

# LIVINGHOPE

## BIBLE CHURCH

GROWING & CHANGING IN CHRIST

# MEMBERSHIP PACKET

CONSTITUTION, CONFESSION,  
CHURCH COVENANT



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# Living Hope Church Membership Class

## Agenda:

1. Fill out Church Membership forms / Service Questionnaire
2. Explain Biblical Church membership (pages 2-10)
3. Vision Statement
4. Confession of Faith
5. Read Church Covenant
6. Constitution / Polity – elder led, congregationally affirmed
7. Child Protection Policy (page 32)
8. Answer questions
9. Take pictures for church directory if needed
10. Go over testimonies

## Christ Builds His Church

Christ gave us the promise, “I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). What is Jesus talking about when He speaks of His church?

## Church Universal and Church Local

Theologically, we can define the church in two ways: the church universal and the church local. The church universal is that Body of believers from all times that will be gathered when Jesus comes again at the marriage supper of the Lamb – when people of every tribe, tongue, people and nation will be gathered as one Body in Christ. That’s the church universal. We call it the family of God, or the elect of all the ages. But most of the commands in the New Testament are for a local church context.

It tells us to:

1. Submit to elders – but this does not mean I submit to elders of all churches at all times. That would be impossible. It says “submit to those who have the rule over you” (Heb. 13:17; Acts 20:29-30). They are going to give an account. They care for your souls. So this is clearly referring to a local church at a certain location at a certain time in history. A specific council of elders is watching for your soul and going to give an account.
2. In at least 35 places the Bible gives us the one another commands –
  - exhort one another,
  - encourage one another,
  - edify one another,
  - love one another,

- submit to one another,
- tolerate one another,
- outdo one another in good works,
- be kind one to another,
- bear one another's burdens,
- be hospitable toward one another
- etc.

All of these things are in a local church context. All of these demonstrate that we are to be living in community with one another in a covenant relationship.

Acts 2:41–47, “So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. 42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

These were the first members of the New Testament church. They demonstrated their membership to one another through baptism. The apostles and eventually pastors and elders watched for their souls. We see that there is a numerical record of those who have professed Christ and been filled with the Holy Spirit (v. 41) and an acknowledgement that the church was tracking the growth (v. 47).

What I want to demonstrate this morning is that to be rooted in Christ, the New Testament teaches and implies in many places that we are to have a membership in a local church.

### **Binding and Loosing**

Also, in Matthew 18, there is a command to leaders in the church to bind and lose members in the church, as they did in the synagogue. I want to demonstrate to you from the Scriptures that church membership is biblical and necessary.

With that in mind, let's consider why I believe this kind of structure is not only good and healthy for your spiritual life, but I believe it is biblical and necessary to have formal church membership in the local church. The three reasons are as follows:

We ought to be rooted as members of the local church for:

1. Spiritual Protection
2. Simple Obedience
3. Sanctifying Purpose for Living

Our vision statement says this: “Living Hope Bible Church **exists to glorify God by bringing people to Jesus and membership in His family**, helping them to grow and change in Christlike maturity, and equipping them for **service to God in the local church** and in mission to the world.”

When we say “membership in His family” we not only mean the universal church, but that each of us should be in a covenantal relationship with each other to care for each other’s spiritual welfare and well being.

## **I. Reason #1: Spiritual Protection**

A. The worst thing that can happen to a Christian is not persecution, physical injury, or death.

In many respects, these are the best things that can happen to us. Jesus said that we are blessed when we are “persecuted for righteousness' sake” (Matthew 5:10). Paul said he would “take pleasure in infirmities . . . for Christ's sake . . . For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:10). Jesus said to His followers, “My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do” (Luke 12:4). This makes perfect sense, because for the believer, “to be absent from the body” is “to be present with the Lord.” None of these earthly threats should hold any sway over us whatsoever.

B. But there is one thing that should make us tremble, and that is the prospect of being overtaken by sin.

- Sin is what Christ suffered for on the cross. He became sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21)!
- Sin grieves the Holy Spirit of God (Ephesians 4:30).
- Sin in the life of a true believer invites the discipline of the Father (Hebrews 12:5-8).
- And sin, if it characterizes the life of a professing Christian, may indicate that the profession of faith is false (Titus 1:16; 1 John 2:3-4, chapter 3). Even as those whose sins have been forgiven, we must never forget that sin is the one thing that sends people to eternal torment in hell.

C. We are called in the New Testament to covenant together in localities to care for one another’s soul as **believers**.

### **Added to the Church**

Back in Acts 2, we see a hundred twenty were gathered in the upper room, and God adds 3000 souls to them. In Acts 4:4, another four thousand men, plus women and children were added to the assembly. Now here we have some

indication that they kept rolls, the fact that they knew how many they were responsible for. They evidently knew who was a part of the church by a profession of faith and by baptism. And this is really the precedent of keeping membership rolls in a church. The apostles and later pastors are able to keep track of who has committed himself to Christ and for whom they are responsible in the life of the church.

## **Metaphors for the Church**

There are several metaphors for the church, and each of them implies a responsibility for each member.

- **Together we are called a Flock** – **Acts 20:28**, “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.” A flock is not a random collection of lambs. Jesus says, “My sheep know my voice and they follow me”. Sheep belong to specific flocks. A shepherd missing a sheep is going to do all he can to find his sheep. He doesn’t go looking for the sheep of other flocks, but his own sheep.
- **Together we are called God’s Temple.** **Ephesians 2:21**, “in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.” God’s Temple should not have any loose bricks. If so something is wrong. The structure is unsound. If you are missing a brick, the building is in disrepair.
- **Together we are called Christ’s Body.** **1 Corinthians 12:24**, “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” A body cannot just rip off an arm or a leg. You cannot just add a limb to a body. It is a living organism. Your body isn’t a collection of random and loose parts. A body missing an arm is a sad thing. So it is with the Body of Christ.
- **Together we are called God’s household (family).** **Ephesians 2:19**, “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.” In a family, you are either a member or not. Membership is important!

It wasn’t just anyone who was baptized. It was “those who gladly received” what Peter had preached. They were converted. They covenanted to meet together, to break bread together. They were accountable to one another.

- That is why we are told in **Hebrews 3:13** to “exhort one another daily . . . lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (Hebrews

3:13). We are told in Romans 15 to “admonish” or counsel “one another” (Romans 15:14).

- **1 Corinthians 12:12–25** – Every member has an important place in the Body

Notice Paul is talking about real people that we see all the time. We are to experience life depending on one another. We are to care for one another. We are to give honor to one another.

- Each member has his or her own place in the Body, designated by God who sovereignly gives spiritual gifts.

D. Elders and pastors are commanded to care for believers in certain locations. They are placed their sovereignly by God.

- **Acts 20:28-31** (ESV) — “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood...”
- **Hebrews 13:17** (ESV) — “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”

Why should we join a local church as believers? Because your spiritual survival depends on it. In those churches where the fellowship always seems positive and upbeat, but no membership procedure is established, there may be a willingness to confront sin in a biblical manner, but there is no authority to take Christian accountability to its final degree when necessary. That kind of authority—the ability to properly and consistently exercise such loving accountability—is the subject of the next section.

## II. Reason #2: Scriptural Obedience

Membership is never directly commanded in the New Testament. In other words, there is no verse that says, “thou shalt be a member of a church”. But while it is never directly commanded, it is most definitely implied and also taught by example almost everywhere in the New Testament.

A. It is commanded to the **leaders** of the church to bind and loose members in the Church.

Elders and pastors are given the responsibility, the best they know how, to make sure there is a regenerate church membership. We are to carefully examine each candidate that comes for church membership to make sure they are born again. We are also to loose anyone in the church membership who is continuing in

unrepentant sin. This is commanded in the New Testament in at least two places: Matthew 18 and 1 Cor. 5.

