

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Council Governance Implementation Committee

UPDATED: May 2018

Committee background & purpose

What is the Governance Implementation committee charged with doing?

- In April 2015, Council voted on and approved the following motion:

We move to create an implementation committee to formalize the organizational structure and constitutional changes necessary to transition the Calvary Council to a Board of Directors model (ranging between 10-12 members) that would relentlessly pursue Calvary's mission, vision and values. The newly formed committee will draft necessary constitutional changes and guidelines to implement a Board of Directors model, for review and approval by the Council and ultimately the congregation at a later date.

Why are we changing the council structure and not working to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the current structure?

In September 2013, a task force was formed to “Review the governance structures and best practices of other churches to formulate effective recommendations for Calvary’s Council”

In April 2015, the task force reported both suggestions to improve council effectiveness AND a recommendation to pursue a “Board of Directors-like structure” for council. The Council agreed and adopted the above resolution.

Based on recommendations from the initial task force, much has been done to improve how the current council operates including more transparent communication and intentional involvement of full council in key decisions. However, in order to make lasting improvements, council agreed with the task force’s recommendations that the structure should also change.

What did the initial task force do?

The initial task force conducted research on council structures of other large churches through website searches and interviews. Past presidents of Calvary Council, staff members, committee chairs, and pastors were also interviewed to gain their perspectives on challenges they faced during their years of service.

Is Calvary the only church with a Council of size 33?

Through research, it was found that Calvary had the largest church council of any studied. Council sizes ranged from 7 to 20 members, with most in the 10-12 person range.

How do these changes help us achieve Calvary's mission?

Changes to our governance structure direct the Council to concentrate on Calvary's mission to "lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ." Simplifying and improving the Council structure will enable much of the 1500 hours currently spent annually on Council affairs to be redirected towards ministries and mission.

Who is on the current Governance committee?

Current members include Jim Borowick (chair), Heather Hosfield, Sue Mork, Todd Loncorich, Dave Kufahl, John Russo, Jeff Johnson, Mick Lee and Pastor Dave Glesne.

Governance & structure options

Is now the right time to change?

Yes. After more than a decade of discussion, Council commissioned a task force to begin working on solutions to improve Calvary's governance structure in September 2013. The committee has conducted their work prayerfully, thoughtfully, deliberately and comprehensively. Recommendations have been made for discussion and approval by Council at each step of the process. Updates have been provided to the congregation at atrium discussions, town halls and annual meetings. Changes are currently needed for Calvary's lay leadership to successfully deliver on Calvary's mission.

Why do we need to change?

In order to support Calvary's mission to "lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ," the time and talents of council leadership must be used effectively and purposefully, in a manner that is clearly stated in our constitution and by-laws.

Calvary's constitution was created in the 1950's, when Calvary was much smaller and Council volunteers had a large role in running the church ministries. As Calvary grew, the administrative needs also grew and outstretched the ability of volunteers to run the church. Staff were added to run the ministries and meet the operational needs of Calvary. Our current constitution provides for Council members to play a large role in running the ministries of the church, which no longer matches how we operate. Council members stopped being formally aligned to the ministries and standing committees of Calvary many years ago.

Enhancements will result in:

1. **Strong strategic direction** - In today's model, too often, the urgent wins over the important.
2. **Nimble, less complex decision-making** - With our current 33-member Council, there is confusion over roles and responsibilities, and given the lack of continuity in terms, less ability to carry out strategic initiatives from year to year.
3. **Better stewardship of time** - It is estimated that more than 1,500 people hours are spent annually in Executive Committee and Council meetings.
4. **Clarity** - Roles and responsibilities between the Church Council, senior pastor, staff and congregation are confusing and often lead to conflict.

What is changing?

1. With Council focused on strategies to achieve our mission, Calvary should take on bolder initiatives with greater impact and reach.
2. A smaller Council should be able to make decisions in a timely manner, resulting in fewer disruptions and distractions from our mission.
3. Significant time and energy can be redirected from meetings and cumbersome processes to achieving greater impact in our ministries.

