

Hillside Church Constitution and Bylaws

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Hillside Church Constitution

ARTICLE I. NAME

This body will be known as Hillside Church, A Baptist Fellowship

ARTICLE II. MISSION & VALUES

Mission

We follow Jesus, love others, and share hope.

Values

Hillside Church is a place that is safe, a place where individuals become new through their relationship with Jesus, and a place where individuals are sent out to the world to spread the gift Jesus has offered to all.

ARTICLE III. BELIEFS

We believe that:

- The Bible is the inspired Word of God and the basis for faith and practice.
- God eternally exists in unity and trinity as equal persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ is fully human and fully divine.
- All people are sinful, but eternal salvation is uniquely possible for all through faith in Jesus Christ who died for us, was raised by God from the dead, and is coming again.
- The Holy Spirit works to bring people to salvation and is a renewing presence and power in the life of the believer and the church.
- All people are made in the image of God. We believe in the equality and essential dignity of all people, and all are divinely gifted and called to develop and use their God-given gifts for the good of the church, home, and society.
- God calls all people to be his followers. All believers are disciples.

ARTICLE IV. RELATIONSHIPS

We are governed by Jesus Christ, who is the head of the church. This church is subject to no other ecclesiastical body. Although Hillside Church is autonomous, it is our church's intention to cooperate with and support – for the purposes of doing ministry and mission – other Christian organizations it deems appropriate.

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ARTICLE V. ORGANIZATION

Hillside Church is characterized by an organizational structure that is consistent with scripture and, therefore, historic Baptist belief. The beginning point for this organizational structure is the New Testament teaching that the church is to be an autonomous self-governing body. Therefore, ultimate authority for the church's direction resides with the church body. Spiritual, administrative and legal authority is delegated – as occurred in the New Testament – to trusted and spiritually mature members of the church body to enhance the church's ministry and to increase potential for growth. Respectively, the Elders, Deacons, and Corporate Officers have been entrusted with the spiritual, administrative, and legal oversight of the church.

Section 1. Church Body – The church body is defined as its members. The church body decides the following by church-wide vote: call of the Senior Pastor; call of Pastors; call of Ministers; election of Elders, Deacons and Corporate Officers; approval and modification of the budget; the disposition of assets of the church; the acquisition of real property and related indebtedness; amendments to the articles of incorporation; changes to the Constitution and Bylaws of the church; and other matters as specified by the Bylaws.

Section 2. Elders – The Elders give spiritual direction to Hillside Church in order that the church may fulfill its stated mission, and uphold its values. The Elder Board consists of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, and Elders. Elders are members of Hillside who are elected by the church body. The Elders may choose to create ministry or task groups as needed to fulfill their purpose.

Section 3. Deacons – The Deacons provide administrative guidance in finance, personnel and other areas as needed by Hillside Church to accomplish its mission. The Deacons serve under the direction of the Elders. The Deacons may choose to create ministry or task groups as needed to fulfill their purpose.

Section 4. Ministry Team – The Ministry Team assists the church in accomplishing its mission by providing leadership and support for the church's overall ministry. The Ministry Team consists of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, and Ministers and may include lay leaders. The Ministry Team serves under the direction of the Elders. The Senior Pastor serves as leader of the Ministry Team.

Section 5. Corporate Officers – Corporate Officers execute all legal papers as directed by the church through a church-wide vote. The Corporate Officers of the church are the Secretary, Treasurer, and Trustee. The Corporate Officers represent the church in all matters of legal responsibility.

Section 6. Support Staff – The Support Staff consists of administrative, maintenance, and other personnel employed in positions designated non-ministry related. The Deacons are responsible for selection and dismissal of the Support Staff, with recommendation of the Senior Pastor, supervising Pastor or Minister.

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ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Members – Hillside Church consists of persons who have expressed their personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, have been baptized as believers according to the New Testament and are actively following Jesus Christ in discipleship through involvement in the life of Hillside Church.

Section 2. Applying for Membership – A person may be received for membership by either of the following ways.

- (1) By expression of personal faith in Jesus Christ followed by baptism.
- (2) By statement of a prior expression of personal faith in Jesus Christ including baptism.

