaching, CBC shall hold an annual meeting to conduct routine business, keep the membership informed, and to discuss the proposed budget and Church Officers, as required by the By-Laws.

Additionally, the Church Council and Management Team shall hold at least two other "Family Meetings" throughout the year to keep the CBC family informed of what the Church Officers and ministry leaders are doing.

If there is something that needs to be voted on by the membership, this can be done during a Family Meeting, a special meeting called by the Church Council or Management Team, or on Sunday morning before and after each worship hour.

There must be at least three public announcements of the meeting or vote and its purpose.

## ARTICLE VII – ORDINANCES

**Baptism:** Baptism shall be by immersion only, administered only to professed believers, and administered and/or coordinated by the Senior Pastor or his designee a Church Council member or their designee.

**The Lord's Supper:** The Lord's Supper shall be administered regularly at the direction of the Senior Pastor Campus Pastor or his designee.

## ARTICLE VIII – PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The Trustees shall hold in trust the property of CBC, but shall have no power to acquire, mortgage, lease or transfer any of this property without a specific vote of the CBC membership authorizing such action.

If CBC is dissolved or ceases to function as a cooperating Southern Baptist church, the Trustees shall transfer all CBC property and obligations – real and personal - to the Bluebonnet Baptist Association Southern Baptists of Texas Convention for mission purposes. If the Bluebonnet Baptist Association Southern Baptists of Texas Convention has dissolved or ceases to exist as a Section 501 (c)(3) organization at the time CBC is dissolved, all assets shall be transferred to a similar religious organization under Section 501 (c)(3).

## ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

The Constitution may be amended by an affirmative vote of at least 75% of the members, age 17 and older, present and voting at an annual meeting, Family Meeting, special meeting called by the Church Council or Management Team, or on Sunday morning before and after each worship hour, providing the proposed amendment has been presented to the CBC membership at least 30 days prior to the vote.

## ARTICLE X – INTENT

This Constitution is a revision or update of the original Constitution. The original statements pertaining to the principles held by CBC's founders were very prayerfully and judiciously discussed before enlarging, clarifying or changing.

Past business conducted by CBC remains operative and viable.

## ARTICLE XI – RATIFICATION

This Constitution is hereby ordained and established for Calvary Baptist Church of Bastrop, Texas by vote of the CBC membership on August 6, 2023.

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Jim Jordan, Church Council

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Rick Adams, Management Team

**By-Laws of Calvary Baptist Church of Bastrop, TX**  
**Adopted August 6, 2023**

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# **ARTICLE A—CBC MEMBERSHIP**

## **SECTION 1 – QUALIFICATIONS**

The membership of CBC shall consist of persons who:

1. Have made a public profession of faith in Christ as Savior and Lord,
2. Have followed Jesus in baptism by immersion after faith in Christ,
3. Agree with the CBC Statement of Faith.

## **SECTION 2 – ADMISSION**

Membership in CBC may be attained by completing a new member form and each of the following:

1. Attending a class about CBC membership at CBC or completing the CBC membership section of this class online,
2. Meeting with a member of the Church Council, Deacons or a Pastor to request CBC membership,
3. Approval by the Church Council.

The Church Council may accept the new member with a majority vote. Names of prospective new members will be published at least two weeks prior to a vote by the Church Council.

## **SECTION 3 – TERMINATION**

Membership in CBC may be terminated as follows:

1. Requested by the member,
2. When requested by another church,
3. By letter of transfer to another church,
4. By death of the member or,
5. By scriptural removal by the Church Council, as found in Matthew 18:15-17.

At CBC, we seek to support, look for the best in, and honor those who God has led to the CBC family as members. As with all who profess faith in Christ, we acknowledge our sin and turn from it through repentance and seek reconciliation with each other in love. At some time it may be necessary for the Church Council to discuss unrepentant sin with a member with the hope the member will repent and seek reconciliation. If the member refuses to acknowledge their sin and seek reconciliation, it may be necessary to terminate the individual's membership at CBC.

If the Church Council determines that it is necessary to remove an unrepentant member, they shall discuss the issue with the member and give them an opportunity to terminate their membership. If the member chooses not to terminate their membership, the Church Council shall present the issue and their decision to the CBC membership.

## SECTION 4 – INACTIVE MEMBER STATUS

The Church Council, Deacons, or Management Team may change a member's status to "Inactive" after a thorough inquiry into the member's circumstances. Any such inquiry must include a diligent search to locate the inactive member and confirm:

1. His or her wishes regarding CBC membership,
2. The member has moved from the area, or
3. The member has connected with another church.

A member whose status has been changed to "Inactive" is still a member. If they return to the area or reconnect with CBC, their status may be changed to "Active" by the Church Council, Deacons or Management Team.

