

BrightHope

FIND HOPE | FIND LIFE

**BHCC exists to introduce people to
Jesus Christ and to assist believers in
becoming passionate followers of Him.**



BAPTISM

APPLICATION



MEMBERSHIP

APPLICATION

Bright Hope Community Church Membership Guide

BrightHope

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Why Membership?

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of Bright Hope Community Church (BHCC). We believe Biblical membership should be meaningful, both for you and the church, so this is not something we take lightly. Church membership is a means to: demonstrate commitment to God and to His Church; help to bring stability to the local church; provide accountability for you and fellow members; to benefit & equip you in your walk with Christ; and to be a unified light to the world.

FOUR COMMITMENTS

1. **Commitment to God.** You are affirming that you are indeed a disciple of Jesus Christ who is desiring to follow Him, and you've been baptized by immersion to publically demonstrate your devotion to Him.
 2. **Commitment to the mission of BHCC.** You know our mission statement and you are playing an active part in leading people from where they are to where God wants them to be. This means you are: serving somewhere; financially supporting BHCC; and praying for the ministry of BHCC.
 3. **Commitment to relationships.** We were designed for relationships. Through relationships come depth, love, accountability, and growth. Admitting that we need one another is a strength of the church that reinforces the bond we have in Christ. In this church family, we are privileged to pray for one another and bear one another's burdens.
 4. **Commitment to growing in your faith.** No matter how long you've been a Christian, there are still steps you can take to become more like Christ. As a member, you're acknowledging that you're taking an active role in the discipleship process –through participation in a small group study, an active BHCC ministry, by taking classes, and by personal, spiritual disciplines, etc.
-

WHO IS MEMBERSHIP FOR?

**One who has placed his/her faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin. (Romans 3:23-25); AND*

**One who has been baptized by immersion, following conversion, to indicate his/her identification with Christ's finished work (Believer's Baptism). (Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:12; Romans 6:3-4); AND*

**One who agrees with the Statements of Promise, Position, and Practice of Bright Hope Community Church; AND*

**One who has given evidence of a teachable spirit and a desire to live a holy life.*

WHY IS A SPIRITUAL FAMILY IMPORTANT?

**You need healthy relationships. (Eph. 4:15-16)*

**You need a place where you can use your gifts. (1 Tim. 4:14)*

**You need a place where you can grow and serve with others. (Acts 2:42)*

**You need a place to be committed to an eternal cause. (2 Cor. 4:18)*

**The church needs you because God has gifted you to help the church. (Romans 12:5-8)*

**No church, including BHCC, will be perfect. We are flawed by sin. When the church is built upon the principles of Scripture, it is the best place to grow in faith and community.*

BIBLICAL SUPPORT FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

**Church membership is implied in the connection between believers, the references to one body joined together in Christ, and the way we are to utilize our spiritual gifts for building up one another. (Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:21-27; Ephesians 4:11-16)*

**Church membership is an essential way in which we demonstrate submission to leaders and to one another and exercise our walk with Christ together. (Hebrews 13:17; Ephesians 5:1-21; Colossians 3:1-17)*

**Church membership is implied in how shepherds and leaders are to minister to, instruct, and oversee the flock. (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-3)*

Church membership is implied in devotion together to the disciplines of doctrine, breaking of bread, fellowship, and prayer. (Acts 2:42)

**Other passages related to various aspects of local church membership: (Acts 13:1-3; 14:26-38; 15:30; 16:1-5; Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:2-3; Revelation 2 & 3.)*

MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

1. Be absolutely certain of your faith in Christ's work alone - received by grace through faith - for the forgiveness of your sin.
2. Be baptized by immersion if you have not been already (one can be accepted into membership pending baptism). Also see the section below titled "The significance and place of the two ordinances of the local church."
3. Read through 3 documents: this BHCC Membership Guide, the BHCC Church Profile, and the BHCC Essential Guidelines and Beliefs. Determine if you are in agreement with Bright Hope's "Essential Guidelines and Beliefs".
4. Complete and submit* the BHCC Membership Application at least 1 week prior to a Membership Class. The Leadership Team (pastors/deacons) will review your application. Any concerns that the Leadership Team has with your application will be addressed with you personally. (*Submit your completed application to our secretary, Justi McGrady.)

5. Attend an announced Membership Class following a morning service or during our Sunday School time (9:30-10:30). Lunch and childcare will be provided. Attending Membership Class will be: pastoral staff and/or deacons and their wives, and other prospective members.
6. Either immediately following the Membership Class, or at a date shortly after, a brief interview will be conducted between the prospective member and a deacon(s) and wife (wives) for the purpose of verbally sharing your salvation testimony & addressing any questions.
7. After the Membership Class, the Leadership Team will decide whether to recommend you to the congregation for BHCC Membership.
8. Church Vote. During a regularly scheduled or special church meeting, there will be a congregational vote on each prospective member.

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND PLACE OF THE TWO ORDINANCES OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. BELIEVER'S BAPTISM...Who, Why, How & When?

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

The Bible clearly teaches that all who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ as their **Forgiver** and their **Leader** (Savior & Lord) should be baptized. Baptism is reserved for those who have personally and willingly received God's offer of Salvation. *"And those who gladly received His Word were baptized" (Acts 2:41). "When they believed they were baptized" (Acts 8:12).* At Bright Hope, we ask that children wait to be baptized until they personally understand the meaning of baptism following their conversion.

WHY SHOULD WE BE BAPTIZED?

Shortly before His ascension, Jesus commanded His followers to spread the message of Salvation, and He instructed that all who believed in that message should be baptized (Matthew 28:19f, Mark 16:15f). Baptism is a symbol of an individual's personal relationship with Christ, made possible by His death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism does NOT save a person or guarantee a person's salvation; rather, baptism is a way of publicly identifying oneself with Christ. Baptism is a public declaration of a person's new **position** in trusting in Christ's forgiveness of their sins, and their new **possibility** in life due to now trusting Christ's leadership (Lordship) of their life (Romans 6:3-8).

HOW SHOULD WE BE BAPTIZED?

The word "baptize" means "to immerse." Jesus was baptized by immersion (Matthew 3:16). The New Testament Church baptized by immersion. Baptism by immersion best illustrates our identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (Colossians 2:12). Therefore, we believe baptism by immersion is most consistent with the teachings of the Bible.

WHEN SHOULD WE BE BAPTIZED?

Baptism should take place as soon as possible after one has personally trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. At Bright Hope, we ask that those desiring to be baptized make their decision known by speaking with the pastor or a deacon.

WHAT IF I WAS BAPTIZED AS AN INFANT?

Infant Baptism is a tradition that began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. There is no reference in the Bible to baptizing infants. The custom of Infant Baptism is different from the ordinance of Believer's Baptism. Believer's Baptism is only for those who are old enough "to believe" since its

purpose is to publicly declare a personal commitment to Christ. Therefore, Believer's Baptism is for all individuals who have personally trusted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, even if they were also baptized as infants.

2. THE LORD'S SUPPER (Communion)

- A Memorial Observance – I Cor. 11:23-26
- A Symbolic Observance – Matt. 26:26-28
- A Continuing Observance – 1 Cor. 11:26
- A Church Observance – I Cor. 10:14-17; 11:18-20

PRINCIPLES FOR SERVING GOD AND OTHERS

- We encourage individuals who identify a need, to seek and start new ministries as they are led by God.
- Our desire is to prepare people for service by pre-service training...but, on-the-job training is more beneficial...we learn best by doing.
- Most ministries require a specified length of commitment for the benefit of those serving and being served...but we allow people to change ministries graciously, without guilt.
- We encourage people to serve primarily in the areas where they are most gifted. However, for our church to be effective it is also important for our members to serve in areas where they are needed, even if not necessarily gifted. It may be necessary for some members to carry multiple ministry responsibilities.
- It is our goal that every member has some on-going ministry involvement, although time commitment will depend on individual life circumstances. We hope that every member will continually seek *greater* ministry challenges and have a *growing* commitment to ministry involvement.

All ministry and team leaders will be active members of the church who are willing to faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of their ministry.

Ministry Development Process...

- **Start with a need.** A ministry should not be considered unless it meets a specific need in the life of BHCC.
- **Match the need with Scripture and with our mission.** A ministry must not only meet a need, it must also support the purposes, mission, and core values of our church. Financial resources should be allocated strategically to cover the purpose and mission of the ministry.
- **Passionate leaders.** Leaders must be spirit-led individuals who have a heart burdened for their ministry area.
- **Build according to giftedness.** The ministry team must be built, as much as possible, according to their gifts which match the area of ministry.
- **Review regularly.** All ministries should be evaluated regularly to determine whether they continue to meet a need, serve the purposes of BHCC, continue to be well-led, and have the necessary team of people in place.



