

1 **Hope Community Church Constitution**
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4 **Article One: Name, Incorporation and Affiliation:**

5 The name of this organization will be Hope Community Church. Hope Community Church was organized and
6 incorporated in Hennepin County of the State of Minnesota on May 13th, 1996.
7

8 Hope Community Church is an independent church voluntarily affiliated with the Minnesota Baptist Conference
9 and the Baptist General Conference, as well as the North Central District of the Evangelical Free Church of
10 America and the Evangelical Free Church of America. As appropriate, we may likewise cooperate with
11 interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary independent basis.
12

13 **Article Two: Foundation, Purpose and Calling:**

14 The foundation of this church is the Lord Jesus Christ, and its code of guidance in all its affairs is the Bible, which
15 we believe is the Word of God. We affirm that it is only by God's incredible grace expressed in the life, death and
16 resurrection of Jesus Christ that our sins can be forgiven and that we can now have hope. We also affirm that Jesus
17 Christ is the only guide for lasting joy. We desire to put our full hope in Christ as we wait for His return.
18

19 The overall purpose of this church and reason for its existence is to glorify God. We believe that God is most
20 glorified in us as we learn to hope and be satisfied in Him alone. We long to glorify God by putting our trust in
21 Him, following His ways, and to gather together as many new worshippers of Him as possible. We aim to
22 treasure Him in corporate and private worship, know Him better through the Bible, and communicate with Him
23 in prayer. We also want to extend His love to others through fellowship, support, discipleship and outreach. We
24 rely on God Himself to bring change, growth, healing and maturity.
25

26 We affirm that God has uniquely called Hope Community Church to minister to the students, faculty and
27 residents of the University of Minnesota community. We also desire to serve the natural network of relationships
28 we have through our daily situations, wherever they may be.
29

30 **Article Three: Statement of Faith**

31 **1. The Word of God**

32 We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written
33 under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. 2
34 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21; Mark 13:31; John 8:31,32; John 20:31; Acts 20:32
35

36 **2. The Trinity**

37 We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, that these are equal in every
38 divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and
39 redemption. Gen. 1:1,26; Isa 44:6-8; John 1:1,3; Matt. 28:19; John 4:24; Rom. 1:19,20; Eph. 4:5-6
40

41 **3. God the Father**

42 We believe in God, the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe
43 that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of each person, that He hears and answers prayer, and He saves
44 from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. Luke 10:21,22; Matt. 23:9; John 3:16; 6:27; Rom. 1:7; 1
45 Tim. 1:1,2; 2:5,6; 1 Peter 1:3; Rev. 1:6
46

47 **4. Jesus Christ**

48 We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth,
49 sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension
50 into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth. Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38;
51 John 1:1, 20:28; Rom. 9:5; 8:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21-23; John 20:30,31; Matt. 20:28; Eph. 1:4; Acts 1:11; Rom. 5:6-8;
52 6:9,10; Heb. 7:25; 9:28; 1 Tim. 3:16
53

54 **5. The Holy Spirit**

55 We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness,
56 and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, empower, and gift all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the

1 Holy Spirit indwells all who believe in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher and guide. John 14:16-17,
2 26; 15:26,27; 16:9-14; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Gal. 5:22-26

3
4 **6. Regeneration**

5 We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe
6 that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Gen. 1:26;
7 5:2; Gen. 3; 2:17; 3:19; Eccl. 2:11; John 3:14; 5:24; 5:30; 7:13; 8:12; 10:26; Rom. 9:22; 2 Thes. 1:9; Rev. 19:3, 20; 20:10;
8 14:15; 21:18; Psa 51:7; Jer. 17:9; James 1:14; Rom. 3:19; 5:19; Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9; 3:16; John 1:13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom.
9 8:1

10
11 **7. The Church**

12 We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons
13 are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a
14 credible confession of faith, and associated for worship, work and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon
15 the members of the local church the primary tasks of living a life of worship, nurturing the body of believers and
16 giving the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world. Eph. 2:19-22; Acts 1:8; Eph. 5:19-21; Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:23-25

17
18 **8. Christian Conduct**

19 We believe that Christians should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others; that their conduct should
20 be blameless before the world; that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions; and that they should seek
21 to realize for themselves and others the full stature of maturity. 1 Cor. 10:31; Rom. 12:1-3; Heb. 12:1-2; John 14:15,
22 23-24; I John 2:3-6; 2 Cor. 9:6-9; 1 Cor. 4:2; Col. 1:9-10