## SECTION 5 – GOVERNANCE AND VOTING

### Governance

The Church Council, **with the Senior Pastor as Chairman**, is responsible for leading CBC in all matters of direction, doctrine and discipline. It will also oversee and evaluate the direction of all ministries and stewardship of CBC. The Church Council may establish teams to assist them in any of their duties and may delegate authority to qualified individuals or teams as they deem necessary. They may also include other members or outside resources in meetings and decisions.

The Church Council and all Church Officers are responsible for ensuring transparency in the management of CBC business. They are to keep the CBC family informed of important issues and decisions.

If a CBC member disagrees with a decision made by the Church Officers, they should approach the appropriate Church Officer(s) to discuss the issue. If the CBC member is not satisfied with the response or resolution, they may raise the issue at any annual, family, or called meeting. The CBC membership may bring the issue or decision to the floor for discussion by a majority vote of members, age 17 and older, present and voting. The issue can be discussed at this meeting but a vote cannot be taken until the next annual, family, or called meeting. For a decision to be overturned, 75% of members, age 17 and older, present and voting must vote in favor of overturning the decision.

### Voting

Each member, age 17 and older, is entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy or absentee voting is prohibited. A simple majority vote shall prevail in deciding all business, except where otherwise provided for in the Constitution and By-Laws. The following decisions must be presented to the CBC membership for a vote:

1. Approval of the annual CBC budget
2. Changes to the approved annual CBC budget
3. Approval of all Church Officers
4. Expansion, merger or dissolution of CBC
5. Removal of **the Senior Pastor or** a Pastoral Staff member
6. Incurring debt
7. Acquisition or disposition of real estate
8. Approval of changes to the CBC Constitution and By-Laws

Additional items may be presented at the discretion of the Church Council. In the event there is the need for a CBC membership vote, the Church Council will make the recommendation known at least **two weeks 30-days** prior to the vote. Additional items or scheduling changes may be presented at the discretion of the Church Council.

# ARTICLE B — CHURCH OFFICERS

## SECTION 1 – GENERAL

The Church Officers are:

1. Senior Pastor and All Pastoral Staff
2. Lay-Elder Members of the Church Council
3. Deacons
4. Members of the Management Team
5. Trustees

### Requirements

1. Active members of CBC – regularly attending services at CBC
2. Actively serving in a ministry at CBC
3. As servants, committed to seeking God's best for CBC
4. Agree with and fully support the mission, vision, and theological distinctions of CBC
5. While both men and women are gifted for service in the Church, the offices of Pastor and Church Council Lay-Elder are limited to men and shall meet the Biblical expectations found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3:
  - a. [1Timothy 3:1-7 ESV] The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup>Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup>not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup>He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, <sup>5</sup>for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? <sup>6</sup>He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup>Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.
  - b. [Titus 1:5-9 ESV] This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— <sup>6</sup>if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. <sup>7</sup>For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, <sup>8</sup>but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. <sup>9</sup>He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.
  - c. [1 Peter 5:1-3 ESV] So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: <sup>2</sup>shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you, not for shameful gain, but eagerly; <sup>3</sup>not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.
6. Deacons shall meet the Biblical requirements outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13:

[1Timothy 3:8-13 ESV] <sup>8</sup>Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup>They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup>And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. <sup>11</sup>Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup>Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. <sup>13</sup>For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.
7. Meet the moral expectations of leaders found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3. Members of the Management Team and Trustees shall meet similar and complementary moral expectations of a leader. They Must be of exemplary character with the highest integrity, holding firm to the faith and managing their own affairs well. Be eager to serve, committed to their spouse, wise, fair, helpful, self-controlled, hospitable, gentle, and serve as examples to the CBC family. Must not be money hungry, quarrelsome, quick tempered, overbearing or given to drunkenness.

## SECTION 2 – ELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS

CBC members may recommend candidates to the Church Council for consideration as Church Officers. The Church Council will nominate candidates to serve as Trustees and members of the Church Council, Deacons and Management Team. The candidates shall be presented to the CBC family at least 30 days before a vote.

If a member believes there is a reason a nominated person is not able or qualified to serve, the member should approach the nominated person and discuss the issue (Matthew 18:15-17). If the member is not satisfied with the response or resolution, they should bring the issue to one or more of the Deacons. The Deacon(s) will inform the Church Council of the issue. The Church Council, along with the Deacon(s) who presented the issue, will approach the Church Officer nominee with the concern and discuss the issue. They will prayerfully consider and make a decision regarding the candidate's qualifications. Approval of Church Officers requires an affirmative vote of at least 75% of the members, age 17 or older, who are present and voting.

The processes for selecting **Senior Pastor and** Pastoral Staff candidates are covered in Sections 4 and 5 respectively.