Get connected soon...contact a ministry leader or become one!
To get an idea of what your spiritual giftedness may be, visit:
<https://gifts.churchgrowth.org/spiritual-gifts-survey/>

**WITH QUESTIONS, OR TO FIND YOUR FIT, PLEASE CONTACT
THE FOLLOWING MINISTRY LEADERS OR COORDINATORS...**

CHILD PROTECTION...Kayla Tini [sktini@hotmail.com]

NOTE: If you are desiring to serve in any ministry that involves children or youth, you must successfully complete BHCC's Child Protection Program and receive a Criminal Records Check and Child Abuse Clearance.

CHILDRENS MINISTRIES/NURSERY... Amy Cumberland [amyllynne8809@hotmail.com]; Kayla Tini, Director of Children's Ministry [sktini@hotmail.com]

DESIGN TEAM...Sam Burgard [sburgard.uts@gmail.com]; Carole Percy [cjperc@embarqmail.com]; Katherine Raisley [katraisley@gmail.com]; Qin Raisley [qinraisley@gmail.com]

DIRECTORS OF COUNSELING/STUDENT MINISTRY DIRECTORS...Sam & Rachel Burgard [sburgard.uts@gmail.com]; [rlburgard@zoominternet.net];

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC...Josh Petras [petrasjosh@ymail.com]

FACILITIES/PROPERTY MAINTENANCE... Mark Percy [papfinpa@gmail.com]; Dan Graham [kgraham18@embarqmail.com]; Ed Hoffman [cranberrylawandhome@gmail.com]

FINANCE... Karen Hemphill [finance.bhcc20@gmail.com];

GOOD NEWS CLUB OUTREACH... Steven & Kayla Tini [sktini@hotmail.com]

GUEST SERVICES...Carole Percy [cjperc@embarqmail.com], Katherine Raisley [katraisley@gmail.com]

INTERCHANGE (Wed. Adult Prayer/Bible Study)...Ken Slater [klslater74@zoominternet.net]

FIGHT CLUB (Men's Ministry)...Chris McGrady [brighthopebutler@gmail.com]

MISSIONS COORDINATOR...Kayla Tini [sktini@hotmail.com]

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD...Charrie Slater [charriewilson@gmail.com]

OUTREACH/EVANGELISM...Sam Burgard [sburgard.uts@gmail.com]; Steven Tini [sktini@hotmail.com]

PASTORAL STAFF... Chris McGrady [brighthopebutler@gmail.com]

SECRETARY...Justi McGrady [brighthopebutler@gmail.com]

SECURITY...John Castina [john.castina@gmail.com]; Ralph Niederlander [bigalphn@gmail.com]

SOUND TECHNICIAN COORDINATOR...Doug Raisley [draisley@yahoo.com]

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT (Adult Educ., Life Groups, Men's Ministries)... Chris McGrady [brighthopebutler@gmail.com]

USHER MINISTRY...Scott Cumberland [sportsman8729@gmail.com]

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL...Molly Castina [mollyrosebean@gmail.com]

VIDEO MINISTRY...Ron Hemphill [hemphills@gmail.com]

WEDNESDAY MINISTRIES... *Rush Hour:* Sam & Rachel Burgard, Josh Petras; *One Way:* Steven & Kayla Tini [sktini@hotmail.com]

Joy Junction: Jen Niederlander [jenlg18@embarqmail.com]

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES...Rachel Burgard [rlburgard@zoominternet.net]; Justi McGrady [brighthopebutler@gmail.com]

General questions/comments: brighthopebutler@gmail.com

Where could my gifts, talents, resources be used? _____

Please consider contacting someone above to find your fit!

THE MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Welcome to the BHCC Membership Class! We are excited that you are considering membership at Bright Hope. Today we will briefly review the BHCC Membership Guide, answer questions that you may have, and discuss the information that follows. The goals today are to assure that you meet the biblical standards for local church membership, and that you still desire to join this family of followers of Jesus Christ.

Reasons we think you should join Bright Hope:

1. Bright Hope is a _____ and _____ family of Christ-followers.
2. Bright Hope is united around the _____ of Jesus Christ.
3. Bright Hope desires to _____ our community and our world for Jesus.
4. Bright Hope is committed to the _____, _____, and _____ of the whole counsel of God.
5. Membership demonstrates _____ to God's Word.
6. Membership expresses your _____ of _____.
7. Membership elevates your _____.
8. Membership enhances your _____.
9. Membership gives you greater opportunity for service through utilizing your _____ and _____ for God and others.
10. Membership gives you a personal sense of _____ and a _____ in what happens at Bright Hope.

Be prepared to share a personal reason(s) you would like to join Bright Hope?

By being a member of Bright Hope, I am committing to the following:

1. To _____ the _____ of Bright Hope.
2. To _____ my giftedness to _____ Bright Hope.
3. To share in the _____ of Bright Hope by _____, _____, _____, and _____.
4. To _____ the _____ of Bright Hope through regular _____, Christ-like _____, and demonstrating supernatural _____.
5. To relate to my church family in _____, _____, and _____. If conflict arises, I will be _____, _____, and _____ with the goal of honoring Christ and _____ relationships.
6. To _____ God with my whole heart, soul, mind, and strength.
7. To hold myself and others _____ to living a life of _____.
8. To lead with _____ and serve with _____.
9. To _____ Jesus as the Shepherd of Bright Hope and the _____ and _____ as _____ servant-leaders.
10. To _____, _____, and _____ to the leadership of Bright Hope and one another.



Bright Hope Membership & Baptism Applications

Baptism Application (pg 9-10). Please return at least 1 week prior to scheduled Baptism.

Membership Application (pg 10-12). Please return at least 3 days prior to Membership Class.

By completing either (or both) applications, I affirm that I have received Jesus Christ as my personal Savior and Lord, and desire to live obediently to Him and be an active part of the ministries of BHCC.

These applications can be completed: a) **in writing (and deliver to Pastor Chris or Justi); b) by typing responses directly into this document (preferably in a different color) and emailing to:

brighthopebutler@gmail.com ; or 3) by scanning the QR codes below and submitting your application through these Google Forms:

BAPTISM:



MEMBERSHIP:



****If completed in writing, please submit the copy in the front pocket of this binder.**

Bright Hope Baptism Application

We believe baptism is an outward expression of inward faith in Jesus Christ. It symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism does not save or guarantee salvation; rather, it is an act of obedience and a public profession of faith in Christ. Therefore, baptism is for those who personally profess faith in Jesus Christ.

Step 1: Review the section on Believer's Baptism under "The Significance and Place of the Two Ordinances of the Local Church" (in the "Bright Hope Membership Guide")

Step 2: Complete & return this baptism application (if it is your desire to be baptized).

Name: _____
Birthdate: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Please share your story about when you came to faith in Jesus (attach extra paper if needed):

If God were to ask you why you should be allowed into heaven, what would you say? _____

Why do you want to get baptized? _____

Please check one:

- ☐ I am ready to schedule my baptism (more info will be provided after your application is reviewed)
☐ I need more information before I am ready to schedule my baptism (pastor and/or deacon will contact you)

Bright Hope Membership Application

We believe that baptism and church membership go hand in hand. In Scripture, water baptism consistently occurs as soon as possible following conversion. Local church membership is not directly addressed in Scripture, but it is implied in several passages (Acts 2:41,47; Acts 6:3; Heb 13:17 discusses authority and structure in the church; and 1 Cor. 5 refers to people who are inside the church versus those outside). We encourage baptized believers to serve within, be accountable to, and formally commit to this local church. Non-members still have opportunities to serve within this local church, but specific roles, such as teaching and leadership, can be filled only by members of Bright Hope.

First & Last Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____ Occupation: _____

Marital Status: ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated
☐ Widowed ☐ Remarried

Members of your current household	Relationship	Birthdate

Have you been baptized by immersion (see Section "1. Believer's Baptism" - page 4 of Membership Guide)? ____ Yes ____ No When? _____

We believe that Believer's Baptism is prerequisite for membership, however, your desire to be a member should not be your motivation for baptism. Baptism should be a response of obedience to God and a declaration of His saving work in your life.

If you have not been baptized, is this something you would like to do? _____

Alternately, you can also complete these applications using the QR codes below:

(cont'd)→

Are you currently a member of a previous church? If so, where? _____

If applicable, are you leaving your previous church on good terms? _____ Why did you decide to leave? _____

If you are a member of another church, you need to speak with someone in leadership in that church and explain why you are leaving. We value unity at Bright Hope, and the unity of your previous church is critical as well.

Is there anything you disagree with in BHCC's Essential Guidelines and Beliefs? _____

If so, which part(s) & can you give a biblical reason for your disagreement?

We believe that regular giving is a commitment that each member should make. Giving is biblical, it is voluntary, it is to be cheerful, and it is to be proportional to how God has blessed you. While the amount you give is between you and God, God has modeled generous giving through the grace He has freely and joyfully given to us. Do you have any questions or comments about giving to the work at BHCC?