### **The Synagogue and Binding and Loosing**

I do believe there eventually would have been a members list of some kind because the model for the New Testament church comes from the synagogue from Jesus day.

Look over at **Matthew 18:15-19** (ESV) — “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18 Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, **and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.** 19 Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

It is very important to note that in this context, the binding and loosing was for membership in the synagogue. The witnesses were prescribed by the Mosaic law. And to be loosed meant to be excommunicated as a member. To be bound meant to be brought in or retained as a member. The “two or three” that needed to be in agreement was very likely the elder council of the synagogue.

### **Church Discipline in 1 Corinthians: Inside and Outside**

Paul uses even stronger language to describe the removal of an unrepentant "brother" from the church. In 1 Corinthians chapter 5, regarding a professing Christian who was leading a grossly immoral life, he tells that church congregation to act as one Body together, and in love, to remove this man from the church's membership so that God might discipline him and bring him back. And that's what happened.

**1 Corinthians 5:11–13** — “But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those **inside** the church whom you are to judge? 13 God judges those **outside**. “Purge the evil person from among you.”

The membership here is described as those “inside the church”. The whole church is to participate in the process to disaffirm this person who continues in sin. He's no longer a member. And if there is a way to disaffirm someone in the church as a member, there must have been some system by which they affirmed one another as Christians—as members of that church. In what other way could these people have obediently followed Paul's instructions in verse 13

when he said, "Therefore 'put away from yourselves the evil person?'"? If a person were never affirmed or accepted as a member of that particular group, there would be no way to obey the command to remove him from that group.

B. It is commanded to elders to **shepherd** a certain group of people. Consider Paul's command in Acts chapter 20 when he passionately implored those in Ephesus to "shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood"? How would those Ephesian elders have known who in particular was under their care as a shepherd if not for some system of membership? For a moment, put yourself in the position of an elder. How else could you know which people comprise the group that Peter referred to as "those in your charge" (1 Peter 5:3)? **1 Peter 5:3** (ESV) — "not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock."

C. It is commanded to the **believers** of the church to join in a covenant community in the local assembly of believers.

What other way could you have of knowing those for whom you will be held accountable (cf. Hebrews 13:17)?

### **Reasons for Church Membership (from Mark Dever, 9 Marks):**

- **You stop being an independent Christian.** Elders are commanded to bind and loose and therefore believers are implicitly commanded to be bound to a local assembly. You are no longer on your own, but willfully submitted to the accountability of the elders and the entire church – Matthew 18:15-18. You are either bound or loosed from the local church.
- **You use your spiritual gift to build up the local body.** 1 Cor. 12, Romans 12, Eph. 4.
- **The local churches cannot grow or function properly with wayward members.** Ephesians 4:11-16.
- **You demonstrate your commitment to specific individual parts.** Eph. 4:16, "from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each [individual] part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love." See also the "one anothers" sheet.

\*\*\* It is not a clique but an amalgamation of various different parts, with different age groups, ethnicities, etc. We should minister to all the various parts, not just what we are comfortable with.



- **You have the responsibility to encourage the local church and be faithful to it until the Lord comes.** You are to love those for whom Christ died.

**Hebrews 10:24-25**, “let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

### **III. Reason #3: Sanctifying Purpose for Living**

Back in Acts 2, the Scripture says they were doing four things together on a regular basis.

Verse 42 – “they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayer.”

Together they gave themselves to DOCTRINE, FELLOWSHIP, THE LORD’S TABLE, AND PRAYER.

They did life together! God promises in many places to sanctify us. Paul wrote to the church at Philippi, instructing them to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling . . . ” (Philippians 2:12). In using the term “work out,” Paul was not telling those Christians to come up with their own plan for salvation (work out your own arrangement). He was also not telling them to work off a debt (like paying off a credit card) after it seemed that they had gotten something for free. Paul’s meaning here comes from a single Greek word that is translated by the two English words, “work out.” It means, in simple terms, to fulfill your purpose—to accomplish that which you were meant to accomplish.

Understanding, then, that every Christian was created by God for a purpose, we must ask ourselves what that purpose is.

- Philippians 2:12–13 (ESV) — “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

We are created to please God and do His will. We don’t do this perfectly, but God promises to bring it to full completion. Listen to His promises:

- Romans 8:28–29, “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.”
- “Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.” (Jude 24-25)

- “He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.” (1 Thessalonians 5:24)
- “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6)
- “God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.” (2 Thessalonians 2:13)
- “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)
- “God will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Corinthians 1:8-9)

The New Testament speaks of the church as the context where biblical love should be given and experienced in its highest form. And most biblical references to the church are to the local church. When the New Testament writers speak of love, they use language that brings to mind unity among members and reliance upon one another. Nowhere do we find language that would encourage or affirm individuality.

How does all this work out? Ephesians 4:15–16 (ESV) — “we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”

When Paul describes the church as a body in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, he consistently refers to the individual Christians as members of that body (vv. 12, 14, 18, 19, 20, 23, 25, 26, 27). Never does Paul, or any other biblical author describe a Christian as one who functions or exists in **isolation** from the whole. Paul closes 1 Corinthians chapter 12 by mentioning spiritual gifts given to individuals as the Holy Spirit wills. But then, in his very last sentence he writes, "And yet I show you a more excellent way" (v. 31). The entire next chapter speaks of the perfection of love—a thing that exceeds even faith and hope in greatness (1 Corinthians 13:13). "Without love," Paul writes, "I am nothing" (13:2).

Why should you join a church? Because by committing yourself in that way you will help to fulfill your purpose as a Christian. You cannot do it without the rest of the members of the Body.

# Constitution, Confession, & Covenant

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# ARTICLE 1

## Organization

The name of this Church shall be "Living Hope Bible Church" of Roselle, Illinois and "Iglesia Esperanza" (Spanish ministry).

# ARTICLE 2

## Vision Statement

Living Hope Bible Church exists to glorify God by bringing people to Jesus and membership in His family, helping them to grow and change in Christlike maturity, and equipping them for service to God in the local church and in mission to the world.

# ARTICLE 3

## Confession of Faith

*The following summary of our faith is adapted from the New Hampshire Confession of Faith of 1833.*

### 1. Of the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit, and is the perfect treasure of heavenly instruction (1); that it has God for its author, salvation for its end (2), and truth without any mixture of error for its matter (3); that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us (4); and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union (5), and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (6).

1. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Sam. 23:2; Acts 1:16; 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16:29-31; Psa. 119:11; Rom. 3:1-2
2. 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; Mark 16:16; John 5:38-39
3. Prov. 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 3:4
4. Rom. 2:12; John 12:47-48; 1 Cor. 4:3-4; Luke 10:10-16; 12:47-48
5. Phil. 3:16; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Pet. 4:11
6. 1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:6; Jude 3:5; Eph. 6:17; Psa. 119:59-60; Phil. 1:9-11

### 2. Of the True God

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth (1); inexpressibly glorious in holiness (2), and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love (3); that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (4); equal in every divine perfection (5), and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (6).

1. John 4:24; Psa. 147:5; 83:18; Heb. 3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer. 10:10
2. Exod. 15:11; Isa. 6:3; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 4:6-8
3. Mark 12:30; Rev. 4:11; Matt. 10:37; Jer. 2:12-13
4. Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 1 John 5:7
5. John 10:30; 5:17; 14:23; 17:5, 10; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6
6. Eph. 2:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5; comp. 2, 7

### 3. Of the Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker (1); but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state (2); in consequence of which all people are now sinners (3), not by constraint, but choice (4); being by nature utterly void of that holiness

required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin (5), without defense or excuse (6).