23
24 **9. The Ordinances**

25 We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's
26 Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the public declaration of a believer's faith in Christ alone for the
27 forgiveness of their sins. We believe that immersion of the believer in water in the name of the triune God is the
28 richest expression of the New Testament example. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for
29 commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until
30 the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 11:23-26

31
32 **10. Religious Liberty**

33 We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone in all matters of
34 faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by an ecclesiastical political authority;
35 that therefore Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free
36 from dictation or patronage of the other. 1 Tim. 2:5; Rom. 14: 7-9, 12

37
38 **11. Church Cooperation**

39 We believe that local churches can effectively promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in
40 a denominational organization. Such an organization, whether a regional or district conference, exists and
41 functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time.
42 Churches may likewise cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary basis. Acts 15:36, 41; 16:5; 1
43 Cor. 16:1; Gal. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4, 10, 11

44
45 **12. The Last Things**

46 We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His
47 kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous, and
48 the endless suffering of the wicked. Matt. 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts. 1:11; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thes. 4:15; 2 Tim. 4:1;
49 Titus 2:13; 1 Cor. 4:5; 1 Cor. 15; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; Rev. 20:4-6, 11-15

50
51 **Article Four: Church Covenant**

52 We believe God has called Hope Community Church to glorify His name by helping as many people as possible
53 become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ in the University of Minnesota area and anywhere else He provides
54 the opportunity. We believe God has called us to be a local community of believers who celebrate God's presence
55 in worship, unleash God's power in prayer, utilize God's Word as the ultimate source of truth for every aspect of
56 life, and do whatever is necessary to go into the kingdom of darkness and bring Christ's message of love and
57 forgiveness. He has called us to live in Biblical community through loving relationships and accountability to one

1 another. We believe He has called us to live out the obedience of faith and that we grow in Christ through loving
2 God and serving in His work on earth - being good stewards of the time, talents, finances and other resources God
3 has entrusted to us. God has also called us to demonstrate His grace and love in all we do. Together as a church,
4 we covenant together in carrying out His vision for this church.
5

6 **Article Five: Church Membership**

7 There are two main types of membership at Hope Community Church: Positional Members and Church Members.
8 Church Membership can either be Full Membership or Associate Membership as described below:
9

10 **“Positional Members”**

11 Hope Community Church acknowledges that every individual who has made a personal profession of faith in
12 Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is a “positional member” of the universal Body of Christ and should be given
13 opportunity to use their God-given gifts and resources to serve Him and further the Kingdom of God. There are
14 many ways that members of the Body of Christ can use their gifts at Hope Community Church (1 Corinthians
15 12:12-13, Ephesians 2:13-22; 4:3-6). “Positional” membership is eternal and unchanging.
16

17 **“Church Membership”**

18 We also believe that God calls “positional members” to grow by becoming “church members” in a specific, local
19 fellowship united with common Biblical beliefs and a common sense of mission (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians
20 12:25-31; 14:12,26 Hebrews 10:24,25). We cannot see the invisible bond of a “positional member” in Christ, but we
21 can identify those who are the “church members” at Hope Community. We invite those wishing to join our
22 community of faith to become church members if they agree with this Constitution and its Bylaws and are willing
23 to go through the membership process to become church members of Hope Community Church.
24

25 **“Associate Church Members”**

26 Being uniquely located near the University of Minnesota, Hope Community Church recognizes that some people
27 may wish to keep their membership at a “home” church while they are in transition. If this is the case, we allow
28 for an associate membership, where these individuals can be members of Hope Community Church without
29 transferring their membership from their previous church. The privileges, responsibilities and disciplines of an
30 associate membership are identical to a church membership, except that the membership will expire four (4) years
31 from its inception. At that time, in order to continue membership at Hope Community Church, the individual will
32 need to become a church member by discontinuing membership in another church body. From hereon in this
33 constitution and in all the bylaws, unless specifically stated, church membership will include associate members
34 also.
35

36 The procedure for becoming a Church Member and Associate Church Members, as well as the termination,
37 privileges, responsibilities and discipline of Church Members are found in the Bylaws of this Constitution.
38

39 **Article Six: Church Government**

40 The Overseer Team and the Leadership Team, along with pastoral staff, will be responsible for the general
41 operation of the affairs of the church in accordance with the constitution and bylaws. Confirmation of these teams
42 and staff, as well as major items of business will be brought before the Church Membership to be voted upon.
43

44 **Article Seven: Congregational meetings**

45 **Worship**

46 The church will meet regularly on Sundays for corporate worship.

47 **Business meetings**

48 The church will hold an annual meeting, where the budget for the next year will be approved. In addition,
49 we will hold special business meetings scheduled as needed, called by the procedure in HCC Bylaws,
50 Article 14.
51

52 **Article Eight: Amendments**

53 This document, known as the Hope Community Church Constitution, contains the principles and beliefs of the
54 church. Amendments to this constitution will be by two-thirds vote of Church Members present at any business
55 meeting of this church provided each amendment will have been presented in writing, posted, and announced at
56 least three (3) months in advance of the meeting. At no time will any amendment or changes be adopted that
57 would be determined to be contrary to the teachings of the Bible.

