

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia

2026 Soccer Program Guide

1. Introduction

Calvary Chapel's soccer program is ministry designed to help children become disciples of Jesus Christ through the means of sports, with a secondary emphasis on teaching them the game of soccer. One of the unique distinctions of our league is a weekly team devotional where coaches and players meet to discuss what being a disciple of Jesus Christ looks like both on and off the field.

As a part of that purpose, our league allows players of all skill levels to participate and enjoy themselves. While we do keep score and standings, our priorities are honoring the Lord, having fun, and then enjoying healthy competition, in that order.

2. League Structure and Schedule

We offer five co-ed leagues. These leagues are as follows:

- A League - Ages 4-5
 - Playing time: 16-minute halves
 - Number of players: 5 (no keeper)
 - Ball size: 3
- B League - Ages 6-7
 - Playing time: 21-minute halves
 - Number of players: 6 + a keeper
 - Ball size: 3
- C League - Ages 8-9
 - Playing time: 23-minute halves
 - Number of players: 7 + a keeper
 - Ball size: 4
- D League - Ages 10-12
 - Playing time: 25-minute halves
 - Number of players: 8 + a keeper
 - Ball size: 4
- E League - Ages 13-17
 - Playing time: 32-minute halves
 - Number of players: 10 + a keeper
 - Ball size: 5

3. Game Details

All games will be played according to the latest edition of FIFA's laws of the game unless otherwise specified.

All games will start on time, even if one or both teams don't have enough players for a full team. In that scenario, the opposing team may choose to play down to match the other team, but is not obligated to do so.

Teams may only recruit a player from another team to play at the agreement of the referee and both coaches. In younger age groups, the emphasis should be on getting enough players for both teams to play, so the team with more players can lend players to the other team.

The clock runs continuously with the exception of halftime and, on hot days at the agreement of the referees and coaches, water breaks midway through the half. In 8-9s and up, teams may call for substitutions on throw-ins when their team has possession, as well as all goal kicks or after a scored goal. Teams may sub on an opponent's throw-in only if the opponent subs. No substitutions are allowed on a free kick or a corner kick. Injured players can be subbed out at any stoppage. In the 4-5s and 6-7s, subs are allowed on all stoppages of play. Coaches in all age groups should give players equal amounts of playing time as much as possible. To encourage player safety, players will not be penalized for using hands/arms to protect their head (except in the E League).

Standings are kept in all ages except the 4-5s, with playoffs for the 10-12s and 13-17s taking place at the end of the season. All regular season games will end in regulation, even if the score is tied. Playoff games ending in a tie will be decided by a shoot-out.

4. Cancellation of Games

Chris Clark and Josiah Simpson will determine if games need to be canceled. If a game is cancelled, we will attempt to email you and possibly call you (provided you have supplied us with a good phone number and email address). We also will post any cancellation info (or lack of cancellation, if the weather is questionable) on our website at kids.ccphilly.org/sports. Cancelled regular season games are generally not re-scheduled. Playoff games may be rescheduled if the church calendar permits.

5. Uniforms and Equipment

All players must be in full uniform in order to participate in their game. No player will be allowed to participate in the game unless he or she is in proper uniform (Calvary-issued shirt and socks of the same color). The only exception is that players may wear their own shorts, as long as those shorts are solid black, and preferably without any logos or markings. All players, for their own safety, must wear shin guards for all practices and games. No jewelry can be worn during the game. Cleats are recommended, but sneakers are allowed.

Note on earrings: It is our strong recommendation and preference that no child wears earrings while playing due to risk for injury. However, if your child must wear earrings, all earrings **must** be covered with tape or a band-aid. Only small stud earrings are allowed (no hoops, large earrings, or anything that dangles). Calvary is not liable for any injury for players who choose to wear earrings.

Please do not bring your own soccer ball to games on Saturdays. Game balls will be provided. Players may, however, bring their own ball to practices. All players should bring a water bottle to all games and practices. Players should mark soccer balls or water bottles brought from home with their name in order to avoid confusion.

6. Facilities

Our program works best when everyone is respectful of our facilities and of others who are using them. We ask that no child be left unattended while at Calvary, and young children should be supervised at all times. While recreational play is allowed for children who are not currently playing their game, please make sure that any play does not interfere with games in progress. Please do not walk on the fields during play, and

please watch to make sure that young children do not run onto the field. Please be courteous and clean up after yourselves. Your cooperation is appreciated.

7. Eligibility

Each player is required to register. These leagues are open not only to those presently attending Calvary Chapel, but also to anyone else that may want to play. However, all players are required to participate in the team devotions that will take place each week. Devotions take place before or after each team's game time slot at the coach's discretion and are considered part of the game. Players may NOT skip team devotions and attend the game portion only, as they are a critical aspect of the discipleship element of our soccer league. Any player who is unwilling to participate in team devotions, skips these times regularly, becomes a hindrance to the spiritual growth of his/her teammates, or does not act in a way appropriate for a Christian league will be asked not to sign up or to withdraw from the league. Players who leave the league for such reasons will not be given a refund.

