

Constitution

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this corporation shall be Hope Bible Fellowship

ARTICLE II -- PURPOSE

Section 1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this corporation shall be to establish a local family oriented church, adhering to the historic definition of "Church" which is: A New Testament Church is a body of born again, baptized believers voluntarily banded together for regular worship, teaching, fellowship and the world-wide proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; perpetuating the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; having New Testament officers of Pastor and Deacons and governed by God's principles clearly defined in the New Testament Scriptures.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

NOTE: Articles III through IX constitute the By-Laws of Hope Bible Fellowship

Section 1. Receiving Members:

Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving satisfactory evidence of regeneration, having been subsequently baptized by immersion, accepting the Statement of Faith, church Constitution and Covenant of this church, and who is recommended by the Pastor and Deacons who constitute the Membership Committee, may be received into membership by a majority vote of the church membership.

Section 2. Active Members:

All members who show their interest in the welfare of the church by regular attendance and those members, who because of sickness or infirmities are unable to attend services, shall be classified as active members.

Section 3. Inactive Members:

All those who do not attend the regular services without reasonable excuse for a period of six months shall automatically be placed on the inactive membership roll after being informed of such pending action. Members on the inactive list shall not be eligible to vote in the church business meetings. Any members on the inactive list can be restored to active status upon their resumption of regular attendance and a majority decision by the Pastor and Deacons.

Section 4. Removal of Members

A person may be removed from membership for the following reasons: a) By reason of church discipline; b) By written request of said member; c) Death.

Section 5. Discipline of Members:

The procedure for discipline shall be followed as outlined by the principles in Matthew 18:15-20. The aim of discipline is to "gain" the erring brother (Gal. 6:1). If restoration attempts fail, then church discipline should culminate in dismissal from membership by recommendation of the Pastor and Deacons followed by congregational vote.

ARTICLE IV -- CHURCH OFFICERS

CHURCH OFFICERS:

The elected officers of the church shall be, but not limited to Deacons, Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial secretary. All officers except Pastors and Deacons shall be elected for a one-year term.

1. PASTOR:

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite term. He shall meet the qualifications described in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The relationship can be dissolved upon at least thirty (30) days notice from the Pastor to the church or notice of the church to the Pastor. The 30 days notice can be waived by mutual agreement.

The call or dismissal of the Pastor shall come before the church at a called Business Meeting for that purpose. A notice shall be read from the pulpit in all services on the two Sundays preceding the called meeting. A three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of

the active members present and voting is necessary to call or dismiss a Pastor. The quorum for calling or dismissing a Pastor shall not be less than fifty percent (50%) of the active voting membership. (See Article V, section 5 for other quorum requirements).

The Pastor shall preach the Word of God regularly, administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, act as Moderator of Business Meetings (the Pastor may appoint a Moderator to serve in his place), oversee the ministry of the church, watch over its membership and spiritual interest, and organize and develop its strength for best possible service. He shall be an *ex officio*, non-voting member of all ministries and officially organized groups within the church.

2. DEACONS:

The congregation shall appoint by their vote of approval an Interim Leadership Team ("ILT") which will assist with the process of appointing the initial Deacons. The congregation will submit their nominations for the office of Deacon to the ILT. The ILT will determine the initial number of Deacons that are to serve on the Board of Deacons based upon the size and needs of the congregation, and also based upon the ILT's determination that the nominated candidates meet the New Testament qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13, as well as the candidate's confirmation of their willingness to serve. The ILT will then present each recommended candidate to the congregation for a vote of affirmation. In order to stagger these initial appointments, the term of office for each initial Deacon shall be for three, two or one year(s) as determined by the number of votes each candidate receives. (The candidate with the most votes will be appointed to a 3-year term, the candidate with the second most votes to a 2-year term, and the candidate(s) receiving the fewest votes relative to the top two vote-getting candidates will serve 1-year terms. Each initial candidate must receive a minimum majority vote in order to be appointed to serve.)