In what way(s) do you desire to serve within your church family based on your interests, abilities, gifts, and time (see *Ministries* in the Church Profile)

I prefer to attend membership class on this date: _____ (options will be announced)

****Please write your personal testimony of how you came to Christ on the next page with your name and date. Be sure to attach that paper to this application. We will ask you to verbally share your testimony in a Membership Interview with at least one deacon and wife.**

I have had access to a copy of the *BHCC Essential Guidelines and Beliefs* (pages 18-30 of this packet) and I understand the positions of BHCC. As a member of this church, I will abide by these guidelines, and seek to fulfill the membership responsibilities to the best of my ability with God's help and will endeavor to grow in the Word and fulfill my responsibilities to the Lord and to His work.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Submit this application and salvation testimony to BHCC Secretary, Justi McGrady, by email to brighthopebutler@gmail.com . Alternately, submit a hard-copy of your application.

Salvation Testimony of _____.

Today's date: _____

**Leadership Team Use
Only**

Interview by Deacon (date; signature): ____/____/____ ; _____.

Deacon Recommendation (yes or no): _____

Pending baptism (yes or no): _____

Please return to Church Secretary

Congregational Meeting Decision ____/____/____

BrightHope

BHCC CHURCH PROFILE, as of January 2020

Church Contact Information:

*Bright Hope Community Church
4101 Highland Ave
Butler, PA 16001
724-614-7611*

www.brighthopechurch.com
*Instagram: brighthopebutler
Twitter: @brighthope16001;
Facebook: @BHCC.Meridian*

Ministries:

*Sunday School (Age 3-Grade 12)
Sunday Adult Connections
Staffed Nursery for All Services
Greeting Team
Ushering Team
Sound Tech Team
Worship Team/Music Ministry
Children's Ministry Team
Facilities Maintenance
Church Softball Team
Child Protection Program
Video Ministry
Communications Director
Kids Night Out
Operation Christmas Child*

*Kids Church (Age 3 thru Grade 5)
Library
Life Groups
Hospitality Team
Rush Hour (Jr/Sr High Youth Group)
One Way (Grades 2-5 Youth Group)
Joy Junction (Age 3-Grade 2)
Interchange: Adult Prayer & Bible Study
Security Team
Women's Bible Study
Facilities Maintenance
Missions Coordinator
Guest Relations
Good News Club Outreach*

What We Believe:

We are passionate about introducing people to Jesus and helping them become fully committed to Him. We desire to be a place where encountering God is the norm, where spiritual formation is an exciting journey, and where no one stands alone. Bright Hope Community Church has experienced God's grace through Jesus Christ as a people and we long to share its amazing power in transforming a person's life for good in our pursuit after God's own heart. Below is a summary of some of our key beliefs based upon the truth of Scripture. (Please see the attached "Essential Guidelines and Beliefs" for our complete Statements of Promise, Position, and Practice.)

About the Bible

We believe that the Bible is the inspired and authoritative Word of God. We believe it is without error because the Spirit of God directed men to write its very words.

About God

We believe that there is only one God who exists eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

About Jesus

We believe that Jesus is God revealed in the flesh to mankind. He lived a life totally without sin and was the only acceptable sacrifice for the sin of mankind. Through His life on this earth, He demonstrated the power and love of God. Through His voluntary and substitutionary death on the cross, He paid for the sin of all mankind and

satisfied the wrath of God toward sin and provided redemption and forgiveness for those who believe. Through His bodily resurrection, He demonstrated His power over death and the grave and offers the same free gift to those who trust in Him alone.

About the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person in the triune Godhead. He indwells believers at the moment of salvation. He teaches, equips, convicts of sin, guides, seals, and sanctifies those who believe. He provides unique spiritual gifts to every believer for the purpose of edifying the church.

About Mankind

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God and was designed to have pure and perfect fellowship with God. Because the first created man, Adam, willfully disobeyed and sinned against God, all of mankind is separated from God. As a result of Adam's sin, all of mankind is sinful in nature and in practice and is unable to restore a right relationship with God through any effort of his own.

About Creation

We believe that God supernaturally created the heavens and earth and all living things in a literal six-day creation as described in the book of Genesis. Mankind is not the result of any process of evolution.

About Salvation

We believe that God alone possesses the power to eternally save mankind from sin, death, and Hell. This salvation is a gift from God according to His grace. Through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, salvation was made available to all mankind. Salvation occurs only when a person places their faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross and in His resurrection as the sufficient payment for the debt of sin.

About the Church and Christian Living

We believe that the church is the body of Christ and is made up of those who have placed their trust in the finished work of Christ. The local church is responsible for administering two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper. These ordinances have no power to save. Believers are responsible to find, join, and be actively involved in a local Bible-believing church. Each Christian should live their life in obedience to the Word of God out of love for Him.

About the Destiny of Mankind

We believe at death, those who are true believers pass immediately into the presence of Christ and remain there in joyful fellowship until their bodies are resurrected. The unsaved at death descend immediately into Hades where they are kept under punishment until their bodily resurrection resulting in eternal punishment and separation from God in Hell.

About Future Events

We believe that the Bible speaks to how the future will unfold. Jesus will return to remove His church - made up of true believers - from this earth. This great event in the fulfillment of prophecy is known as the Rapture of the Church - whose time is known to no man. Another event yet to come is a seven-year period of tribulation where God will pour out His righteous judgment upon an unbelieving world. At the end of this seven-year period, Christ will return to Earth and establish a literal one-thousand-year reign. Following His reign, the final judgment will take place: unbelievers will be condemned to eternity in Hell and believers will forever be with the Lord.

About Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

We believe that the Bible clearly defines marriage to be between one man and one woman. We believe that that

all sexual relationships outside of this defined marriage relationship are sinful and contrary to God's order and design (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography). We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that endorsing behavior of which the Bible disapproves endangers persons and dishonors God. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Bright Hope Community Church.

Church Affiliation:

Bright Hope is a biblical, non-denominational, community church because we believe that the Scripture best represents the model of a "community" (Acts 2:41-48) of like-minded people who gather in the love and grace of God. Bright Hope is made up of people who are members, regular attenders and guests who come from very diverse church and denominational backgrounds and people who have had no church background at all. We don't stress nor do we "stress over" denominational backgrounds but we respect where people are coming from. We realize that we are all in process in our spiritual journeys and need to show the grace of God to one another while being guided by the truth of the Bible.

Our Story:

Bright Hope Community Church (BHCC) started in the fall of 2000 when a group of born-again believers began meeting in individual homes. We were led by God to organize a new grace-oriented, Bible-believing church in the Butler area. We officially organized and received our incorporated legal status from the State of Pennsylvania on January 31, 2001. At that time, the church was named Bright Hope Baptist Church (BHBC), and was led by interim pastor, Brian Eichelberger from March – September 2001.

In December 2001, Paul Hoover was called by BHBC as Interim Pastor. Then in May 2002, Pastor Hoover became BHBC's first full-time pastor (retired in September 2018). In October 2003, BHBC voted to change its name to Bright Hope Community Church (BHCC) for the purpose of better representing a philosophy of community-oriented ministry. BHBC/BHCC met at the local YWCA for a period of about 4 years.

After a 2 ½ year search for a facility, BHCC relocated to 4101 Highland Avenue, Butler, PA (in the community of Meridian). We closed on this property on July 15, 2005. One year to the day that we closed on our property, July 15, 2006, we held our first worship service together at Bright Hope Community Church in Meridian, our new home! In 2010 we purchased the adjoining property. After much hard work and renovation, we were able to open "Bright House" for ministry purposes!

Different from any other church in Butler, BHCC is a small church that does big things. Fellowship, family, intimacy, grace-oriented, heart-focused, growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus through biblical worship and teaching...these are words and phrases that we believe describe well our church's desire to do things that the church is called to do, and to do them within the unique construct that God has provided for us. We certainly aren't a perfect church, but we are church that pursues our perfect Savior with a hunger and thirst that is insatiable. We encourage others to come to Bright Hope in order that they may "Find Hope, Find Life".

Church Strengths:

Biblical teaching

Authentic worship

*A heart for needs of people
Leadership stability
Tightly-knit church family*

*Children/student ministries
Needs-based, creative ministry
High percentage of members involved in service*

Church Goals:

*Small group momentum
Continued spiritual growth & health
Exploring options for additional
facility expansion/improvement*

*More mission minded
Community outreach
Additional staffing for specific
ministry needs*

Church Demographics:

(Reported January 2019) Bright Hope consists of approximately 65 Family Groups/Singles. There are 114 active members of BHCC, 210 attenders (including members), and an average 12-month weekly attendance of approximately 125. Approximately 60% of members have been members for 10 or more years. Our age demographic is approximately as follows: 17 and under (35%); 18 to 29 (15%); 30 to 39 (10%); 40-49 (15%); 50-59 (15%); 60+ (10%).

Those who attend provide the following as the top 3 reasons they attend BHCC: Worship; Preaching and Teaching; Fellowship.