Section 3. Granting Letters of Recommendation – The Secretary will, upon written request from another church for transfer of membership, be authorized to send a letter of recommendation to the requesting church.

Section 4. Removal from Church Membership – Members may be removed from membership under the following conditions:

- (1) By transferring membership to another church.
- (2) By requesting to be removed from membership.
- (3) Exclusion by church vote upon recommendation of the Elders.

ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship – The church will meet each Sunday morning and at other times as determined for services of worship. In emergency situations, the Senior Pastor along with the chair of the elected Elders or Deacons will be responsible for making a decision to cancel.

Section 2. Observance of the Lord's Supper and Baptism

- (1) **The Lord's Supper** – Communion will be observed a minimum of four times annually as scheduled by the Elders or Ministry Team.
- (2) **Baptism** – Baptism will be scheduled by the Elders or Ministry Team. Baptism will be by immersion unless prohibited by a baptismal candidate's special needs.

Section 3. Annual Church Business Meeting – The church will meet annually to review and approve the budget for the upcoming year and to conduct other matters of business as needed. The annual church business meeting will be held no later than the first Sunday in December. The Deacons will, in consultation with the Elders, set the date and agenda for the annual church business meeting. Notice of the subject, date, time and location for the annual business meeting must be publicized by printed or electronic means at least two weeks before the meeting and announced in the Sunday morning worship prior.

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Section 4. Called Business Meetings – A called business meeting may be held to consider matters of a significant nature. The Elders will decide when there is a need for a called business meeting unless otherwise specified by the Bylaws. Notice of the subject, date, time and location for the called business meeting must be publicized by printed or electronic means at least two weeks before the meeting and announced in the Sunday morning worship prior.

Section 5. Quorum – A quorum consists of those church members who attend the business meeting, provided it has been properly called.

Section 6. Voting – Every member who is 16 years of age or older has the right to vote on all matters presented to the church body. Voting by proxy is prohibited. Guidelines for electronic and absentee voting are outlined in the Church Manual. All matters will be decided by majority vote except where otherwise specified in the Bylaws.

Section 7. Parliamentary Procedure – *Robert's Rules of Order* (latest revised edition) will govern all business meetings except where it is inconsistent with the Bylaws of this church.

Section 8. Moderator – The Senior Pastor will be moderator of business meetings. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the chair of the elected Elders will preside. Otherwise, the Secretary will call the meeting to order and a moderator pro-tem will be elected.

ARTICLE VIII. LEADERSHIP

The Senior Pastor, Pastors, Ministers, elected Elders, Deacons and Corporate Officers must be members of the church. The primary responsibility of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, Ministers, elected Elders and Deacons will be to lead Hillside Church to accomplish its stated mission and uphold its values. Processes for electing, hiring, evaluation, and terminating people in leadership position are outlined in the Church Manual.

Section 1. Senior Pastor – After a recommendation from a Search Committee, the Senior Pastor is called by at least seventy-five percent of church members casting votes. The Senior Pastor serves as the leader of the Ministry Team. The Senior Pastor serves as member and co-chair of the Elder Board and as a non-voting member of the Deacons. Duties of the Senior Pastor will be listed in the Church Manual.

Section 2. Pastors – Pastors serve under the direction of the Senior Pastor after being recommended by a Search Committee and the Senior Pastor and approved by at least seventy-five percent of church members casting votes. Pastors serve on the Elder Board. Duties of Pastors will be listed in the Church Manual.

Section 3. Ministers – Ministers are recommended by the Elders and approved by at least two-thirds of church members casting votes. Ministers serve under the direction of the Senior Pastor, or a Pastor. Duties of Ministers will be listed in the Church Manual.