1. Gen. 1:27, 31; Eccl. 7:29; Acts 16:26; Gen. 2:16
2. Gen. 3:6-24; Rom. 5:12
3. Rom. 5:19; John 3:6; Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:15-19; 8:7
4. Isa. 53:6; Gen. 6:12; Rom. 3:9-18
5. Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:18, 32; 2:1-16; Gal. 3:10; Matt. 20:15
6. Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom. 1:20; 3:19; Gal. 3:22

#### **4. Of the Way of Salvation**

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (1), through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God (2); who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin (3); honored the divine law by his personal obedience (4), and by his death made a full atonement for our sins (5); that having risen from the death, he is now enthroned in heaven (5); and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior (7).

1. Eph. 2:5; Matt. 18:11; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; Acts 15:11
2. John 3:16; 1:1-14; Heb. 4:14; 12:24
3. Phil. 2:6-7; Heb. 2:9, 14; 2 Cor. 5:21
4. Isa. 42:21; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 3:21
5. Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 20:28; Rom. 4:25; 3:21-26; 1 John 4:10; 2:2; 1 Cor. 15:1-3; Heb. 9:13-15
6. Heb. 1:8, 3; 8:1; Col. 3:1-4
7. Heb. 7:25; Col. 2:9; Heb. 2:18; 7:26; Psa. 89:19; Psa. 14

#### **5. Of Justification**

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ (1) secures to such as believe in him is justification (2); that justification includes the pardon of sin (3), and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness (4); that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood (5); by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God (6); that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity (7).

1. John 1:16; Eph. 3:8
2. Acts 13:39; Isa. 3:11-12; Rom. 8:1
3. Rom. 5:9; Zech. 13:1; Matt. 9:6; Acts 10:43
4. Rom. 5:17; Titus 3:5-6; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Rom. 5:21
5. Rom. 4:4-5; 5:21; 6:28; Phil. 3:7-9
6. Rom. 5:19; 3:24-26; 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12
7. Rom. 5:1-3, 11; 1 Cor. 1:30-31; Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:8

#### **6. Of the Freeness of Salvation**

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel (1); that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith (2); and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel (3); which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation (4).

1. Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Luke 14:17
2. Rom. 16:26; Mark 1:15; Rom. 1:15-17
3. John 5:40; Matt. 23:37; Rom. 9:32; Prov. 1:24; Acts 13:46
4. John 3:19; Matt. 11:20; Luke 19:27; 2 Thess. 1:8

#### **7. Of Grace in Regeneration**

We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again (1); that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind (2); that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth (3), so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel (4); and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life (5).

1. John 3:3, 6-7; 1 Cor. 1:14; Rev. 8:7-9; 21:27
2. 2 Cor. 5:17; Ezek. 36:26; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:28-29; 5:5; 1 John 4:7
3. John 3:8; 1:13; James 1:16-18; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 2:13
4. 1 Pet. 1:22-25; 1 John 5:1; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:9-11
5. Eph. 5:9; Rom. 8:9; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 3:14-21; Matt. 3:8-10; 7:20; 1 John 5:4, 18

## 8. Of Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God (1); whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ (2), we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy (3); at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior (4).

1. Mark 1:15; Acts 11:18; Eph. 2:8; 1 John 5:1
2. John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31
3. Luke 18:13; 15:18-21; James 4:7-10; 2 Cor. 7:11; Rom. 10:12-13; Psa. 51
4. Rom. 10:9-11; Acts 3:22-23; Heb. 4:14; Psa. 2:6; Heb. 1:8; 8:25; 2 Tim. 1:12

## 9. Of God's Purpose of Grace

We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners (1); that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end (2); that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable (3); that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy (4); that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree (5); that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel (6); that it is the foundation of Christian assurance (7); and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence (8).

1. 2 Tim. 1:8-9; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 1:1-2; Rom. 11:5-6; John 15:15; 1 John 4:19; Hos. 12:9
2. 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt. 20:16; Acts 15:14
3. Exod. 33:18-19; Matt. 20:15; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:23-24; Jer. 31:3; Rom. 11:28-29; James 1:17-18; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 11:32-36
4. 1 Cor. 4:7; 1:26-31; Rom. 3:27; 4:16; Col. 3:12; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; 15:10; 1 Pet. 5:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:12
5. 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Cor. 9:22; Rom. 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; 2 Pet. 1:10
6. 1 Thess. 1:4-10
7. Rom. 8:28-30; Isa. 42:16; Rom. 11:29
8. 2 Pet. 1:10-11; Phil. 3:12; Heb. 6:11

## 10. Of Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness (1); that it is a progressive work (2); that it is begun in regeneration (3); and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means-especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer (4).

1. 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; 13:9; Eph. 1:4
2. Prov. 4:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; Phil. 3:12-16
3. John 2:29; Rom. 8:5; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14
4. Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:5; Luke 11:35; 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:18; 4:30

## 11. Of the Perseverance of Saints

We believe that only those who endure unto the end are true believers (1); that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors (2); that a special providence watches over their welfare (3); and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (4).

1. John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 3:9; 5:18
2. 1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt. 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9
3. Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Psa. 121:3; 91:11-12
4. Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; Jude 24-25; Heb. 1:14; 2 Kings 6:16; Heb. 13:5; 1 John 4:4

## **12. Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel**

We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government (1); that it is holy, just, and good (2); and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin (3); to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church (4).

1. Rom. 3:31; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:20; 4:15
2. Rom. 7:12, 7, 14, 22; Gal. 3:21; Psa. 119
3. Rom. 8:7-8; Josh. 24:19; Jer. 13:23; John 6:44; 5:44
4. Rom. 8:2, 4; 10:4; 1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 8:10; Jude 20-21; Heb. 12:14; Matt. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 12:28

## **13. Of a Gospel Church**

We believe that a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers (1), associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel (2); observing the ordinances of Christ (3); governed by his laws (4), and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his Word (5); that its only scriptural officers are pastors and elders, and deacons (6), whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the letters to Timothy and Titus.

1. 1 Cor. 1:1-13; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:1; 11:31; 1 Cor. 4:17; 14:23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3:5
2. Acts 2:41-42; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 5:12-13
3. 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; 1 Cor. 11:23; Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:6; 2 Cor. 2:7; 1 Cor. 4:17
4. Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thess. 4:2; 2 John 6; Gal. 6:2; all the Epistles
5. Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 14:12; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 12:14
6. Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; 15:22; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1

## **14. Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer (1), unto the Name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit (2); to show forth, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life (3); and that baptism is the visible sign of membership in the Body of Christ (4). We believe that in the Lord's Supper, believers in Jesus, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ (5); preceded always by solemn self-examination (6).

1. Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; 4:1-2; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 16:32-34; 18:8
2. Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Gal. 3:27-28
3. Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; Acts 22:16
4. Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts and Epistles
5. 1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20
6. 1 Cor. 11:28; 5:1, 8; 10:3-32; 11:17-32; John 6:26-71

## **15. Of the Lord's Day**

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day (1) and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes (2) by preparation for that rest that remains for the people of God (3).

1. Acts 20:7; Gen. 2:3; Col. 2:16-17; Mark 2:27; John 20:19; 1 Cor. 16:1-2
2. Exod. 20:8; Rev. 1:10; Psa. 118:24
3. Isa. 58:13-14; 56:2-8; Psa. 119:15; Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 11:26; 13:44; Lev. 19:30; Exod. 46:3; Luke 4:16; Acts 17:2, 3; Psa. 26:8; 87:3; Heb. 4:3-11

## **16. Of Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society (1); and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed (2); except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (3) who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth (4).

