

**Hamilton Hills Church Bylaws**  
**Revision 2019**

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## 1. **Identity**

The legal name of this Indiana corporation is Hamilton Hills Church, Incorporated, using the assumed name of Hamilton Hills Church (HHC). HHC is an independent, autonomous church with government of the church vested in its Members, using an elder model. HHC is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body.

The Bible is the supreme authority for all decisions of HHC.

Any affiliations shall be in harmony with our purpose, core values, and statement of faith. Those affiliations shall be established and can be withdrawn by vote of the Elders.

## 2. **Statement of Faith**

### 2.1. **Our Mission Statement**

Wholehearted love for God, Christ-like love for people.

### 2.2. **Our Commitment**

HHC is committed to glorifying God as a local body of believers through the exaltation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, proclaiming His eternal plan of salvation as revealed in the Scriptures for the edification of believers and evangelism of the lost.

### 2.3. **Our Objectives**

1. To promote the Scriptural and Spirit-led worship of God the Father and Jesus the Son. John 4:23-24, 16:12-15
2. To equip and involve Christians in ministry. Ephesians 4:11-16
3. To fulfill the Great Commission with an emphasis on evangelism. Matthew 28:18-20
4. To stimulate Christ-like love through fellowship, accountability and care for others. John 13:12, Acts 2:42-47, 1 Corinthians 13, 1 Peter 4:7-11
5. To provide biblical training and nurturing on life issues. 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 4:1-2; 2 Peter 1:3-4
6. To stimulate daily dependence on God for life and ministry through prayer and the Scriptures. Mark 9:29, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 Peter 5:7
7. To be a good citizen of our community with an emphasis on meeting spiritual needs. Romans 13:1-14
8. To maintain a sound financial condition in obedience to God's Word. Luke 16:8-13, 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, 2 Corinthians 9:12-15

## 2.4. Our Beliefs

### 2.4.1. The Scriptures

We believe the Bible is God's written revelation to man. "All Scripture is God-breathed," being infallible and inerrant in its original manuscripts. The 66 books of the Old and New Testaments comprise the Scriptures, which are complete.

Since the Bible is God's Word, God said what He meant and meant what He said. The Bible is to be interpreted literally, which means normally, grammatically, historically and contextually.

We believe the Bible to be the center of true Christian unity and the supreme standard by which all other philosophies and activities must be measured.

Therefore, we commit ourselves to the regular reading and studying of God's Word, with conformity to godliness being the goal, that we may be "thoroughly equipped for every good work."

2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17  
Hebrews 4:12  
2 Peter 1:20-21

### 2.4.2. The Godhead

We believe the Almighty God to be the Creator and Sustainer of everything that exists. He is worthy of man's highest adoration, worship and respect. Complete obedience should only be normal. God's ultimate purpose in the creation of mankind is to bring glory to Himself.

God, in His unity, may be seen in three Persons; executing three distinct offices.

God the Father is the Executive Head, residing at the throne of heaven. God is spirit and possesses the following attributes among others:

Holiness	Justice
Omniscience	Omnipresence
Omnipotence	Immutability
Self-Existence	Eternality

We believe God the Son, Jesus Christ, left heaven to come to earth in the form of a physical body. Conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, He lived an absolutely perfect life, setting the example for all mankind. In a bloodshed death upon the cross, Christ paid for the sins of the world. Following His burial, He bodily rose from the grave and is presently in heaven interceding for those who are committed to Himself.

We believe the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the God-head, though omnipresent and actively involved in ministry with Old Testament saints, took His abode in the world in a special sense from the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers of sin, righteousness and judgment, with the goal of leading people to the Savior. Indwelling every believer at the point of faith in Christ, He baptizes them permanently into the body of Christ. Temporary gifts for the sake of revelation are complete.

Therefore, we humbly submit to our God, giving all the glory of life to Him.

Matthew 3:16-17

1 Corinthians 10:31

Revelation 4:11

### **2.4.3. Angels**

We believe God created innumerable sinless, spiritual beings known as angels. They serve as God's ministering messengers, advancing the cause of the Kingdom of God.

