

HILLSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

CONSTITUTION

December 2, 2012

ARTICLE A – NAME

The legal name of this church body shall be Evangelical Free Church of Porterville, (doing business as Hillside Community Church), hereinafter in this document known as Hillside Community Church (HCC), the church, or this church. Offices of this organization are located in Porterville, California.

ARTICLE B – ~~STATEMENT OF PURPOSE~~ **PURPOSES OF THE CHURCH**

~~As empowered by the Holy Spirit, the purpose of this church is to worship God, to develop a caring and nurturing fellowship, to teach Christians to obey everything Christ has commanded, and to share the love and life of Jesus Christ with people in our community and worldwide.~~

- **The Great Commission – Our vision and mission are to be passionate followers of Jesus and to help others be passionate followers of Jesus**
- **Worship – To provide opportunity for the teaching of God’s Word, fellowship, communion, and prayer (Acts 2:42)**
- **Service – To ensure that all have opportunity to serve Christ (Ephesians 4:11)**
- **Discipleship – To encourage the growth of each believer toward maturity in the faith and Christlikeness (Colossians 1:9-12)**
- **Evangelism – To share the Gospel both at home and abroad (Acts 1:8)**

ARTICLE C – AFFILIATION AND GOVERNANCE

- 1) This church affirms its belief in the autonomy of the local church under God.
- 2) This church chooses to affiliate with the Evangelical Free Church of America, an IRC Section 501(c)(3) corporation. HCC will, when possible, send delegates to their conferences, support their home and foreign missions, and unite in mutual **efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ to the extent that the congregation shall decide.**
- 3) The form of Government for this church shall be **a combination of Congregational and Elder rule.**
 - The congregation shall have final voting authority in the following areas: 1) Calling and dismissing pastors, 2) ~~Approval~~ **Affirmation** of, or dismissing Elders, 3) Approval of the annual budget, 4) Approval of, or amending of the Constitution and Bylaws, 5) Acquisition of, or divestiture of, **or encumbrance of** real property by the corporation.
 - The congregation shall vest all other responsibilities and authorities in a Board of Elders who **shall be responsible for the governing of the church and shall submit to the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit in such**

~~governing (Titus 1:9) are empowered to oversee and administrate all church activities, both spiritual and corporate.~~ The Board of Elders, at their discretion, shall appoint Deacons and Deaconesses who shall assist the Board of Elders in the administration of the church and shall have responsibilities as delegated by the Board of Elders. Various committees may be appointed and will function under the direction of the Board of Elders.

- 4) Supplement to this Constitution are Bylaws which shall embody the stated qualifications for Pastors, officers and members; their duties, conditions for membership, method by which members are received or removed, and rules and regulations for the activities of this church. Provisions for revisions or additions shall be outlined in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE D – STATEMENT OF FAITH

The church endorses the Evangelical Free Church of America’s Statement of Faith (dated 2008). ~~This statement is a summary of the teachings of the Scriptures and it shall not replace the Scriptures as the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.~~

We Believe:

God

- 1) We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

The Bible

- 2) We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

The Human Condition

- 3) We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God’s saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

Jesus Christ

- 4) We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus - Israel’s promised Messiah - was conceived through the

Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

The Work of Christ

- 5) We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

The Holy Spirit

- 6) We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

The Church

- 7) We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Christian Living

- 8) We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

Christ's Return

- 9) We believe in the personal, bodily and pre-millennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

Response and Eternal Destiny

- 10) We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace, amen.