4. Better defined roles and responsibilities for Church Council, senior pastor, staff and the congregation should result in smoother operations, fewer crises and the ability to attract top talent to Calvary.

What is the new Council Size and Terms?

The new Council will be 11 members in size, plus the inclusion of the Sr. Pastor in an advisory, non-voting role. Terms increase from 3 years to 4, with a limit of 2 consecutive terms of service. Council members interested in a second term must “re-apply” through the Nominating Committee and be re-elected by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

With fewer people on Council, are we diminishing the opportunities for congregational input?

No. The smaller council will still have an important function in governance at Calvary. Further, committees involving congregational members such as pastoral call committees will be formed as needs arise, thus increasing the congregational representation and input on key challenges and issues.

How will the role of the Nominating Committee change?

The important work of the Nominating Committee becomes even more vital to the success of Calvary. The Nominating Committee will focus on finding candidates that meet the needs expressed by the incumbent Council for the upcoming term.

Will the Congregation still elect members to Council?

Yes. The Nominating Committee will provide vetted applicants for Council positions 30 days in advance of the Annual Meeting for review by the congregation, with elections to be held at the Annual Meeting. Because of the intentional nature of the nominations process including 30 days for the congregation to review candidates, nominations for Council positions will not be accepted from the floor during the election process at the Annual Meeting.

How will Officers be selected?

As in most Board governance structures, Council will elect its own officers, including President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Officer roles are 2 years in length and Council members are limited to 2 consecutive Officer role terms.

With a smaller Council size, how many members must be present to make decisions?

Assuming Council is fully staffed at a size of 11, 9 members must be present either physically or remote to meet and make decisions. A Quorum is stated as “Current Council size minus 2”.

Implementation

What is needed to implement changes to Calvary's Council governance structure?

Changes to the constitution will need to be drafted. Dayton Soby, a long time Calvary member and author of the current constitution, has offered his time and services to draft necessary changes at no cost to Calvary. Once finalized, two congregational votes are required for the adoption of constitutional changes.

What are the next steps?

The Governance committee has defined and presented a new Council structure to Council (Step 1) and determined the impact on the Constitution and By-Laws (Step 2), receiving was overwhelming support from Council. The Governance Committee is now working on Step 3 where changes to the constitution are being drafted and an implementation plan is being created. The congregation will be given updates and asked for input and feedback throughout the process.

Step 1 - Define new Council structure

Passed Council by 84% margin

Step 2 (*) - Determine Impact on Constitution and By-Laws

Passed Council by 91% margin

Step 3 (*) - Draft changes to the Constitution and By-Laws

Step 4 (*) - Create an Implementation Plan

*** Note that Steps 3 and 4 are being done in parallel

Step 5 - Congregational Vote on Constitution and By-Laws changes

Step 6 - Execute Implementation Plan

(*) - indicates Council Approval is required

When will these revisions be made?

With the Senior Pastor call process currently underway, the Governance Committee is working to demonstrate a serious commitment to improving the way in which Calvary is governed. The goal is to approve the changes to the constitution in the fall and implementation to begin with the next Council term.

How will Council members be selected for the new structure?

Council size and terms will change. The Nominating Committee will follow a very intentional, thoughtful and prayerful process in which members are sought for roles that leverage their gifts, talents and experiences. The Nominating Committee will manage the process, where candidates will be vetted through a thorough application, interview and election process.

How will any changes affect the congregation?

In the short term, there will be very little noticeable change in how Calvary operates.

Longer term, Calvary should shift from an inward focus on processes to an outward focus where we combine our gifts, talents and resources to positively impact the world outside of Calvary's 4 walls. With Council focused on strategy, leadership and pursuit of Calvary's mission, our ministries will have a much greater impact on all God's people.

For more information, see <https://www.calvary.org/about/church-council> or talk with a current member of Council.