Church Vision & Values:

The stated purpose of BHCC is to introduce people to Jesus Christ and to assist believers in becoming passionate followers of Him.

We see BHCC as a local church that God has raised up to focus on impacting the people of Butler and the surrounding areas, and that is involved in reaching people with the Gospel.

We prioritize spiritual growth at BHCC by teaching, equipping, and supporting believers for meaningful relationships with God and others and for service and outreach. We desire first to strive for spiritual health and depth within our local body, and the natural progression will result in numerical growth. We also envision a generation of new leaders raised up who will continue to duplicate and expand our vision.

The result of moving believers at BHCC toward maturity and Christ-likeness will be to see our church proficient in biblical truth and motivated to intentionally share Christ in our community and beyond.

The outcome will be seen in people transformed by the Gospel. The power and influence of Christ in the lives of individuals and families will be realized in homes, communities, workplaces, schools, and governments.

As Bright Hope continues to grow spiritually and numerically, and when the time comes that BHCC could adequately staff another ministry, we would like to multiply by birthing churches that are like-minded with the same purpose and vision that BHCC now maintains.

We value the following: the clear teaching and application of the Bible; prayer and intimacy with God; people and relationships; authentic worship; purpose-driven ministry; every member as a minister; relevance; excellence and creativity.

Missions & Outreach:

We are committed to missions locally and abroad. We currently support 3 missionaries abroad and 2 local ministries. We have various members who participate in short-term mission trips that are encouraged by the church. Our goals include becoming more mission-minded locally, nationally, and internationally, and to enhance the role of our current Missions Coordinator to encourage more mission involvement from our members and attenders. We annually host a booth at the Butler Ethnic/Community Festival where we distribute Bibles and

literature and carry on meaningful spiritual conversations with the people of Butler. We would like to develop new means of community outreach. We have baptized an average of 5-10 believers per year.

Worship Gathering:

At 10:45 Sunday morning at Bright Hope, you would find people from many different walks of life, dressed in casual clothes or their Sunday best, carrying a Bible, enjoying interaction and fellowship as well as a cup of coffee, joining together in primarily contemporary worship, Scripture reading, giving, and in-depth Bible teaching. Our greeting team will welcome you. We utilize a full band to lead worship. While various Bible translations are used personally, we often use the ESV as our translation of choice for preaching and teaching. Our people have shared that they enjoy a variety of styles of preaching including, but not limited to expository, topical, relational, engaging, practical, and application-based teaching. Sermon lengths tend to range from 35 to 50 minutes in a worship service that runs from 10:45 until 12:00ish. During this time, kids church is also offered for children age 3 through Grade 5 (weeks 2 and 4 each month for grades 2-5). A staffed nursery is also provided for ages 0-2.

Community Profile/Demographics:

Butler County, PA has a population of 185,974 people with a median age of 43 and a median household income of \$63,345. Between 2015 and 2016 the population of Butler County, PA grew from 185,689 to 185,974, a 0.15% increase and its median household income grew from \$60,934 to \$63,345, a 3.96% increase. The population of Butler County, PA is 95.2% White, 1.31% Hispanic, and 1.23% Two+. 2.96% of the people in Butler County, PA speak a non-English language, and 99% are U.S. citizens.

Meridian, a community within Butler Township where our facility is located, is a family-oriented community. Meridian had a population of 3554 in 2016. Butler Township had an estimated 2017 population of 16,629 and a median household income of \$59,398. Meridian sits about 1 hour north of Pittsburgh and is easily accessible from Interstate 79, State Route 422, and State Route 8.

Butler City is about a 5 minute drive from our facility and had an estimated 2017 population of 13,107. The median household income for residents of Butler City was \$29,477 in 2016. Butler City is in desperate need of the Gospel.

Western Pennsylvania is a good place to raise a family and is a place where people tend to call home for a lifetime. There are many things that draw people to this region and cause people to remain. The Greater Butler Area is home to many exceptional health care providers related to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Butler Health System, Armstrong County Memorial Hospital, and Allegheny Health Network. Post-secondary educational opportunities are in abundance within 30 miles of Butler (Butler County Community College, ranked best in PA; Slippery Rock University; Grove City College; Geneva College, University of Pittsburgh, branch campuses of Penn State University, LaRoche College, and more. Butler is also easily accessible to many areas of shopping and restaurants including its own downtown area which is under revitalization, Grove City Prime Outlets, Clearview Mall, Butler Commons, Cranberry Township, and much more. The Butler Area is also home to AK Steel Corporation, Butler Memorial Hospital, US Department of Veterans Affairs, VA Hospital, and the Butler Blue Sox baseball team.

Statement of Promise...What We Pursue

We believe we have been led by the Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, and on our profession of that faith have been immersed in the waters of baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. We accept the Word of God as our final authority for faith and practice, and now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and willingly enter into this covenant with one another as one body in Christ to be one in Spirit and purpose. (*John 3:16-18; Acts 16:31-34; II Tim. 3:16,17; Eph. 4:3-6*)

Therefore we pursue, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to...

- Strive for the advancement of this church in spiritual growth, wisdom, knowledge and holiness
- Sustain its worship, ordinances and doctrines
- Be consistent in our attendance at all regular services and give it priority in all aspects of our lives
- Discover and use our spiritual gifts and talents
- Actively meet the needs of the poor and afflicted in personal and tangible ways
- Look for ways to reproduce ourselves through local New Testament churches both locally and internationally
- Contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church and the spreading of the Gospel to the most remote parts of the earth.

(*Eph. 4:13; Heb. 10:24,25; Rom. 12:4-8; I Pet. 4:10,11; Jas. 2:15-17; Acts 1:8; II Cor. 9:7,12,13; Matt. 28:19,20*)

We also commit to...

- Do our best to be diligent in maintaining personal devotions and to formally and informally educate our children in the ways of Christ
 - Develop relationships with family, friends and acquaintances and seek opportunities to share Christ with them
 - Live lives of distinction by not conforming to the patterns of this world
 - Avoid all gossip, divisiveness, bitterness and unrighteous anger
 - Remove anything from our life that may grieve or quench the Holy Spirit, or that may cause another believer to stumble
- (*Josh. 1:8,9; Deut. 6:7-9; Mark 4:14; II Cor. 5:20; Rom. 12:1,2; 14:13; Titus 2:7-12; Eph. 4:29-32; I Thess. 5:19; I Cor. 6:19; II Cor. 6:3*)

We further promise to...

- Encourage each other in the blessed hope of our Savior's return
 - Patiently forbear one another in love with all humility and gentleness
 - Carry one another's burdens
 - Remember each other in prayer
 - Hold each other accountable
 - Aid each other in sickness, distress and material need
 - Be kind, tender-hearted and forgiving to each other
 - Honor and submit to our God-appointed authorities
 - Be slow to take offense, but always be ready for reconciliation
 - Uphold the Essential Guidelines and Beliefs of Bright Hope Community Church
- (*I Thess. 4:16-18; Eph. 4:2; Gal. 6:2; Jas. 5:16; Prov.27:17; Heb. 3:12,13; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:32; Heb.13:17; Matt. 5:23,24; II Tim. 4:2*)

We purpose to humbly and joyfully submit ourselves to our Christian calling and to live our Christian lives in the strength of the Lord for His ultimate glory. (*Matt. 5:16; I Cor. 10:31; I Pet. 2:9; I Pet. 4:11*)

BRIGHT HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH
ESSENTIAL GUIDELINES AND BELIEFS
Statement of Position...What We Believe

Article 1- Our Name

This congregation of believers in Jesus Christ shall be known as the Bright Hope Community Church, Inc.

Article 2- Our Purpose

1. This congregation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to: establishing and sustaining authentic / relevant worship, crisis intervention counseling and assistance programs, evangelism efforts locally and globally, ministry training for men, women and youth, and other churches to do the same.

2. As members of Bright Hope Community Church it is our desire to glorify God by creating a church environment where believers can develop a passion for God and a passion for people. We accomplish this through the balanced fulfillment of the following biblical tasks:

- Worshipping God
- Serving others
- Evangelizing the lost
- Baptizing new believers
- Discipling one another

(Matthew 22:37-40, Matthew 28:19-20)

3. It is our desire to be effective in our purpose as a local church by consistently facilitating a Christ-like transformation in people (Colossians 1:28-29).

Article 3- Our Declaration of Faith

We are passionate about introducing people to Jesus and helping them become fully committed to Him (assisting believers in becoming passionate followers of Him). We desire to be a place where encountering God is the norm, where spiritual formation is an exciting and mysterious journey, and where no one stands alone. Bright Hope Community Church has experienced God's grace through Jesus Christ as a people and we long to share the amazing power it has in transforming a person's life for good and pursue after God's heart.