1. Rom. 13:1-7; Deut. 16:18; 1 Sam. 23:3; Exod. 18:23; Jer. 30:21
2. Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:1-8
3. Acts 5:29; Matt. 10:28; Dan. 3:15-18; 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20
4. Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:4; Rev. 19:16; Psa. 72:11; Psa. 2; Rom. 14:9-13



## **17. Of the Righteous and the Wicked**

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (1); that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem (2); while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse (3); and this distinction holds among men both in and after death (4).

1. Mal. 3:18; Prov. 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Gen. 18:23; Jer. 15:19; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 6:16
2. Rom. 1:17; 7:6; 1 John 2:29; 3:7; Rom. 6:18, 22; 1 Cor. 11:32; Prov. 11:31; 1 Pet. 4:17-18
3. 1 John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; John 3:36; Isa. 57:21; Psa. 10:4; Isa. 55:6-7
4. Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; John 8:21-24; Prov. 10:24; Luke 12:4-5; 9:23-26; John 12:25-26; Eccl. 3:17; Matt. 7:13-14

## **18. Of the World to Come**

We believe that the end of the world is approaching (1); that at the last day Christ will descend from heaven (2), and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution (3); that a solemn separation will then take place (4); that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy (5); and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness (6).

1. 1 Pet. 4:7; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35; 1 John 2:17; Matt. 28:20; 13:39-40; 2 Pet. 3:3-13
2. Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-11
3. Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:12-59; Luke 14:14; Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; 6:40; 11:25-26; 2 Tim. 1:10; Acts 10:42
4. Matt. 13:49, 37-43; 24:30-31; 25:31-33
5. Matt. 25:35-41; Rev. 22:11; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Pet. 2:9; Jude 7; Phil. 3:19; Rom. 6:32; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; John 4:36; 2 Cor. 4:18
6. Rom. 3:5-6; 2 Thess. 1:6-12; Heb. 6:1-2; 1 Cor. 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:2-16; Rev. 20:11-12; 1 John 2:28; 4:17

# **ARTICLE 4**

## **Church Covenant**

God, by His sovereign grace and omnipotent love alone, has led me to repent of my sin and believe on Jesus Christ, trusting Him alone as my Savior and Lord. As one who has been baptized as a believer in Christ, I desire to unite with this church family. Therefore, I enter into a covenantal relationship with the members of this church. In humble reliance upon the Holy Spirit, I endeavor to pursue the following:

- (1) To meet together for any and all services on each Lord's Day, as the Lord shall give me opportunity, to serve and glorify Him in His worship, to edify one another, and to work together for the good of His church
- (2) To diligently guard the truth, upholding the standard of sound words recorded in Scripture and reflected in our Confession of Faith
- (3) To earnestly seek God's face in prayer both private and corporate for the pleasure of His presence, the needs of the saints, for personal and corporate cleansing from sin and holiness in our journey of sanctification, and for personal and corporate revival as He pleases to give it.
- (4) To avoid participation in any secret society which violates the Scriptures or our Confession of Faith

- (5) To wholeheartedly support, love, and care for the church's ministries and members, offering: my prayers, my financial gifts of tithes and offerings, my service
- (6) To boldly witness for the Lord Jesus Christ, living a transformed life and proclaiming the gospel as the Lord guides my steps
- (7) To actively pursue personal holiness before God in fulfillment of the great commandment – to love God supremely and my neighbor as Christ has loved us
- (8) To promote the unity of the church, being a peacemaker with all in the body of Christ
- (9) To respectfully follow the elders and other leaders of this church, trusting and supporting their leadership as they follow Christ
- (10) To humbly submit to the church's discipline, graciously repenting when approached about personal sin, and lovingly restoring others who become entangled in sin if they should come to repentance
- (11) To be active in the work of the ministries of the local church, unless providentially hindered
- (12) I also purpose to maintain family and private worship; if God has given me children, to train my children according to the Bible, to walk carefully in the world, to be just in my dealings, faithful in my engagements, and appropriate in my conduct, to avoid gossip, not speaking that which is evil, and to avoid unrighteous anger, to abstain from all forms of activity which dishonor my Lord Jesus Christ, cause stumbling to a fellow believer or hinder bringing a soul to Christ, to be zealous in my efforts to advance the cause of Christ our Savior, and to give Him preeminence in all things.
- (13) I also purpose to guard the biblical structure of the family and the sanctity of life, affirming marriage as that being between a man and a woman joined together by God, which man should not put asunder.
- (14) I further purpose to encourage my fellow brethren in the blessed hope of our Lord's return, to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feelings and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation.
- (15) I moreover purpose that if I remove from this place, I will seek as soon as possible to unite with some other church of like faith and practice where I can carry out the spirit of this covenant and other principles of God's Word.

This covenant I make in the presence of Almighty God, the Searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to fulfill my obligations, as I shall answer at the Last Day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. I most humbly beseech the Lord to strengthen me by His Holy Spirit for this end, and for His glory and honor.

# ARTICLE 5

## Membership

### *Section I: Establishment of Membership*

The membership of Living Hope Bible Church shall consist of persons whose applications have been approved and accepted by the Council of Elders after having given testimony of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to the Pastor or one of the Elders. Each member agrees to live in accordance with the church's Confession of Faith, Covenant, Vision Statement, and Constitution. Following their acceptance, new members will be presented to the congregation by the Senior Pastor or one of the Elders for affirmation at a monthly Members' Meeting or one of the church's regular worship services. The membership of the church shall include *active*, *associate*, and *inactive* members.

#### A. Active Members

The active membership shall consist of those members who manifest an active interest in the welfare and ministry of the church through attendance and participation, or through equivalent missionary activity. An active member must have no other commitments which would prevent loyalty to this Church or to the beliefs, principles, and policies to which we hold.

#### B. Associate Members

Associate Membership may be extended to those temporary residents such as students, missionaries, or special situations of those holding regular memberships elsewhere, who otherwise meet the requirements for Active Membership. Associate Members shall be entitled to participate in all functions and activities of the Church, but shall not be included in the voting Membership.

#### C. Inactive Members

Inactive membership consists of those Members who find it impossible to retain their Active Membership status through regular attendance or participation, or who are in the process of church discipline. Inactive Members do not have voting privileges.

#### D. Voting Membership

Any active Member of this Church, who is 18 years old or older is eligible to vote on any matter of the Church unless otherwise restricted by law. Missionaries shall not be counted as part of the Voting Membership except on those occasions when circumstances permit them to be present at Members' Meetings.

### *Section II: Removal from Membership*

During the sixth month of the church year, and at such time as may be necessary, the Council of Elders shall review the Membership Roll.

- A. Members whose interest in the welfare and ministry of the Church has clearly ceased, shall upon vote of the Council of Elders, be dropped from the Membership Roll, provided reasonable attempts have first been made to restore them. Such action shall be reported to the church congregation at the following regularly scheduled business meeting.
- B. When any Member faces a change in his ability to meet requirements of his current membership status, it is desirable that such Member take the initiative in requesting a change in membership status as applicable. Members who, after due admonition, persist in a lifestyle which is at variance with the Christian principles and damaging to the reputation and ministry of the Church, shall upon vote of the Council of Elders, be dropped from the Membership Roll. Such action shall be reported to the church congregation at the following regularly scheduled business meeting.

### ***Section III: Restoration of Membership***

Any Inactive Member who resumes attendance and participation, and otherwise meets the requirements for Active Membership, may be restored to Active Membership upon their written or verbal request, subject to the approval and acceptance of the Council of Elders. Such action shall be reported to the church congregation at the following regularly scheduled business meeting.