ARTICLE E – MEMBERSHIP

~~Membership in this church is open to all who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, whose personal character and conduct manifest the fruits of true faith in God, who subscribe to Article D—Statement of Faith, and who willingly abides by this Constitution and its Bylaws (Romans 10:9-10; Galatians 5:22-23; James 2:14).~~

1) Qualifications for Membership: Persons desiring to unite with this church by profession of a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and whose personal character and conduct manifest the fruits of true faith in God shall be examined as to their Christian faith and experience. Membership requirements are:

- Belief in the finished, atoning work of Christ for sin (John 3:16; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:8; 1 Timothy 1:7)
- Belief in the Bible as the only inspired, inerrant, sufficient authoritative guide for life (2 Timothy 3:16)
- Submission to the HCC Statement of Faith

2) Obligations of Membership: The members of the church shall be responsible for faithful support to the body of Christ, the church (2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Hebrews 10:24-25); for submission to the leadership (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5); embracing the vision and mission of the church; and for a ministry of support and encouragement to one another (Galatians 6:2; Colossians 3:12-17). Members are encouraged to contact any Elder if they wish to meet with the Board of Elders to discuss any matter of concern.

ARTICLE F – OFFICERS

The officers of HCC shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the Board of Elders, and the Church Treasurer.

ARTICLE G – CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

- ~~1) HCC shall have semi-annual congregational business meetings in the second and fourth quarters of the calendar. Semi-annual congregational business meetings shall~~

~~be the time and place for the election of Elders, amendments to HCC's constitution and/or bylaws, the approval of reports, purchase of real property, and other church business.~~

- ~~2) Special business meetings may be called by the chairman of the board of elders or 51% of the voting members (By Laws Section 1.1b) for the purpose of conducting church business that cannot be delayed to a semi-annual congregational business meeting.~~
- ~~3) A semi-annual congregational business meeting shall require notice and an agenda to be distributed not less than two (2) weeks before the meeting date. Church business may be conducted at a special congregational business meeting except: Election of Elders, approval of the annual budget, and amendments to the constitution and bylaws.~~
- ~~4) A special congregational business meeting shall require notice and an agenda to be distributed not less than three weeks before the meeting date.~~
- ~~5) Semi-annual and special congregational business meetings require a quorum to be present before HCC business can be conducted or transacted.~~
- ~~6) A quorum requires twenty five percent (25%) of HCC's voting members to be present.~~

1) Notice shall be given and an agenda shall be distributed in at least two consecutive Sunday morning services prior to a business meeting. ~~Business meetings shall be called for member input.~~ Approval of the congregation by a vote of active adult members voting shall be required as stated for the following:

- Purchase or sale of real estate: ~~75~~ 67%
- Filling of permanent full-time ~~pastoral staff~~ Lead Pastor: 80%; dismissal of the Lead Pastor per Bylaws 3.6
- Affirmation of elders: 75%
- Amendment of the Constitution and Bylaws or Statement of Faith: 67%
- Any other matters provided herein, or any matters presented by the Elders for church vote: simple majority

A business meeting shall be called by the Elders for any specified purpose. A business meeting may also be called by 51% of the voting membership.

2) A Business Meeting shall be any meeting called to review any item designated in Article C (3) requiring congregational approval.

3) The privilege to vote is restricted to active members of this church 18 years of age and older. The Board of Elders shall determine the method of voting unless specified otherwise in this document. Unless stated otherwise in this Constitution and Bylaws, a simple majority is required for the adoption of any resolution or motion.

4) Semi-annual celebratory congregational and special business meetings require a quorum to be present before HCC business can be conducted or transacted.

5) A quorum requires twenty-five percent (25%) of HCC's voting members to be present. In the event there is no quorum present, the elder board is authorized to act on behalf of the congregation.

ARTICLE H – AMENDMENTS

- 1) Amendments to the constitution may only be presented to the congregation for vote at a semi-annual ~~congregational~~ **Celebratory Meeting** or **pecially called** business meeting.
- 2) Proposed amendments shall be presented to the Board of Elders in writing for discussion, ~~not less than eight (8) weeks prior to a semi-annual congregational business meeting.~~
- 3) Amendments approved by the board of elders shall be presented to the congregation, in writing, not less than six (6) weeks prior to the next semi-annual ~~congregational~~ **Celebratory Meeting** or a **pecially called** business meeting.
- 4) The Board of Elders shall provide the congregation an opportunity to discuss proposed amendment(s) not less than four (4) weeks prior to a semi-annual ~~congregational~~ **Celebratory Meeting** or a **pecially called** business meeting.
- 5) Approval of amendments shall be by closed ballot and will require a seventy-five percent (75%) majority of the votes cast by voting members present.
- 6) ~~Article D of this constitution cannot be amended except to bring Article D into conformity with the EFCA.~~

