



CONSTITUTION

Table of Contents

Preamble	1
Article I	
Name	1
Article II	
Purpose	1
Article III	
Statements of Faith	1
Section 1 – The Scriptures (Bibliology)	
Section 2 – The Trinity (Theology)	
Section 3 – The Church (Ecclesiology)	
Section 4 – Man (Anthropology)	
Section 5 – The Spirit World (Angelology)	
Section 6 – Salvation (Soteriology)	
Section 7 – Future Events in Prophetic Scripture (Eschatology)	
Article IV	
Associations	10
Article V	
Membership	10
Section 1 – Qualifications	
Section 2 – Types	
Section 3 – Acceptance	
Section 4 – Responsibilities	
Section 5 – Discipline	
Section 6 – Termination	
Article VI	
Government	13
Section 1 – Members	
Section 2 – Elders	
Section 3 – Deacons	
Section 4 – Deaconesses	
Section 5 – Non-Pastoral Staff	
Section 6 – Offices	
Article VII	
Policies & Distinctives	25
Section 1 – Policies and Distinctives	
Section 2 – Teams	
Section 3 – Meetings	
Section 4 – Finances	
Article VIII	
Amendments	28
Section 1 – Constitution	
Section 2 – Policies and Distinctives	

Preamble

This non-profit, religious organization is organized in accordance with the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended. This organization has not been formed for the making of any profit or for personal financial gain. The assets and income of the organization shall not be distributable to or benefit the elders, deacons, deaconesses, officers, or any other individual. The assets and income shall only be used to promote the organization's purposes as described herein. Nothing contained herein, however, shall be deemed to prohibit the payment of reasonable compensation to employees or independent contractors for services provided for the benefit of the organization. This organization shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income tax. This organization shall not endorse, contribute to, work for, or otherwise support or oppose a candidate for public office. This organization is organized exclusively for the purposes subsequent to section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Upon the dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

Article I – Name

This organization will be known as “New Hope Baptist Church” of Nampa, Idaho. The principle office location shall be 1829 W Iowa Ave, Nampa, ID, 83686.

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of this organization is to glorify God in its function as a pastoral church ministry defined by Scripture in Matthew 28:18-20: “And Jesus came up and spoke to them saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’”

Article III – Statements of Faith

The elders of New Hope Baptist Church recognize that any statements of faith are but an inadequate human attempt to summarize and classify the treasures of a flawless divine revelation. But this does not diminish the importance of such statements in defining what New Hope Baptist believes as a church. The statements which follow carefully specify our teaching position with regard to the major biblical doctrines. They also provide an anchor to protect the church against theological drift.

Section 1. The Scriptures (Bibliology)

A. Inspiration

The Bible, in its original manuscripts, is completely inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16-17), the very words inspired by God (2 Peter 1:19-21), and is the infallible (Psalm 19:7-11) and authoritative (John 17:17) Word of God given to man.

B. Interpretation

Since the Bible was written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit through many authors (2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17) over a long period of time, the most accurate and comprehensive method of interpretation is the literal-historical-grammatical method. In order to be consistent with Scriptural truth, intent, context, and meaning, this is the method this church will use to interpret the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 4:5; Proverbs 30:5-6).

Section 2. The Trinity (Theology)

There is one, true God (Isaiah 45:5-7; Deuteronomy 6:4-5) who is spirit (John 4:24) and, as such, is infinite (Psalm 102:25-27), intelligent (Isaiah 40:13-14; Proverbs 3:19), omniscient (Psalm 139:2-6), omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-12), omnipotent (Genesis 18:14; Luke 18:27), immutable (Psalm 102:25-27; Hebrews 6:17), perfect (Psalm 18:30; Matthew 5:48), holy (Leviticus 19:2; 1 Peter 1:15), and righteous (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 11:7). God exists eternally in three Persons (Matthew 28:19; John 10:30; 2 Corinthians 13:14), Father (John 8:41), Son (John 1:1; Titus 2:13), and Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4). These three Persons are equal in deity, essence, power, sovereignty, and majesty yet perform distinct but harmonious functions (Ephesians 1:3-14).

A. God the Father

God the Father is a distinct (1 Samuel 2:2) person of the Trinity, yet He shares in the same essence with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He is sovereign (Psalm 29:2; Isaiah 29:15-16; 43:6-7; Romans 9) over all creation and His purpose (Isaiah 14:24-27) for all creation is to display His glory, person, and name (Revelation 4:11). Therefore, He accomplishes His purpose, according to His desire and for His glory and pleasure (Isaiah 46:8-13; 55:8-13; Daniel 4:34-35; Ephesians 1:9-11; Philippians 2:12-13).

B. God the Son, Jesus Christ

God the Son has eternally existed as a distinct person of the Trinity, yet He shares in the same essence with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. He is the creator (Colossians 1:15-22; Revelation 4:11), the sustainer of all creation, the LORD, Jehovah of the Old Testament, and the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies (John 10:30-31). In the redemptive plan, even though He was still God (Matthew 1:23; John 1:1), He took upon Himself the form of man by being supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35) and born of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-35; John 1:14). After His death on the cross, He rose bodily from the grave (Matthew 28:1-15), ascended into heaven, and is now seated at the right hand of God the Father (Hebrews 1:1-4), making intercession for us (Acts 2:22-36). In this way, He became, and is today, the perfect substitutionary sacrifice for man and the only payment for the penalty of sin (John 14:6; Acts 2:38-39). Both then (incarnation) and now, He is completely God and completely man (Philippians 2:5-8), and will physically return (John 14:1-4) to rule and reign on the earth in keeping with His promises. We believe that the Scriptures clearly teach that Jesus is LORD, Yahweh (Jehovah), without sin and without the possibility of sinning (Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 John 3:5). Jesus is the Savior and the Christ, the Messiah, the One who will establish the Theocratic (Millennial) Kingdom on earth at the time of His second advent. When the word "Christ" (Messiah) is used in the New Testament, it is a reference to His work, position, and title as the "Anointed One", the God/Man Ruler, and the King who has all power and authority in heaven and on earth. Jesus is His given name (Matthew 1:20-25).

C. God the Holy Spirit

God the Holy Spirit is a distinct person of the Trinity, yet He shares in the same essence with God the Father and God the Son. He was active in the creation of this world, along with God the Father and God the Son (Genesis 1:2, 26). In the Old Testament, He came upon men selectively to empower them for service (Psalm 51:11; Isaiah 63:10-11; Judges 3:10). In the New Testament, following the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit came

on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41) to institute the Church and to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come. He came to indwell all believers, making them spiritually alive (John 3:5-8), setting them apart for purity, and sealing them as God's eternally secure possessions. Today the Holy Spirit is our helper (John 14:16-18) as He comforts and leads us through life. He teaches us the truths of God's Word, controlling and strengthening us to live Christ-like lives (John 16:7-14). At the moment we put our faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit baptizes (John 3:5-8; I Corinthians 6:11; 12:13; Galatians 3:27) us into the Church, which is the Body of Christ, and gives spiritual gifts to be used in service for our Lord and the Church (1 Corinthians 12-14; Romans 12; Ephesians 4). Because of the completed revelation of the Bible, certain sign gifts that were used to authenticate an apostle's message from God have ceased to be needed and have come to an end (1 Corinthians 13; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:1-4; Revelation 22:18-19).