Lucifer, a high-ranking angel, sinned through pride and rebellion. Becoming Satan, he led a great number of the angelic host to oppose God and be expelled from heaven. These fallen angels, now known as demons and evil spirits, join with Satan to thwart the program of God.

Therefore, recognizing that the conflict of the ages is primarily spiritual, we focus our efforts on the victory found in God's Kingdom.

Ephesians 6:10-18

Hebrews 1:14

### **2.4.4. The Creation and Fall of Man**

We believe man was created with the mental and moral likeness of God. As the crowning work of creation, God is involved with the development of each person prior to birth. Man's chief goal is to glorify God, his Maker. While God deals with man as a whole being, he has three dimensions: body, soul and spirit. Through the sin of Adam, mankind now carries a bent to trespass against God. Losing the spiritual life, man is totally deprived and without remedy apart from the work of Christ.

Therefore, we view life as a sacred gift from God. Commitment of our total beings to Him is only reasonable.

Psalms 139

Romans 3:23, 6:23

#### 2.4.5. **Salvation**

We believe that no one can enter the Kingdom of God apart from being born again. The new birth of the believer comes only through faith in the Person and work of Christ, and repentance is a vital part of regeneration. No amount of resolution, effort or submission to regulation can help the sinner take even one step toward heaven, "for it is by grace you have been saved, through faith."

Upon acceptance of Christ into one's life, the believer immediately passes from spiritual death to spiritual life, possessing every spiritual blessing in Christ. We believe this good news should be spread to all peoples of the world, both close and afar.

John 3:16

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Ephesians 2:8-9

#### 2.4.6. **The Christian Life**

We believe those who personally receive Christ are called with a holy calling to walk not after the sinful nature, but after the righteousness of the Spirit of God within them. While believers are positionally sanctified before God at the point of faith, it should be the Christian's desire to advance progressively in personal growth as well.

Growth can be enhanced as born-again followers of Christ practice the following:

- Daily study of God's Word
- Regular prayer
- Immediate confession of sin
- Faithfulness and involvement in the Church
- Avoidance of divisive or destructive speech, but rather, conversation which edifies
- Proper respect for other Christians, striving for unity of the Spirit
- Separation from sin and its lure
- Refraining from all substance abuse, which would serve to harm the body, the dwelling place of the Spirit of God
- A responsible family life, including abstention from fornication, adultery, and homosexuality
- Submission to human government, except where government is contrary to biblical principle

- The work of evangelism
- The exercise of spiritual gifts

Therefore, we live as a people committed to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 4:14-16

1 Peter 1:13-16

2 Peter 3:18

#### **2.4.7. The Church**

We believe those who are united in faith to the Savior Jesus Christ are members of the universal church which is the body and bride of Christ. Believers from Pentecost to the rapture in every part of the world are a part of the universal church.

We believe the local church is ordained of God to carry out His mission for His glory in this age. In a given geographic location, the local church is a company of born-again persons, baptized on profession of faith in Christ and united for exaltation of God, edification of believers and the evangelism of the world. The local church has two offices, that of pastor (bishop, elder, shepherd) and deacon (servant, minister). The Church has two ordinances, that of baptism and the Lord's table.

We believe the local Church is autonomous, taking God's Word as the only sufficient rule for spiritual life and behavior. The Scriptures teach that the Christian should be wary of those who do not teach the Gospel. Thus, Bible-believing Churches today should have no part in fellowship or separation with apostate churches. Purity of Christ's Gospel must be held foremost.

In light of God's revelation, we believe the Church is an essential part of the Christian's life.

Ephesians 2:19-22

1 Timothy 3:1-16

#### **2.4.8. Future Events**

We believe God has a plan and a program for future events to the ultimate culmination of His divine purposes. Included for believers are the following:

- Rapture to heaven
- Bema seat judgment

- Marriage supper and union with Christ
- Return to earth with the Lord
- The Millennial Kingdom
- A new heaven and a new earth

The future for those who reject Christ includes:

- Death and torment in hell
- A seven-year world-wide tribulation
- Final rebellion and crushing of Satan
- The Great White Throne Judgment
- The Lake of Fire

With the view of God's future for mankind, it then becomes the Christian's responsibility to prepare himself with purity and to seek the conversion of the world from the powers of darkness to the Kingdom of God's light.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Hebrews 10:25

Revelation 22:12-13

**We believe** that marriage has been established by God to provide a healthy and safe environment for personal and spiritual growth. We believe that the Bible defines marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman and is the only context for biblical sexual expression. (Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Hebrews 13:4). HHC adheres to a biblical definition of Marriage.