ARTICLE I – CHURCH PROPERTY

- 1) After incorporation, HCC shall have the power to buy, own, rent, lease, use, and take possession of any real property or chattel; to sell, deed in trust, or dispose of the same. Title to the aforementioned real property and chattel shall be held by the church in its own name.

- 2) Any transaction involving purchasing, selling, trading or leasing or mortgaging of real property shall have congregational approval. Passage requires a two-thirds majority of the voting members present at a semi-annual **Celebratory Meeting** or **specially called congregational** business meeting.
- 3) In the event of a congregational division, real property and chattel shall remain with HCC.
- 4) ~~HCC, its incorporation and charter, shall be dissolved when the congregation votes, by a ninety percent (90%) majority of the voting members of HCC, to dissolve its articles of incorporation. A 12-week congregational notice must be given prior to a vote.~~
- 5) This corporation is not formed for gain or profit for the corporation, the members, officers, or any individuals. The property of the corporation is dedicated to religious and charitable purposes. Upon the dissolution of this corporation, its remaining assets after payment of all debts shall be distributed to EFCA West of the Evangelical Free Church of America, an IRC section 501 (c) (3) corporation.

ARTICLE J – CONGREGATIONAL CELEBRATORY MEETINGS

Semi-annual congregational meetings shall be held in the 2nd and 4th quarters of each year for the purpose of bringing honor, glory and praise to our Lord for all He has done in the intervening times between the Celebratory Meetings.

ARTICLE K – TEACHERS

Teachers must consent in writing to submit to and be bound by the Constitution, Statement of Faith and leadership of HCC. All teachers must be approved by the Elder Board or its designee and will be handled on a case by case basis.

HILLSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

BY LAWS

(as Amended December 6, 2015)

SECTION 1—MEMBERSHIP

1.1 - QUALIFICATIONS

1.1a - All members shall meet the qualifications set forth in Article E of the Constitution of HCC.

1.1b - Voting members shall be at least 18 years of age and be members in good standing (see Section 1.6—Members in Good Standing).

1.2 - APPLICATION

Those persons who desire membership in the church shall make their desire known to the Pastoral staff or Board of Elders by submitting a written application to the board of elders.

1.3 - MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Prospective members shall ~~attend membership class sessions~~ **complete a membership class designated by the elders** that ~~teach and explain~~ **includes the Statement of Faith** ~~Biblical doctrine~~, history and governance of the Evangelical Free Church of America, responsibilities and privileges of members (1.8), and the unique features of this church body and its ministries.

1.4 - APPROVAL OF NEW MEMBERS

1.4a - The Board of Elders shall review each candidate's request for membership to determine his/her spiritual condition, doctrinal beliefs, **agreement with the vision and mission of HCC**, and relationship with Jesus Christ. If the candidate is found to be qualified for membership, the Board of Elders shall present that person to the church as a candidate for membership (**Article E.1.**).

1.4b - Should any member question the qualifications of an applicant, he or she shall approach the applicant in a spirit of Christian love to determine the legitimacy of their concerns. If the concerns are not eliminated after the meeting, the member shall then bring their concerns before the Board of Elders as indicated by the pattern given in the Word of God. (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2; II Corinthians 2:5-11).

1.4c - Four weeks after presentation to the congregation, each candidate will **be affirmed by the Board of Elders as** ~~become~~ a member unless the applicant's

qualifications come under question.

1.5 - PASTORAL STAFF MEMBERSHIP

The Pastoral Staff and their spouses shall become members upon acceptance of a call from HCC.

1.6 - MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING

A member in good standing is any member of HCC who has not had his/her membership ~~suspended~~ **become inactive** or terminated.

