

# Bylaws

of



The New Testament teaches that the local church is the visible, organized expression of the body of Christ. The people of God are to live and serve in obedience to the Word of God and under the lordship of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

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## **PART ONE: MEMBERSHIP**

### **A. Membership**

Men and Women who desire membership shall meet with a pastor and an elder or with two or more elders to hear the vision and direction of the Church of Hope. Upon hearing the vision and direction of the Church of Hope, they may decide if they would like to join the team and become an active member.

### **B. Membership Acceptance**

Someone who wants to become part of the team of Church of Hope must sign the membership covenant, profess personal faith in Jesus Christ, and display evidence of spiritual growth. They shall be interviewed as per Section 1A and then received into membership which becomes effective immediately. If a person is not accepted into membership an elder or pastor shall meet with the person and explain the reason for the denial of membership.

### **C. Age Limitation**

Members shall be at least 18 years of age.

### **D. Membership Records**

The membership records shall be administered as follows:

#### **1. Active Members**

Active members consist of those members who adhere to the qualifications of membership as stated in the bylaws.

#### **2. Discipline of Members**

Great care and love will be exercised in disciplining the members of the Church of Hope. We will refer to Matthew 18:21-35 and take the appropriate steps with the goal of biblical reconciliation.

#### **3. Loss of Membership**

Those who have moved from the community but have not transferred their membership to another church shall have their membership suspended after a period of one year.

#### **4. Membership List**

- a. The official membership list shall consist of all active members.
- b. Pastoral staff and elders will review the membership list each year to keep it up to date.

## **PART TWO: GOVERNMENT**

### **A. Annual Meeting**

The annual congregational meeting shall be held at a time set by the elder board, with proper notice given.

### **B. Special Congregational Meeting**

The elder board shall have authority to call special congregational meetings for purposes of information, general discussion or the conducting of church business on which a vote may be taken with proper notice having been given to the congregation.

### **C. Proper Notice**

Proper notice shall be given to the congregation for any congregational meeting (annual meeting or special meeting) when the purpose and time of such meeting shall have been announced in two public services of the congregation immediately prior to the announced meeting. In matters on which a congregational vote must be taken, proper notice shall also include a notification via the church bulletin.

### **D. Member Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of one-third of active members eligible to vote.

### **E. Change to By-Laws**

Any change or amendments to the Church of Hope bylaws will be implemented in the following manner.

All changes must be reviewed and approved by the Church of Hope elder board. If approved by the elder board the changes must be submitted to the active members of Church of Hope for the purpose of reviewal, explanation and suggestion at least two weeks prior to final approval by the elder board.

A special meeting may be called per Proper Notice by the elder board if deemed necessary by the elder board.

## **PART THREE: THE ELDER BOARD**

### **A. Elder Board Members**

The elder board shall consist of the pastors and church elders.

### **B. Vacancies**

If a vacancy occurs on the elder board, the pastor(s) and present elders will select a new candidate, with great prayerful consideration, who qualifies as an elder and according to biblical standards. (1Timothy 3:1-7)

If a vacancy occurs at the pastoral level the elders and remaining pastor(s) will select a new candidate, after prayerful consideration.

### **C. Term of Office**

To be an elder is a calling therefore all elders will be appointed by the pastor(s) and present elders and will serve unless they move away or live in a manner not fitting of an elder (Titus 1:5-9). An elder may serve for two consecutive terms (four years) but must then resign from his position for a period of one year and is not eligible to serve on either the elder or deacon/deaconess team during that year. After a one-year absence, he may then again be eligible to serve in leadership if the need exists.

### **D. Appointments**

The Elder board shall provide oversight for all positions in the church.

### **E. Elder Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the elder board.

## **PART FOUR: COMMITTEES**

### **A. Job Descriptions**

The elder board shall maintain an approved job description and mission for all committees, organizations and positions of ministry in the church.

### **B. Vacancies**

Vacancies in non-elder board positions will be filled by elder board appointment.

### **C. Finance Team**

The finance team shall consist of the church treasurer, the assistant treasurer, and two members of the congregation. The finance team will be responsible for preparing the annual budget and presenting it to the congregation for review by the first Sunday in March. They will then submit it to the elder board for approval by the third Sunday in March. The budget shall include an annual review of the salaries of the pastor(s) and staff.

### **D. Audit Committee**

The elder board shall appoint an auditing committee once per year to audit the financial records of the church and all church organizations before the annual meeting and present its findings to the elder board and to the congregation at the annual meeting.

## **PART FIVE: BYLAWS**

The principles laid out in the Bible found in (1 Timothy 1:3-11; 2 Timothy 2:14-26; Titus 1:5-16 and John 13:34-35) and other similar passages shall be the governing rule of the Church of Hope.

### **Section 1: Name**

The official name under which this church is incorporated or organized is Church of Hope.