## **Statement of Operations**

### **3. Corporate Information**

#### **3.1. Officers**

The Corporate Officers of HHC are:

1. President: Senior Pastor
2. Secretary: Appointed Elder

The Corporate Officers' roles and responsibilities are governed by the terms of this Provision 3.1 (Officers).

If no roles and responsibilities are listed as to a particular position, those roles and responsibilities are governed by the Board of Directors as set forth in Provision 3.2.

#### **3.2. Board of Directors**

The Elders, defined in Provision 4.1, serve as HHC's Board of Directors.

#### **3.3. Corporate Officer Resignation or Removal**

If the Chairman of the Elders or the Secretary resigns or is removed, that man also resigns from the respective Corporate Officer position and shall be replaced as soon as practicable.

### **4. Biblical Leadership – Elders**

Biblical leadership of the Church consists of Elders and Deacons. HHC will operate with two types of Elders: Vocational Elders (as further defined in Provision 4.1.2 below) and Lay Elders (as further defined in Provision 4.1.1 below).

When Jesus Christ calls us to follow him, he calls us to be a part of a community: the church. The church—the gathering of believers in Jesus—is the place where God dwells in the Body of Christ (see Ephesians 2:22; 1:23). If we know and love God, we will know and love his church as well.

The church, as the Body of Christ, is made up of many members, all of whom have different functions. God calls different people to different roles, none of which are dispensable. Yet a body, in order to function properly, must be organized and harmonious in its operation. Of course, every Christian is responsible to promote the harmony, unity, and order of the body. One of the primary factors in achieving this is effective leadership. In Scripture, we see clear principles consistently outlined: the church is to be led and governed by elders.

The New Testament uses three words to describe this office: elders, pastors/shepherds, and overseers (see, e.g., Acts 20:17 and following; 1 Peter 5:1-2). “Elder” is used to describe the Elder’s character and maturity. And because this is the most common term in the New Testament, it’s the one we tend to use most often. “Pastor” refers to the Elder’s attitude and way of interacting with people. “Overseer” refers to the Elder’s function in the church.

Furthermore, the New Testament almost always refers to elders in the plural (e.g., Acts 20:17; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5; James 5:14). Therefore, HHC is governed by a plurality of elders. This helps to provide wisdom, balance, and accountability for the church’s leaders. It’s less likely that any individual takes the wrong type of action because there are brothers with the competency and authority to pull him back in line, or remove him from a position of influence. This gives the advantage of shared decision-making without the disadvantage needing a congressional vote for every decision.

Finally, we note that the eldership is a noble task (1 Timothy 3:1), worthy indeed of a double honor (1 Timothy 5:17). But, it is a weighty responsibility, and we are warned to not be “hasty” in appointing elders (1 Timothy 5:22). Because elders are charged to handle both organizational/leadership responsibilities and the spiritual headship of the church, we recognize that it is crucial for us to take great care in only appointing qualified, godly elders for our church. By having a clearly-defined and formally-followed process for our elder candidates, we protect both them and the church from unwise appointments to this important office.

#### 4.1. Elders

The Elders serve as HHC’s Board of Directors (BOD) and are the governing body of the HHC. The Elders are a team of men comprised of Vocational Elders (defined in 4.1.2), including the Senior Pastor (defined in Provision 4.8), and Lay Elders (defined in 4.1.1).

All Elders must meet the qualifications of an Elder, as stated in Provision 4.2 below, and must be Members of HHC.

The Elders shall have at least one more Lay Elder than Vocational Elder(s). For example, if there are two (2) Vocational Elders, including the Senior Pastor, there will be at least three (3) Lay Elders for a total of five (5) Elders. In other words, the Elders will maintain a simple majority of Lay Elders.

If for any reason the composition of the Elders does not consist of a simple majority of Lay Elders, then the Elders will begin the process outlined in Provision 4.5 to restore the required composition.