## SECTION 3 – REMOVAL OF CHURCH OFFICERS

At CBC we seek to support, look for the best in, and honor those God has called to lead the CBC family (1 Timothy 5:17-21). At some time it may be necessary to remove a Church Officer, either due to unrepentant sin, poor performance, their inability to fulfill their role, financial consideration or a change in staff skills requirements.

If the Church Council determines it is necessary to remove a Church Officer, they shall discuss the issue with that individual and give the Church Officer an opportunity to resign. If unity cannot be reached after discussion and prayer, the Church Council shall present the issue to the CBC membership for a vote. The results of the vote shall be final.

If a member of CBC believes a Church Officer has disqualified themselves due to sin or is no longer able to fulfill their role, the member should approach the Church Officer and discuss the issue (Matthew 18:15-17). If they are not satisfied with the response or resolution, they should bring the issue to one or more members of the Church Council, **Pastoral Staff** or Deacons.

The Church Council member(s), **Pastoral Staff member(s)** or Deacon(s) will inform the Church Council of the issue. The Church Council, along with the individual(s) who presented the issue, will approach the Church Officer with the concern and discuss the issue. They will prayerfully consider what action, if any, should be taken.

If no action is required, the Church Council will inform the person who presented the issue of their decision and reasoning. If action is required, the Church Council will inform the Church Officer of their decision and reasoning. If the Church Officer does not agree with the decision, they can:

1. Resign their position. In the case of a paid position, the Church Council will determine an appropriate severance package.
2. Ask the Church Council to bring the issue and their decision or recommendation before the CBC membership for a vote. The result of the vote shall be final.

The Church Officer in question shall not participate in making decisions or recommending action.

The Church Council may place a Church Officer on paid or unpaid leave pending an investigation and decision or potential recommendation to the CBC membership.

## **SECTION 4 – SENIOR PASTOR**

The Senior Pastor is recognized as the under-shepherd of Jesus Christ and a spiritual leader of CBC. He is responsible for leading and overseeing the:

1. Casting of the vision for CBC
2. Preaching and teaching ministry of CBC
3. Equipping of CBC members for their ministries
4. Pastoral Staff and Ministry Staff.

As the primary overseer and supervisor of the Pastoral Staff and Ministry Staff, the Senior Pastor can:

1. Reassign staff to other positions
2. Revise job descriptions
3. Evaluate and hold staff accountable
4. Recommend termination to the Church Council in the case of unrepentant sin, poor performance, inability to fulfill their role, financial consideration or a change in staff skills requirements.

### **Requirements**

1. Meet all requirements for Church Officers stated in Article B Section 1 of the CBC By-Laws.
2. Able to articulate their call to full-time vocational ministry.
3. CBC membership has affirmed his call to CBC.
4. Must be a licensed minister.

### **Evaluation**

The Senior Pastor shall be evaluated annually in writing by the Church Council who will make a salary recommendation to be included in the CBC budget. Additionally, the Church Council shall seek to support, encourage, lift up, and work in unity with the Senior Pastor. This includes encouraging and helping the Senior Pastor maintain a strong relationship with God and his family. If members of the Church Council see the Senior Pastor neglecting these areas or if they see sin beginning to take hold, they shall discuss the issue with him, encouraging him to change direction. They should be willing to do what they can to help the Senior Pastor in this situation.

If the Senior Pastor is unwilling to repent and accept help, the Church Council may recommend disciplinary action up to and including termination. This recommendation must be presented to the CBC membership for a vote at a called meeting. The results of the vote shall be final.

### **Hiring A New Senior Pastor**

In the event a Senior Pastor vacancy occurs, the Church Council shall ensure that the immediate preaching needs are met each week at every service. They may appoint an interim Pastor/Leader if they deem it appropriate.

The Church Council will also appoint a Senior Pastor Search Team. The Church Council would be expected but not required to be members of the team. The team shall consist of at least 5 but not more than 7 members and shall be charged with the responsibility of identifying a permanent Senior Pastor candidate to be presented to the CBC membership in view of a call. The Church Council will notify the Church of the team members and keep the CBC family informed of the search progress.

After a careful and prayerful search and evaluation, the Search Team will invite a candidate to CBC in view of a call. The CBC family shall have an opportunity to hear the candidate in specific worship services. The Search Team will then make a recommendation to the CBC membership to extend the call. An affirmative vote of at least 75% of the members, age 17 and older, who are present and voting will constitute a call.

A budget amendment is required if the position is not included in the budget or if the salary to be offered is above the salary included in the budget for this position. Any required budget amendment must be approved by the CBC membership before an offer of employment is extended.