## **ARTICLE 6**

### **Church Government**

#### ***Section I: Council of Elders***

##### **A. Elder Form of Church Government**

Just as believers individually should seek to govern their lives by guidelines given in Scripture, Church bodies should follow scriptural instructions and precedents in governing themselves. The Elder form of government, as set forth in the New Testament, is, we believe, not only potentially the most satisfactory form of Church government; but is also that form of government which most closely follows Scriptural example. Just as following Biblical principles will enable the individual to live a successful Christian life, following Biblical guidelines in regards to Church government will enable a Church to more effectively minister within and outside of the local body of believers. This is not to say that a hierarchical, presbyterian or congregational form of Church government cannot be blessed or used of God: Church history obviously proves that they can be, often in great ways. However, we believe it is the Elder form of Church government that is presented as our Biblical model (Acts 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23:16; 20:17; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

##### **B. Who Selects Church Leadership?**

We are told in the New Testament that God is intimately involved in distributing spiritual gifts amongst believers for the building up of the Church body. Ephesians 4:11-12 says:

*“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” (ESV)*

As the Holy Spirit is involved in granting gifts for leadership, edification and encouragement with the church, we see that He is also directly involved in filling leadership positions in particular Church bodies. In Acts 20:28, speaking to the Elders of the Church in Ephesus, Paul made this statement:

*“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.” (ESV)*

In other words, the Elders of the Church at Ephesus were appointed not just by men, but by the Holy Spirit. The human role in selecting Elders is to recognize, by their knowledge, lifestyles and spiritual maturity, those whom the Holy Spirit has chosen to lead. As believers today, we should seek out those individuals who, by their lives, demonstrate that they are qualified to be Elders. Guidelines for defining and recognizing those spiritual qualities which a prospective Elder must meet are given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. This is dealing with his present character.

#### C. Qualifications of an Elder

1. He must be above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 2:7); that is, blameless or of good report. There was to be no grounds for accusing this man of improper Christian behavior.
2. He must be the husband of one wife (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6), that is not a polygamist. In a culture where man frequently cohabited with more than one woman, Paul needed to make it very clear that an Elder in the Church was to be a “one-woman man”--loyal to her and to her alone.
3. He must be temperate (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8), that is, self-controlled. He must not be a man who is in bondage to himself and to the desires of the flesh.
4. He must be prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8), that is, sensible, wise and balanced in judgment. He must not be given to quick and superficial decisions based on immature thinking.
5. He must be respectable (1 Timothy 3:2), that is, he must have an orderly life. He must demonstrate good behavior.
6. He must be hospitable (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8), that is, he must be unselfish and willing to share his blessings with others. His home life and personal life must be characterized by “hospitality”.
7. He must be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9), that is, to communicate the truth of God to others – “to exhort in sound doctrine” in a non-argumentative way (2 Timothy 2:24-26).

8. He must not be given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7), that is, he must not be “addicted” to wine.
9. He must not be pugnacious, but gentle (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7), that is, he must not be a person given to physical violence, but one who is characterized by forbearance and tenderness.
10. He must not be contentious (1 Timothy 3:3), that is, not given to quarreling and selfish argumentation.
11. He must be free from the love of money (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:2), that is, not “greedy of filthy lucre”, or “fond of sordid gain”, or stingy with his material blessings.
12. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6), that is, he must have the respect of his family and be recognized as the leader of the household. Paul adds: “for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church?” (1 Timothy 3:5, ESV)
13. He must not be a new convert (1 Timothy 3:16), that is, one who is a new Christian and a babe in Christ. He must be a mature believer and obviously one who has been a Christian for a period of time—at least long enough to demonstrate the reality of his conversion and the depth of his spirituality.
14. He must have a good reputation with those outside the Church (1 Timothy 3:7), that is, unbelievers must also respect his character and integrity.
15. He must not be self-willed (Titus 1:7), that is, one who gets angry quickly and “flies off the handle”. He must be in control of his own spirit.
16. He must love what is good (Titus 1:8), that is, he must not follow after and desire those things which are evil and sinful. He must be the kind of person who desires to do the will of God in everything. (1 Peter 5:2)
17. He must be just (Titus 1:8), that is, he must be fair and impartial. He must be one who can make objective judgments based upon principle. This also implies that he is one who carefully obeys the laws of the land.
18. He must be devout (Titus 1:8), that is, holy and separated from sin.
19. He must hold fast the faithful Word (Titus 1:9), that is, he must be stable in his faith and obey the Word of God in all respects. He must not be hypocritical, teaching one thing and living another. This also implies that he is gifted in discernment, able to carefully apply the Word of God to complex life situations.

#### D. Functions of an Elder

1. He must help shepherd the flock of God (1 Peter 5:2; Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:5), that is, he must care for the Church. Like a shepherd who oversees a flock of sheep, he is to guard the people of God against false teachers (Acts 20:28-30). He is to meet their needs and assist them in whatever way he can.
2. He is not to lord it over those allotted to his charge, but he is to be an example to the flock (1 Peter 5:3), that is, he is not to use his position for selfish gain or to demonstrate dictatorial attitudes. Rather he is to lead by example—obviously a Christlike example, as demonstrated in the qualifications just listed.
3. He is to teach and to exhort (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9), that is, to instruct and warn Christians. A significant part of the “shepherding” responsibility is to feed the flock of God.
4. He is to refute those who contradict the truth (Titus 1:9), that is, to stand up against those who teach false doctrine. He is to expose those who are “teaching things they should not teach” (Titus 1:11).
5. He is to manage the Church of God (1 Timothy 3:5), that is, to oversee the Church and administer the affairs of the Church. He is to be a man who can “rule well” (1 Timothy 5:17).
6. He is to pray for the sick (James 5:14-15), that is, along with the other Elders of the Church, he is to go where the sick are, anoint them with oil as a sign they are God’s child, and pray for their spiritual and physical well being.

#### E. Additional Duties of the Elder Council

1. To elect a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer each year at the first meeting, after the Annual Meeting.
2. To establish policies and determine practices for the Church.
3. They shall provide guidance and direction for the Committees and Officers to insure coordination and harmony in Church activities.
4. To hear and consider all reports and recommendations submitted by Pastors, Boards, Committees, and Staff.
5. They shall examine applicants for Church membership.
6. At the first Council of Elders Meeting after the election they shall establish all Committees necessary to effective operation. Each Committee shall have an Council of Elders Member to serve as liaison.
7. To assist the Pastor/Teacher in the administration of baptism and communion.

8. To serve and appoint Pastoral Search Committee when necessary.
9. For the purpose of Civil Law, the Council of Elders shall be known and act as the Directors of the Corporation, holding the trust all property, real and personal, of Living Hope Bible Church. Real estate property shall not be bought, sold or encumbered unless authorized by a two-thirds majority vote at a Regular or specially called Congregational Members' Meeting.
10. To exercise general oversight of Church finances and Church property matters.
11. To recommend to the Membership the acquiring of or disposal of real estate property or non-budgeted items.
12. To participate in the discipline of erring Members when such is deemed necessary, while striving for reconciliation.

#### F. Election of Elders

1. Elders are to be chosen from amongst men in the Church Membership who have an interest in being an Elder and are demonstrating a lifestyle that meets the guidelines listed above. The Council of Elders will consist of those men who are qualified, with no certain number to be maintained.
2. Prospective Elders can be recommended by the Elder Council or recommended by the Church Membership. All Elder candidates will be examined by the Council of Elders. The candidates' names will be published alphabetically in advance, in order for the Congregation to evaluate. If there is no objection to the candidate, the Elder Council must be contacted before the Annual or Special Meeting. If the Council of Elders finds him worthy he will be presented to the Church Membership for its vote of affirmation.
3. In keeping with the scriptural injunctions not to lord authority, a vote of two-thirds quorum is needed to approve the Elder's recommendation. If each Elder candidate does not receive a positive vote of affirmation, the candidate's name will be withdrawn and the candidate will not be appointed.
4. Each Elder must be reaffirmed by the Congregation every three years.
5. The Church Membership may ask for, and get clarification on any issues or decisions made by the Council of Elders.
6. The Church Membership may question decisions or policies instituted by the Council of Elders. It is the responsibility of the Church Member to examine the Scriptures to see if decisions and policies are biblical (Acts 17:11). Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the questioning member, to first contact any Elder or Pastor in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17 and Ephesians 4:15-16. If necessary, a requested meeting will be established to discuss any questions with the Council of Elders.