The Elders’ job description is to support the structure and well-being of the Church, which includes, but is not limited to, the overall policy, vision, teaching, protecting, leading, and well-being of the corporate Church body and its individual Members. The Elders are entrusted with the governance of the church. Noting Biblical instruction and the need for personal spiritual development, they lead the Church through providing counsel for spiritual direction,

business administration, staff development, and/or accountability to create and execute ministry plans for the Church.

The Elders also serve as the corporate Board of Directors of HHC, with one of the Elders to serve as the Chairman of the Board (Provision 4.8). Individual Elder responsibilities will be assigned based on the gifting of the individual and the needs of the church.

The Elders may create a Leadership Team or an Executive Team. All such teams would by delegation be subject to the Elders and the Elders would determine the size and composition of such teams.

#### 4.1.1. **Lay Elders**

A Lay Elder is not employed by and does not receive compensation from the Church.

#### 4.1.2. **Vocational Elders**

Vocational Elders are defined as those Elders who are in the employ of the Church as a regular, part-time, or full-time staff member. Vocational Elders may receive compensation for fulfilling their vocational responsibilities as employees of the Church.

A Vocational Elder shall neither vote on nor determine his own personal salary or benefits or designate his personal housing allowance.

#### 4.2. **Elder Qualifications**

Elder qualifications include (1 Timothy 3:1-7):

- A man who is above reproach;
- If married, the husband of one wife, who is herself in a healthy spiritual relationship with Christ
- Sober-minded;
- Self-controlled;
- Respectable;
- Hospitable;
- Able to teach;
- Not a drunkard;
- Not violent but gentle;
- Not quarrelsome;
- Not a lover of money;
- Manages his own household well;
- Not a recent convert; and
- Well thought of by outsiders

Elder is another term for pastor, Bishop, overseer or shepherd. Elders are men above reproach or blameless. These are not sinless men—sinless men do not exist. The elders who would lead the churches had to be men without any outward character flaw. It is a man whom others in the church have no obvious reason to accuse of sin. He would have internal evidence against himself because he knows his inclinations toward evil and sin. His lifestyle would need to be exemplary.

All Christians should strive for these general characteristics, not just the elders.

This list is a description of a person living above reproach to which all believers should strive. The normal attendee of a church would not be denied entrance into the church if that attendee lacked these character qualities. However, an elder must demonstrate ALL of these qualities to serve in the office as an elder. Every believer should strive to live above reproach.

The Elder position is the highest office in the church and is a role exclusively for males (1 Tim. 2:11-15).

The elders in a church set the precedent for what faithful pastoral leadership is in that church.

Therefore, elders must have character which qualifies them to lead God's people, and competency to accomplish the duties assigned to them.

#### 4.3. Elder Duties

The duties of the elders are many according to Scripture. Some of the representative duties are:

- Prayer and Scripture study (Acts 6:4)
- Ruling/leading the church (1 Timothy 5:17)
- Managing the church (1 Timothy 3:4-5)
- Caring for people in the church (1 Peter 5:2-5)
- Giving account to God for the church (Hebrews 13:17)
- Living exemplary lives (Hebrews 13:7)
- Rightly using the authority God has given them (Acts 20:28)
- Teaching the Bible correctly (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:2)
- Preaching (1 Timothy 5:17)
- Praying for the sick (James 5:13-15)
- Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings (Titus 1:9)
- Working hard (1 Thessalonians 5:12)
- Rightly using money and power (1 Peter 5:1-3)
- Protecting the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17-31)
- Disciplining unrepentant Christians (Matthew 18:15-17)

- Financially supporting the church in a Biblical fashion (1 Corinthians 16:1-2, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7)

The Elders of HHC, then, are to:

- Provide spiritual leadership, guidance, and direction for HHC;
- Model biblical unity as a leadership team for HHC;
- Support, encourage, and mentor the Senior Pastor, and assist him in providing the same to the staff, deacons and other lay leaders at HHC;
- Search scripture and pray through decisions to reach consensus as a leadership team;
- Physically attend or otherwise participate in monthly Elder meetings;
- Share responsibilities of providing a presence and involvement in the different ministries within the church (e.g., Deacons, Youth, Small Groups, Finance, Woman's, Children's, etc.);
- Provide teaching as directed by the Senior Pastor for special training classes and small groups;
- As the need arises for additional staff pastor(s) and/or staff, the Elders will review for each position the job description, compensation, budget impact, and reporting structure;
- Make retention and release decisions with respect to staff pastor(s) and/or staff, based on HHC needs and in accordance with the church budget, except the Senior Pastor; and/or
- Set the annual budget for HHC.