The Deacon Board (once it has been formed by the above process resulting in the appointment of all individuals to serve as a Deacon), along with the Pastor, will assume responsibility for the process of the appointment of new future Deacons. The congregation will be asked to annually submit their nominations for the office of Deacon to the Deacon Board and the Pastor. The Deacon Board along with the Pastor will review those nominations based upon the number of Deacons needed and based upon the New Testament qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13, combined with a candidate's indication of a willingness to serve. The Deacon Board and Pastor also reserve the right to make and so evaluate their own nominations for a new Deacon. Following the evaluations of all names under consideration, the Deacon Board will present their recommendations to the congregation for a vote of affirmation at a duly called business meeting. All subsequent terms of office for a Deacon following the initial appointments shall be for three years, unless the Deacon Board recommends otherwise in order to maintain an appropriate staggering of expiring terms. At the end of a 3-year term, each Deacon will be ineligible for reelection for a period of one year.

The Deacons are to, with the Pastor, have the care and welfare of the church uppermost in their minds and service. The Deacons shall assist the Pastor in guarding and nourishing the spiritual life of the church. They shall oversee the preparation and administration of baptisms and the Lord's Supper. They shall exercise the general oversight of all church properties and are authorized to pass on routine operating and maintenance expenditures up to \$1000.00 or as the Church Budget directs.

The Pastor and Deacons shall propose a budget to present to the church at the annual Business Meeting.

The Deacons shall constitute the Pulpit Committee to interview and recommend to the church a candidate for the office of Pastor when there is a vacancy in this office.

The Pastor and Deacons shall be the Membership Committee and oversee assimilation of new members. They shall also be the Discipline Committee. They shall likewise serve as the Nomination Committee choosing two members from the congregation at large to assist them if they desire.

The Deacons shall direct the Treasurer as to the paying of all current expenses.

The Deacon body shall function as the Trustees of this corporation, therefore, they shall be responsible for performing any legal duties required of them.

3. CHURCH CLERK:

The Church Clerk shall be responsible for keeping the minutes of all church Business Meetings, keep a complete registry of membership, and perform such other particular duties as may be prescribed by the church.

4. TREASURER:

The Treasurer shall act as bookkeeper of the church, shall keep accurate records of all receipts and disbursements, disburse money as directed by the Pastor and Deacons and shall make regular reports to the Pastor, Deacons and church. The Treasurer shall not be the Pastor or a Deacon. The person elected to this position shall serve the church for a period of one year and is eligible to hold this position for additional years as approved by member vote at annual business meeting.

5. FINANCIAL SECRETARY:

The Financial Secretary shall assist the Treasurer in counting all church offerings and in keeping an accurate record of the income of the church, and provide annual individual receipts of giving and will assume the responsibilities of the Treasurer in his or her absence.

ARTICLE V -- BUSINESS MEETINGS

Section 1.

The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

Section 2.

All Business Meetings of this church shall be guided by the Word of God (Ephesians 4:3; 1 Corinthians; 14:40; Philipians 2:3; Hebrews 13:17; and Galatians 5:22), and follow generally accepted parliamentary procedures.

Section 3.

Annual Congregational Report and Business meetings shall be held, date to be determined by the Pastor and Deacons and announced two Sundays in advance. Business Meetings for voting upon new members may be called at the conclusion of any Sunday morning service as recommended by Pastor and Deacons.

The Annual Report Meeting shall be held during the month of January, the date of which shall be set by the Pastor and Deacons and announced on two previous Sundays. Other Business Meetings may be called at any time by the Pastor, the Deacons, or upon written request of a quorum* of the voting members of the church. Such Business Meetings and the agenda shall be announced two weeks prior to said meeting. Only those items announced may be considered at the meeting. (*See Article V Section 5 for quorum requirements).

Section 4.

Voting in all meetings may be by voice or show of hands, except that upon the request of a majority of members calling for a vote by ballot, ballot voting shall be mandatory. Election or dismissal of all officers, including the Pastor, shall be by ballot only. Active members eighteen (18) years of age or over, are entitled to vote. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be, but not limited to, approval of the annual church budget.

Section 5.

A quorum shall consist of not less than 25% of the active voting membership present at all constitutionally scheduled Business Meetings. In the case of calling or dismissing a Pastor the quorum shall not be less than fifty percent (50%) of the active voting membership present.

ARTICLE VI -- ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1

The election of officers shall be held during the annual Election Meeting of the church held in the month of December, the date to be determined by Pastor and Deacons.