1.6a – Termination of membership by Request: Any member who wishes to terminate his or her membership shall notify the Board of Elders in writing. ~~A member in good standing who terminates membership from HCC to join another church shall, upon request, receive a letter of recommendation (Romans 16; 1-2).~~

1.6b – ~~Suspension of~~ **Inactive** membership due to Absence: Any member who **for at least six (6) months has failed to regularly** ~~does not~~ attend services **of this church** ~~for twelve months~~ **and who has not given satisfactory explanation of such absence,** ~~or does not communicate with the church for a period of twelve months~~ shall have his/her membership suspended. **Inactive members shall be dropped from all membership rolls after six months on the inactive membership roll by vote of the Elder Board.**

1.6c – ~~Termination of membership due to~~ **Church** Discipline –

- 1) The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1).**
- 2) If any member conducts himself/herself in a manner that is immoral or unchristian as defined by Scriptures, promotes discord or division in the church, teaches or promotes doctrine which is contrary to Article D – Statement of Faith, the member shall be approached, and admonished in a spirit of Christian love.**
- 3) If the member shall continue in his/her immoral or unchristian behavior as defined by Scripture, he/she shall be disciplined by action of the Board of Elders (Matthew 18:15-17; Titus 3:10-11). which may include loss of membership.**

1.7-REINSTATEMENT

1.7a – A former member of HCC whose membership was terminated by discipline or request shall have his/her membership reinstated upon completion of the approval process as outlined in **1.2, 1.3, and 1.4–Approval of New Members** of these By Laws.

1.7b – An ~~suspended~~ **inactive** member due to absence shall have his/her membership reinstated by completion of the approval process as outlined in **1.2, and 1.4-Approval of New Members** in the by-laws.

1.8– RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS

1.8a – To Love: The shining feature of the church is love for each other. Members shall demonstrate biblical love through unity, patience, and a willingness to embrace those with needs (Galatians 6:1-2; John 13:34-35; James 5:14-20; I Corinthians 13).

1.8b. – To be Spirit-Controlled: Members should allow the Holy Spirit to fill their lives that they may continually display the fruits of a Spirit-controlled life. The power to do this is available in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:6, 9; Ephesians 5:15-21; Galatians 5:22-23).

1.8c – To Grow in Christ: Every member shall endeavor, with God’s help, to faithfully pursue regular and systematic study of the Bible, private and family devotions, and prayer to promote personal spiritual growth (I Peter 2:1-3; II Peter 3:18).

1.8d – To Submit to Authority: Every member should recognize a responsibility to submit to the authority of the leaders of the church, which is established by God. Every member should speak well of the church (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

1.8e – To Give Testimony: Members shall be ready to share ~~their testimony~~ **the Gospel**, live exemplary lives, and witness to the power and grace of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; I Peter 3:15; II Timothy 1:6-14; Hebrews 12:1-2).

1.8f – To Attend: Members shall participate regularly in the functions of the church such as Sunday worship services, Sunday school, and weekly Bible studies (Hebrews 10:19-25).

1.8g – To Be Stewards: Members shall practice stewardship to God by giving their time, talent, service, and offerings as a ~~voluntary~~ response of love for God (Romans 12:1-2; I Corinthians 16:1-4; II Corinthians 9:5-8).

1.8h – To Serve: Members shall participate in ministry, according to the leading of the Holy Spirit, their spiritual gifts, and abilities (I Corinthians 12:7-18; Ephesians 4:11-13).

1.8i – To Pray: Members shall recognize their responsibility to pray regularly for the Pastoral staff, Elders, members, and the ministries of the church (Philippians 4:6; I Timothy 2:1, 2).

1.8j – To Admonish to Repentance: When a member sins, errs, is taken in a fault, or strays, we are to lovingly admonish one another (Colossians 3:16; Proverbs 27:6; Romans 15:14; Psalm 141:5; Luke 17:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Timothy 3:16).