### **Section 2: Relationship**

The Church of Hope is a non-denominational church in association with Actx Network.

### **Section 3: Membership**

Qualifications for membership shall consist of:

1. Confession of faith in Jesus Christ and evidence of regeneration.
2. Acceptance of the affirmation of faith and the covenant of the Church of Hope.

### **Section 4: Ordinances**

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are recognized as the two ordinances of the church. Baptism by immersion, after conversion, is taught and practiced as the Scriptural mode. The Lord's Supper is administered regularly.

### **Section 5: Government**

There shall be an annual meeting of the members of this church to be held at a time specified in the bylaws, at which time the members shall receive reports of the departments, including audited reports of the treasurers. The elder board shall conduct the affairs of the church. The elder board may call other meetings of the members by proper notice to the membership as specified in the bylaws. It is understood that all members in good and regular standing are entitled to vote on titles of property.

### **Section 6: The Church Elder Board**

The elder board shall consist of a minimum of three members and up to seven members and shall have an odd number of members. It shall include the senior pastor, the pastoral staff, elders and a recording secretary who is selected from the elders. The elder board shall be the board of directors and trustees of this church where such body is required by law.

This church by its bylaws shall determine the number of elder board members.

The senior pastor shall be chairman, or, at his request, the elder board shall elect an elder as chairman. The elder board shall also elect an elder as vice chairman. The elder board shall hold monthly meetings for prayer and business and shall report to the church monthly or as the church may decide. Special meetings of the elder board may be called by the chairman or upon request of an elder board member. All officers, committees and organizations are amenable to the elder board.

### **Section 7: Officers**

The officers shall be members of this church and shall satisfy the Scriptural standards for the church leadership. They will consist of the following: senior pastor and pastoral staff, elders, treasurer and assistant treasurer, and such other officers as may be designated in the church bylaws or in the state law.

### **Section 8: Pastoral Staff**

The elder board shall not give consideration to any candidate for the pastoral staff without much prayer and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Pastoral staff members shall be called by the elder board. Upon appointment by the elder board, a pastoral staff member and spouse become members of this church.

### **Section 9: Duties Of Church Officers**

#### **Article 1. Senior Pastor**

The senior pastor shall have oversight of this church. He shall be chairman of the elder board and governing board except as he may choose to proceed according to the provisions in Article VI. He shall preside at all regular or special meetings of the church membership. He is a member ex-officio of all church committees and organizations.

When the membership has no pastor, the chairman of the elder board shall have oversight of the church.

The senior pastor shall be the president of this church where such office is required by law.

#### **Article 2. Elder Board Recording Secretary**

The recording secretary shall keep the minutes of membership meetings and elder board meetings and conduct the correspondence of this church directed by the elder board. He shall make the minutes available to the congregation.



### **Article 3. Deacon and Deaconess Recording Secretary**

The deacon and deaconess recording secretary shall be elected from the deacon and deaconess, keep the minutes of the deacon and deaconess meetings and make the minutes available to the elder board and congregation.

### **Article 4. Treasurer**

The treasurer shall be a member of the deacon/deaconess board and shall receive all monies of this church. The treasurer shall be responsible for the payment of all bills on the order of the deacon/deaconess board, keeping proper records of all transactions and filing canceled vouchers and receipts for payment made. The deacon/deaconess board shall determine where funds of this church shall be kept. No offering shall be solicited from the membership except upon approval of the deacon/deaconess board or elder board. The treasurer is empowered by the bylaws to issue receipts to the donors.

### **Article 5. Assistant Treasurer**

The assistant treasurer shall be a member of the deacon/deaconess board and, with another person or persons appointed by the elder board of this church, be responsible to count all monies and keep a separate record of all receipts. The assistant treasurer may be empowered by the bylaws to issue receipts to the donors.

### **Article 6. Benevolent Lead**

The Benevolent Lead will manage the benevolent requests as well as the distribution of gifts. The Deacon/Deaconess board will manage benevolent requests in the absence of a Benevolent Lead.

## **Section 10: Boards**

### **Article 1. Elders**

The elder Board shall consist of a minimum of three members and up to seven members and shall have an odd number of members. It shall include the senior pastor, pastoral staff, and elders one of which will be the recording secretary for the board. The elder board shall be the Board of Directors and Trustees of this church where such body is required by law.

The elder board shall meet monthly, and the recording secretary will make the minutes of the meeting available to the congregation upon request.

The elders shall be members of this church, be appointed by the present elder board and shall serve a term of two years. A member of the elder board may serve for two consecutive terms but must resign from the board after the second term (four years). He will not be eligible to serve on either the elder board or deacon/deaconess board during this year.

The elders shall serve with the pastoral staff in the oversight of the spiritual ministry of the church. They shall constitute the committee on membership.