Section 2.

Three weeks before the annual Election Meeting the Nominating Committee shall make available sample ballots, with qualified nominees for each office, to all voting members of the church. Space is to be provided following each of the names in order that all members of the church may have opportunity to write in any additional nominations for that office, subject to approval by the Nominating Committee.

Those writing in nominations must return their ballots to the Nominating Committee not less than two weeks prior to the annual Election Meeting. The Nominating Committee shall review the nominations and shall place on the ballot the name of such qualified persons who are willing to serve and who have received the most write-in votes for any given office. No voting by proxy shall be allowed.

Section 3.

Vacancies occurring during the year may be filled at any regularly scheduled Business Meeting. The Pastor and Deacons shall present to the church qualified nominees for vacancies to be filled.

Section 4.

Election of officers other than Pastor shall be by a 2/3 approval vote by ballot.

ARTICLE VII -- POLICIES

Section 1. POLICY MANUAL

General procedures of operation for ministries and groups of Hope Bible Fellowship, not addressed in this constitution, are to be defined in the Policy Manual. Each policy shall contain a ministry, group, or operation name, governing spiritual principles, scriptural justification, the ministry's relation to the church's purpose, names and contact means of current leaders, and the dates of the policy's draft and approval.

Section 2. ESTABLISHING POLICIES

Policies are to be drafted by the leaders of respective ministries, groups or operations in consultation with the Pastor and Deacons. Policies are approved by the church at any regular Business Meeting. Only policies recommended by the Pastor and Deacons are to be considered.

ARTICLE VIII – DISSOLUTION

Section 1. DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of this corporation, all of its debts shall be fully satisfied. No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any individuals from the assets, holdings or other transactions in which this corporation may be involved. In the event of dissolution any assets that remain after all debts have been settled, shall be distributed equally to Missionaries that are supported by Hope Bible Fellowship.

ARTICLE IX -- AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at any regularly scheduled Business Meeting, or at a called meeting with a 50% quorum of active members, provided said amendment has been given out in writing at a morning service at least two weeks preceding its being acted upon. Any and all amendments must have the unanimous approval of the Pastor and Deacons before presented to the congregation.

END

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the public confession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

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

We also purpose to maintain family and private devotions; to train our children according to the Word of God; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk carefully in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to abstain from all forms of activity and practice which dishonor our Lord Jesus Christ; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of Christ, our Savior; and to give him preeminence in all things.

We further purpose to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior, to secure it without delay.

We moreover purpose that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church of like faith and order where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

END

ARTICLES OF FAITH

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the following statement of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members.

1. THE SCRIPTURES:

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally and plenary inspired by God and is the product of Holy Spirit controlled men, and therefore is the truth without any error. We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried. II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:19-21

2. THE TRUE GOD:

We believe there is one and only one living God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the God-head there are three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. Exodus 20:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT:

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, with God the Father and God the Son, and of the same nature; that He was active in creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains Satan until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the Agent in the New Birth; and that He seals, empowers, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer. **He bestows spiritual gifts, some of which were of a temporary nature designed as signs to authenticate the message of the apostles, and have ceased. Among these gifts are the gifts of tongues and healing.** Scriptural basis: John 14:16-17, 16; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5-6; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Romans 8:14; Romans 8:16 and Romans 8:26-27

4. THE DEVIL, OR SATAN:

We believe in the personality of Satan; a created, fallen angel; that he is the unholy god of this age, and is destined to the judgment of an eternal torment in the lake of fire. Matthew 4:1-3; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10.

5. CREATION:

We believe the Genesis account of creation that man came by direct creation of God and not by evolution. Genesis 1 and 2; Colossians 1:16, 17; John 1:3.

6. THE FALL OF MAN:

We believe that man was created in innocence, in the image of God, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners; not only by nature, but of choice; and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse. Genesis 3:1-6; Genesis 3:24; Romans 3:10, 23; 5:12; 6:23; I:18, 32.

7. THE VIRGIN BIRTH:

We believe that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son. Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1: 18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1: 14.