## SECTION 4 – EXECUTIVE PASTOR AND CAMPUS PASTOR

### EXECUTIVE PASTOR

The Executive Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church is recognized as the under-shepherd of Jesus Christ and will oversee the day-to-day operations and ministries of the church.

#### Requirements:

- Meets the Biblical criteria for Elder/Overseer/Pastor as found in Article B, Section 1.
- Licensed or ordained as a Baptist Minister.
- Mature believer with clear call to ministry.
- Experienced in oversight of ministry programs with positive interpersonal skills and the ability to delegate to and motivate others.
- Highly motivated with a proven love for the fellowship of the church.

#### Primary Duties:

- Serve on Church Council to develop and implement the vision, focus, and mission of the church.
- Work closely with campus pastors, ministry directors, and volunteer ministry leads to ensure communication, consistency, and healthy growth of all programs.
- Mentor and encourage staff and volunteer ministry leads to ensure all ministries maintain the vision, focus, and mission of the church.
- Review, create, and implement policies and procedures to ensure effective operations.
- Lead staff meetings.
- Work in conjunction with Campus Pastors to oversee church-wide discipleship development.
- Pending a Campus Pastor vacancy, interim oversight & coordination of campus worship and pulpit supply.
- Preach/Teach as needed.

#### Specific Duties:

- Oversee and assist the Management Team.
- Oversee and assist the Ministry Directors and support staff.
- Oversee and assist the Volunteer Ministry Team Leads.
- Represent the church in outreach events, cooperation with associational partners, and in civic matters.

#### Evaluation

The Executive Pastor shall be evaluated annually in writing by the Church Council Lay-Elders who will make a salary recommendation to be included in the CBC budget.

Additionally, the Church Council shall seek to support, encourage, lift up, and work in unity with the Executive Pastor. This includes encouraging and helping the Executive Pastor maintain a strong relationship with God and his family. If members of the Church Council see the Executive Pastor neglecting these areas or if they see sin beginning to take hold, they shall discuss the issue with him, encouraging him to change direction. They should be willing to do what they can to help the Executive Pastor in this situation. If the Executive Pastor is unwilling to repent and accept help, the Church Council may recommend disciplinary action up to and including termination. This recommendation must be presented to the CBC membership for a vote at a called meeting. The results of the vote shall be final.

#### Hiring A New Executive Pastor

In the event an Executive Pastor vacancy occurs, the Church Council shall ensure that the immediate preaching needs of the Executive's duties are met each week at every service. They may appoint an interim Pastor/Leader if they deem it appropriate.

The Church Council will also appoint an Executive Pastor Search Team. The Church Council would be expected but not required to be members of the team. The team shall consist of at least 5 but not more than 7 members and shall be charged with the responsibility of identifying a permanent Executive Pastor.

candidate to be presented to the CBC membership in view of a call. The Church Council will notify the Church of the team members and keep the CBC family informed of the search progress.

After a careful and prayerful search and evaluation, the Search Team will invite a candidate to CBC in view of a call. The CBC family shall have an opportunity to hear the candidate in specific worship services. The Search Team will then make a recommendation to the CBC membership to extend the call. An affirmative vote of at least 75% of the members, age 17 and older, who are present, and voting will constitute a call.

A budget amendment is required if the position is not included in the budget or if the salary to be offered is above the salary included in the budget for this position. Any required budget amendment must be approved by the CBC membership before an offer of employment is extended.

## **CAMPUS PASTOR**

The Campus Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church is recognized as the under-shepherd of Jesus Christ and implements and oversees Sunday gatherings, provides spiritual guidance and pastoral services to the congregation, and serves on the Church Council to develop and implement the vision, focus, and mission of the church.

### **Requirements:**

- Meets the Biblical criteria for Elder/Overseer/Pastor as found in Article B, Section 1.
- Licensed or ordained as a Baptist Minister.
- Highly motivated with a clear call to pastoral ministry and a proven love for the fellowship of the church.
- Skilled in development, presentation, and mentoring of clear and engaging sermons intentionally facilitating the mission and vision of the church.
- Positive interpersonal skills and ability to provide pastoral care, empathizing with the deep concerns of others.