Section 3. The Church (Ecclesiology)

A. The Church

There is one, true Church (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:11), called in Scripture the Body and Bride of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7-8). The Church was a mystery in the time before Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, yet now it has been revealed in the New Testament (Ephesians 3:1-6). The Church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32; Colossians 1:25-27), coming into existence on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given (Acts 2:1-13). At this time, the disciples became a part of the Body of Christ, and all who have been "born from above", either Jew or Gentile (Ephesians 3:4-6; Romans 3:22; Romans 10:12), by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are members of His Body, the Church (John 3:3-8), of which He is the head (Ephesians 1:22-23). The Church will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own, at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Romans 11:25).

B. The Local Church

The local church is comprised of those belonging to the Body of Christ who are associated together by faith. In keeping with the admonition of Scripture, they voluntarily fellowship together (Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 2:42) in order to observe the ordinances (1 Corinthians 11:17-34; Luke 22:19-20; Matthew 28:19-20), preach Jesus Christ, worship (Luke 4:8), exercise their spiritual gifts (Ephesians 4:11-16), care for the widows and orphans (James 1:27), and teach the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15; 4:1-5) to equip the saints for ministry (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 13:1-3). The local Church has the absolute right of self-government (Matthew 22:21; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5, 19, 23; 10:3-4; 1 Timothy 3:1-13) with dependence upon none, other than Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).

C. The Ordinances of the Local Church

Jesus Christ instituted the observances of baptism and communion (the Lord's Supper) as the two ordinances of the Church. These ordinances are to be observed by born-again believers who are old enough to understand their meaning and are walking with the Lord. They are an act of obedience for the believer but are not required for salvation.

1. Baptism

Scriptural baptism is by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20). It is to be observed only once after conversion (Acts 8:12; 10:47; 16:33) as an outward sign of the inward work of grace by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 2:38).

2. Communion

The Lord's Supper is to be observed regularly until He comes. It is a remembrance of all that Christ did for us in His substitutionary death, burial, and resurrection. Observance of the Lord's Supper is for believers only and has no spiritual merit for the unsaved (Matthew 26:26-30; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34).

D. The Church and Civil Government

God established both the Church and the civil government, and He gave each its own distinct sphere of operation (Matthew 22:21; John 18:36; Romans 13:1-7; 2 Corinthians 10:3-4; Ephesians 4; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; 1 Peter 2:13-17).

Section 4. Man (Anthropology)

A. The Creation

The Biblical account of creation states that God created the heavens and the earth, the physical universe, angels, and man. God created the earth in six 24 hour days, (And there was evening and there was morning, one day; Genesis 1:5.) and these days were not separated by any amount of time. The Biblical account of creation is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct and immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process. (Genesis 1&2; Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:3)

B. The Creation and Purpose of Man

Men and women are created directly by God (Genesis 2:7; Isaiah 44:24) and in the image of God (Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4), and we belong to Him (Psalm 100:3). We believe that human beings were created in the image of God as either male or female, that gender identity and roles are aspects of God's creative design, that marriage is the joining of one man and one woman, and that sexual intimacy is to be expressed only within the bond of biblically defined marriage (Genesis 1:1-31; 2:18; 2:24-25; Exodus 20:11; Matthew 19:4-6; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3; 13:4; see also our *Policies and Distinctives Manual* for a more detailed stance on "Marriage" and "Sexuality").

The primary purpose of man is to worship God and to bring glory to Him forever (Isaiah 45:5-9, 21; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12; 3:10, 20-21; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

C. The Condition of Man

Man was created by God in a state of innocence (Genesis 1:27-31; 2:25), but as a result of the temptation of Satan, Adam and Eve voluntarily sinned and fell from their innocent state (Genesis 3:1-7). Because of Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God (Genesis 2:16-17; Genesis 3:6), man incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death (Romans 5:12)

and the wrath of God abides on him (Romans 1:18). Man died spiritually and became inherently corrupt and, therefore, utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God (Romans 3:10-18; 8:6-8). Because he is spiritually dead, with no capacity to restore his relationship to God, man is hopelessly lost (Luke 19:10; Psalm 119:176), separated from God forever (Ephesians 2:12; Colossians 1:13). Therefore, man, unless redeemed, is condemned eternally to a literal hell (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Matthew 7:13; Philippians 3:18-19; 2 Peter 2:1-9).

D. The Redemption of Man

Salvation is entirely a work of God by grace, on the basis of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and not on the basis of any human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:3-5, 18-19). The sacrifice of His body and the shedding of His blood (Leviticus 17:11; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:22) satisfied God's just demand for the payment required as the penalty for man's sin (Romans 6:23). Jesus Christ acted as our only substitute and received the penalty for sin that we deserved (1 Peter 3:18).

E. The Individual Liberty of Man

God created man with a will, and he is able to make choices within the limitations of his nature (Genesis 3; John 1:12-13; Psalm 119:108; Joshua 24:15; Psalm 25:12).

1. Slavery for the Unbeliever

Man in his fallen state has a nature (body and spirit) that is corrupted by sin (Psalm 14:3; Jeremiah 17:9; Titus 1:15), which he inherited through the man Adam (Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22). Because of the corruption of man's nature, he is unable to make choices that lead to righteousness (Ephesians 4:17-19). Man as an unbeliever is a slave to sin (John 8:34), and any perceived act of good or righteousness is still corrupted by sin and, therefore, has no impact in his standing before God (Romans 8:7-8; Ephesians 2:8-9). All of his deeds will be considered as filthy garments (Isaiah 64:6). Therefore, man as an unbeliever, without Christ, is under the law and his choices and actions are subject to judgment based on the law, and he will not stand (Romans 2:12 & 3:20; Galatians 3:11; Revelation 6:16-17, 20:12).

2. Freedom for the Believer in Jesus Christ

The person who believes by faith in Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, is no longer a slave to sin and is set free from the requirements of the law (Romans 3:28). For in Christ the law was fulfilled and, therefore, as a believer having the Spirit of Christ in us (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19), we are justified before God because of the righteousness of Christ, through our faith in Him (Romans 5:1, 8:3-4). We are now free to choose to obey God and His Word and to do good works that have a purpose (Matthew 5:16; Ephesians 2:10). This freedom believers have by grace through faith in Jesus Christ is not a license to gratify the desires of the flesh (Galatians 5:1; 5:13; 1 Peter 2:15). Our freedom in Christ is the free choice to surrender our lives to Christ (James 4:7), dying to ourselves daily (Matthew 16:24; Romans 7:4; 1 Peter 2:24), to obey His commands in demonstration of our love for Him (John 14:15).

F. Responsibility of the Believer

Every believer in Jesus Christ must give an answer to God individually (2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10-12); therefore, no other man, and no church, can act as his conscience. He has the responsibility to interpret the Scripture for himself and to answer to God for the way in which he does so (Romans 14:1-8). The believer has the Holy Spirit to guide and enable him (Romans 8:1-5; 1 John 2:27), apart from any other ministry of man or of the Church. Every believer will stand individually responsible for the proper interpretation and application of everything the Bible teaches (Romans 14:9-12).

G. The Final Judgment

1. Of the Unbeliever

Unsaved individuals will someday stand before the Lord at the Great White Throne judgment (Revelation 20:11-15), where they will recognize Jesus Christ as Lord, be judged according to their works, and sentenced to eternal judgment in hell (Luke 16:19-31; John 3:18).

2. Of the Believer

Every saved individual will someday stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10). This judgment is not of their worthiness of salvation but of their works, in order that every believer may receive rewards from the Lord (Romans 8:1; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 4:5).