1.8k- Members are strongly encouraged to follow the Lord in **Believer's** Baptism unless they have been previously baptized-

SECTION 2 – GOVERNMENT

2.1 – HEADSHIP

This church recognizes Jesus Christ as its Head and Chief Shepherd. We believe that Jesus Christ called HCC into existence. Therefore, we believe that Christ will sustain, lead, and empower this body of believers. All decisions and activities shall be subject to the leading of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Bible (Article D, 10 and Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23-26; Colossians 1:18; I Peter 5:4).

2.2 – BOARD OF ELDERS

Under the Headship of Christ, subject to the conditions of Article C of the Constitution, the administration of HCC shall be vested in a Board of Elders who will be ~~elected~~ **affirmed** by the voting members of the congregation. The Board of Elders shall be accountable to the congregation in its dealings with the Pastors, employees of HCC, members, and ministries of HCC.

2.2a – Composition

The Board of Elders shall consist of at least three ~~elected~~ **non-pastor** Elders and the Lead Pastor. **Should the Lead Pastor position be vacant, the Elders shall may appoint someone from the Pastoral staff to temporarily fill the Lead Pastor vacancy on the**

Elder Board. Should there be no additional pastoral staff, the remaining Board of Elders is authorized to continue to act in their duly elected capacity as a Board of Elders. In the event the Elder Board membership falls below the number of four (4), the remaining elders are authorized to appoint such men from the active Deacons or a member who would otherwise qualify as a deacon to temporarily serve with the Elders until qualified men are approved to serve as Elders. Other members of the Pastoral staff, and employees of HCC, shall not serve as Elders. The Board of Elders shall select a Chairman, Vice-chairman, and Secretary from among its membership. The Lead Pastor shall not hold an office on the Board of Elders. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the Board of Elders shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the church by virtue of the office held on the Board of Elders.

2.2b – Elder Qualifications

~~Candidates for Elders shall be men who meet the Scriptural qualifications for the office of Elder:~~

- ~~• Self controlled — I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8~~
- ~~• Hospitable — I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8~~
- ~~• Able to teach — I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8~~
- ~~• Able to defend the truth — Titus 1:9~~
- ~~• Not violent, but gentle — I Timothy 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9~~
- ~~• Not quarrelsome — I Timothy 3:3~~
- ~~• Not a lover of money — I Timothy 3:3~~
- ~~• Not a recent convert — I Timothy 3:6~~
- ~~• Has a good reputation — I Timothy 3:7~~
- ~~• Not overbearing — Titus 3:7~~
- ~~• Not quick tempered — Titus 1:8~~
- ~~• Loves what is good — Titus 1:8~~
- ~~• Upright and holy — Titus 1:8~~
- ~~• Disciplined — Titus 1:8~~
- ~~• Above reproach — I Timothy 3:2~~
- ~~• Husband of one wife — I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6~~
- ~~• Temperate — I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6~~
- ~~• Respectable — I Timothy 3:2~~
- ~~• Not given to drunkenness — I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7~~
- ~~• Manages his own family well — I Timothy 3:4~~
- ~~• Obedient children — I Timothy 3:4 5; Titus 1:6~~
- ~~• Does not pursue dishonest gain — Titus 1:7~~
- ~~• Keeps hold of deep truths — I Timothy 3:9~~

~~Elders shall be committed Christians, knowledgeable of the Word of God, and able to explain and defend basic Christian doctrine and the Statement of Faith of this church.~~

Elders shall be men who (a) must be an active participant in the services and ministries of the Church and have demonstrated the highest moral and spiritual

character, the heart of a servant and shepherd, and soundness in wisdom and judgment, (b) must be in agreement with the Statement of Faith, (c) must be in agreement with these Bylaws, and (d) must possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. A candidate for Elder has demonstrated that he is modeling the mission of the church. A Candidate for Elder shall be a member of HCC. ~~for at least one year before he is eligible to serve. This requirement shall be waived for the Lead Pastor.~~