### **Primary Duties:**

- Preaching and Teaching
  - Develop and deliver doctrinally sound messages relevant to the community in alignment with the church mission and vision.
  - Mentor/mentor additional sermon contributors from within the church family.
  - Oversee and assist the Sunday worship and production teams to maintain consistency and clarity in the presentation of Sunday gatherings.
  - Work in conjunction with various ministries to provide periodic focus-weekend emphasis.
  - Work in conjunction with Executive Pastor to oversee discipleship development including regular involvement in and facilitation of various ministries and small group Bible Studies.
- Pastoral Duties
  - Engage with members and guests to provide spiritual guidance, facilitating their growth in faith through counseling, discipleship, and mentoring.
  - Lead an effective program of visitation for sick and shut-in members and member prospects.
  - Perform (or oversee others as they perform) life events such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals.
  - Assist in managing conflict by working with the church council to reconcile relationships and promote church unity as Biblically appropriate.
  - Assist the Executive Pastor to oversee various ministries within the church, ensuring they align with biblical doctrine and the church mission and vision.
- Community Engagement (in coordination with the Executive Pastor)
  - Represent the church in outreach events, cooperation with associational partners, and in civic matters.
  - Develop relationships with pastors both within the church and in the greater community to broaden understanding and promote spiritual disciplines.

### **Evaluation**

The Campus Pastor shall be evaluated annually in writing by the Church Council Lay-Elders who will make a salary recommendation to be included in the CBC budget.

Additionally, the Church Council shall seek to support, encourage, lift up, and work in unity with the Campus Pastor. This includes encouraging and helping the Campus Pastor maintain a strong relationship with God and his family. If members of the Church Council see the Campus Pastor neglecting these areas or if they see sin beginning to take hold, they shall discuss the issue with him, encouraging him to change direction. They should be willing to do what they can to help the Campus Pastor in this situation. If the Campus Pastor is unwilling to repent and accept help, the Church Council may recommend disciplinary action up to and including termination. This recommendation must be presented to the CBC membership for a vote at a called meeting. The results of the vote shall be final.

### **Hiring A New Campus Pastor**

In the event a Campus Pastor vacancy occurs, the Church Council shall ensure that the immediate preaching needs are met each week at every service. They may appoint an interim Pastor/Leader if they deem it appropriate.

The Church Council will also appoint a Campus Pastor Search Team. The Church Council would be expected but not required to be members of the team. The team shall consist of at least 5 but not more than 7 members and shall be charged with the responsibility of identifying a permanent Campus Pastor candidate to be presented to the CBC membership in view of a call. The Church Council will notify the Church of the team members and keep the CBC family informed of the search progress.

After a careful and prayerful search and evaluation, the Search Team will invite a candidate to CBC in view of a call. The CBC family shall have an opportunity to hear the candidate in specific worship services. The Search Team will then make a recommendation to the CBC membership to extend the call. An affirmative vote of at least 75% of the members, age 17 and older, who are present, and voting will constitute a call.

A budget amendment is required if the position is not included in the budget or if the salary to be offered is above the salary included in the budget for this position. Any required budget amendment must be approved by the CBC membership before an offer of employment is extended.

## SECTION 5 – PASTORAL STAFF

Pastors are recognized as the under-shepherds of Jesus Christ and spiritual leaders at CBC. As members of the Church Council, Pastors, working under the leadership of the Senior Pastor and Church Council, shall lead the CBC family in their respective areas of responsibility which are assigned to them by the Senior Pastor.

### Requirements

1. Meet all requirements for Church Officers stated in Article B Section 1 of the CBC By-Laws.
2. Meet the specific requirements of their job description.
3. Able to articulate their call to vocational ministry.
4. CBC membership has affirmed their call to CBC.

### Evaluation

The Pastoral Staff shall be evaluated annually in writing by the Church Council Lay-Elders, who along with the Church Council Management Team will make salary recommendations to be included in the CBC budget.

Additionally, the Senior Pastor and the other Church Council members shall seek to support, encourage, lift up, and work in unity with each of the Pastoral Staff. This includes encouraging and helping them maintain a strong relationship with God and their families. If the Senior Pastor or other members of the Church Council see a Pastoral Staff member neglecting these areas or if they see sin beginning to take hold, they shall discuss the issue with him, encouraging him to change direction. They should be willing to do what they can to help him in this situation. If the Pastoral Staff member is unwilling to repent and accept help, the Church Council may recommend disciplinary action up to and including termination. This recommendation must be presented to the CBC membership for a vote at a called meeting. The results of the vote shall be final.

### Hiring Pastoral Staff

In the event a Pastoral Staff vacancy occurs or if the Church Council determines the need for an additional staff member, they shall ensure that the immediate needs are met and may appoint an interim leader if they deem it appropriate.

The Senior Pastor, working with the Church Council, will determine the process for selecting a new Pastoral Staff member. The Church Council will notify the CBC family of the process and keep them informed of the search progress.

After a careful and prayerful search and evaluation, the Church Council will invite a candidate to CBC in view of a call. The CBC family shall have an opportunity to hear the candidate in specific worship services. The Church Council will then make a recommendation to the CBC membership to extend the call. An affirmative vote of at least 75% of the members, age 17 and older, who are present and voting will constitute a call.