1. The Authority of the Bible

The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the verbally inspired Word of God, they are without error in the original writings, and they are the complete and final revelation of God. (Matthew 5:18; John 17:17; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21; Revelation 22:18-19)

2. The Triunity of God

There is only one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Who are co-equal in their essential nature, attributes, and perfection. (Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 18:30-31, 147:5; Matthew 28:19; Mark 12:29; Luke 3:22; John 4:24, 5:23, 10:30, 14:9; Acts 5:3-4; II Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3)

3. The Person of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is God the Son, the promised Messiah, conceived in the flesh by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, true God and true man, without sin, and the only mediator between God and Man. (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7; Matthew 1:18-25; Mark 14:61-62; John 1:1-3, 14, 29, 5:18, 8:58, 10:30; II Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 2:9; I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 1:2-9, 2:14-15; I John 5:20)

4. The Work of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, through His death on the cross, paid for all sin, completely satisfied the righteous wrath of God against sin, and provided redemption and forgiveness for all who believe. After His death, Jesus Christ arose bodily from the dead, was seen by many during a period of forty days, and then ascended into Heaven where He is seated at the right hand of God as our Advocate and High Priest, from which place He will some day return to establish His Kingdom on earth. (Isaiah 53:5-6; Luke 24:36-43; John 1:18, 3:16, 20:25-28; Acts 1:6-11; Romans 3:21-26; I Corinthians 15:3-8, 20-23; Galatians 3:13; Colossians 1:13-14; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; I Peter 1:18-19, 2:24; I John 2:1-2; Revelation 20:6)

5. The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is that Person of the Triune Godhead, who convicts men of sin, causes spiritual birth, indwells, seals, sanctifies, guides, equips, teaches, and fills the believer, thus enabling him to walk in obedience to God and His Word. For the sake of unity within this church family, we do not practice or teach the supernatural sign gifts (i.e.; speaking in unlearned foreign languages, miraculous healing, and speaking prophetically of future events; an expanded explanation is available). Instead, we encourage believers to seek the "most excellent way" of love and to be zealous about the developmental gifts that are certain to edify the church (i.e.; administration, encouragement, evangelism, giving, helping, mercy, shepherding and teaching). (John 3:5, 14:16-17, 26, 15:26-27, 16:7-15; Acts 1:8, 5:3-4; Romans 8:9, 14; I Corinthians 2:10-11, 6:11, 19, 12:4-13; II Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 5:16-18, 22-23; Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30, 5:18-21, Rom 12:1-8, I Cor. 12-14, Eph. 4, 1Pet 4:10)

6. The Creation and Fall of Man

Man was created by God in His own image and is not the product of evolution; he fell into sin through personal disobedience to the revealed will of God; and as a result, all mankind is sinful in nature and practice, is unable to save himself and faces eternal separation from God. (Genesis 1:26-28, 2:7, 18-24, 3:1-24, 9:6; Matthew 19:4; Mark 7:21-23; John 8:42-44; Romans 1:18, 3:10, 23, 5:1; Ephesians 2:1-3)

7. The Salvation of Man

Eternal salvation from sin, death and hell is the free gift of God's grace and is based solely upon man's personal faith and belief in Jesus Christ. He voluntarily died as a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins and arose bodily from the dead, thus guaranteeing our own resurrection to eternal life. This salvation is not received by, nor based on, any sacrament, merit, or good work on our part. This one who receives Christ's salvation is eternally secure. (John 1:11-13, 3:16, 5:24, 10:28-30, 14:6; Acts 16:31; Romans 3:23-26, 5:8, 6:23, 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 7:24-25; I Peter 1:18-19, I John 5:11-13)

8. The Destiny of Man

At death, the redeemed pass immediately into the presence of Christ and there remain in joyful fellowship until their bodily resurrection unto life. The unsaved at death descend immediately into Hades where they are kept under punishment until their bodily resurrection resulting in damnation. (Daniel 12:2; Luke 16:22-23, 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 3:10, 11, 21; Revelation 20:11-15)

9. The Nature and Organization of the Church

All who have placed their faith in Christ are united together immediately by the Holy Spirit in one spiritual body, the Church, of which Christ is the Head. In addition, the members of this one spiritual body are directed to associate themselves together in local church assemblies. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:46-47; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 10:25)

These local independent churches are given the needed authority and scriptural guidelines by God for worship, administration, edification and exhortation. The officers at BHCC serving under Christ and over the church are pastors and deacons. (Acts 6:1-6, I Corinthians 14:40; Ephesians 4:11-12; I Thess. 5:12-14; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-5)

10. The Ordinances of the Church

Two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the triune God. This ordinance, being a command of Christ, is recognized as a prerequisite for membership in the local church. Likewise, the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His atoning death. These two ordinances are to be observed until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:41, 10:47-48; I Corinthians 11:23-29)

11. Future Events

One of the coming great events in the fulfillment of prophecy concerning the church is the personal, bodily return of the Lord to remove from the earth His waiting church and to reward them according to their works. (John 14:2-3; Romans 14:10-12; I Corinthians 3:11-15, 15:51-53, II Corinthians 5:10; I Thessalonians 4:15-17; Titus 2:11-13; Revelation 3:10)

Another event yet to come is the seven year period of tribulation during which the judgments of God will be poured out upon the unbelieving world. These judgments will climax with the return of Christ in glory to the earth. He will destroy His enemies and restore Israel to her land. (Daniel 9:27, 12:1; Jeremiah 30:7; Matthew 24:15-31, 25:31-46; II Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16:1-19, 21, 19:1-21)

Christ will then establish His thousand-year kingdom in which the saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth. (Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:1-16, 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Revelation 19:11, 20:1-6) At the close of the thousand year reign the unsaved dead will be raised and committed to eternal punishment and the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God in the New Heavens and the New Earth. (Mark 9:43-48; I Corinthians 15:24-28; II Thessalonians 1:9; II Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 20:11-15, 21:1-4, 22:5, 11)

12. Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

BHCC EXISTS TO INTRODUCE PEOPLE TO JESUS CHRIST AND TO
ASSIST BELIEVERS IN BECOMING PASSIONATE FOLLOWERS OF HIM

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11.)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Bright Hope Community Church.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Bright Hope Community Church as a representative of the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Christian community in general, it is imperative that all members and those who serve at BHCC agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22.)

BRIGHT HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH
ESSENTIAL GUIDELINES AND BELIEFS
Statement of Practice...How We Function

Article 4 – How We Function

The following Essential Guidelines and Beliefs (also known as Guidelines) concern how we function and are for the purpose of outlining the internal organization and operation of Bright Hope Community Church. This statement does not exhaust the extent of our organizational structure. We do believe, however, that the foregoing statement accurately represents the present practice of our church, and is therefore, binding upon all members of Bright Hope Community Church. At the same time we want it to be understood that these Guidelines look to the Holy Scriptures for our instruction.

A. Membership

1. Privilege of membership.
 - a. We believe that once an individual makes a commitment to be a member of Bright Hope Community Church he or she becomes part of a team with an exciting adventure before them. There will be opportunities for corporate worship, loving and caring fellowship, service, the discovery and use of spiritual gifts, and mutual accountability. Bright Hope members, being led by God, may start up, organize, and lead specific ministries that reflect BHCC's overall Mission Statement (Introducing people to Jesus Christ and assisting believers in becoming passionate followers of Him) and that have been approved by church leadership.
 - b. Believers who are non-members may actively serve in BHCC's ministries except in leadership positions.
 - c. The membership functions as a body under the headship of Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-shepherd with the assistance and counsel of the deacons. Determination of the internal affairs of the church is an ecclesiastical matter and is determined exclusively by the church's own organizational procedures. Members may not vote to initiate action, but rather to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and deacons.
 - d. It will be the privilege of each active member of the church, who is at least 18 years of age, to vote on the calling of a pastor and the office of deacon, for issues of membership, the annual church budget, the purchase or sale of real estate, and amendments to the church documents. Younger members may vote on other areas at the discretion of the pastor and deacons.
 - e. Each area listed above in pt.(d) will require a simple majority vote of those active members present and constituting a quorum. A quorum will consist of 30% of active voting members. The exception to this rule is the calling of a pastor, which will require at least a three-fourths affirmative vote of those active members present and constituting a quorum.
2. Members (and serving non-members) are held accountable to what we have agreed upon as a church in the Essential Guidelines and Beliefs.
3. The composition of the membership of Bright Hope Community Church shall consist of believers in Jesus Christ who upon their confession of faith in Jesus Christ, have been baptized by immersion; have read and are in agreement with the Essential Guidelines and Beliefs; have given evidence of a teachable spirit and a desire to live a holy life.
4. The admission of members.
 - a. By testimony of faith, having previously been baptized by immersion following his or her salvation.
 - b. By water baptism (immersion) as a believer in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord.
 - c. By a letter of recommendation from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice or other letter of good standing from the prior church as long as the applicant has been baptized by immersion (discussion of other modes of baptism in relationship to conscience and understanding and willingness to have a teachable spirit towards the biblical instruction of BHCC in regards to immersion baptism – this does not include Baptismal Regeneration) following their profession of faith.
 - d. By restoration upon recommendation of the pastor and deacons, after the excluded person has given evidence of honest repentance and made full confession of wrong doing before the church membership.
5. The process of admission into membership.
 - a. Complete the application for membership in total.
 - b. Attend membership classes.
 - c. Meet with the Membership Team (Deacon(s) for an interview and to share personal testimony.
 - d. Be recommended to the church membership by the Membership Team and be approved by majority vote of the active membership as stated in section (2d) above.