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Article Nine: Acquisition, Disposition and Encumbrance of Real Property

In a case of division of the Church Membership, church property will belong to those Church Members who abide by HCC's constitution, to be determined by the Minnesota Baptist Conference, if necessary. In a case of discontinuance of the church, the church property and debt will be transferred to the Minnesota Baptist Conference, excluding the real property at 707 - 10th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN and the real property at 711 - 10th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN. These pieces of real estate, excluding all contents, are to be transferred to the North Central District of the Evangelical Free Church.

Any action involving the construction of, financing of, or addition to the church facilities that fall outside of budgeted expenditures must be approved by the Church Membership at a business meeting called for such purpose. In addition, any sale, lease, transfer, or disposition of all of the church property and assets shall likewise be approved by the Church Membership at a business meeting called for such purpose.

By affirmative vote of the Leadership Team, the church may borrow money, buy, lease, acquire, own, hold, improve, use and deal in and with, real or personal property, or an interest in property, wherever located, and may sell, convey, mortgage, create a security interest in, lease, exchange, transfer or dispose of all or a part of it's real or personal property, or an interest in property, wherever located.

Hope Community Church Bylaws

Article 1: Vision of Hope Community Church

Hope Community Church exists to honor God by helping as many people as possible become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Article 2: Core Values

Our core values flow from a commitment to see our vision happen in our specific location, the University of Minnesota area and natural network of relationships. Our seven core values are:

1. For God's Glory

In all the universe, there is nothing more important than God. God's glory is the radiance of all that He is, and is what we are created to enjoy. Therefore, all of our ministries and efforts are about glorifying God and we will aim to worship God in all that we do, not just in our corporate worship alone, but through the rest of our lives as well.

"It ain't about us, it's about God."

2. By God's Grace

The grace of God shall permeate all that we do. We acknowledge that our only hope for a restored relationship with God is through the grace given to us at the cross of Jesus Christ. We will operate in a spirit of grace and humility, and will allow ourselves to be broken over our own sin.

"We are all poster children for grace."

3. Through the Truth of The Word of God

The Bible is our source of truth and our guide for living. Real life change happens only when it brings our lives into alliance with the God-inspired words of Scripture. We value teaching, preaching, studying and meditating upon God's Word.

"God's Word changes lives!"

4. Depending on God through the Holy Spirit.

We have no desire to have the ministry of this church be powered on our own strength. We will rely on the Holy Spirit to lead, empower, and comfort us as we eagerly learn how to personally and corporately pray and worship.

"Be a sailboat, catching the wind of the Spirit - not a speedboat, under your own power."

5. Because All People Matter to God

The reason we desire to minister to others is because people, all people, matter to God. No matter how far away from God they may seem, they all matter to God (Luke 15). Therefore we will be relevant by being contemporary and removing any unnecessary obstacle to help people see Jesus Christ. We want to honor where each person is at in their personal spiritual journey, while encouraging them to go farther. We will do this all in a God honoring manner.

"People matter to God."

6. Therefore, We Hope to Make Disciples

Through loving relationships and the community created at Hope Community Church, we aim to make fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ who would engage in knowing Jesus Christ through study and service. We highly value the smaller groups (mentorship relationships, small and cell groups, etc.) that can help facilitate these kind of life long, authentic, God-centered friendships.

"Community is our middle name" & "Make fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ"

7. And, Ultimately, Spread the Kingdom of God

We believe that as believers, we are on the offensive in a spiritual battle and therefore we will seek to go into the kingdom of darkness to do as much damage as we possibly can. We value kingdom of God related prayer, outreach, children's ministry, community service, church planting, and leadership development to accomplish this.

"Go into the kingdom of darkness and trash the joint."