A budget amendment is required if the position is not included in the budget or if the salary to be offered is above the salary included in the budget for this position. Any required budget amendment must be approved by the CBC membership before an offer of employment is extended.

## SECTION 6 – CHURCH COUNCIL

Members of the Church Council are recognized as under-shepherds of Jesus Christ and spiritual leaders at CBC. They are responsible for:

1. The Vision for CBC
2. The preaching and teaching ministry at CBC
3. Overseeing the equipping of the CBC family for their ministries
4. Overseeing Pastoral Staff and Ministry Staff
5. Overseeing the Deacons
6. Ensuring transparency with other CBC leaders and the CBC family
7. Nominating individuals to fill Church Officer positions
8. Presenting church discipline issues to the CBC membership
9. Determining theological positions
10. Working with the Management Team to develop sound policies and procedures in a CBC Operations Manual
11. Maintaining and updating the Constitution and By-Laws
12. Approval of CBC membership.

The Church Council consists of:

1. The Senior Pastor who serves as chairman Pastoral Staff. Note: New Pastoral Staff will serve a 6-month probationary period prior to receiving Council voting rights.
2. At least three men and no more than ten men Lay-Elders.
3. Approximately one man Lay-Elder for every 100 members with the intent to have representation for each campus.
4. A council Chairman shall be selected by the Church Council from amongst the Council Members. This role may be periodically rotated as best determined by the Council.

It is the goal of the Senior Pastor and the Church Council to work together in unity as they seek to lead and oversee CBC. If the Church Council is unable to come to unity after discussion, prayer and fasting, they may consult other Church Officers or take the issue to the CBC membership for a vote. The results of the vote shall be final.

### Requirements

1. Meet all requirements for Church Officers stated in Article B Section 1 of the CBC By-Laws
2. Be a member of CBC for at least 12 months
3. Make serving on the Church Council their primary ministry at CBC.
4. Licensed and/or ordained – or willing to do so.

### Selection of the Church Council Lay-Elders

If a Lay-Elder vacancy on the Church Council occurs or if the Church Council determines there is a need for an additional Lay-Elder member, the Council shall nominate a candidate to fill that position. That candidate shall be presented to the CBC family at least 30 days before a vote.

If a member believes there is a reason a nominated person is not able or qualified to serve, they should follow the steps outlined in Article B, Section 2 of the CBC By-Laws.

### Term

Lay-Elder Members of the Church Council shall serve 3-year terms. At the end of their term, the member is encouraged to pray and ask God if He desires them to continue serving. If so, they need to inform the other members of the Church Council. If the Church Council agrees, their name shall be submitted again to the CBC membership for approval. After two consecutive terms the member must rotate off for at least one year. If the Church Council is in the middle of something that would be hurt by a member rotating off, a one-year extension may be granted with a unanimous vote of the Church Council and approval by the CBC membership.

## SECTION 7 – DEACONS

Deacons are servants of CBC who assist the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff and Church Council in meeting the needs of the CBC family. They have the responsibility to oversee the spiritual and physical care of the CBC family. Additionally, Deacons are to:

1. Work to protect the unity of CBC, seeking to be peacemakers in all situations.
2. Oversee the benevolence ministry.
3. Conduct an annual review of the CBC membership.
4. Assist in the administration of Church ordinances.
5. Help their assigned congregation run smoothly by praying and counseling with people before and after services and assisting when and where possible.
6. Make ministry visits to widows and shut-ins, as well as members in the hospital and assisted living facilities.

### Requirements

1. Meet all requirements for Church Officers stated in Article B Section 1 of the CBC By-Laws.
2. Be a member of CBC for at least 6 months.
3. Meet the Biblical requirements outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13:  
[1 Timothy 3:8-13 ESV] <sup>8</sup>Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup>They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup>And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. <sup>11</sup>Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup>Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. <sup>13</sup>For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.
4. Ordained – or willing to do so.

### Number of Deacons

Approximately one Deacon for every 40 people in average attendance per congregation.

### Selection of Deacons

The Church Council will accept recommendations from leaders and others within the CBC family. They will prayerfully observe and consider the qualified individuals, then meet with them to affirm their willingness, calling, and qualification to serve.

The Church Council will present the Deacon nominees to the CBC family at least 30 days prior to a vote.

If a member believes there is a reason a nominated individual is not able or qualified to serve, they should follow the steps outlined in Article B, Section 2 of the CBC By-Laws.

### Term

Deacons shall serve 3-year terms. At the end of the 3-year term, Deacons are encouraged to pray and ask God if He desires them to continue serving as an active Deacon. If so, they will inform the Church Council or Lead Deacon. A member of the Church Council or the Lead Deacon will meet with the Deacon to reaffirm their willingness, calling, and continued qualification to serve. Deacons desiring to continue serving must be reaffirmed by the Church Council. Their names must be published to the CBC family two weeks prior to reaffirmation by the Church Council.