Section 5. The Spirit World (Angelology)

A. The Creation of Angels

Angels were created by God and are, therefore, not to be worshipped (Revelation 19:10; 22:9). They were created by God separate from man to serve Him and bring Him glory (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14; Revelation 5:11-14; Job 38:7; Psalm 148:1-5).

B. Holy Angels

The angels that did not leave their original state of creation are unfallen, or elect, spirit beings and will forever remain in that state (1 Timothy 5:21). These spirit beings today minister in two general areas: (1) they worship God and carry out His will (Isaiah 6:1-3; Revelation 4:6-11); (2) they are ministering spirits to those believers who are heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1:14).

C. Fallen Angels

God created all things perfect and without sin. But when Satan, the anointed cherub and God's highest created being (Ezekiel 28:11-19), determined to be like God (Isaiah 14:12-17), sin entered into the creation. Satan is a real being and is extremely powerful, but he does not have God-like attributes (Job 1-2). He is evil and cunning (John 8:44), intending to destroy God's plan and usurp God's sovereign rule (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 12:7-10). He seeks to achieve his purposes and control through deceitful temptations and trying circumstances (1 Peter 5:8; Genesis 3:1). He is the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10).

In seeking to overthrow God's authority, Satan convinced one third of the angels to follow him (Revelation 12:4), resulting in their fall (2 Peter 2:4). Because of this willful act of sin, their eternal punishment and destiny is sealed with no opportunity for repentance (Jude 6). Until these fallen angels are sent to their eternal punishment (Matthew 25:41), they are demonic messengers under Satan's control, opposing God's plan and purpose (Revelation 12:7-9; Ephesians 6:10-12).

Section 6. Salvation (Soteriology)

A. Provision and Assurance

God authored and Christ purchased our eternal salvation (John 3:16; Hebrews 12:2). God has chosen, before the foundation of the world, those who will believe in Christ and exercise their personal faith in Him, though we are still responsible to believe in Him, yielding to His sovereignty (Ephesians 1:3-6; John 6:35-51, Romans 8:27-30; Romans 9:10-16; 1 Peter 1:2-5). This salvation is all of grace through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ Who paid the full redemptive price for our sins (Ephesians 2:8-9). He satisfied God's righteous demands by suffering the death and penalty for man's sin on the cross of Calvary (Hebrews 5:9; 10:10-18). Salvation is made effective to man only as he believes (John 20:31; Acts 16:30-31), exercising personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Romans 10:9-10). Those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ are saved forever and nothing can separate them from God's love (Romans 5:5-11; 8:31-39; Philippians 1:6). Since believers are eternally His, God will not allow the believer to be separated from Himself.

B. New Birth

Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden brought the penalty of death (Genesis 2:17) to him and all his descendants (Romans 5:12-21). At the moment of his sin, both Adam and Eve died spiritually and began to die physically. In order for God to deal with mankind's spiritual death, He sent His Son to die for all sin and to be raised from death in order to give victory over the penalty of sin (1 Corinthians 15:21-22). At the moment of salvation or new birth, the Spirit of God gives to a person who is spiritually dead, spiritual life (John 3:3-8; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Believers are made partakers of the divine nature (Romans 8:16-17; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 4:24; 2 Peter 1:4). This spiritual life enables them to understand spiritual truth and to communicate with God (Romans 8:5-11). Not only are believers made alive spiritually but also indwelt with the Holy Spirit, who is the believer's source of power (Romans 8:11-14).

C. Justification

Individuals are acquitted from the guilt of sin when they are saved by faith (Romans 5:1-11). At the moment of salvation, God declares them to be righteous and holy in the person of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21), and they are set apart for a holy purpose. It is not possible for anyone to earn justification before God.

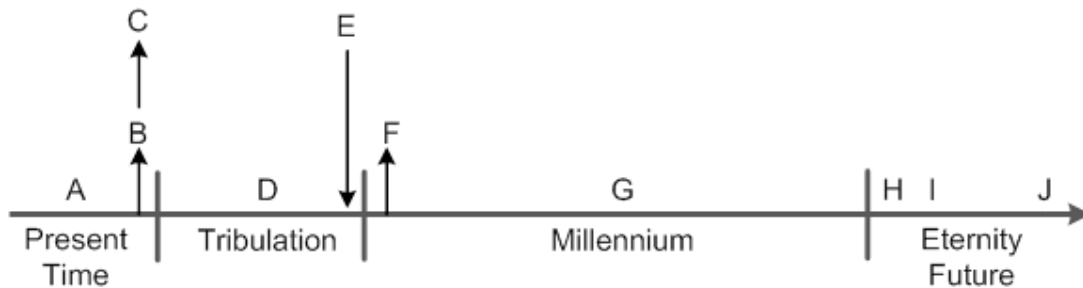
D. Sanctification

Believers are in an ongoing process of being set apart, from sin, to do the will of God in their lives. This is daily sharing and participating in God's holiness as the Holy Spirit is active in their lives (Romans 6:1-23; Colossians 3:1-11; 1 John 3:1-4).

E. Glorification

In the future, when believers are in His presence, they will be like Jesus Christ. Not that they will become gods, but they will be glorified and holy in reality as Jesus Christ is holy (John 3:1-3; Romans 6; 8:30; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11; Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13; 2 Peter 1:2-11; 1 John 3:1-4).

Section 7. Future Events in Prophetic Scripture (Eschatology)



Letters on the timeline correspond to the following descriptions, A-J.

A –The Church Age

The Church began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), when the Holy Spirit was given, and will continue on earth until the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) of the Church. During this time, Israel, the covenant nation sovereignly chosen by God, is dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ. After the completion of the church, Israel will be gathered in the Holy Land and will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ. (Romans 11:1-32; Genesis 13:14-17; Ezekiel 37)

B - The Rapture

The next great prophetic event awaiting the Church, spoken of by Paul, is the bodily coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:1) in the air to rapture all believers since the time of Pentecost. The Lord will descend and, with a shout, all the dead in Christ, those true believers who have died since Pentecost, will be raised and their souls united with their glorified bodies. After, those alive at His coming will be caught up and also united with their glorified bodies (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 John 3:2). The word “rapture” comes from the Latin translation of the words “caught up” (1 Thessalonians 4:17) and means to seize or snatch.

C - The Judgment Seat of Christ

This is a judgment for believers in order to receive rewards (1 Corinthians 4:5). It is not a judgment of our being qualified for heaven but a judgment of our life, as we give account of what we have done for the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:10).

D - The Tribulation

This is the seven-year period, also known as “Daniel’s Seventieth Week”, in which God will once again focus on the people of Israel and will pour out His wrath on all nations of the earth (Jeremiah 30:7). The tribulation is divided into two equal parts: the first half being “the beginning of sorrows” and the second half being “the great tribulation”. The Church will be taken to be with the Lord sometime prior to the beginning of this seven-year period (Matthew 24; Daniel 9).

E - The Second Coming of Christ

This is the personal, bodily return of Jesus Christ, with His Church, to the earth to establish His earthly kingdom, just prior to the end of the tribulation period (Zechariah 14:1-5; Jude 14-15). As Jesus Christ sets foot on the earth, He will bring the great campaign of Armageddon to an end (Revelation 19:11-21). At that time, He will conquer the nations and establish His Millennial Kingdom.

F - The Resurrection of Old Testament Saints

Following the tribulation, Old Testament saints and those believers martyred during the tribulation will be resurrected, in order to receive their glorified bodies and their inheritance in Christ’s millennial kingdom (Daniel 12:1-3, 9-13 Revelation 20:4).