BHCC EXISTS TO INTRODUCE PEOPLE TO JESUS CHRIST AND TO
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- e. Be baptized by immersion if applicable.
- f. Be presented with a membership certificate and be extended the "right hand of fellowship" following a Sunday worship service.

6. The classification of members.

- a. An active member is someone who is faithfully fulfilling the church's Essential Guidelines and Beliefs.
- b. A member who is inactive is someone who is not faithfully fulfilling the church's Essential Guidelines and Beliefs as determined by the pastor and deacons. Once this determination has been made and the individual has been informed, he or she will no longer have the privilege of serving in a church ministry, attending a church business or information meeting, or voting on church business. The pastor and deacons will then initiate a meeting with the member in question in an attempt to encourage them and restore them to their commitments. If this proves to be of no avail, after patient instruction and prayer, the member in question will be removed from membership and the membership will be informed. People who will not be considered as inactive members will be, but not limited to, college students, military personnel, shut-ins, missionaries, and evangelists.
- c. An associate member is someone, who having membership in a church of like faith and practice, finds it impractical to change his or her membership (such as temporary residence or employment), yet desires opportunity for service. These situations will be reviewed by the Membership Team and recommendations will be made to the active church membership in accordance with normal membership requirements. These individuals will have all the privileges of membership, except the right to vote or hold an elected office.

7. The discipline of members.

- a. There are times when the church must exercise their biblical responsibility of disciplining its members. This is never a comfortable action and many times, it can provoke negative attitudes from within the church body. Many people misunderstand church discipline, therefore, we believe it is necessary to carefully outline both the biblical teaching and steps applied by Bright Hope Community Church in these situations.
- b. The objectives for church discipline are to: restore an erring brother in Christ, honor and obey God, remove defilement of sin from the church body, and restrain others from sin (Galatians 6:1, James 5:19-20, II Corinthians 2:9, I Corinthians 5:6, II Timothy 2:14-21, I Timothy 5:20).
- c. The biblical reasons for church discipline are: false doctrine, immorality, a disorderly walk, divisive spirit within the church, and an unrepentant attitude towards sin (I Timothy 6:1-5, II Timothy 2:16-17, I Corinthians 5, II Thessalonians 3:6-15, Romans 16:17-18, Titus 3:10, Matthew 18:15-17).
- d. The biblical attitudes when conducting church discipline are as follows: Personal and spiritual consistency, humility, and meekness; a committed love for the individual involved in the sin; a firm and uncompromising stand against sin; quickness to grant forgiveness of those who repent and confess; and a willingness to take an active role in the restoration of the repentant individual (II Thessalonians 3:15, Titus 1:13, Luke 17:3-4, Ephesians 4:32, Galatians 6:1,2).
- e. The practical steps in carrying out discipline/reconciliation of a church member.
 - 1e. The Discipline/Reconciliation Team will consist of the pastor and deacons. It is specifically directed that these men, in carrying out the above objectives for church discipline, move carefully yet firmly in protecting the peace and purity of the church. Any intentional disruption of a worship service is not acceptable and may result in the removal of the privilege of attendance. It is also recognized that God specifically directs these men based upon their biblically appointed office to care and watch out for the spiritual character of the church and individual members (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17). It should also be understood that there will be times, due to liability, the sensitivity of the discipline situation and the need to protect all parties involved, that the full disclosure of all the details pertaining to the discipline of the individual(s) may not be in the best interest of the church membership. If the pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter he will not be permitted to sit as a member of the Discipline/Reconciliation Team and shall be entitled to the same steps as other members and be subject to the same discipline and reconciliation process.
 - 2e. Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth, testimony, and church unity, he is to go alone to the offending party(ies) and seek to restore his brother or sister. Before he goes he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration (Matthew 18:15; Galatians 6:1).
 - 3e. If the member in question does not repent or reconciliation of the issue is not reached, a second member (spiritually mature), or either a deacon or the pastor may accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This should also be preceded by self-examination, prayer, and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration (Matthew 18:16).

- 4e. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (2e) and (3e) have been taken the Discipline/Reconciliation Team shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the meeting with the Discipline/Reconciliation Team then the member in question will be placed on “disciplinary probation” and the membership will be informed (Matthew 18:17). Disciplinary probation will result in the individual no longer having the privilege of serving in a ministry of the church, attending a business or information meeting, or voting on any church business.
- 5e. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (2e), (3e), and (4e) have been taken, and the members of the church have had time to pray, admonish, and encourage the member in question, then the individual who refuses to repent and be restored is to be removed from the membership of the church upon recommendation of the Discipline/Reconciliation Team (Matthew 18:17, I Corinthians 5).
- 6e. No matter may be heard by the Discipline/Reconciliation Team or the church unless the steps outlined in the subsections (2e) and (3e) have been taken, except in the case of public offense as determined by the pastor and deacons.
- 7e. If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the membership of the church, he is to be viewed as an unbeliever. All contact with him or her from that point forward must be for the sake of repentance and restoration except in the case where a family member is the subject of disciplinary action (Matthew 18:17).
- 7f. If at any time during the above process confidential information is breeched by the member/s under discipline/restoration in a way that distorts the truth of the incident and may cause harm to the Name of Christ, the reputation of BHCC, its members, or its leadership, the pastor and deacons have the right and responsibility to inform the membership of the true facts pertinent to the incident for the purpose of the protection and purity of the church, and the integrity of its leadership.

8. The termination of membership.

- a. Death - (no action required)
- b. Resignation by request - Any member upon written request to the church will be removed from the membership and the membership will be informed. Any individual that is the subject of church disciplinary action making such a request must understand that a favorable recommendation will not be given to any other church until they have repented of their sin and sought forgiveness.
- c. Letter of recommendation - A majority vote of active members present and constituting a quorum may grant a letter of recommendation to any member who is an active member and who wishes to unite with any other Bible-preaching church of like faith and practice, as determined by BHCC.
- d. Inactive - If there is no favorable response, as determined by the pastor and deacons (within 45 days of being contacted), by the individual after an attempt has been made to restore them to their commitments.
- e. Discipline - As outlined above in (pt. 8, sub pt. e., subsection 5e).

B. Church Officers

1. Elected and Appointed Officers

The elected officers of this church will be the pastor and deacons. The appointed officers will be the president (deacon chairman), church treasurer, church clerk, and financial secretary. All appointed offices will be selected from the membership who is in good standing, with the exception of president. The pastor and deacons may also create and appoint new officers, other teams, coordinators and ministry groups as deemed necessary.

2. Qualifications

Elected and appointed officers of this church will be at least twenty-one years of age. All officers are required to meet the expectations of all members as outlined in the Essential Guidelines and Beliefs. Elected officers will be measured by higher standards highlighted in I Timothy 3, where the wife, home, and family relationships must be considered, as well as their individual qualifications. All officers should be spiritually mature, of unquestioned Christian character, loyal to the Word of God, dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the spiritual welfare of this church. They should be faithful in attendance and participate in regular and special meetings as well as business sessions of the church. No person will hold more than two offices at the same time. All new officers will assume office on the first Sunday following the annual meeting.

3. Retention of Records

The records of all officers are considered to be church property and will be maintained in good order. These records are to be given to the succeeding officers as soon as practical for safekeeping in a prudent place.

4. Dismissal of Officers

Any officer unable or unwilling to fulfill the duties of his office, who fails to meet the qualifications (pt.2) during his tenure, or who is unable to support the pastor should resign from office. If any officer can no longer support or meet the requirements of the Essential Guidelines and Beliefs of this church, he or she will be removed from office by the pastor and deacons.

C. Pastor

1. Qualifications (Article 4, Section B, pt.2)

The candidate, before he is called, will be required to state his acceptance of and adherence to the Essential Guidelines and Beliefs of this church to the Pulpit Committee. Any differences which he has concerning these documents should be submitted to the committee in writing.

2. Selection

The deacons of the church will serve as the Pulpit Committee. As often as it may become necessary to call a pastor, the Pulpit Committee will without unnecessary delay begin the process of evaluating potential candidates. If the candidate has served in other churches, his ministry there will be explored. If after examining him the Pulpit Committee desires to consider him as a candidate for the pastorate, he will be invited to come and preach and meet with the leadership and the church. His candidacy is to be announced to the church prior to his coming.

3. Call and Term

- a. The candidate for the pastorate will be extended a call at a special meeting of the church called for that purpose. Notice of this meeting will be given on two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.
- b. The pastor will be elected for an indeterminate term. He will be chosen by at least a three-fourths affirmative vote of the active church members present and voting. To avoid confusion, only one candidate for the pastorate will be considered at one time.
- c. The pastor will give the church not less than thirty days notice of his intention to discontinue as pastor.