Article 3: Definition of Church Membership

All people who have chosen to accept Christ's work on the cross for their sins and now follow Him in an intimate relationship as Lord and Savior are members of the universal church. They are "positional members" of the world-wide church. Those Christ-committed followers who have chosen to align themselves with Hope Community Church in its ministry, worship, and purposes may become "Church Members" of Hope as further

1 defined in Article Five of the Constitution.
2

3 **Article 4: Procedure for becoming a Church Member**

- 4 1. Declare a personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, publicly proclaimed through
5 believer baptism by immersion¹, and display evidence of a maturing, active, love relationship with Jesus;
6 2. Be in full agreement and practice with the HCC Statement of Faith, Vision, Core Values, and Church
7 Covenant;
8 3. Agree to abide by the Hope Community Church constitution and bylaws, including the policies on church
9 discipline (Bylaws, Article 8);
10 4. If the individual is a member of another congregation, a letter of transfer from that church will be requested, or
11 a written communication with that fellowship that membership is to be discontinued at the previous church.
12 5. Prior to acceptance as a Church Member, each person will complete the introductory membership class which
13 explains Hope Community Church's vision, values, beliefs, ministries and expectation of being a Church
14 Member.
15 6. A person interested in membership will meet with a group of Church Members appointed by the Leadership
16 Team to determine that he/she agrees to uphold the conditions of membership. At least two (2) people from
17 this group will be members of the Leadership Team. Upon approval of this group of Church Members, as well
18 as the fulfillment of 1-5 above, the person will become a Church Member.
19

20 **Article 5: Procedure for becoming an Associate Church Member**

21 Procedure for becoming an Associate Church Member of Hope Community Church is the same as Article 4:
22 Procedure for becoming a Church Member, with the exclusion of the letter of transfer request (Article 4, Procedure
23 number 4.)
24

25 *Note: The use of the term "Church Membership" in the rest of these bylaws shall refer to BOTH church members and*
26 *associate church members.*
27

28 **Article 6: Privileges of Church Membership**

- 29 1. It identifies a person as a Christ-committed follower (Ephesians 2:9, Romans 12:5).
30 2. It provides a spiritual family to support and encourage a person in a walk with Christ (Galatians 6:1-2,
31 Hebrews 1:24-25).
32 3. It places a person under the spiritual protection and guidance of Christ-centered leaders
33 (Hebrews 13:17, Acts 20:28-29).
34 4. It gives a person the accountability needed to grow (Ephesians 5:21).
35 5. It provides the opportunity to hold offices in the church (Elder and Deacon).
36 6. It gives the person the privilege of voting on Church matters if of legal voting age (18).
37

38 *Note - We do not require church membership in order to be in non-office positions of service or leadership. The only*
39 *requirement is that the individual must be a committed follower of Jesus Christ.*
40

41 **Article 7: Responsibilities of Church Membership**

42 With the privilege of membership comes certain responsibilities. As they are enabled by God to do so, members
43 will:

- 44 1. Pray regularly for other members and the church pastor(s) and leadership;
45 2. Regularly participate in the ministries of Hope Community Church;
46 3. Care for others in the Body of Christ and prayerfully consider ministry within the church;
47 4. Seek to follow Christ and His example in attitude and activity;
48 5. Share the good news of forgiveness in Christ with those who do not know Him; and
49 6. Give regularly and intentionally of God's financial provision to support the work of the church.
50
51

¹ Baptism means to totally cover or immerse. The original greek word in the New Testament for baptism is *baptizo*, which has a literal definition of "to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water." Jesus directed His followers to be baptized which would show them to be totally covered with the Holy Spirit. His disciples made a conscious decision to be baptized. They displayed this by being immersed into water. We believe that this example of baptism holds the richest connection to biblical example and testifies most accurately to others that we are Christ's and have chosen to humbly identify ourselves with His death and return to life. Other methods of believer's baptism are not practiced except in extremely rare instances where a total water immersion would be dangerous or unavailable.

1 **Article 8: Discipline of Church Members**

2 If a Church Member of Hope Community Church is found to be in persistent, unrepentant sin, action will be
3 initiated to correct the sinning member. This will be done with a concern for redemption and reconciliation rather
4 than punishment and ostracism.

5
6 Biblical authority for church discipline is founded upon the following two principles:

- 7 (1) Believers are directed to not "...continue in sin..." (Romans 6:1); and
8 (2) Sin in the Christian's life is to be confessed and forsaken (I John 1:9; Proverbs 28:13).
9

10 Disciplinary action toward a member who persists in sin will be initiated only after it is clear that the member has
11 been approached:

- 12 (A) individually (according to Matthew 18:15); and if they do not respond then
13 (B) with one or two other mature believers (Matthew 18:16; Galatians 6:1)
14

15 If, after both of these actions, the member continues in the sin, a written complaint should be submitted by the
16 "witnesses" (see above (B)) to the Overseer Team. The Overseer Team will carefully investigate the complaint,
17 attempting to bring about clarity and restoration. If all reasonable efforts fail to resolve the issue, the Overseer
18 Team will decide on further action, which could include public warning to other church members and attenders
19 (Matthew 18:17).
20