7. Members of the Church may attend any meeting of the Council of Elders upon notification to the Church Office. The Board reserves the right to go into executive session at any time without observers.

#### G. Officers of Elder Council

The Council of Elders shall elect its own Officers and establish duties consistent with the needs of Living Hope Bible Church.

1. Chairman: The Chairman shall preside at all Council of Elders Meetings which are to be conducted according to Scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8 and 1 Corinthians 14:40. The Chairman shall, in absence of the Pastor, be responsible for the leadership of the Church. The Chairman of the Council of Elders shall arrange the first meeting of all Boards and Committees within thirty days after the Annual Meeting for purposes of organizing.
2. Vice-Chairman: The Vice-Chairman shall assume all of the above enumerated duties of the Chairman in his absence.
3. Secretary: The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept the Minutes of all Meetings of the Council of Elders and Congregational Meetings and shall attach to said Minutes all official correspondence relating to such meetings. He shall be charged with the duty of giving proper notice to the Congregation of Annual and Special Meetings.
4. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct records of all monies collected by the Church, and the presentation of a financial report at the Annual Members' Meeting. Proper records and books concerning incoming and outgoing funds shall be kept and such records and books shall be available for auditing or inspection within a reasonable time by the Council of Elders.

#### H. Meeting and Quorum

The Council of Elders shall conduct Regular Member's Meetings once a month and Special Meetings at such other times as called for by the Pastor/Teacher or Chairman of the Board. A majority of the Board Membership shall constitute a quorum [for an Elders' meeting, but a Members meeting quorum shall be 33% according to Article 11, Section 5].

### ***Section II: Additional Boards and Committees***

#### A. Deacons

The Deacons shall consist of Members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The Deacons shall be responsible for the care and financial oversight, and the maintenance of the physical properties, to assist the Elders as needed in the general spiritual care of the Church, and perform other duties as assigned by the Council of Elders.

## B. Committees

The Council of Elders shall establish any and all committees, consisting of Active Church Members, necessary for the effective ministry of the Church. The Committees shall vary in number, purpose, and term of duty as deemed proper by the Council of Elders. Each Committee shall be accountable to the Council of Elders. Upon request of the Council of Elders each Committee shall present Minutes or written reports of progress. Each Committee shall elect a Chairman and other Officers at the first convened Meeting after the Church's Annual Meeting and keep accurate minutes.

## C. Missions Board

The Missions Board shall be responsible for the outreach of the Gospel to those not normally in contact with our regular Church program. The Missions Board will assist the Council of Elders by bringing considered recommendations regarding Missions to their attention and by serving as a wider base of counsel. Their expanded duties are specified in the Missions Policy.

## D. Terms of Service:

1. Members of the Deacons and elected Members of the Missions Board shall be elected for a term of three years with approximately one third of the Members of each being elected each year.
2. All other Officers/Coordinators shall be elected for a term of two years.

# ARTICLE 7

## Senior Pastor

### *Section I: Elections*

The Pastor/Teacher shall be selected by the Council of Elders and confirmed by the Members of the Church at a Special Members' Meeting called by the Council of Elders. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time. An announcement of a special meeting shall be given at the services on two preceding Sundays. One-third of the Active Members, 18 years of age or over (Article 5, Section I, D) shall constitute a quorum. The voting shall be by secret ballot. Three-fourths (75%) favorable vote of the quorum is necessary to extend a call.

### *Section II: Qualifications*

The Pastor of Living Hope Bible Church must be a man who gives clear evidence of a call to the ministry of the Gospel. He must be qualified spiritually and trained to be the spiritual leader of the Church. He must be in agreement with the doctrines, principles, and policies of this Church as set forth in Articles 2, 3, and 4.

### ***Section III. Duties***

The Pastor/Teacher shall be an ex-officio member of all Teams, Boards, and Committees and he shall be responsible to the Council of Elders. The Pastor/Teacher shall arrange for, and/or conduct, all public and regular services of the Church and shall be responsible for general oversight of the spiritual welfare of the Church (2 Timothy 4:1-2).

### ***Section IV: Cessation of Relationship***

The cessation of the Pastor relationship with the Church shall be considered at any time when any of the following conditions occur:

#### **A. Resignation**

On presentation of the Pastor's resignation.

#### **B. Release**

1. On unanimous recommendation of the Elders, or
2. By church vote of at least two-thirds of the eligible Active Membership.

#### **C. Terms**

The Council of Elders shall determine the details of cessation. Normally, there shall be severance pay of three months salary and benefits.

## **ARTICLE 8**

### **Interim Pastor**

#### ***Section I: Recommendation by Elders***

Should the office of Senior Pastor be vacant, the Council of Elders shall be responsible for filling the vacant pulpit each Sunday. The Council of Elders shall also, if deemed necessary, recommend an Interim Pastor to the church. The Interim Pastor shall be confirmed by two-thirds majority vote of the eligible Active Membership.

#### ***Section II: Special Considerations***

The Interim Pastor shall not be part of the Council of Elders or the Pastoral Search Committee so that there is no conflict of interest. Any remuneration given to the Interim Pastor shall be decided upon by the Council of Elders. The release of the Interim Pastor shall occur when a Senior Pastor is called, or at any time determined by the Council of Elders.

## ARTICLE 9

### Other Pastoral Staff

Other pastoral staff shall be subject to the same election and cessation of relationship procedures under Article 7. They shall perform such duties as may be outlined by the Pastor and Council of Elders.

## ARTICLE 10

### Church Calendar

#### *Section I: Fiscal Year*

The Fiscal year of the Church shall be from July 1 through June 30 inclusive.

#### *Section II: Office Terms*

The terms of office shall be from July 1 through June 30 inclusive.

## ARTICLE 11

### Meetings of the Church

#### *Section I: Monthly Members' Meetings*

Monthly Members' Meetings of the Church for hearing of reports and the transactions of any special business, shall normally be held on the last Wednesday of each month unless otherwise specified by the Elders.

#### *Section II: Annual Members' Meetings*

Annual Members' Meetings of the Church for hearing of reports, the election of Officers, and the transactions of such business as would naturally come before it, shall normally be held on the third Wednesday of April.

#### *Section III: Called Meetings*

Special Members' Meetings may be called by the Pastor, by majority vote of the Council of Elders, or by request, in writing submitted to the Council of Elders (signed by at least 10% of the Voting Membership). Notice of the Meetings shall be given in the Church Bulletin and from the Pulpit on at least the two Sundays prior to the date of the Meeting. The nature of the business shall be stated in the announcement.

#### ***Section IV: Procedure***

A moderator, usually the Pastor or a member of the Council of Elders, shall preside at all Members' Meetings. Meetings shall be conducted in an orderly manner according to 1 Corinthians 14:40. Unless otherwise specified, all items of business shall be decided by a majority vote.

#### ***Section V: Quorum***

Thirty-three percent of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business unless otherwise required.

## **ARTICLE 12**

### **Ministry Manual**

A Ministry Manual shall be prepared, approved by the Council of Elders, and maintained as an instructional guide in the Church's various ministries and operations. The Manual shall include job descriptions and specific functions of each Ministry, Office, and Committee of Living Hope Bible Church.

## **ARTICLE 13**

### **Licensing and Ordination**

#### ***Section I: Licensing***

Qualified men may apply for a ministerial license for the State of Illinois through the Church when appropriate. Such requests shall be referred to the Council of Elders for consideration.