2.2c – Board of Elder Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Board of Elders ~~shall be to~~ **include but are not limited to:**

- 1) **Overseeing** the nurturing and teaching of the congregation (I Timothy 4:11-16; 5:17; Acts 6:4);
- 2) **Meeting** regularly to pray for the spiritual welfare and direction of the church;
- 3) **Overseeing and supervise** all church ministries (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-3);
- 4) **Striveing** to remedy any spiritual weakness in the lives of the congregation or staff;
- 5) **Being** involved in the lives of the congregation through leadership, prayer, example, teaching, encouragement, discipline, ~~and~~ counseling, **discipleship, and evangelism** (I Peter 5:1-3; James 5:13-16);
- 6) **Seeking** to restore erring members (Matthew 18:15-17; II Cor. 2:5-11; Galatians 6:1-2);
- 7) **Guarding** against dangerous and or untrue teachings (Acts 20:17-31; Hebrews 13:17);
- 8) **Approveing** and **recommending** an annual budget to the congregation;
- 9) **Superviseing** the wise disbursements of the Benevolent Fund;
- 10) ~~Approve new members~~ **Administering the membership process as required in these bylaws;**
- 11) **Assisting** the Lead Pastor in baptism, communion, and visiting the sick or sorrowing;

- ~~12) Administrate the annual performance evaluations of pastor(s) and church employees;~~
- 13) Be responsible to fill the pulpit in the absence of the pastor;
- ~~14) Recommend and approve a long range strategic plan to the congregation.~~

2.2d – Elder Nominations

- ~~1) The Nominating Committee shall be composed of two Elders, one of whom shall serve as chairman, and three members at large. The members at large must meet the same standards as Deacons and Deaconesses (see Section 2.4c). The Board of Elders shall appoint the Nominating Committee.~~
- 2) The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of nominees from the membership of the church. The Nominating Committee shall interview prospective candidates to ascertain their willingness and qualification to serve as Elders.
- ~~3) Members may suggest a prospective candidate to the Nominating Committee. These suggestions must be made prior to the posted closing date for nominations.~~
- ~~4) The Nominating Committee shall present the list of vetted candidates to the Board of Elders for approval or disapproval.~~

2.2e – Election Procedure

- 1) The Board of Elders shall recommend qualified candidates to the congregation for approval **affirmation** not less than four (4) weeks prior to an election at a semi-annual **Celebratory Meeting** or **a specially called business meeting**.
- 2) The ~~election~~ **affirmation** of Elders shall be held at semi-annual **Celebratory Meetings** or congregational business meetings: **a specially called business meeting**.
- ~~3) If an elder is elected in the second quarter semi-annual congregational business meeting, that elder's first term of office will be three (3) years plus the time until the next fourth quarter semi-annual business meeting.~~
- 4) **The slate of** candidates for Board of Elders shall be ~~elected~~**affirmed**, by closed ballot, with a seventy-five percent (75%) majority of the votes cast by the voting members present.

2.2f – Tenure of Office

Elders shall serve a three-year term-of-office **beginning at the time they are affirmed**. If an Elder desires to continue service on the Board of Elders, and is affirmed by the Board of Elders, his name shall be recommended to the congregation for re-election **affirmation**. Elders may serve two (2) sequential terms but must take at least a one-year leave at the end of two consecutive terms. **If necessary to fulfill the minimum requirement, the elders may appoint an interim elder.**

2.2g – Vacancies

If, during the course of a year, a vacancy occurs on the Board of Elders, the Board of Elders may appoint a replacement to serve until the next ~~semi-annual~~ **specially called business** meeting. Replacement Elders shall meet all the qualifications of Elder (see Section 2.2b).

2.2h – Meetings

The Board of Elders shall meet regularly at mutually agreed upon times. Advanced notice of all meetings shall be given to all Elders **except in case of an emergency**. Minutes and notes of the Board of Elder meetings shall be kept and recorded. ~~Elders shall seek to arrive at decisions by unanimous vote.~~

2.2i – Quorum

At least a ~~sixty-six~~ **seventy % (667 %)** of the members of the Board of Elders shall be present to form a quorum at the Board of Elder meetings.