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Section 4. Elected Elders

- (1) **Role** – Elected Elders work in partnership with the Senior Pastor, Pastors and Ministers to lead Hillside Church to accomplish its stated mission and uphold its values. The elected Elders, along with the Senior Pastor and Pastors, make up the Elder Board. Duties of elected Elders are listed in the Church Manual.
- (2) **Qualifications** – Elected Elders will be at least 21 years of age at the time of taking office and will have been a member of this church for at least one year immediately prior to the time of nomination. Spouses may not serve as Elders or Deacons at the same time. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as elected Elders.
- (3) **Number-Rotation-Tenure** – A minimum of 6 Elders will be elected for a term of three years, with one-third of the number being elected each year to begin serving June 1. This number may be increased or decreased, as determined by the Elders according to the needs of the church. The number of elected Elders will always exceed the number of Pastors, including the Senior Pastor, serving as Elders. A person serving a term of 24 months or more will not be eligible for re-election until after a lapse of one year.
- (4) **Meetings-Quorum** – The Elders will conduct regular meetings. A quorum consists of at least one half of the Elder Board. The Elder Board will make decisions by consensus whenever possible. The Chair of the Elder Board may call for a vote when consensus cannot be reached. All members of the Elder Board vote.
- (5) **Election** – The Chair and Vice-chair will oversee the Elder election process as defined in the Church Manual. The elected Elders rotating off in the current year will constitute the Elder Election Committee. The Elder Election Committee will be responsible for the accomplishment of the Elder Election process. The elected Elders may, if needed, adjust the schedule to accomplish the required steps, provided the election process should be completed prior to June 1.
- (6) **Officers** – The elected Elders will choose three of their members to serve respectively as chair, vice-chair, and secretary of the Elder Board. The chair will serve as co-chair with the Senior Pastor.
- (7) **Ordination** – For those elected as Elders who have not been ordained, a service of ordination will be scheduled and planned by the Senior Pastor and chair of the Elder Board. Previous ordination as a Pastor, Minister or Deacon will be recognized as the equivalent of Elder ordination.
- (8) **Vacancies** – Vacancies will be left unfilled until the next regular election of Elders. Vacancies will be filled to achieve compliance with Article VIII, Section 4 and will be by church vote.

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Section 5. Deacons

- (1) **Role** – The purpose of the Deacons is to provide administrative guidance in finance, personnel and other areas as needed by Hillside Church to accomplish its stated mission and uphold its values. Duties of the Deacons will be listed in the Church Manual.
- (2) **Qualifications** – Deacons will be at least 21 years of age at the time of taking office and will have been a member of Hillside Church for at least one year immediately prior to the time of nomination. Spouses may not serve as Elders or Deacons at the same time. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as Deacons.
- (3) **Number-Rotation-Tenure** – The Deacons will consist of a minimum of 6 members who will be elected for a term of three years, with one-third of the number being elected each year. This number may be increased or decreased, as determined by the Elders according to the needs of the church. The Senior Pastor will bring a recommendation for the Chair of Deacons to the Elders for approval. The Senior Pastor, Chair of the Elder Board and Treasurer serve as non-voting members of the Deacons. Deacon terms of service will begin January 1.
- (4) **Election** – The Elder Board will nominate Deacons equal to the number of vacancies being filled according to the process detailed in the Church Manual. Affirmation of the nominees will take place during the annual church business meeting.
- (5) **Ordination** – For those elected as Deacons who have not been ordained, a service of ordination will be scheduled and planned by the Senior Pastor and chair of the Elder Board. Previous ordination as a Pastor, Minister or Deacon will be recognized as the equivalent of Deacon ordination.
- (6) **Vacancies** – A vacancy may be filled at any time by the procedure outlined in number (4) above, with election during a called business meeting.

Section 6. Secretary

- (1) **Role** – The Secretary serves as the Secretary of the Corporation and will attest the signature of the Trustee and Treasurer on all legal documents and will affix the corporate seal of the Corporation on such documents. The Secretary also has the responsibility of recording all church business decisions and transactions. Other duties of the Secretary are outlined in the Church Manual. If the Secretary of the Corporation is unable to carry out his or her duties at any time, the Secretary of the Elder Board will serve in this capacity until the vacancy has been filled.
- (2) **Qualifications** – The Secretary should be a respected and trusted member of Hillside Church. The Secretary will keep records that are easily understood and be conscientious in preserving and recording these records for church use.

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- (3) **Tenure and Election** – The Secretary will be nominated by the Elder Board and serve a term of three years. The Secretary may serve multiple and consecutive terms. Election of the Secretary will take place at the annual church business meeting or a called business meeting. A vacancy may be filled at any time. The Secretary's term of service will begin January 1. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as Secretary.