21 Sins requiring discipline that may eventually result in exclusion from membership and leadership include:

- 22
23 1) *Sins of human character that obscure the holiness of God.* Examples would be unrepentant sexual sin,
24 unlawful business practices, or using alcohol or drugs in a way that would bring unwarranted harm
25 upon the body. (1 Corinthians 5:11);
26 2) *Sins of divisiveness that bring confusion to the work of the church.* Examples would be gossiping about
27 church attenders, staff, and leadership, slandering others, or not keeping confidential issues secret.
28 (Romans 16:17); and
29 3) *Sins that violate the truth of God by promoting false doctrine.* Examples would be promoting universalism,
30 denying the deity of Christ, or any other teaching contrary to the Hope Community Church Statement
31 of Faith (2 Peter 2:1-3).
32
33

34 **Article 9: Procedure for terminating Church Membership**

- 35 1. A Church Member requesting a letter of transfer to another church will be granted a letter stating their
36 Church Membership status at Hope Community Church.
37 2. When a Church Member joins another church, their membership at Hope Community Church is
38 terminated without further action. HCC Members who are missionaries and join another church where
39 they are serving may retain their membership in Hope Community Church. Church Members may also
40 retain their membership when they are temporarily relocated to another city for their job or education and
41 choose to join a local church in that community.
42 3. A Church Member may terminate their membership upon request.
43 4. A Church Member who does not make an involved contact with the church for one year will be put on an
44 inactive list. A staff member or representative of Hope Community Church will attempt to contact them.
45 If there is no involved contact within 6 months, the membership will be terminated.
46 5. A Church Member whom the Overseer Team determines to be propagating teachings contrary to Hope
47 Community Church's statement of faith (Constitution, Article Three), and/or is involved in activity that is
48 determined to be divisive to the vision, core values or church covenant (Bylaws, Article 1 and 2) and/or is
49 guilty of gross misconduct contrary to the church covenant (Article 4 of Hope Community Church's
50 Constitution), will be removed from the Church Membership by a unanimous vote of the Overseer Team.
51 That action will be taken only after reasonable efforts, as outlined in the preceding Discipline of Church
52 Members section (Bylaws, Article 8).
53

54 **Article 10: Church Leadership**

55 The Leadership of Hope Community Church is based on two leadership groups:

- 56 1. The Overseer Team (elders)
57 2. The Leadership Team (elders and deacons)

- 1 I. The Overseer Team
- 2 A. Definition and Responsibilities
- 3 The **Overseer Team** will consist of elders who will be ultimately responsible for the welfare and spiritual
- 4 direction of Hope Community Church. They will direct matters of overall vision of the church, keep
- 5 spiritually attuned to where the Holy Spirit is leading HCC, devote themselves to keeping HCC
- 6 theologically pure and culturally relevant, handle matters of church discipline, visitation of the sick,
- 7 teaching when appropriate, and be upholders of this church in prayer. They will be in direct
- 8 communication with the Leadership Team regarding the setting of vision, values and spiritual direction
- 9 for Hope Community Church. There will be a minimum of four meetings per year, with special meetings
- 10 as needed. A minimum of three (3) will be members of the Leadership Team, at least one who is a lay
- 11 elder, (i.e., not in any staff position with the church). These elders who will be on the Leadership Team
- 12 will be appointed by the Overseer Team and approved by the Leadership Team with unanimous
- 13 agreement.
- 14
- 15 B. Qualifications for being a member of the Overseer Team (elders)
- 16 1. An attender of Hope Community Church for at least one (1) year;
- 17 2. A Church Member of Hope Community Church;
- 18 3. An active member of one of the ministries of Hope Community Church and a regular participant in
- 19 public worship at HCC;
- 20 4. Has a passion for the Vision and Core Values of Hope Community Church;
- 21 5. Models an understanding that biblical leadership is to be a servant to those who are being led
- 22 (Matthew 20:20-28);
- 23 6. A man (1 Timothy 2:12, Titus 1:6) of at least 18 years of age who fulfills the following additional
- 24 biblical qualifications for being an overseer (elder) primarily found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- 25 The elder must:
- 26 1. have a deep abiding faith in Christ, and be theologically astute (1 Timothy 3:9, Titus 2:9)
- 27 2. have demonstrated leadership and giftedness in ministry, and have a willingness to serve (1 Peter
- 28 5:2-3);
- 29 3. be spiritually mature, i.e., not a new believer (1 Timothy 3:6);
- 30 4. be able to communicate biblical knowledge in the overseer's specific area of ministry (1 Timothy
- 31 3:2);
- 32 5. possess a good reputation within and outside the church (1 Timothy 3:2.7; Titus 1:6);
- 33 6. demonstrate self-control and appropriate biblical attitudes in relationships (1 Timothy 3:2-3; Titus
- 34 1:6-7); and
- 35 7. demonstrate a measure of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).
- 36
- 37 C. Selection
- 38 New Overseer Team members will be selected by the following process
- 39 (c.f. Acts 14:23, Titus 1:6)
- 40 1. The Overseer Team will welcome suggestions for potential Overseer Team members from the
- 41 congregation.
- 42 2. The Overseer Team will tentatively select new Overseer Team members and announce them to the
- 43 congregation.
- 44 3. If Church Members have an objection to a proposed leader, they may present that objection to the
- 45 Overseer Team (c.f. I Timothy 5:19).
- 46 4. The Overseer Team will appoint Overseer Team members by unanimous agreement.
- 47 5. Church Membership will confirm the appointment of new Overseer Team members by simple
- 48 majority vote at an annual or special business meeting.
- 49 6. We will strive for a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of eight (8) Overseer Team members at any
- 50 one time.
- 51 7. The Senior Pastor will automatically be an Overseer Team member.
- 52
- 53 D. Terms of Service
- 54 1. The term of appointment of an overseer (elder) is two (2) years from the date of Church Membership
- 55 confirmation.
- 56 2. Overseer Team members will continue in a second term if they are willing to serve and if they are
- 57 reconfirmed in that position at the end of their first two (2) year term by the Overseer Team.