2.2j – Accusation

~~Accusations made against an Elder shall not be considered unless supported by two or three witnesses.~~ Shall it be proven that **he an elder** has erred in doctrine or conduct, the Board of Elders shall proceed biblically (I Timothy 5:19–20; Matthew 18; 15-17).

2.3 – CHURCH OFFICERS

2.3a – Chairman

The Board of Elders shall choose a Chairman from among its members annually. The Chairman shall preside over all business meetings of the Board of Elders and the congregation. He shall have the power to call special meetings of the Board of Elders or the congregation as the need arises and shall present a written report at regular congregational meetings, summarizing the activities of the Board of Elders to date.

2.3b – Vice-Chairman

The Vice-Chairman shall serve as Chairman in the Chairman's absence and perform

other duties as directed by the ~~chairman~~ **elders**.

2.3c – Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of all Board of Elders meetings and congregational meetings, and be responsible for all church correspondence delegated to him by the Board of Elders. He shall be responsible for the preservation of minutes and correspondence of the church as a permanent record.

2.3d – Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be an Elder or Deacon/Deaconess that is appointed by the Board of Elders for a two year term, and approved by the congregation. The Treasurer shall serve under the supervision and oversight of the Board of Elders. ~~The Treasurer shall be the chairman of the Finance Committee that oversees the disbursement and payment of bills, oversees the proper maintenance of itemized accounts and records, and sees that monthly, quarterly and annual reports are submitted to the Board of Elders and the congregation.~~ The Treasurer shall assist in an annual audit.

2.4 – DEACONS AND DEACONESSSES

2.4a – Appointment

The Board of Elders shall **may** appoint members of HCC to the office of Deacons and Deaconesses. Deacons and Deaconesses will function under the authority and direction of the Board of Elders.

2.4b – Responsibilities

It will be the responsibility of Deacons and Deaconesses to manage, plan, organize, and supervise the approved ministries of the church **as directed by the elders**. The exact responsibilities of each Deacon and Deaconess will vary according to ministry description.

2.4c – Eligibility

All Deacons and Deaconesses will be required to be church members who meet the biblical qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6:2-3; and Romans 16:1.

2.4d – Accusations

~~Accusations made against a Deacon or Deaconess shall not be considered unless supported by two or three witnesses.~~ Should it be proven that ~~he/she~~ **a deacon/deaconess** has erred in doctrine or conduct, the Board of Elders shall follow biblical procedures (Matthew 18:15-17; I Timothy 5:19-20).

SECTION 3 – PASTORAL STAFF

3.1 – QUALIFICATIONS

The Pastoral staff shall meet the qualifications outlined in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 for Elders (see Section 2.2b). Pastors shall be of sound Christian character, sound in faith and doctrine, and shall be qualified to teach and preach the whole counsel of the Word of God. **Pastors shall embrace the vision and model the mission of the church as determined by the Board of Elders.** Pastors shall abide by the Statement of Faith – Article D of the church Constitution.

3.2 – DUTIES

3.2a – It shall be the work of the Pastoral staff to equip the saints for the work and service of the church (Article B). Pastors shall do this by giving their time to the teaching and preaching of the Word of God, praying for the congregation, caring for the spiritual welfare of the members, disciplining believers, counseling, training leaders and ministering to the sick.

3.2b – The Lead Pastor shall direct the church, guide and assist the Pastors and staff toward accomplishing the objective of the church, thereby fulfilling its mission.

3.2c – The Lead Pastor shall be a member of the Board of Elders. He shall not hold an office among the Elders. He shall be accountable to the Elders.

3.2d – ~~Pastors shall submit written reports on their ministries at the regular congregational business meetings.~~

3.3 – LEAD PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

When the church seeks a **Lead** Pastor, the Board of Elders shall appoint a Pastoral Search Committee. The committee will function until the position is filled.