Section 7. Trustee (President of Corporation Designate)

- (1) **Role** – The Trustee, as provided by law and action of the church, represents the church in all matters of legal responsibility and executes all legal papers as directed by the church. The Trustee is designated as the President of the Corporation. The Trustee has no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of or exercise control over the use of church property without a specific vote of the church. If the Trustee is unable to carry out his or her duties at any time, the Chair of the Elder Board will serve in this capacity until the vacancy has been filled.
- (2) **Qualifications** – The Trustee should be a respected and trusted member of Hillside Church. The Trustee should have an understanding of the church leadership structure and its financial, legal, and administrative operations.
- (3) **Tenure and Election** – The Trustee will be nominated by the Elder Board and serve a term of three years. Election of the Trustee will take place at the annual church business meeting or a called business meeting. A vacancy may be filled at any time. The Trustee may serve multiple and consecutive terms. The Trustee's term of service begins January 1. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as Trustee.

Section 8. Treasurer

- (1) **Role** – The Treasurer is responsible for receiving, accounting, disbursing, and reporting all the monies and gifts of the church. The Treasurer also serves as Treasurer of the Corporation. The Treasurer will prepare and distribute quarterly financial statements to the church body. Other duties of the Treasurer will be outlined in the Church Manual.
- (2) **Qualifications** – The Treasurer should be a respected and trusted member of Hillside Church with knowledge of standard accounting practices. The Treasurer will keep financial records that are easily understood and be conscientious in preserving and recording these records for church use.
- (3) **Tenure and Election.** The Treasurer will be nominated by the Elders, elected by the church, and serve a term of three years. Election of the Treasurer will take place at the annual church business meeting or a called business meeting. A vacancy may be filled at any time. The Treasurer may serve multiple and consecutive terms. The term of service will begin January 1. Spouses may not serve as Treasurer, Elder or Deacon at the same time. In addition, the Treasurer may not serve as an Elder or Deacon during his/her term as Treasurer. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as Treasurer.

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ARTICLE IX. CHURCH MANUAL

Section 1. General Statement – Church policies and procedures will be described in the Church Manual. The Deacons will be charged with maintaining and keeping the manual updated. Additions, deletions or revisions of the Church Manual will be made by and through the Deacons, subject to final approval by the Elders.

Section 2. Contents – The Church Manual will include the following information:

- (1) Senior Pastor, Pastors, and Ministers Section: employment processes, job descriptions, evaluation, termination, and personnel policies and other materials related to the Senior Pastor, Pastors and Ministers.
- (2) Elder Board Section: election processes, duties, and termination procedures of those who serve as elected Elders.
- (3) Deacons Section: election processes, duties, and termination procedures of those who serve as Deacons.
- (4) Corporate Officers Section: duties of all Corporate Officers: Trustee, Secretary, and Treasurer, election processes, evaluation, and termination procedures, locations for storing documents of the corporation and ongoing records.
- (5) Support Staff Section: job descriptions for all current members of the Support Staff, evaluation and termination procedures, and other materials related to the Support Staff.
- (6) Organizational Section: all ministry or task groups along with their purpose, composition, responsibilities, and evaluation/oversight.
- (7) Policy and Procedure Section: all policies and procedures approved and adopted by the Elders.
- (8) Other: information, programs and procedures necessary for the efficient operation of the church.

ARTICLE X. DISSOLUTION

In the event that Hillside Church would be dissolved by the church body and no longer exist, the assets belonging to Hillside Church would be turned over to the North Carolina Cooperative Baptist Fellowship or merged with another congregation.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws will be made at a called business meeting of the church, provided that:

- (1) An electronic copy of the proposed change(s) has been made available on the church website or via newsletter no less than thirty days prior to vote.
- (2) Written copies have been made available in the church office to the church membership.

Two-thirds vote of all members of the church present and voting must ratify amendments to the Hillside Church Constitution and Bylaws.

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ARTICLE XII. ADOPTION

The Constitution and Bylaws will be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when two-thirds of the members present and voting at the business meeting at which the vote is taken vote in favor of the document. This vote will take place not less than 30 days after formal presentation of the Constitution and Bylaws to the church.