G - The Millennium

This is the fulfillment of God’s promise to David (2 Samuel 7:8-16; Isaiah 11:1-16) that he would have a descendant who would sit on his throne forever. Jesus Christ will literally begin to fulfill this prophecy as He rules and reigns on the earth for one thousand years. At the end of the one thousand years, Satan will be released from his prison to deceive and gather for battle the rebels born during the Millennial Kingdom. However, fire from heaven will consume them, and the devil will be thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Revelation 20:1-10).

H - The Great White Throne Judgment

This is the judgment of unbelievers from all generations. All will be resurrected to stand before the Lord to be judged according to their works for salvation. Since their works will prove ineffective in declaring them righteous before God and because their names are not written in the Book of Life, they will be cast alive into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15).

I - The New Heavens and the New Earth

Following the thousand year reign of Jesus Christ and the judgment of unbelievers, God will restore the heavens and the earth to glorious perfection (Acts 3:21; Romans 8:19-23). The new heavens and earth will be the eternal home of the saints (2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1-22:5).

J - Eternity

Believers will exist eternally in the presence of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:3-57). For the unbeliever, it will be an eternal existence in hell, separated from God to bear the punishment of their sin without relief (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Revelation 21-22).

Article IV – Associations

An independent, New Testament, Baptist church cannot join anything outside of itself but only affiliate therewith on the grounds of fellowship. This church declares itself to be in fellowship with the following groups, so long as these groups remain true to their original statements of faith, aim, and practice:

The Southern Idaho Regular Baptist Fellowship (SIRBF)

The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches (GARBC)

Baptist Network Northwest (BNN)

Idaho Regular Baptist Bible Camp, Inc. (IRBBC)

The church may associate with or withdraw association from an organization at its own discretion. This action may be done by following the procedures to amend the constitution, listed in Article VIII, Section 1. No church association or financial support is to be given to a work or workers whose doctrinal position is not consistent with the “statements of faith” in Article III of this constitution.

Article V – Membership

Section 1. Qualifications

Any person desiring to unite with the membership of this church will be required to meet the following qualifications:

1. Confession of faith in Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures and personal acceptance of Him as Lord and Savior.
2. Baptism by immersion, which is a public confession of Jesus Christ following a personal experience of salvation.
3. An attitude of support toward the purpose and beliefs of this church, as stated in this constitution.

Section 2. Types

Members of this church fall into one of four categories:

A. Formal Membership

All formal members must be 18 years of age or older and will have equal rights to vote and hold an office for which they are scripturally qualified.

B. Associate Membership

Associate membership is extended to students, military personnel, and other persons temporarily residing in the community who wish to retain formal membership in another evangelical church of like faith and order yet wish to unite themselves to this church for service to Christ and to fellow believers. Associate members must meet the same qualifications as formal members. They may teach and serve in the church, but they may not vote or hold office.

C. Youth Membership

Youth membership is granted to those individuals under 18 years of age who have satisfied all of the qualifications for membership and desire to unite with the church for service to Christ and to fellow believers. Youth members may serve in the church but may not hold office or vote.

D. Inactive Membership

Members demonstrating a lack of interest and/or attendance at services of the church for a continuous period of six months will have their memberships reviewed by the elders. The reasons for lack of attendance include, but are not limited to, medical, school, military, incarceration, or commissioning to the mission field. Those names agreed upon for removal from formal membership, by a unanimous decision of the elders, will be presented to the church at the next business meeting. These inactive members will then be removed from the formal membership roll and placed on the roll of inactive members. Before any member may be placed on the inactive list, efforts must be made by the elders to contact the member. Inactive members will not have the normal rights and privileges that are granted to formal members.

Section 3. Acceptance

Persons meeting all of the qualifications mentioned in Article V, Section 1 and desiring to unite with the membership of this church may apply for membership as follows:

A. Procedure for Formal and Associate Membership

All applicants will be required to attend the membership class and then meet with two of the elders to share their testimony of Christian experience and affirm their agreement with the church constitution. Upon the unanimous decision of the elders, applicants will be presented to the church body for the members to affirm the elders' decision. The right hand of fellowship (Galatians 2:9) will then be presented to the new members to represent unity and partnership in the service of Christ.

B. Procedure for Youth Membership

All applicants will be required to attend the membership class and then meet with their parent(s)/guardian(s) and two of the elders to share their testimony of Christian experience. Upon the unanimous decision of the elders, applicants will be presented to the church body for the members to affirm the elders' decision. The right hand of fellowship (Galatians 2:9) will then be presented to the new members to represent unity and partnership in the service of Christ.

C. Procedure for Transition from Youth to Formal Membership

When youth members reach the age of 18, they must then meet with two of the elders to share their testimony of Christian experience and affirm their agreement with the church constitution. Upon the unanimous decision of the elders, applicants will be presented to the church body for the members to affirm the elders' decision.

D. Procedure for Transition from Inactive to Formal Membership

Transition from inactive to formal membership will be reviewed by the elders, upon written request of the inactive member, and granted upon a unanimous vote of the elders. Confirmed applicants will be presented to the church body for the members to affirm the elders' decision.

Section 4. Responsibilities

Every member of the church is expected to be faithful in all spiritual duties essential to the Christian life, as set forth in the Scriptures; to attend the meetings of the church; to labor for the physical and spiritual welfare of fellow members and for the success and progress of the work of the church; to regard and protect its reputation in the community; to contribute regularly and according to ability for its expenses and programs; to honor and esteem the elders, pray for them regularly, and assist them in carrying out the programs of the church.

Members will endeavor to keep the unity of the church; and if at any time they find themselves opposed to the doctrines and policies of this church, and can no longer have an attitude of support for those doctrines, they will seek counsel and resolution with the elders. If a resolution of the differences is not achieved, they will not seek to disrupt the fellowship and unity of the church but will respectfully withdraw from its membership.

Section 5. Discipline

In the event that a fellow believer (John 14:21; 1 John 1:5-6) sins, it is the responsibility of those who are spiritual (Galatians 6:1) to take the following steps of restoring the fellow believer, in order to preserve the unity (Ephesians 4:1-3), purity (2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 5:6-7), and reputation of the church. The goal of these steps is restoration of the repentant brother; so, if he repents after any of these steps, then he should be forgiven and the steps of restoration should be followed.

First an individual believer is to go to the sinning brother privately and confront him in a spirit of humility and gentleness (Matthew 18:15a). This confrontation involves clearly exposing his sin so that he is aware of it and calling him to repentance. If the sinning brother does not repent, then the individual believer should take one or two fellow believers (Matthew 18:16) with him to, once again, confront the sinning brother in a spirit of humility and gentleness. If the sinning brother refuses to listen, you are to tell it to the church (Matthew 18:17a). The first step in telling it to the church is to go to the group of elders, so that they can reach out to the sinning brother in love. If, after a period of time, the sinning brother is still verifiably unrepentant, you are to explain to the church the steps that have been taken to bring about repentance and restoration, as well as the upcoming steps of excommunication (Matthew 18:17b; Titus 3:10-11; 1 Corinthians 5:7, 11-13).