3. An Overseer Team member can be removed at any time by a three-fourths vote of the remainder of the Overseer Team.
4. Overseer Team members may not serve for more than four (4) consecutive years. They may be reappointed after a one year absence. The exceptions to this are the Senior Pastor, who is a permanent member of the Overseer Team, and other Pastoral Staff, who may also serve indefinite terms but are not required to do so.

II. The Leadership Team

A. Definition and Responsibilities

The Leadership Team will consist of elders and deacons and will have full authority to plan, organize, lead and evaluate the overall ministries, operations, business and staffing of Hope Community Church. They will be responsible to set the budget, procure property, hire and dismiss staff, make decisions regarding implementation of vision, values, and spiritual direction set by the Overseer Team. There will be regular, monthly meetings for the Leadership Team.

B. Qualifications for being a member of the Leadership Team (deacons)

1. An attender of Hope Community Church for at least six (6) months;
2. A Church Member of Hope Community Church;
3. An active member of one of the ministries of Hope Community Church and a regular participant in public worship at HCC;
4. Has a passion for the Vision and Core Values of Hope Community Church;
5. Displays an understanding and a commitment to model that biblical leadership is to be a servant to those you are leading (Matthew 20:20-28);
6. A man or woman (Romans 16:1, 1 Timothy 3:11) of at least 18 years of age who fulfills the following biblical qualifications for being a leader (deacon) primarily found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13). The deacon must:
 1. have Christ centered integrity (1 Timothy 3:8);
 2. be honoring to others in word and deed (1 Timothy 3:8, 11);
 3. show signs of leadership (1 Timothy 3:12);
 4. have a deep abiding and theologically sound faith in Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 3:9);
 5. be spiritually mature and faithful in all things, having a good reputation with those inside and outside the church (1 Timothy 3:10,11); and
 6. demonstrate a measure of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

C. Special Officers of The Leadership Team

There are three offices of Hope Community Church:

1. Church Chairperson - will act as moderator for the monthly meetings, or will appoint someone to conduct this role as appropriate.
2. Treasurer - Will oversee the financial affairs of Hope Community Church, delegating to reliable people and staff financial areas as appropriate
3. Secretary - will keep accurate and appropriate minutes of Leadership Team meetings, noting all decisions and actions items. These minutes will be public documents for all to see upon request.

All officers are members of the Leadership Team and may be Elders or Deacons. The selection of these officers are by a nomination process and a majority vote within the Leadership Team. They will be presented and affirmed by a majority vote to the church membership at the next annual or special business meeting. Term of service will be 1 (one) year renewable as long as they are on the Leadership Team.