4. Responsibilities

- a. The pastor is to be considered the chief administrator of the church and have spiritual oversight with a servant's attitude toward this church. The pastor's duties will include, but are not limited to, preaching the Gospel, feeding the flock and equipping the membership for the work of the ministry. The pastor will conduct and have in his charge the stated services of public worship. He will administer the ordinances and he is to perform the usual duties of a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (i.e. counseling, weddings, funerals, etc.).
- b. The pastor will moderate all business meetings of the church and deacons. In his absence he may appoint a member of the deacons to moderate. When the pastor is unavailable to appoint a moderator, the president of the corporation (Deacon Chairman) will moderate or appoint a moderator from the deacons.
- c. The pastor will secure speakers and programs for the church with cooperation and counsel of the deacons.

5. Compensation

The deacons will review the pastor's compensation on an annual basis. This review will be submitted as a part of the church budget prior to the annual church business meeting.

6. Vacation and Days Off

It is expected that the pastor will take an annual vacation. The time and extent of the vacation will be agreed upon by the pastor and deacons. It is also expected that he will take at least one day off a week as well as be granted time off for normal holidays.

7. Absence for (Pastoral and Ministry Development)

Absence from the services of the church will be by mutual consent of the pastor and deacons. The pastor will be encouraged to attend, at the church's expense, conferences or church ministry-related trips and other opportunities that will facilitate continuing his education and personal enrichment. The church should allocate funds to provide for these growth opportunities for the pastor in the annual budget if possible.

8. Sabbatical

Every seven years of service, the pastor will be granted a paid sabbatical of four months, provided adequate funds are available to support the ministry and operational costs of BHCC including pulpit fill during the extent of the sabbatical.

D. Deacons

1. Composition

The number of deacons must not be less than three. It will never exceed the number of "Spirit-filled" men available who meet the qualifications listed in Acts 6, I Timothy 3, Titus 1 and Article 4, Section B, pt.2.

2. Nominations

The membership will be encouraged to submit in writing potential nominees to the Nominating Team (pastor/deacons). Any names submitted after January 5th (the month prior to the annual meeting) will not be considered. The Nominating Team will examine the biblical qualifications, as well as the leadership qualifications outlined in Article 4, Section B, Part 2 of the BHCC Statement of Practice, for each nominee. If a nominee is determined to be qualified, they will be asked to prayerfully consider accepting their nomination. If they are willing to accept their nomination, they will be interviewed by at least one member of the Nominating Team to affirm their agreement with BHCC Essential Guidelines and Beliefs as well as the leadership qualifications outlined in Article 4, Section B, Part 2 of the BHCC Statement of Practice. Upon their affirmation of these items, their name will be presented to the church membership as a Deacon Candidate no later than two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting and their name will appear on the ballot for deacon. Names appearing on the ballot will be the only names considered. There will be no nominations from the floor.

3. Election and Term

The active membership of the church will elect the deacons from the ballot submitted by the Nominating Team at the annual meeting. The number of deacon positions available will be determined by the nominating team each year prior to the Annual Meeting, and the number of deacons elected in a given year will not exceed the number of positions available in that year. Candidates who receive the most votes will be installed as deacons only if they have also received a simple majority of members present and voting. If elected, they will serve terms of three years arranged to end alternately. A deacon may serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. Following the two consecutive three-year terms served he must take one year off before he can serve another term. Election will be by written ballot and tallied by appointed tellers at the meeting. In the case of a tie, and when the number of positions available has not yet been satisfied, the tied candidates will then participate in a run-off vote in that same meeting.

4. Responsibilities

- a. It will be the duty of the deacons to assist the pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church; to be his counselors; to exercise special and prudent care over the church membership, seeking out and ministering to those who need assistance. The deacons will assist the pastor in the administration of the ministries and activities of the church as in the succeeding paragraphs of Sections E, F, and G in Section 6/Trustees below.
- b. The deacons will participate in administering the ordinances of baptism and communion.

5. Meetings

- a. The deacons will convene on a monthly basis to transact an agenda that reflects the overall responsibilities entrusted to them. This regular meeting will be established by the pastor and deacons. The pastor or the president of the corporation (deacon chairman) may call additional meetings.
- b. The pastor will preside at all meetings unless he chooses to appoint a deacon to preside. No meetings will be held without the pastor unless agreed upon by the pastor and deacons. A majority of the full number will constitute a quorum. The secretary of the deacons will keep a faithful record of any important work, acts or transactions performed by the deacons. The secretary of the deacons will supply this record of minutes to the church clerk to be included with all church business meetings, thus compiling a complete and orderly church record. The deacons will make a full report of their activities to the church at each annual meeting.

6. Trustees

- a. The deacons will serve as trustees of this church, representing this corporation as its agent.
- b. The trustees will not have authority to buy, sell, lease, give away, or dispose of in any manner church property that exceeds \$2500 in value, or to mortgage or encumber the same with debts that exceed the above amount, except as the church will order by a corporate act.

E. Other Officers and Staff

1. Treasurer

- a. The treasurer of the church will be appointed annually by the deacons from the office of deacons. He will cooperate with the financial secretary and assistant financial secretary in counting and recording all monies received by the church. A record of income and disbursements, specifying distribution into various funds, will be maintained by the financial secretary with a summary copy to be received by the lead pastor prior to the Annual and Quarterly Meetings.

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- b. The treasurer will perform his duties in accordance with the giving principles of the church as outlined in Scripture, sound accounting principles, and any written instructions from the deacons or Auditing Committee.
- c. All financial transactions are to be kept in permanent records. Written quarterly and annual reports will be submitted to the church and copies kept by both the treasurer and the financial secretary.
- d. The treasurer, financial secretary and/or assistant financial secretary will deposit all church receipts in the bank, including monies received from within the church or from other individuals or via online or text giving, with receipts from all sources being recorded on a weekly basis.

2. Financial Secretary

- a. The financial secretary will be appointed by the pastors and deacons. The church secretary will serve in the role of assistant financial secretary.
- b. He or she will be assisted by the treasurer and/or assistant financial secretary in counting and recording all monies received by the church. The financial secretary and the assistant financial secretary will keep an accurate record of all giving and will be responsible for guarding the records of individual giving as a sacred trust. A report of annual church contributions for each participant will be provided in January of each year.
- c. The president (deacon chairman) or secretary (deacon secretary) of the corporation will assume the responsibilities of the financial secretary in his/her absence, except that he may not simultaneously perform the duties of the treasurer.
- d. All disbursement of funds will be by check signed by the Financial Secretary or other authorized officer in his/her absence. When feasible, electronic disbursement of funds is permitted to be utilized by the Financial Secretary with accurate records being kept of all transactions.
- e. All budgeted ministry expenses must be reported to the financial secretary in a timely manner. Receipts of all purchases will be submitted to the financial secretary or be held by the ministry leader and made available to the financial secretary upon request. The financial secretary will present a giving and expense report, including account balances, at each quarterly and annual meeting.

3. Church Clerk

- a. The church clerk will keep a record of all church business meetings. He/she will keep a record of receptions and terminations of membership, including baptisms. He/She will be responsible for notification of other churches relative to church membership. He/She may not release the membership roll of this church to any outside group or individual for other than official church business.
- b. He/She will make a full written report of all official church actions at the annual meeting of the church.

4. Vocational Staff

- a. Every effort will be made to provide qualified personnel for the ministries of the church through the working membership. When it is deemed necessary to invite vocational staff (such as pastoral associates, interns, secretaries, ministry directors, etc.) current pastoral staff will recommend the creation of a staff position to the deacon team. Pastoral staff and deacons will vote on the creation of said position (majority approval). A suitable and qualified candidate will be recommended by current pastoral staff to the deacon team. Pastoral staff and deacons will vote on this candidate to be hired into a staff position (majority approval).

Staff members who are involved in confidential information pertaining to BHCC's ministry will be required to become, if not already, members of the church. They will be under the direct supervision of the pastor and deacons who will prepare an appropriate, written job description for each staff member.

- b. Total staff salaries will be voted upon for congregational approval at the Annual Meeting. Individual staff salaries will not be disclosed to the church membership.

If a staff hiring need arises during the year, and a salary amount has not been included within the Annual Budget, a salary amount will be brought to the membership for an approval vote.

Staff member's salaries will be established by the pastor and deacons and a recommendation will be submitted to the membership for its approval. These salaries will be reviewed annually by the pastor and deacons and will be submitted as part of the church budget prior to the annual church business meeting.

F. Ministry Teams

1. Purpose

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Ministry is the work of the church. All of BHCC's ministries originate out of necessity and God's leading in an individual (or group of individuals) to begin such ministry. This structural paradigm allows the important dynamic of the spiritual gift of leadership to be unleashed.