3.3a – Composition: It shall be made up of two Elders and at least three (3) voting members of the congregation. The committee shall be self-organized; one member of the Pastoral staff may serve on a Pastoral Search Committee.

3.3b – Duties: The search committee shall submit qualified candidates(s) to the

Board of Elders for consideration. The Board of Elders ~~shall~~ **may** recommend a candidate to the congregation for approval.

3.4 – LEAD PASTORAL CALLS

3.4a – The approval and calling of a **Lead** Pastor may take place at any regular or special business meeting of the church. Approval shall be by closed ballot and will require an 80% majority of the votes cast by the voting members present.

3.4b – Upon congregational approval, a letter of appointment shall be extended to the Pastoral candidate.

3.5 – OTHER PASTORAL STAFF

3.5a – When the church seeks other pastoral staff, the Board of Elders may appoint a Search Committee or may act as a Search Committee. The committee will act until the position is filled. The composition and duties of the committee shall be as stated in 3.3a and 3.3b respectively.

3.5b – The approval and calling of other pastoral staff may take place at any regular or special business meeting of the church. Approval shall be by closed ballot and will require a 75% majority of the votes cast by the voting members present.

3.5c – Upon congregational approval, a letter of appointment shall be extended to the Pastoral candidate.

3.5 6 – ACCUSATIONS

~~Accusations made against a Pastor shall not be considered unless supported by two or three witnesses.~~ Should it be proven that the Pastor has erred in doctrine or conduct, the Board of Elders shall ~~charitably admonish the Pastor~~ **proceed biblically**. If this action fails to bring the desired results, the matter shall then be referred to the church membership with a recommendation for further actions (I Timothy 5:19-20).

3.6 7 – DISMISSAL or TERMINATION

All employees of HCC are “at-will” employees. Dismissal ~~for cause will~~ **may** result from ~~but not be limited to 1) actions found by the Board of Elders to be deemed morally deficient~~ **moral deficiency as deemed by the Board of Elders, 2) unsatisfactory job performance, or 3) physically unable/inability** to perform assigned duties. ~~This action will require a unanimous recommendation by the board of elders to the congregation.~~ To retain

the pastor, the congregation must vote against the recommendation of the board of elders by at least 80% of the votes cast by voting members at a regular or special congregational meeting. The pastor in question will not attend this meeting. Membership in the church will be terminated upon dismissal or termination.

3.7 8 - RESIGNATION

The Pastor's written letter of resignation must be submitted to the Board of Elders. Upon acceptance of a pastor's written resignation, status of the pastor's continued membership in the church will be determined by the Board of Elders.

SECTION 4 – MISCELLANEOUS

4.1 – AMENDMENTS

4.1a – Amendments to the by-laws can only be presented to the congregation for ~~vote approval~~ at ~~semi-annual congregational~~ **specially called** business meetings.

4.1b – Proposed amendments shall be presented to the Board of Elders, in writing, ~~not less than eight (8) weeks prior to a semi-annual congregational business meeting.~~

4.1c – Proposed amendments approved by the Board of Elders shall be presented to the congregation, in writing, not less than six (6) weeks prior to a ~~semi-annual congregational~~ **specially called** business meeting.

4.1d – The Board of Elders shall provide the congregation an opportunity for discussion of proposed amendments not less than four (4) weeks prior to a ~~semi-annual congregational~~ **specially called** business meeting.

4.1e – Approval of amendments shall be by closed ballot and will require a seventy-five percent (75%) majority of the votes cast by the voting members present.

4.2 – CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AGENDA

4.2a – New business items **not on the agenda will not be** presented from the floor. ~~are business items not on the current agenda prepared by the Church Chairman.~~

4.2b – ~~Any N~~ **Any new** business item(s) **must be presented to the Board of Elders, in writing, for their consideration.** ~~from the floor at the congregational business meeting shall not be voted on at that meeting.~~

Revised and adopted ~~December 6, 2015~~

(Elder revision #5c – 02/02/2021)