If this brother listens to you during any of these steps and repents (Acts 3:19; Acts 26:20b; 2 Corinthians 7:9-11) of his sins, you are to forgive (Luke 17:3-4) him and help him through a process of restoration. This process will involve accountability, where you are to pray (2 Corinthians 13:7) for your brother, provide encouragement (Galatians 6:6-9; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8), comfort him by reaffirming God's and the church body's love and care for him (John 13:34), bear his burdens with him (Galatians 6:2), and help to restore his fellowship with the Holy Spirit and the church body. After a period of time, there is a point and celebration (Luke 15:3-10) of

full restoration. This step may or may not include a restored service in the same position of ministry, understanding that some areas may promote temptation to the prevailing sin. At this point, the restored brother should get involved in a fellowship group that will provide the continued encouragement and accountability (Hebrews 10:24-25) that we all require.

Section 6. Termination

The leadership meeting minutes will reflect termination of membership status for individuals in the church. Reasons for termination of membership will be as follows:

A. Inactivity

Names that are placed on the roll of inactive members will be given an additional six months before their membership statuses will be reviewed by the elders. After this review, if a unanimous decision by the elders deems it necessary to terminate a member's status, it will be recorded in the next leadership meeting minutes. Members who are removed from the membership roll will be notified in writing.

B. Conduct (Article V, Section 5)

C. Death

D. Written request of a member wishing to terminate his or her membership

Article VI – Government

The church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church and accepts the Scriptures as its supreme and only guide in all matters of faith, order, and discipline. Under that Authority, the government of this church is vested in the corporate body of believers who compose its membership. Within the guidelines and limitations defined by this document, the members assign authority and administrative functions to the elders as its board of directors.

Section 1. Members

1. While the members (Article V) assign authority and administrative functions to the elders, they retain the right to be involved in:
 - a. Calling (Article VI, Section 2.C.1) or dismissing (Article VI, Section 2.G.2) the senior pastor or associate pastor(s)
 - b. Affirming the selection of elders (Article VI, Section 2.C.2)
 - c. Nominating and affirming the selection of deacons (Article VI, Section 3.B) and deaconesses (Article VI, Section 4.B)
 - d. Affirming the recommendation of new members (Article V, Section 3)
 - e. Excluding unrepentant members as the final step in church discipline (Article V, Section 5)
 - f. Adopting, amending, or repealing the constitution as may be required (Article VIII, Section 1)

- g. Affirming the annual budget (Article VII, Section 4.C.1)
- h. Changing its associations (Article IV)
- i. Selling, acquiring, or encumbering property
- j. Dissolving the corporation

Section 2. Elders

The elders are charged with teaching, feeding, and protecting the church; and it is the elders who are accountable to God on behalf of the church (1 Peter 5:1-4).

A. Qualifications

Each elder must be an active, male member of this church. He must subscribe, without reservation, to the statements of faith and agree to abide by the guidelines of this constitution. He must possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9:

1. Aspires to the office of overseer; exercises oversight voluntarily and eagerly, according to the will of God (1 Timothy 3:1; 1 Peter 5:2)
2. Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
3. Husband of one wife; a one-woman man (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
4. Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2)
5. Sober minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
6. Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)
7. Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
8. Able to teach; exhorts believers and refutes false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
9. Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
10. Not violent; not pugnacious (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
11. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3)
12. Not a brawler; not contentious; not quick tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
13. Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
14. Rules well his own house; his children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:7)
15. Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)
16. Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
17. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
18. Loves what is good (Titus 1:8)
19. Just, fair (Titus 1:8)
20. Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)
21. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)

B. Elder-Pastor

The elder-pastor is a scriptural elder, overseer, shepherd, and spiritual leader of the church; and is referred to as “senior pastor”. The senior pastor is a professional staff member and is responsible for the pulpit ministry. A detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the senior pastor are included in the *Policies and Distinctives Manual* attached to this constitution.

C. Associate Pastor(s)

Additional professional, pastoral staff may be needed to complement the total ministry of shepherding this church body. A detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of an associate pastor are included in the *Policies and Distinctives Manual* attached to this constitution.

D. Elder(s) Selection

Elders are called by God, confirmed by the church elders, and appointed by the elders to the task of leadership. The starting point in identifying a potential elder is the desire in the heart of the individual (1 Timothy 3:1; 1 Peter 5:2). God plants in a man’s heart a passion for the ministry (Acts 20:28) and then confirms it by the leading of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the elders, through prayer and fasting (Acts 14:23). A candidate shall be required to complete a current, written assessment of character and a biblical doctrine questionnaire found in the *Policies and Distinctives Manual*.

A man should be considered for the office only after he has proven himself suitable for a ministry of leadership through a period during which he is *tested*. Then he may be *tempered* for a time, where he is observed functioning in a limited position of delegated oversight. After this time of being tempered, if he demonstrates capability in leadership and loyalty to the Scriptures, he can be publicly acknowledged as one who is to be *trusted* in the service of leadership (1 Timothy 5:22). Following this time of being tested and tempered, an announcement should be made to the congregation a minimum of three weeks before an official, public acknowledgment.

If one or more members, because of knowledge of some existing issue or circumstance, deem it necessary to object to the selection of this man as an elder, a written objection shall be brought in person to the elders, to examine and investigate the objection. Should the objection be found valid, the candidate for elder will not be approved. Should the objection be invalidated, using the qualifications of an elder stated in Article VI, Section 2.A as the standard for examining the stated circumstance, the elders will communicate with the objecting member(s) regarding the decision and the candidate may be considered for approval to join the elder board.

The elders will commission approved elder candidates during a public announcement before the membership. This public acknowledgment will be done through the laying on of hands by the elders (1 Timothy 4:14). This visible act will demonstrate solidarity between the elders and the one on whom they laid their hands, and is a means of saying, “We commend you to the ministry. We stand with you, support you, and affirm your right to function in a position of leadership in this church.”

E. Responsibilities

Elders, as the spiritual overseers of the flock, are to determine church policy (Acts 15:22); oversee the church (Acts 20:28); appoint other elders (1 Timothy 4:14); rule well, teach, and preach (1 Timothy 5:17); exhort and refute (Titus 1:9); and act as shepherds, setting an example for all (1 Peter 5:1-3). They are to devote themselves, first of all, to prayer and to the ministry of the Word and shall select deacons and deaconesses to handle the daily, operational matters of the church (Acts 6:3-4). The elders will be responsible to:

1. Uphold the truth of the Scriptures
2. Identify, equip, and organize the members for their best possible service to the Body of Christ
3. Develop procedures to establish order in the church's activities that will fulfill its purpose and vision
4. Administer the ordinances
5. Serve as the church's board of directors, exercising trusteeship over the physical and financial assets of the church
6. Adopt or amend the annual budget
7. Establish the functional departments of the church; and organize themselves, the deacons, and the deaconesses to support the work of these departments
8. Meet regularly
9. Have complete authority to oversee the administrative affairs of the church, with the exception of those items listed in Article VI, Section 1 that include the members

F. Accountability

The elders, under the headship of Jesus Christ, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the authority of the Scriptures, are accountable to:

1. God (1 Peter 5:1-4)
2. Each other (Galatians 6:1; Matthew 18:15-18)
3. The members (1 Timothy 5:19-21; Matthew 18:15-18)

G. Senior Pastor & Associate Pastor(s)

When it is necessary to call a senior pastor or associate pastor, it will be the duty of the elders to investigate the merits of every man under consideration in regard to personal character, education, ministerial record, and preaching ability, to determine his fitness for the pastorate of this church. A pastor search team will be organized to work through the process of searching for the man God would have for this church. (A detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the pastor search team will be included in the *Policies and Distinctives Manual* attached to this constitution.) When a suitable man has been found and unanimously agreed upon by the elders, they will recommend him to the members for consideration.