Effective churches believe that the role of God's people is to minister to people by living out their spiritual gifts instead of running the church by sitting on committees and making decisions about what can or cannot be done. The pastor has a responsibility to keep the church doctrinally sound and headed in the right direction while the day-in, day-out ministry is fulfilled by the people who are actually being the ministers of the church (Eph. 4:11-16).

Ministry teams are a group of people with similar gifts and abilities who are committed and called by God to a specific ministry that supports the purposes and mission of BHCC. Each individual ministry team is self-directed but does not operate independent of the overall plan, purpose and philosophy of BHCC. Teams are individually accountable to one another and to the mission of BHCC according to our Essential Guidelines and Beliefs.

Principles for Serving God and Others

- We encourage individuals who identify a need, to seek and start new ministries as they are led by God.
- Our desire is to prepare people for service by pre-service training...but on-the-job training is more beneficial...we learn best by doing.
- Most ministries require a specified length of commitment for the benefit of those serving and being served...but we allow people to change ministries gracefully, without guilt.
- We encourage people to serve primarily in the areas where they are most gifted. However, in order for our church to be effective it is also important for our members to serve in areas where they are needed, even if not necessarily gifted. It may be necessary for some members to carry multiple ministry responsibilities.
- It is our goal that every member has some on-going ministry involvement, although time commitment will depend on individual life circumstances. We hope that every member will continually seek *greater* ministry challenges and have *growing* commitment to ministry involvement.

All team leaders and members will be active members of the church who are willing to faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of their ministry.

2. Ministry Development Process

- a. Start with a need. A ministry should not be considered unless it meets a specific need in the life of BHCC.
- b. Match the need with our mission. A ministry must not only meet a need, it must also support the purposes, mission, and core values of our church. Financial resources should be allocated strategically to cover the purpose and mission of the ministry.
- c. Passionate leaders. Leaders must be spirit-led individuals who have a heart burdened for their particular ministry area.
- d. Build according to giftedness. The ministry team must be built according to their gifts which match the particular area of ministry.
- e. Review regularly. All ministries should be evaluated regularly to determine whether they continue to meet a need, serve the purposes of BHCC, continue to be well-led, and have the necessary team of spirit-gifted people in place.

G. Missions

1. Purpose

One of the primary objectives of Bright Hope Community Church is to spread the gospel in our community, our nation and to the most remote parts of the earth (Acts 1:8 model). Therefore, we will be aggressive in our efforts to promote evangelistic missions. We will accomplish this goal through prayer support, financial support, missions' trips, missionary conferences, and other activities that focus on missions. Not only will we send missionaries into the world, but we will also disciple and encourage all our members to be willing to serve in missions as well.

2. Support Policies

- a. The policy of this church is to support missionaries and mission agencies who hold to the inerrancy and infallibility of the Scriptures and whose primary objective is establishing indigenous, self-supporting churches, schools, hospitals, orphanages, and similar ministries. Each agency will be evaluated based upon their beliefs and operational philosophies.

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- b. The church may also make contributions to Christian schools, social agencies, literature services, camps, and youth organizations that are known to be passionate in their evangelistic pursuits. These contributions will be in addition to the missions' budget.

3. Supported Missionaries

- a. Support for missionaries will be based upon their need and our leading and ability to support.
- b. The missionary will be prayerfully considered for support after presenting their ministry to BHCC.
- c. After consultation with the mission agency under which the missionary is serving, the amount of support and date when support is to begin will be included in the support recommendation by the church. All missionary support will be reviewed and approved annually in concurrence with the preparation of the annual budget. The support of the missionary may be discontinued upon recommendation of the pastor and deacons by a majority vote of active members present and voting at a properly called business meeting of the church.

H. Financial Policy

1. Gifts and Offerings

We will give in accordance with the Scriptural plan by which the work of the Lord is to be accomplished by His people (3 John 7, Acts 20:35, Matthew 6:19-21, I Corinthians 16:1,2, II Corinthians 8:5, Ezra 4:2-0). Gifts and offerings will be considered to be our plan of finance. BHCC members will be encouraged to progress in their giving and stewardship according to the principle of grace-giving (II Cor. 9:7,8; 8:3,4).

2. Unified Budget

A single treasury system will be our method of finance. There will be only one treasury in the church that all monies will pass through. There will be an orderly recording of all monies given to the church.

3. Special Offerings

Designated offerings will be taken for the Deacon's Benevolence Fund, love offerings, and other special offerings and/or funds as deemed appropriate by the pastor and deacons.

4. Budget Year

The budget year of the church will begin February 1st and end January 31st.

I. Meetings of the Church

1. Use of Church Facilities and Name

Use of the church buildings other than for church-sponsored activities will be according to BHCC's Facilities Use Guidelines. All gatherings off the church property held in the name of Bright Hope Community Church shall be subject to the approval of the pastor and deacons and must be in compliance with BHCC's Essential Guidelines and Beliefs.

2. Meetings of Public Worship

- a. Public worship services - Public worship services will be held on Sunday, the Lord's Day, or any other day or evening as deemed necessary by the pastor and deacons.
- b. Other Ministries/Services – Other ministries/services may be established based upon the fulfillment of our Essential Guidelines and Beliefs.
- c. The Lord's Supper/Communion will be observed on a regular basis. No one who has been indwelt by the Spirit of God in Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9) will be excluded from participation except in certain cases of church discipline (I Corinthians 5:11,12). Unleavened bread/crackers and grape juice will be the elements used to represent the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

3. Business Meetings

- a. All members should consider the importance of active participation in business meetings. Business meetings will be for active church members only. The annual meeting of the church should be held in the month of January. Public notice will be given two successive Sundays immediately preceding the meeting. The agenda will include the election of church officers, presentation and approval of the annual church budget, annual ministry team reports of the treasurer, church clerk and other areas of ministry as requested, as well as any other proper business.
- b. Special business meetings may be called at any time by the pastor and deacons providing public notice be given on the preceding Sunday. The following meetings require a two Sunday notice: the calling of a pastor, electing of deacons, or amending the Essential Guidelines and Beliefs.
- c. Guidelines for voting are outlined in the Essential Guidelines and Beliefs...How We Function, Article 4, Section A (Membership).

J. Dissolution

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In the event that the congregation of Bright Hope Community Church should move to dissolve as a corporation by corporate action, all of its debts and liabilities will be fully satisfied. All remaining assets or holdings will be not be divided among the members or any other individuals, but will be forwarded as a contribution to an organization that will multiply our convictions and be passionate in their pursuit of evangelizing the world. They must be in full agreement in doctrine and practice with BHCC's Essential Guidelines and Beliefs, as well as, conform to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Code).

K. Additions and Deletions

We believe there is wisdom in the periodic evaluation and review of BHCC's Essential Guidelines and Beliefs. The purpose is to ensure both relevance and an accurate reflection of our Biblical purpose as a church. The Essential Guidelines and Beliefs may be amended, altered or repealed by a majority vote of the active members present and voting. All proposed changes must be submitted in writing to the pastor and deacons. If after review and study the pastor and deacons find the change to be necessary, they will make a recommendation at least two weeks prior to voting on any such changes.

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- The original documents were fully approved and accepted on November 4, 2001.
 - This entire group of three documents, renamed "Bright Hope Community Church – Essential Guidelines and Beliefs" and all of its changes were fully approved and unanimously accepted on January 28, 2007.
 - Amended upon unanimous vote at Q2 business meeting, June 8, 2008 (Article 4 A. Membership, 1a. and the addition of 1b.).
 - Amended upon unanimous vote at August 21, 2016 business meeting; Statement of Position...What We Believe: page 3, added Item 12, BHCC's Position on Heterosexuality and Homosexuality (Same Sex Relationships).
 - Amended upon unanimous vote at February 14, 2021 Annual Meeting: Amendment 3, Revision to Statement of Practice, Article 4, Section D, Parts 2 and 3 (Regarding Nominations for the Office of Deacon); and Amendment 4, Revision to Statement of Practice, Article 4, Section E, Parts 1 and 2 (Regarding Church Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Assistant Financial Secretary).
 - Fiscal Year adjusted to Jan. 1 thru Dec. 31 by unanimous congregational vote on 2/12/2023.
 - General Recommendation unanimously approved my member vote on 2/11/2024: Throughout Bright Hope's Essential Guidelines and Beliefs documents, any reference to "the pastor" is to be read and understood as "pastoral staff". This is intended to uphold the Scriptural principle of the plurality of elders in a local church when feasible. This principle is seen in various places in the New Testament (Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, 1 Timothy 5:17, Philippians 1:1)
 - Revision unanimously approved by member vote on 2/11/2024 to Article 4 – How We Function, Section E. Other Officers and Staff, Part 4, Sections a and b. Current version of Essential Guidelines above reflects this revision.
 - Revision unanimously approved by member vote on 2/11/2024 to Article 4 – How We Function, Section A. Membership, Part 8, Section d. Current version of Essential Guidelines above reflects this revision.