They shall be the committee on discipline in accordance with Matthew 18:21-35 with the hope of complete reconciliation and healing.

The elder board shall have final say in all matters of the church.

## **Article 2. Deacon and Deaconess Board, also known as Deacon/Deaconess Board**

The Deacon/Deaconess Board will consist of the following: church treasurer, church assistant treasurer, recording secretary, care lead, benevolent lead, and chairman.

The deacon/deaconess board shall be members of this church who are appointed by the elder board and shall serve a term of two years. A member of the deacon/deaconess board may serve for two consecutive terms but must resign from the team after the second term (four years) and will not be eligible to serve on either the deacon/deaconess board or elder board for that year.

He(she) will be eligible to serve on the deacon/deaconess board after a one-year absence.

The deacon/deaconess board will hold monthly meetings and the recording secretary will make the minutes of the meetings available to the elder board and congregation.

The deacon/deaconess board shall have charge of those ministries and charities of the church which the elder board and/or bylaws designate. They shall receive offering for such purposes and dispense the same and make monthly reports to the elder board. Where there is no deacon/deaconess board, the elder board shall assume responsibility for their ministries until such are appointed.

## **Section 11: Property And Records**

### **Article 1. Property**

This church may acquire, own, dispose of, improve, encumber and convey property, real and personal, for church purposes in conformity with the laws of the state where the property is situated.

Real property may be purchased, sold, conveyed, exchanged, mortgaged or encumbered only by order of the membership through the elder board. In states where trustees are required, the elders serve as trustees and the order of the membership shall proceed through them.

### **Article 2. Records**

The official records of all officers of the church and all its departments are the property of the church. In the event of the death or resignation of the incumbent or upon appointment of his successor, the current records of the office shall be passed on to the newly appointed officer. All records other than current shall be kept in a secure repository selected by the elder board.

**Article 3. Audit**

All financial records shall be examined annually or at more frequent intervals on order of the elder board. At least three persons, none of whom is a financial officer or a church staff member, shall be appointed by the elder board to conduct the examination. The elder board shall authorize actions to conform to additional audit standards that may be required by the jurisdiction in which the church is located.

## **PART SIX: AFFIRMATIONS OF FAITH**

### **The Word of God**

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts. Written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

### **The Trinity**

We believe that there is one living and true God; eternally existing in three persons; that these are equal in every divine perfection; and that they execute distinct but harmonious office in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.

### **God the Father**

We believe in God the Father, an infinite personal spirit perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of mankind, that He hears and answers prayer and that He saves from sin and death all that come to Him through Jesus Christ.

### **Jesus Christ**

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people and personal, visible return to earth.

### **The Holy Spirit**

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, give gifts and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide.

### **Regeneration**

We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are therefore under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **The Church**

We believe in the universal church; a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ baptized on a credible profession of faith and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe

that God had laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

### **Godly Sexuality**

We believe God's plan for human sexuality is to be expressed only within the context of marriage and that God created man and woman as unique biological persons made to complete each other. God instituted monogamous marriage between male and female as the foundation of the family and basic structure of human society. For this reason, we believe that marriage is exclusively the union of one genetic male and one genetic female.

Furthermore, our facility(s) and staff will not host or conduct any wedding/marriage other than the exclusive union of one human genetic male and one human genetic female.

### **Sanctity of Life**

We believe that human life is sacred from conception to its natural end and that we must have concern for the physical and spiritual needs of our fellowman.

### **Christian Conduct**

We believe that Christians should live for the glory of God and the wellbeing of their fellow men and women. That their conduct should be as faithful stewards of their possessions and that they should seek to realize for themselves and others the full status of maturity in Christ.

### **The Ordinances**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit after conversion. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for the commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Religious Liberty**

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith.

### **The Last Things**

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous and the endless suffering of the wicked.

## **PART SEVEN: COVENANT**

Having been led, by the Holy Spirit of God, to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and to confess Him as Lord, and on confession of this 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 most solemnly and joyfully covenant with one another as one body in Christ to lead a life worthy of the Lord fully pleasing to Him.

We promise, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to forsake the ways of sin and to walk together in Christian love and in the paths of righteousness. With this in view, we engage to strive together for both the peace and purity of this Church; to sustain its worship and steadfastly to cherish and hold its ordinances, and money, in the measure that God prospers each of us, that the responsibility for the work of the local church and worldwide ministry of spreading the Gospel be faithfully and effectively discharged.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotion, to teach the Bible to our children, to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances, to be just in our dealings and faithful in our engagements, to be exemplary in our deportment, to avoid unkind words and unrighteous anger, to combine zeal and knowledge in our efforts to advance the cause of our Savior, to make Christ first in all things both spiritual and temporal.

We further engage to give and receive admonition with meekness and affection, to remember each other in prayer, and to aid each other in case of sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offence but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the Scriptures to seek it without delay, to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return.