#### ***Section II: Ordination***

Men desiring ordination to the Gospel ministry shall make a request to the Council of Elders. The application shall be referred to the Council of Elders for consideration. If approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council of Elders, an Ordination Council of the Council of Elders and if desired other Elders, Pastors, or Lay Leaders shall be called to examine the candidate. Upon recommendation of the Ordination Council, the Church shall publicly ordain the candidate and present to him an Ordination Certificate, after a vote of affirmation of two-thirds majority vote at a properly called Members' Meeting.

#### ***Section III: Procedure***

A moderator, usually the Pastor or a member of the Council of Elders shall preside at all Members' Meetings. Meetings shall be conducted in an orderly manner according to 1 Corinthians 14:40. Unless otherwise specified, all items of business shall be decided by a majority vote.

#### ***Section IV: Quorum***

Thirty-three percent of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business unless otherwise required.

## **ARTICLE 14**

### **Purity of Doctrine and Conduct**

#### ***Section I: Doctrine***

No person shall, while occupying a Church Office or other position of service which is under the auspices or jurisdiction of the Church, teach or otherwise actively propagate a doctrine which is contrary to any doctrine set forth in the Confession of Faith (Article 3). Any person who seemingly violates this Section may be suspended from office or position of service by the Council of Elders while investigating any violation. Removal from office will occur if said violation is not corrected.

#### ***Section II: Conduct***

##### **A. Church Member**

If a sin is committed the following biblical procedure shall be pursued.

1. Go to the individual alone to restore, several times if necessary.
2. If no repentance, take two or three witnesses to establish the facts and attempt restoration.
3. If no repentance, the Elders will formally go to the unrepentant person to plead for obedience to the Scriptures. If no repentance, the Elders will inform the unrepentant person that the matter will be taken before the Church so that they may be instructed how to reach out and attempt restoration. There shall be no appeal to any court from that decision (1 Corinthians 5:6, 8)
4. If no repentance, the Elders will inform the Church of removal of the unrepentant person from the Membership of the Church.
5. He/She shall be considered as an unconverted person and fellowship as a Christian brother/sister shall be withdrawn.

##### **B. Elder**

Discipline must follow procedure as defined in 1 Timothy 5:19-20.

##### **C. Restoration and Forgiveness**

The church must restore to fellowship in full forgiveness those persons who show satisfactory evidence of repentance (2 Corinthians 2:6-8; 7:9-11). Persons shall be restored at a duly called congregational meeting upon recommendation of the Elders

and two-thirds majority of the members present and voting (Galatians 6:1). The entire process of church discipline outlined above shall be carried out and enforced in a spirit of Christian love, care, and sensitivity (Matt. 18:16–18; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1–13; Gal. 6:1; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14–15; 1 Tim. 6:3–5; Titus 3:10).

## ARTICLE 15

### Amendments

#### *Section I: Articles 3 and 4*

Articles 3 and 4 hereof may be amended by a ninety percent majority of the votes cast, providing that each voting Member has been fully informed and given the means and opportunity to vote.

#### *Section II: All Other Articles or Sections*

All other Articles or Sections of this Constitution may be revised or amended after Council of Elders approval and by a two-thirds majority of the voting Members present at any Regular or duly called Special Meeting for that purpose. Written notice of such proposed amendment shall be given at least two weeks previous to said Meeting.

## ARTICLE 16

### Dissolution of the Church

#### *Section I: Requirements For Dissolution*

The Living Hope Bible Church may be dissolved after Council of Elders approval and by a ninety percent majority vote of the voting Membership.

#### *Section II: Disposal of Property*

In the event of dissolution, after all debts are paid, the remaining Church property, both real and personal, and all proceeds there from, shall be given without cost to the one or more non-denominational, evangelical, tax-exempt religious organizations. The recipient organization(s) shall be recommended by the Council of Elders and approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting Membership.

# Child Protection Policy

## INTRODUCTION

At Living Hope Bible Church we are passionate about the glory of God. Having experienced the transforming power of the gospel in our own lives, we naturally want to share this good news with others, especially our children. What a wonderful privilege we have to proclaim the greatness of God to the next generation. We earnestly desire that they, too, will know of God's love and place their trust in his son, Jesus.

Although we at Living Hope believe in the transforming power of God's Living Hope in the lives of all persons including those persons who suffer from sexual sins and other sins which cause them to be a danger to children ordinary prudence and the need to protect the church from legal liabilities, dictate that we impose some formal structure and organizational protections on all our ministries involving children. These guidelines are set forth in the hope and expectation that we can provide a safe environment to minister the gospel to our children.

Our Children's and Youth Ministries are partners with parents in providing quality instruction for our children. All these guidelines are meant to protect and promote growth both for the children and adults involved. They are meant to allow Living Hope access to more background information about our workers and to encourage and to facilitate prompt and appropriate responses to reports of abuse, as well as to foster an attitude and a routine practice of personal respect and confidentiality in the handling of these types of incidents.

In taking some simple preventative steps, we can reduce the risk to our children and our ministry programs.

### **I. SCOPE OF POLICY**

Anyone who teaches, supervises, assists or otherwise works with our children in any capacity will be required to follow these policies. Some programs may have additional requirements specifically designed for the individual needs of children in that program or age group.

Parents who participate in Youth Ministry activities with their child/children are not considered Youth "workers" for purposes of this policy. All other adults working in Youth Ministry will comply with the requirements of this policy.

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

**2.0 "Child Abuse" defined.** In general, child abuse includes any form of sexual contact or exploitation, as well as any form of physical or emotional abuse of children. Child abuse includes, but is not limited to, any conduct prohibited by Illinois State law.

**2.1 "Child" or "Children" defined.** "Child" or "Children" means any person under the age of eighteen (18) who is under the care, control and supervision of Living Hope Pastors, staff or laypersons who are acting in any capacity on behalf of the church.

**2.2 "Classroom Visitors" defined.** A classroom visitor is defined as any adult who is not a teacher, worker or parent of a child in that classroom.

**2.3. "Off-Site Activities" and "Church Property" defined.** "Off-site activities" are those activities that take place away from the Living Hope church offices, or the location of our regular Sunday services. "Church property" is any facility, whether rented or owned, that is regularly used for the purpose of conducting church activities.

### **III. WORKER SELECTION AND SCREENING**

The first step in reducing risk to our children and ministry programs is in making the best efforts to select appropriate workers.



**3.0 Pre-Qualifications for Ministry with Children.** Living Hope requires that all workers involved in any aspect of ministry involving children, be members in good standing at Living Hope Bible Church. Each applicant will need to have been in attendance of LHBC for at least six months before an application will be accepted.

All workers in any Children's or Youth Ministries will be screened. A screening form must be completed and signed by all workers (See Appendix A - "Application for Worker in Children's and Youth Ministry").

Minors who help in children's ministry (age 12 and above) must undergo the same application process as adults wishing to work in children's ministry. Minors who work in the nursery with infants will be screened and accepted on a case by case basis. Minors who help in classes will undergo the same training as adults with certain restrictions (such as not taking children to the bathroom) imposed.

Minors under 17 years of age are exempt from the criminal check process. In Illinois, anyone arrested who is 17 or older is considered an adult. Anyone 17 years or older will be subject to a criminal background check as well as a search of the State and Federal Sex Offender Registration Databases.

As a part of the screening process and as an additional condition of working in any aspect of Living Hope ministry involving direct contact with children, all workers must agree in writing to follow all the policies and procedures as outlined in the Living Hope Bible Church Child Protection Policy. In addition, all workers must consent to a criminal background check.