#### **4.4. Elder Nomination**

The Elders, Deacons, and/or pastoral staff can nominate Elders. Nominations will take place annually in October, with the Selection Process taking place in the months of November and December.

Nominations may be made on an as-needed basis to complete the remaining term of an Elder who has resigned or who has been removed under Provision 4.7 below. After completing the remainder of the term, the Elder will need to be re-affirmed through the Affirmation process set out in Provision 7.7 for a new term.

#### **4.5. Elder Selection Process**

The Elder Selection Process means that the candidate is initially evaluated by the current Elders to determine if he meets the qualifications for serving as an Elder and is capable of fulfilling the duties of an Elder.

If the Elder(s) successfully completes the Selection Process, he will be presented to the Deacons and pastoral staff for an initial affirmation.

If affirmed by the Elders, Deacons, and pastoral staff, the candidate for Elder will be presented to the Members for Affirmation under Provision 7.7.

#### **4.6. Elder Approval and Term of Service**

Elders will be presented to the Members for Affirmation (Provision 7.7). Once approved, the Elders shall serve a four (4) year term, beginning in January.

Elders should evaluate each Elder annually.

#### **4.7. Elder Resignation or Removal**

Should an Elder desire to resign, he may do so by submitting a resignation in writing to the remaining Elders.

An Elder can be removed during his term by the other Elders, if necessary, following a biblical process of discipline.

#### **4.8. Senior Pastor Definition**

The Senior Pastor is a specially designated Vocational Elder. The Senior Pastor term comes from the Greek *Episkopos* meaning overseer (Titus 1:6-9, 1 Timothy 3:1-7). The Senior Pastor is a spiritual overseer and under-shepherd to the church. The Senior Pastor's primary responsibility is to set the vision for the Church. He leads the Church in worship of God, building up believers, and reaching the world with the message of Jesus Christ.

The Senior Pastor serves as the corporate President of HHC and Chairman of the Elders.

##### **4.8.1. Senior Pastor Qualifications**

The Senior Pastor's Qualifications reflect exactly the qualifications of the Elders.

##### **4.8.2. Senior Pastor Term**

The term of office for the Senior Pastor is indeterminate. The Senior Pastor's term may be ended upon:

1. Written resignation of the senior pastor, provided to the Elders 30 days before the separation date; or
2. A vote to remove the senior pastor, with appropriate notice as set forth below.

A minimum of thirty (30) days' notice publicly announced in two (2) separate church worship services or church meetings and posted in writing is required for a vote by the membership to remove the Senior Pastor.

#### **4.8.3. Senior Pastor Search Committee**

The Elders or their appointees may serve on or designate a Senior Pastor search committee, if the need arises. Upon satisfactory study and vetting by the Elders, in conjunction with a search committee, if any, the Elders shall present a candidate to the congregation for an Approval Vote as set out in Provision 7.5.

#### **4.8.4. Senior Pastor Compensation**

The Lay Elders will review the Senior Pastor's compensation package and set that package as part of the annual budget process.

#### **4.9. Staff Pastors**

A Staff Pastor may be selected to serve as a Vocational Elder, if approved by the Lay Elders and the Senior Pastor.

### **5. Biblical Leadership – Deacons**

From the Greek – *Diakonoi*, meaning to “wait on” (Act 6:2, 1 Timothy 3:8-13).

The Deacons are comprised of Members who approved to serve as Deacons based on biblical standards and criteria, as set forth in Provision 5.1.

#### **5.1. Deacon Qualifications**

A Deacon should meet the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and the following:

- Participating in the Great Commission;
- Be a member of the church in good standing
- Following the Great Commandments
- Serving in the work of the ministry
- Supporting the mission of the Church with tithes/offerings
- Respecting and supporting pastors, staff, elders, ministry leaders, members and guests
- Regularly attending the services of the Church
- Wife is in a healthy spiritual walk with Christ

Selection for candidacy shall be determined by the candidate's biblical and personal character, as well as the candidate's gifts and abilities to fulfill the qualifications listed above.