8. Parents/Guardians

At least one parent/guardian is expected to be present and with their child at Calvary's field at all times during both practices and games. All children, both players and non-players, must be under the direct supervision of a parent at all times. Parents are not permitted to drop off their children and leave. If a parent is unable to supervise their child, they must ask another willing parent to supervise their child(ren).

Parents (not coaches or referees) are responsible for their children's health and safety while at Calvary. Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia and its employees and volunteers are not responsible for any injury or illness that may occur at games or practices. Parents are encouraged to be informed about topics such as hydration and head injuries. Any player who demonstrates the symptoms of a concussion will be asked to sit out the remainder of the game for his/her own safety. Coaches and referees are permitted to remove players from the game for health and safety reasons. Parents may not enter the field of play to attend to an injured child unless invited by the referee.

No parent/spectator is permitted to sit behind a goal during play. Anyone who sits behind a goal will be asked to move. This rule applies even if your child is playing goalie. Children are prohibited from playing on any of the goals or field equipment, using soccer balls and goals outside of their team's designated practice/game time, or playing ball next to the field of play. Please be sure all children who are not playing are behaving in a safe manner and not interfering with play. Spectators must not interfere with games in progress and are asked to clean up after themselves when leaving the field. Any parent who is demonstrating behavior inconsistent with Calvary's values will be asked to leave the field with a possibility of being banned from all future soccer events.

9. Coaches

In order to coach a team, a coach must be active in attendance at Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia. In addition, everyone must have on file a completed ministry application form. In compliance with Pennsylvania state law, volunteers must also have a completed Child Abuse History Clearance and State Criminal History background check (those who have lived out-of-state in the past 10 years must also complete the FBI background check).

In addition to these formal requirements, all coaches must have an active relationship with Jesus Christ. While coaching experiences is not required, godly character is a must. As the purpose of our league is to be

a ministry and point the players to Jesus, coaches are expected to be an example of a godly man or woman first and a soccer coach second.

Coaches may not drive a child who is not his/her own to or from practices and games unless they have obtained permission ahead of time from the child's parents/guardians.

Coaches are to report any serious injuries by filling out an injury report. Serious injuries would include (but are not limited to) a head injury, broken or potentially broken bone, severe cut, or anything that requires a hospital visit. Injury reports are available in the snack stand and can be returned to the snack stand once filled out. Injury reports should be filled out and signed by both the child's parent/guardian and the coach present when the injury occurs.

10. Referees

Our league is blessed with an awesome team of volunteer referees who make the games possible. Not only are the referees giving of their time to serve, but they are also our brothers and sisters in Christ and should be respected at all times. Any display of offense toward a referee is unacceptable and will result in either a warning or a yellow card. Continued abuse will result in removal from the church premises with the possibility of being banned from future events.

11. Conduct

This league is for the children. We intend to display Christian attitudes in everything. Good conduct by players, spectators, coaches, and referees is mandatory at all times both on and off the field. If anyone becomes unruly, that person will be asked to leave the premises. Failure to comply will terminate the game and result in the possibility of the security being called upon to remove the unruly person from the church's premises.

Calvary soccer uses FIFA's "card system" of yellow cards (warning) and red cards (ejection) for serious foul play and other infractions specified in the laws of the game. A red card will result in suspension from the game with the penalized team playing one player down for the remainder of the game. Players who receive a red card may be suspended for 1 or more weeks at the discretion of Chris Clark and Josiah Simpson. If ejected for fighting, the instigator may receive an additional game suspension and possibly be suspended for the rest of the season.

Our league does not permit slide tackling at any level. Slide tackles will be penalized with a direct free kick and, if the referee deems it intentional, a yellow card.

12. Injuries

Soccer is a contact sport. While we make it a priority to keep all players safe, injuries will happen. When an injury or apparent injury takes place, it is up to the referee to either stop play or wait until the next stoppage. Coaches and parents may attempt to alert the referee but must refrain from running onto the field during play. Parents and coaches must wait for the referee to invite them onto the field to attend to the injured player. Parents or coaches may choose to have the injured player sit out for the remainder of the game or re-enter the game unless the referee deems the player unfit to return, in which case they cannot play. No player exhibiting symptoms of a concussion may return to play unless cleared by a medical professional. Players with an open cut may not re-enter the game until all bleeding stops and all blood is washed from the skin/clothes of the player.

Any significant injuries (broken bones, major cuts, concussions, or anything which requires a doctor or hospital visit) should be reported using an accident report. These reports can be found at the snack stand and require the signature of both the volunteer present at the injury (usually the coach) and the child's parent/guardian.

13. Gender

At Calvary, we believe that God has created both boys and girls uniquely and differently in His image. These differences can cause challenges in the realm of sports, and as with all things, we seek to speak with biblical clarity on these issues to a lost and confused world. All of our teams and age groups are co-ed, meaning that boys and girls will be competing alongside and against one another, and that should impact the way that players play and coaches coach. More specifically, boys (particularly in the older age groups) should be mindful of how they compete with and against girls, both from a physicality and competitiveness perspective, and coaches should be instructing and discipling all their players, both boys and girls, about how to use their bodies on the field in a way that is honoring to the Lord.