If Deacons do not feel God desires them to continue to serve, they can choose to resign, become an inactive Deacon for a period of time or become a Deacon Emeritus.

## SECTION 8 – MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Management Team, **under the oversight of the Executive Pastor and** in support of the mission and vision of CBC, is responsible for the monetary and physical resources of CBC. Those responsibilities include:

1. Maintaining CBC documents including personnel files
2. Developing sound policies and procedures in a CBC Operations Manual
3. Maintaining adequate property and liability insurance for CBC
4. Working with the Church Council to prepare and submit a proposed annual budget to the CBC membership for approval
5. Submitting monthly budget reports to the Church Council and CBC family
6. Conducting annual evaluations and making salary recommendations for administrative, facilities and custodial staff
7. Overseeing spending, cash flow, and budget amendments
8. Hiring and overseeing administrative, facilities and custodial staff
9. Overseeing and maintaining teams to help in the areas of finance, facilities, legal, personnel, technology, and others as required
10. Ensuring that CBC membership and business records are maintained
11. Maintaining the CBC Operations Manual, in coordination with the Church Council.

### Requirements

1. **Meet all requirements for Church Officers stated in Article B Section 1 of the CBC By-Laws**
2. **Must be of exemplary character with the highest integrity, holding firm to the faith and managing their own affairs well. Be eager to serve, committed to their spouse (if married), wise, fair, helpful, self-controlled, hospitable, gentle, and serve as examples to the CBC family. Must not be money hungry, quarrelsome, quick tempered, overbearing or given to drunkenness.**
3. Be a member of CBC for at least 6 months or a designated staff member.

### Size of the Management Team

**Under the oversight of the Executive Pastor,** the Management Team consists of:

1. **Chairman** **A Management Team Chairman as selected by the Church Council from amongst the Management Team members or a designated staff member. With the exception of a designated staff member, this role may be periodically rotated as best determined by the Church Council and Management Team.**
2. Clerk, who is responsible for recording minutes of CBC family meetings
3. Treasurer, who is responsible for:
  - a. Overseeing the counting and reporting of CBC offerings with Counters
  - b. Ensuring those involved in the finances of CBC exercise extreme confidentiality
  - c. Being available to approve and sign checks
  - d. Ensuring all tax and government reporting requirements are met
  - e. Overseeing and maintaining financial records
4. 3 to 6 At-Large Team members with a wide range of expertise, including finance, facilities, legal, personnel, technology and others as required.

Specific responsibilities of the members shall be determined by the Management Team.

### Selection of the Management Team

With the exception of a designated staff member who may serve as chairperson, members are nominated by the Church Council and approved by the CBC membership.

If a vacancy on the Management Team occurs or if the Church Council determines there is a need for an additional member, or at the end of a team member's term, the Council shall evaluate the needs and skills required and will nominate an individual to fill that position.

The Church Council will present the Management Team nominees to the CBC family at least 30 days prior to a vote.

If a member believes there is a reason a nominated person is not able or qualified to serve, they should follow the steps outlined in Article B, Section 2 of the CBC By-Laws.

### **Term**

With the exception of a designated staff member who may serve as chairperson, Management Team members shall serve 3-year terms.

At the end of their term, the member is encouraged to pray and ask God if He desires them to continue serving. If so, they need to inform the Church Council. If the Church Council agrees, their name shall be submitted again to the CBC membership for approval. After two consecutive terms the member must rotate off for at least one year. If the Management Team is in the middle of something that would be hurt by a member rotating off, a one-year extension may be granted with a unanimous vote of the Church Council and approval by the CBC membership.

## **SECTION 9 – TRUSTEES**

The Trustees are the legal representatives of CBC as required by the laws of the State of Texas. They are to sign legal documents only as directed by the CBC membership.

There shall be at least 3 Trustees. When a vacancy occurs, or if there is a need for an additional Trustee, the Church Council will nominate the required number of candidates and bring their names before the CBC family at least 30 days before a vote.

If a member believes there is a reason a nominated person is not able or qualified to serve, they should follow the steps outlined in Article B, Section 2 of the CBC By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE C – MINISTRY STAFF**

Ministry Staff, working under the **direct leadership of the Executive Pastor and the Senior Pastor and** Church Council, shall minister to the CBC family in their respective areas of responsibility. **Ministry staff will report to an assigned Pastoral Staff member for direct leadership.**

### **Requirements**

**Meet all requirements for Church Officers stated in Article B Section 1 of the CBC By-Laws. Must be of exemplary character with the highest integrity, holding firm to the faith and managing their own affairs well. Be eager to serve, committed to their spouse (if married), wise, fair, helpful, self-controlled, hospitable, gentle, and serve as examples to the CBC family. Must not be money hungry, quarrelsome, quick tempered, overbearing or given to drunkenness.**

### **Evaluation**

Ministry Staff shall be evaluated annually in writing by their supervisor who along with the Church Council will make salary recommendations to be included in the CBC budget.