### **5.2. Deacon Duties**

The Deacons will be focused on the biblical and spiritual care of the HHC church body, primarily through meeting physical needs. The Deacons are a servant ministry of HHC and exist to serve the Membership and guests of HHC to help accomplish the vision and mission of HHC as set out by the Elders.

Under the authority of the Elders, Deacons serve as the servant leaders of the various ministries and areas of ministry of HHC (1 Timothy 3:8-12). They are the primary leaders of the Ministry Teams that conduct the volunteer functions of the church and help meet the physical needs of the people of HHC. Deacons of HHC will be viewed as lead servants in the Church.

Support the Elders and staff in caring for the congregation at HHC. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Actively creating relationships with the congregation
- Engaging in support/coaching with family issues
- Hospital visitation
- Meal coordination for families as needed
- Along with the staff, providing feedback to the Elders on strategic initiatives
- PRAY...Together for HHC, for families, for individuals, for each other

### **5.3. Deacon Nomination**

All Members shall have the opportunity to nominate candidates from the Membership to the Deacons during the month of November each year.

Nominations may be made on an as-needed basis to complete the remaining term of a Deacon who has resigned or been removed under Provision 5.6. After the expiration of that term, the Deacon will need to be re-affirmed through Affirmation.

### **5.4. Deacon Selection Process**

The Deacon Selection Process means that the candidate is initially evaluated by the current Deacons to determine if he meets the qualifications for serving as a Deacon and is capable of fulfilling the duties of a Deacon.

If the Deacon successfully completes the Selection Process, he will be presented to the Elders, Deacons, and pastoral staff for an initial affirmation.

If affirmed by the Elders, Deacons, and pastoral staff, the candidate for Deacon will be presented to the Members for Affirmation.

Deacon elections shall take place annually. The number of Deacons needed will be determined by the Elders and will approved by Affirmation.

#### **5.5. Deacon Approval and Term of Service**

Deacons will be presented to the Members for Affirmation. Once approved, the Deacon shall serve a three (3) year term, beginning in January.

Deacons should evaluate and re-affirm each Deacon annually.

#### **5.6. Deacon Resignation or Removal**

A Deacon may end his term early upon written resignation to the Deacons.

A Deacon may be removed at the request of the Deacons by the Elders after going through a biblical discipline process (e.g., Matthew 5; Matthew 18; 1 Timothy 5:19-21).

#### **5.7. Deacon Chairman**

The Deacons shall elect a Chairman. The Chairman shall serve for a 1-year term. The Chairman shall provide leadership and oversight to the Deacons, both spiritually and administratively. The Deacons Chairman reports to the Elder Chairman.

### **6. Membership**

#### **6.1. Member(s)**

A Member is an individual over the age of 18 who has completed the membership requirements and has been admitted to the Membership Roll.

#### **6.2. Membership Roll**

The Membership Roll is a list of the Members of HHC with appropriate contact information maintained by the church staff and made available to the church leadership as needed.

In the event that a Member is inactive for three consecutive months, without reason and upon recommendation of the Elders and/or Deacons, the Member's name may be removed from the Membership.

#### **6.3. Member Voting**

A Member each has one (1) vote for any item that requires a vote. The items requiring a vote are listed in Provision 7.3 Items Requiring Members' Vote.

#### **6.4. Member Admission**

Admission to Membership to HHC may be obtained when a Member:

1. Has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through faith and shares that relationship with an Elder or Deacon;
2. Has been baptized by immersion;
3. Has completed HHC's new member class (or its current equivalent);
4. Indicates support of HHC's Constitution; and
5. Has signed the Membership Covenant.

The Member(s) will be presented with a certificate of membership upon completion of the above and approval by the Elders.

A Member can be removed from Membership of HHC as stated in Provision 6.6 below, Discipline and Removal.

#### **6.5. Membership Covenant**

A Member agrees to support HHC by complying with the Membership Covenant, as it may from time to time be amended.