D. Selection

New Leadership Team members will be selected by the following process
(c.f. Acts 14:23, Titus 1:6)

1. The Leadership Team will welcome suggestions for potential Leadership Team members from the congregation.
2. The Leadership Team will tentatively select new Leadership Team members and announce them to the congregation.
3. If Church Members have an objection to a proposed leader, they may present that objection to the

1 Leadership Team (c.f. I Timothy 5:19).

- 2 4. The Leadership Team will appoint Leadership Team members by unanimous agreement.
- 3 5. Church Membership will confirm the appointment of new Leadership Team members by simple
- 4 majority vote at an annual or special business meeting.
- 5 6. We will strive for a minimum of eight (8) and a maximum of twenty (20) Leadership Team members at
- 6 any one time.
- 7 7. Each Pastoral Staff will be members of the Leadership Team upon hiring, and for the duration of their
- 8 Pastoral employment at Hope Community Church.
- 9 8. If the church has hired an Executive Administrator or Office Manager as part of the ministry staff, this
- 10 member also will automatically be a member of the Leadership Team upon hiring, and remain a
- 11 member of the Leadership Team as long as they are in that role at Hope Community Church.
- 12
- 13

14 E. Terms of Service

- 15 1. The Term of service for a Leadership Team member (deacon) is one (1) year.
- 16 2. Leadership Team members will continue in their service if they are willing to serve and if they are
- 17 reconfirmed in that position every year by the Leadership Team.
- 18 3. A Leadership Team member can be removed at any time by a three-fourths vote of the remainder of
- 19 the Leadership Team.
- 20 4. Leadership Team members may not serve for more than three (3) consecutive years (with the
- 21 exception of Pastoral Staff), but may be reappointed after a one year absence.
- 22
- 23

23 **Article 11: Pastors**

24 A. Qualifications

- 25 1. Senior Pastor
- 26 Same as those for the Overseer Team (Bylaws, Article 10, I. B - with the exception of #1, 2, and 3
- 27 may be delayed until the next opportunity to fulfill these requirements arises) as well as
- 28 possession of gifts, abilities, educational and professional qualifications.
- 29 2. Other pastoral staff
- 30 Same as those for the Overseer Team (Bylaws, Article 10, I. B - with the exception of #1, 2, and 3
- 31 may be delayed until the next opportunity to fulfill these requirements arises) as well as
- 32 possession of gifts and abilities which qualify them for their specified area of ministry.
- 33

33 B. Responsibilities

34 Position descriptions and titles will be presented at the time of call by the Overseer and Leadership Teams.
35 The Senior Pastor will be a member of the Overseer Team and the Leadership Team.

36 C. Selection

- 37 1. Senior Pastor
- 38 A Call Committee will be appointed by the Leadership Team and ratified by the Church
- 39 Membership. This committee will include at least two (2) current Leadership Team members. A
- 40 candidate will be presented to the Leadership Team and to the congregation. An affirmative vote
- 41 of ninety (90) percent of Church Members present at a special business meeting will be required to
- 42 call the Senior Pastor. The vote will be by written, secret ballot.
- 43 2. Other pastoral staff
- 44 The Senior Pastor will recommend to the Leadership Team any additions to the pastoral staff. The
- 45 Leadership Team will consider such recommendations and extend a call if deemed appropriate.
- 46

46 D. Term

- 47 1. Resignation
- 48 Pastors will serve indefinitely. Resignations will be acted upon by the Leadership Team. The time
- 49 and terms of the resignation will be established by the Leadership Team, the Senior Pastor, and
- 50 the resigning Pastor (may or may not be the Senior Pastor).
- 51 2. Termination
- 52 Senior Pastor -
- 53 The matter of dismissal of the Senior Pastor will be handled with the same spirit as discussed in
- 54 guidelines for discipline of church members (c.f. Bylaws, Articles 5). A recommendation for the
- 55 dismissal may be initiated by the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team will make reasonable
- 56 effort to resolve grievances before any termination occurs. The Church Membership may dissolve
- 57 the pastoral relationship by a 2/3 vote at a special meeting called for the purpose of termination

1 following the special meeting procedures (Bylaws, Article 14) with a quorum of at least 50% of the
2 active Church Membership needed and with at least two weeks notice. If the pastor is dismissed,
3 the terms of dismissal determined by the Leadership Team, including a minimum of three months
4 salary and benefits.
5

6 Other pastoral staff-

7 Termination will be acted upon by the Leadership Team after careful consideration and
8 consultation. The Leadership Team will make a reasonable effort to resolve grievances before any
9 termination occurs.
10

11 **Article 12: Staff**

12 **A. Ministry staff**

13 **1. Qualifications**

14 The same as for Leadership Team (deacons) (Bylaws, Article 10, II. B - with the exception of #1, 2,
15 and 3 may be delayed until the next opportunity to fulfill these requirements arises).
16