The call of a pastor will come before the church at a specially called business meeting and handled in accordance with Article VII, Section 3. Only one candidate will be presented to the church at a time. The vote will be a written ballot, and a call will not be extended unless 80% of those voting vote in the affirmative.

Absentee voting may be permitted only when a qualified voting member has sufficiently informed himself or herself concerning the candidate, by being present when the candidate occupied the pulpit and participated in subsequent congregational activities relative to his candidacy.

The salary and other compensations will be fixed at the time of the call and will be documented as a pastor compensation package, attached to this constitution.

H. Organization

1. Officers

The elders will appoint their own officers who will also serve for legal purposes as chairman of the church, vice-chairman of the church, and secretary of the church. Men with an expressed desire to serve in these offices will be eligible for nomination. If an officer desires to step down from his position, new officers may be appointed at their first meeting following the church's annual meeting.

Because of his position as the main teaching elder and his need to commit his time to the study of the Word, the pastor will not be allowed to serve as an officer of the elders.

2. Number

The number of elders will be determined by the number of male members who meet all of the qualifications listed in Article VI, Section 2.A.

I. Term of Office

The term of office for an elder will be continuous as long as he remains a member of the church and meets the qualifications of an elder. A non-pastor elder may step down for personal reasons or if he no longer has a desire to serve. If, in the future, there is a desire to return to the role of elder, it shall be no sooner than one year from the date he stepped down from that role. In addition, he must renew the written assessment of character and review the biblical doctrine statement with the current elder board. The members of the congregation shall be notified, at the next regular meeting that a non-pastor elder will be stepping down.

The pastor has the option of taking a sabbatical, per the sabbatical policy found in the *Policies and Distinctives Manual* attached to this constitution.

J. Termination

1. Elders

An elder may be removed from office, at any regular or special meeting of the elders, if he is found to be spiritually unqualified according to the qualifications listed in Article VI, Section 2.A and pertinent Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9), in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture (Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Timothy 5:19).

When an elder is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, a notice will be made before the church congregation at a regularly scheduled worship service (Matthew 18:15-18). If he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal will be accompanied by a public rebuke (1 Timothy 5:20).

2. Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor(s)

Following the same scriptural guidelines, outlined for removing elders from office, a senior pastor or associate pastor may be removed from his position if he is found to be spiritually unqualified.

He may also be dismissed from his position by a unanimous decision of the other elders, followed by a simple majority vote of the members attending a specially called business meeting in accordance with Article VII, Section 3. A quorum of one-third (1/3) of the formal members must be present in order to have a vote. Before the elders consider this action, efforts must be made to resolve any differences with the pastor.

Section 3. Deacons

Deacons are charged with supporting the ministry of the elders (Acts 6:3-4), uniting the body (Acts 6:5), and caring for the needy (Acts 6:2-3). Their role is of service, sacrifice, and commitment to others' needs.

A. Qualifications

Each deacon must be an active, male member of this church. He must subscribe, without reservation, to the statements of faith and agree to abide by the guidelines of this constitution. He must possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13:

1. Aspires to the office of deacon (1 Timothy 3:1, 8)
2. Man of dignity; worthy of respect (1 Timothy 3:8)
3. Sincere; not double-tongued; not a malicious gossip (1 Timothy 3:8)
4. Not indulging in much wine; not addicted to much wine (1 Timothy 3:8)
5. Not fond of gain; not pursuing dishonest gain (1 Timothy 3:8)
6. Keeps hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience (1 Timothy 3:9)
7. He must first be tested, then appointed to serve as deacon if he is beyond reproach (1 Timothy 3:10)
8. Husband of one wife; a one-woman-man (1 Timothy 3:12)
9. Manages and leads his children and his household well (1 Timothy 3:12)
10. Known to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom (Acts 6:3)

B. Selection

Deacons are called by God, confirmed by the church's elders, and appointed by the elders to the task of leadership. The starting point in identifying a potential deacon is the desire in the heart of the individual (1 Timothy 3:1, 8). God plants in a man's heart a passion for the ministry, and then confirms it by the leading of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the elders, through prayer and fasting.

Any male member who meets all of the qualifications, listed in Article VI, Section 3.A, may be considered by the elders for the office of deacon. He shall be required to fill out a current, written character assessment and biblical doctrine questionnaire found in the *Policies and Distinctives Manual*. Following this, an announcement should be made to the congregation a minimum of three weeks before an official, public acknowledgment.

If one or more members, because of knowledge of some existing issue or circumstance, deem it necessary to object to the selection of this man as a deacon, a written objection shall be brought in person to the elders, to examine and investigate the objection. Should the objection be found valid, the candidate for deacon will not be approved. Should the objection be invalidated, using the qualifications of a deacon stated in Article VI, Section 3.A of the constitution as the standard for examining the stated circumstance, the elders will communicate with the objecting member(s) regarding the decision and the candidate may be considered for approval to join the deacon team.

The elders will acknowledge approved deacon candidates during a public announcement before the membership. This public acknowledgment will be done through the laying on of hands by the elders (1 Timothy 4:14). This visible act will demonstrate solidarity between the elders and the one on whom they laid their hands, and is a means of saying, "We commend you to the ministry. We stand with you, support you, and affirm your right to function in a position of leadership in this church."

C. Responsibilities

Deacons are to assist the elders in shepherding the church. In fulfilling their calling to serve, the deacons are responsible to serve the general, physical, and spiritual needs of the church. The deacons will be responsible to:

1. Assist the elders in the administration of communion and baptismal services
2. Organize ministries specifically designed to meet the needs of the men in the church
3. Together with the deaconesses, administer the ministries of benevolence, caring for the needy, widows, and orphans
4. Oversee the routine care of the facilities and properties
5. Together with the deaconesses, elect the Finance Team (Article VII, Section 4.A)
6. Meet regularly
7. Perform other duties as assigned by the elders

D. Accountability

The deacons, under the headship of Jesus Christ, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the authority of the Scripture, are accountable to:

1. The elders (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Hebrews 13:7, 17)
2. Each other (Galatians 6:1; Matthew 18:15-18)
3. The members (Matthew 18:15-18)

E. Organization

1. Officers

The deacons will appoint their own chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary to administer their meetings. Men with an expressed desire to serve in these offices will be eligible for nomination. If an officer desires to step down from his position, new officers may be appointed at their first meeting following the church's annual meeting.

2. Number

The number of deacons will be determined by the number of male members who meet all of the qualifications listed in Article VI, Section 3.A.

F. Term of Office

The term of office for a deacon will be continuous, as long as he remains a member of the church and meets the qualifications of a deacon. A deacon may step down due to personal needs or if he no longer has a desire to serve. If, in the future, there is a desire to return to the role of deacon, it shall be no sooner than one year from the date he stepped down from that role. In addition, he must renew the written assessment of character and review the biblical doctrine statement with the current elder board. The members of the congregation shall be notified, at the next regular meeting that a deacon will be stepping down.

G. Termination

A deacon may be removed from office, at any regular or special meeting of the elders, if he is found to be spiritually unqualified according to the qualifications listed in Article VI, Section 3.A and pertinent Scripture (1 Timothy 3:8-13), in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture (Matthew 18:15-18).

When a deacon is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from the office of deacon, a notice will be made before the church congregation at a regularly scheduled worship service (Matthew 18:15-18). If he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal will be accompanied by a public rebuke (1 Timothy 5:20).

Section 4. Deaconesses

Deaconesses are charged with supporting the ministry of the elders, uniting the body, and caring for the needy. Their role is of service, sacrifice, and commitment to others' needs.