8. CONCERNING SALVATION:

We believe that salvation is all of grace through the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ who paid the full redemptive price, fully satisfied God's righteous demands by suffering the death penalty for man's guilt, and imputed to man His perfect righteousness reconciling him to God, thus salvation is made effective to man only upon his exercise of personal faith in the death, burial, and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. Such faith is not a meritorious work but possible only by the grace of God. II Corinthians 8:9; I John 2:2; II Corinthians 5:21; John 3:16; John 5:24; Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:8-10.

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again, that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that it provides eternal security, that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life. John 3:3; II Corinthians 5: 17; I John 5: 1; John 3:6-7; Acts 16:30-31; II Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2: I; II Corinthians 5:19, Hebrews 10:12-14.

9. SANCTIFICATION: We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God accomplished in a threefold manner; first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the Life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return. Hebrews 10: 10- 14; John 17:17; II Corinthians 3:18; I Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:25-27; I Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23-24; I John 3:2; Jude 24 -25.

10. THE LOCAL CHURCH:

We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations or government; that the one and only Superintendent of Christ's Church is Jesus Christ Himself through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:41-42; I Corinthians 12:12, 13; Colossians 1: 18; Ephesians 1:22 -23; Ephesians 5:23 -27; I Timothy 3:1-13.

11. BAPTISM AND THE LORDS SUPPER:

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to show faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior. Being a solemn and beautiful emblem of our death to sin and resurrection to a new life, it is pre-requisite to the privileges of local church membership.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. Acts 8:26-39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; I Corinthians 11:23-28.

12. SEPARATION:

We believe in obedience to the Biblical commands to separate ourselves unto God from worldliness and ecclesiastical apostasy. II Corinthians 6:14-17; I Thessalonians 1:9, 10; I Timothy 6:3-5; Romans 16:17; II John 9-11.

13. THE RAPTURE AND FOLLOWING EVENTS:

We believe in the imminent, premillennial return of Christ for His Church, and that at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seven years of tribulation. I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:42-44; 51-54; Philippians 3:20, 21; Revelation 3: 10.

We believe that the Great Tribulation, which follows the Rapture of the Church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial kingdom. Daniel 9:25-27; Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Isaiah 9:6, 7; 11:1-9; Acts 2:29, 30; Revelation 20:1-4, 6.

14. THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED:

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting happiness and joy of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the lake of fire. Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17, 18; Romans 6:23; Proverbs 14:32; Matthew 25:34-46; John 8:21.

15. CIVIL GOVERNMENT:

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that government officials are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth. Romans 13:1-7; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:20: Acts 4:19, 20; Daniel 3:17, 18.

16. THE DOCTRINE OF MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY:

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God's Word allows for divorce and/or remarriage only in the event of unfaithfulness, death of a spouse, or when an unbeliever chooses to divorce a believing spouse. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God. We believe that in order to preserve the function and

integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, and all members of Hope Bible Fellowship must abide by and agree to this Doctrine on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly. Although we firmly believe this doctrine of marriage, we also believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church. Scriptural basis: Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 2:24, Malachi 2:16, Matthew 5:31-32, Matthew 19:3-9 Mark 10:7-8, Luke 16:18, 1 Corinthians 7:12-16, 1 Corinthians 7:39, Ephesians 4:31-32

16. OUR DISTINCTIVES:

Biblical Authority – The Bible is the final authority in all matters of belief and practice (II Timothy 3:15-17).

Autonomy of the Local Church – Human governing of the local church resides within that church (II Cor 8:19, 23).

Priesthood of the Believer – A believer may directly approach God without another human mediatory agent (I Pe 2:5-9).

Two Ordinances – Baptism and Communion are the local church ordinances (Matthew 28:19-2; I Corinthians 11:23-32).

Individual Soul Liberty – Individuals are free and responsible for their spiritual beliefs (Romans 14:5, 12; Titus 1:9).

Saved Church Membership – Prerequisite to local church membership is a credible testimony of faith in Christ and baptism by immersion (Ac 9:26).

Two Offices – Scripture mandates only two offices in the local church: pastor and deacon (I Timothy 3:1-13).

Separation of Church and State – Church and civil government operate in distinct spheres without controlling each other (Matthew 22:15-22; Acts 15:17-29).

END