17 **2. Responsibilities**

18 Position descriptions will be set by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Leadership Team
19 and presented at the time of hiring and reviewed annually.
20

21 **3. Selection**

22 The pastor(s) will work closely with the Leadership Team to determine the best available
23 candidate(s). The Leadership Team will hire all ministry staff within budgetary appropriations.
24

25 **4. Term**

26 Ministry staff will serve indefinitely. Resignations will be acted upon by the Leadership Team. The
27 time and terms of the resignation will be established by the Leadership Team. The Leadership
28 Team will make a reasonable effort to resolve grievances before any termination occurs.
29 Termination will be acted upon by the Leadership Team after careful consideration and
30 consultation.
31

32 **B. Administrative staff**

33 Other staff members will be hired within budgetary appropriations by the Leadership Team to carry out the
34 church's ministry. Position descriptions will be presented at the time of hiring and reviewed annually.
35 Termination will be acted upon by the Leadership Team after careful consideration and consultation. The
36 Leadership Team will make a reasonable effort to resolve grievances before any termination occurs.
37

38 **Article 13: Ministry Teams**

39 Ministry teams shall be formed as required to implement the varied ministries of Hope Community Church and
40 shall be chartered by the Leadership Team to carry out those ministries. The Leadership Team will determine on
41 an annual basis which ministry teams will function at Hope Community Church. This determination will be made
42 based upon the recommendation of church staff, in accord with Hope Community Church's purpose, strategies,
43 and objectives.
44

45 **Ministry Team Leaders**

46 Ministry team leaders shall be selected annually or as needed and are subject to approval by the
47 Leadership Team.
48

49 **Article 14: Business Meetings**

50 **Fiscal and Appointment Year Designation**

51 The fiscal year of the church will be from January 1st to December 31st.

52 The Appointment Year of the two year term of the Overseer Team is based on the date of Church
53 Membership Approval for the individual Overseer Team Member.

54 The Appointment Year of the Leadership Team (along with the offices of Church Chairperson, Treasurer
55 and Secretary) will be February 1st to January 31st except in the special cases where Leadership Team
56 members are replaced in mid year due to an absence. In this case the appointment year will be from the
57 date of replacement until January 31st. This partial year of replacement would not constitute a year of
service and they are eligible to serve 3 more consecutive one year terms after the replacement term is
served.

1
2 Annual meeting
3 The annual meeting of the church will be held during January each year. At this meeting, the budget and
4 other major items of business will be presented. In preparation for the meeting, the Leadership Team will
5 provide church members with written reports from key ministries, together with a financial report,
6 budget, and a report from the Senior Pastor at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting. In addition,
7 confirmation of the Overseer Team, Leadership Team (as well as the offices of Church Chairperson,
8 Treasurer and Secretary) will be announced and commissioned for service at the annual meeting.
9

10 Special meetings
11 Special meeting of the members of the church may be called by the Leadership Team, the Senior Pastor, or
12 by fifteen (15) percent of the Church Members submitting a petition to the Leadership Team for the
13 purpose of the stated call of the meeting. All meetings of the church will be conducted in an orderly and
14 gracious manner.
15

16 Notice of meetings
17 Notice of date, hour, and reason for special meeting will be publicized two (2) consecutive Sundays in
18 advance of the meeting. Exceptions to this include mortgaging, conveying, or encumbering of real
19 property of the church which require written and verbal announcements for four (4) consecutive Sundays
20 and changes to the constitution (which can only be changed at annual or special business meetings
21 following three (3) months notification).
22

23 Quorum
24 Twenty-five (25) percent of the active Church Membership ~~of the church~~ will constitute a quorum of any
25 duly called meeting for the purpose of transacting business.
26

27 Voting
28 Each Church Member, eighteen years of age and older present at the meeting, will be entitled to one vote
29 in each matter. The vote of the majority of the members present and those voting by absentee ballot will
30 constitute the act of all members unless otherwise specified in the constitution or bylaws.
31

- 32 A written ballot vote will be required for:
- 33 Senior Pastor Call Committee
 - 34 Calling and Termination of a Senior Pastor
 - 35 Acquiring, selling, or building upon real property
 - 36 Changes in the constitution/bylaws
- 37

38 **Article 15: Amendments**

39 Changes to the bylaws must be presented to the church by the Leadership Team and then passed by a simple
40 majority vote of the Church Members present at any business meeting. A copy of the proposed change(s) will be
41 presented in writing, posted, and announced two (2) consecutive Sundays in advance of the meeting. No bylaw
42 may alter any part of the constitution.
43