Additionally, the Church Council **and Pastoral Staff** shall seek to support, encourage, lift up, and work in unity with the Ministry Staff. This includes encouraging and helping them maintain a strong relationship with God and their families. If members of the Church Council **or Pastoral Staff** see a Ministry Staff member neglecting these areas or if they see sin beginning to take hold, they shall discuss the issue with the individual, encouraging a change in direction. They should be willing to do what they can to help the individual in this situation.



If the individual is unwilling to repent and accept help, the Church Council will determine the appropriate disciplinary action which could include termination of employment.

In the case of poor performance, their inability to fulfill their role, financial considerations or a change in staff skills requirements the Church Council will choose a course of action which could include a change in responsibilities, additional training, or termination of employment.

### **Hiring Ministry Staff**

In the event a vacancy occurs or if the Church Council determines the need for an additional staff member, they shall ensure that the immediate needs are met and may appoint an interim staff member if they deem it appropriate.

The Senior Executive Pastor, working with the Church Council, will determine the process for selecting a new staff member. After a careful and prayerful search and evaluation, the Church Council or their designee may make an offer of employment. However, if a budget amendment is required it must be approved by the CBC membership before an offer of employment is made.

## **ARTICLE D – FINANCES**

### **SECTION 1 – BUDGET**

We believe the scriptural method of Church financial support is through the tithes and offerings of God's people. In order to plan wisely, promote transparency, and use this money in the most beneficial way, the Management Team shall prepare an annual budget to be presented to the CBC membership for approval before the beginning of each CBC fiscal year.

### **SECTION 2 – FISCAL YEAR**

The CBC fiscal year shall begin on October 1 and end on September 30.

### **SECTION 3 – MISSIONS SUPPORT**

As we seek to Declare the Good News near and far, we support the missions efforts of the Bluebonnet Baptist Association, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention, as well as the yearly offerings that support these organizations. Those missions efforts include but are not limited to:

1. The Cooperative Program
2. The Texas State Missions Offering (Reach Texas)
3. The North American Missions Offering (Annie Armstrong)
4. The International Missions Offering (Lottie Moon)

Additionally, CBC supports local missions near and far as approved by the Church Council.

## ARTICLE E – MINISTRY PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Church Officers are responsible for caring for people and leading CBC. The work of ministry is done by the CBC family using their gifts. It is the responsibility of the Church Officers to train, equip, and support those within the CBC family who serve.

All ministry programs and organizations shall be under the control of CBC and shall support the CBC mission to DEMONSTRATE God's love, DECLARE the Good News and DISCIPLE near and far. All ministry leadership shall be appointed by the Executive Pastor in consultation with the Church Council. Ministry programs and organizations shall be developed and organized as needed under the direction of the Executive Pastor in consultation with the Church Council.

## ARTICLE F – CBC OPERATIONS MANUAL

The Church Council and Management Team shall maintain a CBC Operations Manual that includes:

1. Building Use Rules
2. Child Protection Guidelines
3. Personnel Policies
4. Employee Benefits
5. Job Descriptions
6. Other items as needed.

The manual shall be maintained in the CBC administrative office and made available to anyone who requests access. The Church Council and Management Team shall review the manual at least annually, and update the manual as required.

## ARTICLE G – AMENDMENTS

The By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of the members, age 17 and older, present and voting at, an annual meeting, Family Meeting, special meeting called by the Church Council or Management Team, or on Sunday morning before and after each worship hour, providing the proposed amendment has been presented to the CBC family at least 30 days prior to the vote.

## ARTICLE H – RATIFICATION

These By-Laws are hereby ordained and established for Calvary Baptist Church of Bastrop, Texas by vote of the CBC membership on August 6, 2023.

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Jim Jordan, Church Council

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Rick Adams, Management Team

**APPENDIX:**  
**THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 2000**  
(bfm.sbc.net)

**I. The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

**II. God**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

**A. God the Father**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

**B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

**C. God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

### **III. Man**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

### **IV. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

### **V. God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

## **VI. The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

## **VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

## **VIII. The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

## **IX. The Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

## **X. Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

## **XI. Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

## **XII. Education**

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

## **XIII. Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

## **XIV. Cooperation**

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself

justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

## **XV. The Christian and the Social Order**

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ.

In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

## **XVI. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

## **XVII. Religious Liberty**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

## **XVIII. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.