A. Qualifications

Each deaconess must be an active, female member of this church. She must subscribe, without reservation, to the statements of faith and agree to abide by the guidelines of this constitution. She must possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:11:

1. Aspires to the office of deaconess (1 Timothy 3:1, 11)
2. Worthy of respect; dignified (1 Timothy 3:11)
3. Not a malicious talker or gossip (1 Timothy 3:11)
4. Temperate (1 Timothy 3:11)
5. Trustworthy in everything; faithful in all things (1 Timothy 3:11)

B. Selection

Deaconesses are called by God, confirmed by the church's elders, and appointed by the elders to the task of leadership. The starting point in identifying a potential deaconess is the desire in the heart of the individual (1 Timothy 3:1, 11). God plants in a woman's heart a passion for the ministry and then confirms it by the leading of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the elders, through prayer and fasting.

Any female member who meets all of the qualifications listed in Article VI, Section 4.A may be considered by the elders for the office of deaconess. She shall be required to fill out a written character assessment and biblical doctrine questionnaire found in the *Policies and Distinctives Manual*. Following this, an announcement should be made to the congregation a minimum of three weeks before an official, public acknowledgment.

If one or more members, because of knowledge of some existing issue or circumstance, deem it necessary to object to the selection of this woman as a deaconess, a written objection shall be brought in person to the elders, to examine and investigate the objection. Should the objection be found valid, the candidate for deaconess will not be approved. Should the objection be invalidated, using the qualifications of a deaconess stated in Article VI, Section 4.A as the standard for examining the stated circumstance, the elders will communicate with the objecting member(s) regarding the decision and the candidate may be considered for approval to join the deaconess team.

The elders will acknowledge approved deaconess candidates during a public announcement before the membership. This public acknowledgment will be done through the laying on of hands by the elders (1 Timothy 4:14). This visible act will demonstrate solidarity between the elders and the one on whom they laid their hands, and is a means of saying, "We commend you to the ministry. We stand with you, support you, and affirm your right to function in a position of leadership in this church."

C. Responsibilities

Deaconesses are to assist the elders in shepherding the women and children of the church. In fulfilling their calling to serve, the deaconesses are responsible to serve the general, physical, and spiritual needs of the women and children of the church. The deaconesses will be responsible to:

1. Assist the elders in the administration of the baptismal services and prepare the elements for communion
2. Organize ministries specifically designed to meet the needs of the women in the church
3. Together with the deacons, administer the ministries of benevolence, caring for the needy, widows, and orphans
4. Assist the deacons with the care of the facilities
5. Together with the deacons, elect the Finance Team (Article VII, Section 4.A)
6. Meet regularly
7. Perform other duties as assigned by the elders

E. Accountability

The deaconesses, under the headship of Jesus Christ, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the authority of the Scripture, are accountable to:

1. The elders (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Hebrews 13:7, 17)
2. Each other (Galatians 6:1; Matthew 18:15-18)
3. The members (Matthew 18:15-18)

D. Organization

1. Officers

The deaconesses will appoint their own chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary to administer their meetings. Women with an expressed desire to serve in these offices will be eligible for nomination. If an officer desires to step down from her position, new officers may be appointed at their first meeting following the church's annual meeting.

2. Number

The number of deaconesses will be determined by the number of female members who meet all of the qualifications listed in Article VI, Section 4.A.

E. Term of Office

The term of office for a deaconess will be continuous, as long as she remains a member of the church and meets the qualifications of a deaconess. A deaconess may step down due to personal needs or if she no longer has a desire to serve. If, in the future, there is a desire to return to the role of deaconess, it shall be no sooner than one year from the date she stepped down from that role. In addition, she must renew the written assessment of character and review the biblical doctrine statement with the current elder board. The members of the congregation shall be notified, at the next regular meeting that a deaconess will be stepping down.

F. Termination

A deaconess may be removed from office, at any regular or special meeting of the elders, if she is found to be spiritually unqualified according to the qualifications listed in Article VI, Section 4.A and pertinent Scripture (1 Timothy 3:11), in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture (Matthew 18:15-18).

When a deaconess is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify her from the office of deaconess, a notice will be made before the church congregation at a regularly scheduled worship service (Matthew 18:15-18). If she refuses to repent from that sin, the removal will be accompanied by a public rebuke (1 Timothy 5:20).

Section 5. Non-Pastoral Staff

A. Accountability

All paid and volunteer office staff will report to the elders or deacons, as stated in this section.

B. Office Manager and Staff

The Office Manager and staff positions will be administered by the elders. The positions may be paid or non-paid, part-time or full-time. If designated as such by the elders, the positions may require special education, training, or skills and may be supervisory in scope. A detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the Office Manager is included in the *Policies and Distinctives Manual* attached to this constitution.

C. Hiring and Dismissal

Within the approved budget, the elders may establish, revoke, or modify each office staff position's job description, rate of pay, and fringe benefits. The elders will have the authority and responsibility to hire or dismiss all non-pastoral office staff. The needs of the senior pastor and associate pastor(s) must be considered in these positions.

D. Facilities Manager and Staff

The Facilities Manager and staff may be established as needed and supervised by the deacons, to complete those services or tasks required by the church in its day-to-day operations. The positions may be paid or non-paid, part-time or full-time. These positions, designated as such by the deacons, may require special education, training, or skills and may be supervisory in scope. A detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the Facilities Manager is included in the *Policies and Distinctives Manual* attached to this constitution.

E. Hiring and Dismissal

Within the approved budget, the deacons may establish, revoke, or modify each position's job description, rate of pay, and fringe benefits. The deacons will have the authority and responsibility to hire and dismiss all facility operations staff.

Section 6. Offices

From among the offices of the Church, the officers of this organization will be a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, treasurer, vice-treasurer, and financial secretary. All of these officers will serve under the direction and authority of the board of directors, the elders.

A. Chairman

The chairman of the elders will be the chairman of the church. He will preside over all meetings of the church, the leadership, and the elders. He will have general supervision of the activities and officers of the church.

B. Vice-Chairman

The vice-chairman of the elders will be the vice-chairman of the church. In the absence or disability of the chairman, the vice-chairman will perform all the duties of the chairman, having the same authority and being subject to the same restrictions as the chairman.

C. Secretary

The secretary of the elders will be the secretary of the church. In the absence of the chairman and the vice-chairman, the secretary will perform all the duties of the chairman, having the same authority and being subject to the same restrictions as the chairman. He will keep, or assign to be kept, a record of the minutes of all meetings of the members, elders, deacons, deaconesses, and other designated teams. These minutes will include the date and time of the meeting, the names of those present, the reason for meeting, and the proceedings thereof.

D. Treasurer

The treasurer of the church will be elected by the deacons and deaconesses, from among their membership, and must be approved by the elders before taking office. The treasurer will be responsible for overseeing the proper tracking of all money deposited and withdrawn, both for designated funds and budgeted items. The treasurer, or his or her designee(s), will pay all bills and payroll promptly and will complete the tax requirements, for the church as an organization and for its employees. The treasurer, or his or her designee(s) will give a financial report at every leadership team meeting and regular church meeting, and at any time a request with sufficient notification has been given by the elders. The treasurer will serve as a member of the Finance Team, responsible for preparing and submitting the annual budget to the elders.