**3.1 Persons Excluded from Serving.** Anyone with a history, pattern or conviction of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of children or adults, will be excluded from working in Children's Ministries, Youth ministry, or any other ministry area within Living Hope, which involves direct, unsupervised contact with children, regardless of their conversion.

#### **IV. WORKER SUPERVISION**

Worker supervision is the next step in risk reduction.

**4.0 Discipline.** Discipline will be carried out through instruction, training and correction. A child's dignity must be regarded at all times. Gentleness, respect and understanding must guide all actions and words. At no time will physical punishment be used.

**4.1 Inappropriate Touching.** Touching a child's private areas or the clothing covering those areas and all other forms of Child Sexual Abuse as defined in Section 2.0 are strictly prohibited. The only exception is the necessary hygienic care for infants or toddlers. When a worker is caring for a child in the process of toilet training, the worker may accompany the child to the restroom to assist him or her, provided the door to the restroom is left open.

**4.2 Supervision Policy.** To the extent reasonably practicable, two (2) adult workers should be present during any church activity in a group setting (Such as special classes, business meetings, outreach events, etc.) in which child care or Children's Ministry program or Youth Ministry program is being conducted. Adult supervision must be maintained before and after ministry programs until all children are safely in the custody of their parents or guardians.

**4.3 Adult Admission to Classrooms or Nursery.** Only scheduled workers or parents caring for their own children in a nursery or classroom should be in children's areas. If someone other than these people come to a nursery or classroom they should be asked to return to the auditorium or a director, elder, or deacon should be notified immediately to help with the situation.

**4.4 Workers Alone With Children.** To the extent reasonably practicable in any group ministry activities, no individual worker should ever be left alone in a closed room with one individual child.

**4.5 Overnight and Off-Site Activities.** All overnight and of site activities, involving Children's or Youth Ministries, must be approved in advance by the Elders or other member of the pastoral staff (if given that responsibility by the Elders). A permission slip must be completed and signed by the child's parent or guardian.

When transporting children or youth is necessary, all drivers must be at least 21 years of age, have a valid drivers license (with the proper classification) and current automobile insurance. If the vehicle is equipped with seatbelts, the number of persons in the vehicle must not exceed the number of seat belts. To the extent reasonably practicable, no individual driver should be left alone in a vehicle with one individual child.

**4.6 Transportation Safety Policy.** If a vehicle is used in transportation for the church all passengers should wear seat belts and all children are to be secured in an age appropriate child safety seats.

**4.7 Identification Procedure for the Nursery.** Each family participating in the Sunday nursery program will be required to sign in their child to the Nursery and assigned a Nursery Beeper with a number. The child will not be released to the custody of any person who does not match with the name and Beeper number given at sign in. Exceptions may be granted 1.) In situations where the person picking up the child is known by the nursery worker to be the child's parent/guardian, or 2.) At the discretion of a Director-level person or higher.

**4.8 Infant and Toddler Diaper Changing.** Unless otherwise directed by the parents, the children in the infant nursery will be changed by adult female screened workers. The children in the toddler nursery will be checked and changed by adult female, screened workers if needed.

**4.9 Minors serving in Nursery.** The Director of the Nursery will consider each case separately as to determine suitability for serving in the infant or toddler nursery.

**4.10 Additional Nursery guidelines.** Procedures and specific details concerning additional nursery procedures can be found in Nursery Policies and Procedures Manual as prepared by the Nursery committee.

## **V. REPORTING PROCEDURES**

Effective Reporting Procedures enhance the effort to reduce risk to our children. In general regarding any report of abuse, workers must strive to respond immediately to: i.) Remove the child from the scene (if the abuse took place on site) and the perpetrator and put the child in a safe place; and ii.) Report the incident to an elder or member of the Pastoral Staff.

**5.0 Immediate Response to Incidents/Reports of Abuse.** If a child recounts an incident of abuse that took place either at church or home, his/her word must be taken seriously. He or she must be treated with dignity and respect.

If the abuse is observed or alleged to have taken place on church property, the first response must be to make sure that he or she is in a safe place removed from the perpetrator and the location in which the abuse took place. Immediate emotional support must be given as appropriate and the child should be reminded that telling someone is the correct thing to do. The person to whom the incident is reported should under no circumstances promise not to tell anyone.

All workers and ministry leaders at all levels of the church who have direct contact with children shall be trained to immediately bring such report to the attention of one of the elders or Pastoral Staff. After obtaining a report of abuse and taking such steps as are necessary and appropriate to verify the complaint on at least a preliminary basis, the Pastor / elder who received such complaint shall immediately notify the child's parent or guardian - as well as the proper law enforcement authorities. The remainder of the pastoral staff and the board of elders shall also be immediately notified.

The pastor shall disclose to the parent or guardian the facts which are known at the time, specifically including the fact that an incident has been witnessed or reported, the time and place and nature of the incident and the steps which have been taken by Living Hope to verify the complaint on a preliminary basis. In the event that the parent or guardian has been accused of abuse, the pastor may wait until after an initial investigation by law enforcement authorities is completed before giving such information.

**5.1 Treatment of the Accused.** Under no circumstances shall any Living Hope representative make promises to the accused about the handling of the complaint. A member of the Pastoral staff or elders shall be responsible to obtain the appropriate information and make the decisions required in responding to any complaint, so that the complaint may be acted upon and resolved in a timely way.

Anyone accused of child abuse, as defined in section 2.0, shall be relieved of his or her duties as a children's or youth worker at Living Hope pending resolution of the complaint. The Board of Elders will have sole discretion to determine whether to reinstate the worker, as well as the timing and conditions of reinstatement. Pastoral counseling will be offered when appropriate under the circumstances.

**5.2 Cooperation with Law Enforcement Authorities.** Living Hope will cooperate fully with all law enforcement authorities and administrative agencies with jurisdiction in the investigation of the complaint and the criminal prosecution of the offender.

**5.3 Record of Resolution of the Complaint.** In all cases involving an incident of abuse or an allegation of abuse, a member of the Pastoral Staff or one of the elders shall complete at the appropriate time a report to the file which summarizes all pertinent facts concerning the complaint, which states the specific resolution of the complaint and the reasons therefore, and the need for follow-up action, if any. Such a report shall be maintained at all times in a secure file by a member of the Pastoral Staff or one of the elders. A copy of this report shall be given to the Secretary of the Board of Elders and maintained as part of the official church records.

## **VI. CONFIDENTIALITY OF APPLICATIONS, RECORDS AND REPORTS**

**6.0 Access to Records.** Records of workers' applications, references and screening forms are maintained in the church office in a secured file cabinet by the secretary of the Council of Elders. The Directors of Children's Ministries and the Board of Elders shall have access to completed application forms. Only the Board of Elders shall have access to background check information. An individual file is maintained for each worker, and all information shall be maintained in locked files on a strictly confidential, need-to-know basis.

**6.1 Statements to the Congregation and/or Media.** In the event an allegation of abuse becomes common knowledge within the Living Hope congregation, it is discretionary with the Board of Elders and Senior Pastor as to whether and in what manner a public statement to the congregation about the incident is appropriate. If the allegation becomes public knowledge, only the Senior Pastor or a member of the Pastoral Staff are authorized to release any information to the media so that incomplete, incorrect or conflicting public statements will not be issued by Living Hope. At all points in the decision making process regarding public statements, the Elder Board shall be informed and consulted to the extent reasonably practicable.

## **VII. MISCELLANEOUS**

**7.1 Exceptions to Policy.** Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Board of Elders. Such exceptions shall only be granted for good cause shown and a written statement justifying the reasons for the exception shall be prepared by a pastoral staff member with copies distributed to the Board of Elders for their approval or disapproval.



May the Lord bless you as you live for Christ and  
are conformed to His glorious image!

Adopted December 4, 2011