#### **6.6. Discipline and Removal**

Members who act in a manner that discredits the cause of Christ and HHC shall be implored to change their course through the biblical discipline process. HHC's Elders shall guide this process in truth and grace with the intent of repentance and reconciliation through a biblical process.

During the disciplinary process with a Member(s), the Member(s) shall be suspended from Membership and any role at HHC.

Members desiring to have their membership removed may do so by communicating such desire to the Church staff. Staff will update the membership list every 30 days.

### **7. General Operations**

#### **7.1. Worship Services**

Church worship services shall be determined by the Elders.

#### **7.2. Reporting**

At a minimum, HHC, through its Elders or designees, will provide Members a financial update every six (6) months to the Membership on HHC finances.

### **7.3. Items Requiring Members' Vote**

To be approved, an item called to vote requires an Approval Vote (Provision 7.5). The following items require the Members to cast an Approval Vote:

1. Approving or removing the Senior Pastor;
2. Approving or Amending the Bylaws under Provision 9;
3. Dissolve the corporate entity under Provision 10; and/or
4. Incurring any debt obligations above 20% of the annual budget.

All other major/strategic HHC decisions will be managed by the Elders through the Affirmation Process (Provision 7.7).

### **7.4. Quorum**

A Quorum consists of 35% of the Membership.

A Quorum may also be defined as the number of eligible Members present at a church meeting, if two weeks prior to the vote:

1. a public announcement was made in a worship service; and
2. electronic written notice was given to the Members.

### **7.5. Approval Vote**

To be approved, an item called to vote requires an affirmative vote of 75% or greater vote of a Quorum (Provision 7.4 above) of the Membership.

### **7.6. Notice**

All official notices and communications of HHC take place through electronic methods. It is the Member's responsibility to ensure his or her information is kept current with HHC.

### **7.7. Affirmation Process**

The Affirmation Process is the practice of open conversation and dialog between the Members, Staff, Elders, and Deacons over major decisions that affect the HHC church body.

The Affirmation Process fosters an open and healthy dialog while allowing for a spirit of unity as we all seek God's will and direction at HHC.

The following are the steps to be used in the Affirmation Process:

1. Through electronic communication and church meetings to the Members, the Elders and Staff will provide communication about significant changes to programs or direction of the ministry that will impact HHC.

2. For a period of two (2) weeks after the communication, the HHC membership will provide feedback/questions to the Elders via direct or email communication. Together, HHC will prayerfully consider what God is calling the church to do.

3. Depending on the feedback, the Elder will communicate a positive or negative affirmation to the Members.

4. In the event that there is not a clear direction, the Elders may extend the Affirmation Process and call for a time of congregational prayer and fasting for an additional two weeks. The goal is to find God's heart in this process and maintain unity within HHC.

## **8. HHC Congregational Meetings**

The HHC Congregational Meeting should be conducted at least once a year, but may be called more often if needed, to present financial, operational, and ministry updates or recommendations, including the annual budget report, proposed budget, and spiritual vision for HHC for the upcoming year.

The Senior Pastor shall serve as the moderator of these meetings. If the Senior Pastor is unable to serve as moderator, due to absence or conflict of interest, one or more of the Elders shall moderate these meetings.

Special HHC Congregational Meetings may be called by the Staff or Elders, as needed. A Special HHC Congregational Meeting may be had upon two (2) week Notice to the Membership. The Notice shall set forth an Agenda of the items to be discussed at a Special HHC Congregational Meeting.

## **9. Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended at any Church business meeting by 75% majority or greater vote in the affirmative by a Quorum of Members present and eligible to vote, provided that such vote:

1. Shall be publicly announced in two (2) separate Church worship services; and
2. Notice (Provision 7.6) is given to the Members at least two (2) weeks prior to the Church business meeting.

## **10. Dissolution and Distribution**

Should conditions arise where, for any reason, this church cannot continue, the remaining Members shall present a proposal for dissolution for a vote of the church. All proposals for dissolution of assets must be to non-profit organizations that are generally consistent with the statement of faith of HHC, but in compliance with section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. Under no

circumstances shall the assets of Hamilton Hills Church at dissolution be utilized to benefit individuals or for-profit enterprises. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.