E. Vice-Treasurer

The vice-treasurer of the church will be elected by the deacons and deaconesses, from among their membership, and must be approved by the elders before taking office. The vice-treasurer will be assigned to work under the direction of the treasurer, to assist in the tasks assigned to the treasurer. In the absence of the treasurer, the vice-treasurer will be responsible for the same tasks and roles as the treasurer (as described in Article VI, Section 6.D above). The vice-treasurer will serve as a member of the Finance Team, responsible for preparing and submitting the annual budget to the elders.

F. Financial Secretary

The financial secretary of the church will be elected by the deacons and deaconesses, from among their membership, and must be approved by the elders before taking office. The financial secretary, under the direction of the treasurer, will be responsible to receive, keep individual record of, and deposit all funds contributed to the church. A copy of all deposits made to each specific fund will be given to the treasurer to be added to the financial records. The financial secretary will prepare and deliver forms detailing all charitable contributions for tax deductions. The financial secretary will serve as a member of the Finance Team, responsible for preparing and submitting the annual budget to the elders.

Article VII – Policies and Distinctives

Section 1. Policies and Distinctives

The *Policies and Distinctives Manual* includes companion documents to this constitution. Policies and distinctives are to be adopted as statements regarding the operations of the church (policies) and its stance on specific subjects related to biblical truth (distinctives). These documents must not be in conflict with any element of the constitution. Policies shall be established by the leadership team, or its designee(s), and approved by the elders. Distinctives shall be established and unanimously agreed upon by the elders and then presented to the members for their affirmation.

Section 2. Teams

Teams may be established or terminated by the elders, for specific or ongoing purposes. These teams will be made up of members of the church and will perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and powers specifically delegated by the elders. The general functions of these teams will be to bring recommendations and to provide a wider base of counsel to the elders concerning ministries, projects, special events, or designated task by the elders. All teams will exist for the period specified by the elders.

Section 3. Meetings

Reflecting the character and nature of God (I Corinthians 14:33), all meetings of the church will be conducted in a decent and orderly manner (I Corinthians 14:40). Each person present will be responsible to act in humility, gentleness, and with patience, to preserve the unity of the church (Ephesians 4:1-3; Philippians 2:2-8).

A. For Worship and Bible Study

Meetings will be held regularly for public worship on Sundays. Additional meetings for prayer, praise, and/or Bible study will be held throughout the week. The ordinances of the Lord's Supper will ordinarily be observed monthly, at which time the benevolence offering may be received. Special meetings for the purpose of promoting evangelism, Bible study, missionary work, etc. may be held upon the recommendation of the elders.

B. For Business

Unless otherwise directed by this constitution, matters of business will be decided by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the formal members present and voting.

If possible, a minimum of two weeks' notice must be given for all meetings and a quorum of one-third (1/3) of the formal members should be present.

C. Quarterly Meetings

The congregation will meet once a quarter to hear reports from ministry heads and a financial report, and to conduct other business as needed.

This meeting will be scheduled on a Sunday during the first month of the new quarter (January, April, July, October), unless otherwise directed by the elders.

D. Annual Meetings

The January quarterly meeting will serve as the annual meeting. This meeting will additionally include a presentation of the new annual budget. The agenda for this meeting and the proposed annual budget will be made available to the congregation two weeks prior to the meeting.

E. Special Meetings

Special business meetings of the church may be held at any time at the request of the elders. If possible, an announcement of the date and agenda of a special meeting should be made from the pulpit and published in the bulletin at least two successive Sundays prior to the meeting date.

F. Leadership Team (Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses)

1. Joint Leadership Meetings

The elders, deacons, and deaconesses will meet once a month, unless otherwise directed by the elders, to pray for the church, hear ministry and financial reports, and conduct business as needed. The chairman of the elders will preside over these meetings.

2. Separate Leadership Meetings

The elders, deacons, and deaconesses will be required to conduct their own regular meetings to discuss business appropriate to their stated responsibilities. The elected chairman of each team will preside at their meetings, with the vice-chairman assuming responsibility in the chairman's absence. Minutes of each meeting will be taken by the team's elected secretary and must be turned in to the secretary of the elders to be kept on file.

3. Joint Deacons and Deaconess Meetings

Joint meetings of the deacons and deaconesses may be required to fulfill their responsibilities. When this is necessary, the chairman of the deacons will preside over the meeting and the secretary of the deacons will be responsible for the minutes.

Section 4. Finances

A. Finance Team

The Finance Team will consist of three members: the treasurer of the church, the vice-treasurer of the church, and the financial secretary of the church. Their individual duties are laid out in Article VI, Section 6.

The Finance Team is responsible for the financial bookkeeping of the church and for presenting the annual budget to the elders. The annual budget must be presented to the leadership team one month prior to the annual business meeting and must be approved by the elders before it is presented to the church members.

B. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year for the church will be January 1 through December 31.

C. Annual Budget

1. Preparation

The annual budget will be prepared by the Finance Team, adopted by a unanimous decision of the elders, and affirmed by the members at the annual meeting. The Finance Team will consult with the ministry heads to determine financial needs in each department. These needs will be considered as the budget is prepared based upon the assumed pattern of congregational giving.

2. Amendments

At such times as the congregational giving proves to be insufficient to support the programs of the approved budget, the elders will amend the budget to reduce expenditures in those areas that will have the least adverse impact on the overall objectives of the church. If the funds allow, the elders may also increase a ministry's budget to help that ministry meet the overall objectives of the church. These actions will be done by a unanimous decision of the elders. The members will be notified of such action(s) at the next business meeting.

In order to provide fiscal flexibility in the execution of the church's business affairs, the elders will have the authority to reallocate funds between budgeted line items and categories of up to fifteen percent (15%) of the church's total approved budget.

D. Income

Finances for conducting the church ministries and missionary outreach will be obtained through voluntary giving of tithes and regular offerings. Pledges toward a specific project and special collections may be taken, as deemed advisable by the elders. No project will be undertaken by the church for fund raising purposes, unless specifically authorized in advance by the elders.

E. Spending Authority

1. Ministry Heads

Ministry heads will be allowed to purchase items to be used in their designated ministries according to that ministry's approved budget. Single expenditures that exceed one-fourth (1/4) of that ministry's annual budget shall be discussed by the leadership team before being purchased.

2. Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses

Elders, deacons, and deaconesses will be allowed to purchase items to be used to fulfill their responsibilities in Article VI and according to each area's approved budget. These expenditures must first be agreed upon and approved in their individual meetings. Single expenditures that exceed one-fourth (1/4) of an area's annual budget shall be discussed by the leadership team before being purchased.

F. Audit

An annual audit will be conducted by the Finance Team and two additional church members who have been elected by the deacons and deaconesses.

Article VIII – Amendments

Section 1. Constitution

This constitution may be repealed or amended at the annual meeting, or any other meeting of the church convened for that purpose. This action requires a two-week notice where any proposed amendment must be made available to the members in writing. A unanimous decision of the elders and then a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members present and participating in the vote will be required to pass an amendment of the constitution. The date of any amendments to this constitution must be noted in this Article.

This constitution will supersede all previous legal documents and will constitute the legal documents of New Hope Baptist Church, Nampa, Idaho, adopted on April 19th, 2020.

Section 2. Policies and Distinctives

Policies or distinctives may be repealed or amended, as appropriate, by the responsible group designated in Article VII, Section 1. No policy or distinctive will be amended that conflicts with or voids any provision of the constitution. If there is a conflict between the constitution and a policy or distinctive, the constitution will prevail. Members of the congregation shall be informed of repealed or amended distinctives.

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