

Harvest Community Church Hillsboro, Oregon

Constitution and Bylaws

Constitution

Preamble

We, the members of Harvest Community Church of Hillsboro, Oregon, worship and serve together as a body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, in accordance with biblical teaching and the distinctive practices of the Conservative Baptist Association. We adopt the following articles for our government, and for our plan of worship and service.

Purpose

Harvest Community Church exists as a family of Jesus followers, passionately committed to pursuing the mission Christ gave to His Church: to glorify God by learning together, to live like Jesus, to reach our world.

Article 1. Name

The name of this organization, a corporation, shall be **HARVEST COMMUNITY CHURCH** of Hillsboro, Oregon.

Article 2. Membership

Membership in Harvest Community Church is for the purpose of uniting the believers into one body for the function of the local church. The membership of this church shall consist of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who have been baptized by immersion, who acknowledge agreement with the Core Documents of this church, and who have been received into the fellowship by regular action of the Board of Elders.

The Core Documents of this church consist of the Constitution and Bylaws, The Doctrinal Statement, and the Church Covenant.

Article 3. Offices

“Christ is the head of the church, His body, of which He is the Savior.” (Eph 5:23). The offices of this Church are Elders, Pastors, and Ministers. The church shall elect and appoint persons to serve in these offices as necessary.

Article 4. Meetings

Meetings for worship, prayer, praise, fellowship, business, and special purposes shall be held as set forth in the Bylaws.

Article 5. Relationships

Believing in the sovereignty of the local church as an autonomous body of believers under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, this church shall fellowship and shall cooperate with churches of like faith and practice, and with organized groups of Conservative Baptists or inter-church

groups, when our beliefs will not be compromised. To such groups, this church may send statistical reports and may be represented at their meetings.

No financial support is to be given to a work or workers whose use of such funds will be in opposition to the Core Documents of Harvest Community Church.

Article 6. Amendments

The Core Documents (Constitution and Bylaws, Doctrinal Statement, and Church Covenant) may be amended by a seventy five percent (75%) majority vote of the quorum, provided such amendments have been submitted in writing to the membership at least four (4) weeks preceding the vote. A quorum shall be a minimum of twenty percent (20%) of Church members sixteen years of age or older.

Bylaws

Preamble

These Bylaws are adopted, ordained, and established for our government and plan of worship and service.

No Bylaws shall be effective that are contrary to the Core Documents of this Church.

Article 1. Membership

Section A – Qualifications

Membership shall consist of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who have been baptized by immersion, have acknowledged agreement with the Core Documents of this church, received new member instruction, and have been received into the fellowship by action of the Elders.

Section B. Application

Anyone desiring membership shall make application to the Elders. Application may be made following believers baptism, or with accompanying letter of transfer from a recognized evangelical church, or by personal profession of Christian experience. The Elders will review the application and vote to grant membership, or not.

Section C. Responsibilities

Members are expected to keep their Church Covenant obligations as described in the Harvest Community Church Covenant.

Section D. Privileges

Harvest Community Church is an Elder-led, congregationally-affirmed church. All members shall have equal rights, except that those under sixteen (16) years of age shall be ineligible to vote. Members of this Church have no property rights and, upon termination of membership, shall be entitled to no personal interest or assets.

Section E. Removal from Membership

Membership may be ended by act of the Elders for the following reasons: a member submits a request for a letter of transfer to another church, there is a lack of regular attendance for an extended period of time (for reasons other than health or temporary relocation), or due to church discipline.

If any member of this Church is opposed to any of the Bible doctrines as accepted and practiced by this Church, or uses his or her influence contrary to the best interests of this Church, or continues in unrepentant sinful conduct, he or she may be excluded from Church membership. Matters of Church discipline will be conducted according to the principles described in Matthew 18:15-17, I Corinthians 5:9-13, II Thessalonians 3:6-15 and I Timothy 5:17-22. Restoration is to be sought according to the principles described in II Corinthians 2:5-8 and Galatians 6:1-2.

Article 2. Offices and Officers

Section A. Definitions of Offices and Officers

The **offices** of this church shall be those of Elders, Pastors, and Ministers. See Article 3 of constitution above.

The legal responsibilities of the Corporation shall belong to the **officers** of the Corporation, as follows: Chairman– President of the Corporation; Treasurer – Financial Officer of the Corporation; Secretary – Secretary of the Corporation.

Section B. Elders

Elders serve the local body of believers, known as Harvest Community Church, under Jesus Christ, through spiritual and practical leadership and oversight. The Elders will collectively oversee the activities of the church, and may, in consultation with, and through the Lead Pastor, delegate these activities to the paid staff, and others, as they see fit. The Elders shall give themselves to prayer and the study of God’s Word so that they may give Biblical leadership, oversight, and direction to the Church, and care for its members.

The Elders shall consist of the Lead Pastor, and at least five laymen confirmed by the membership. The Lead Pastor may not serve as chairman, secretary, or treasurer of the Corporation, and may not vote on issues pertaining to staff compensation or other conditions of employment.

The Elders shall select a chairman, secretary, and treasurer from among their members, who shall serve as the officers of the corporation. Elections for the chairman, secretary, and treasurer shall be held at a minimum every two years.

Elders must be men of exemplary Christian character who conform to the qualifications for the office as given in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Elders shall be members in good standing for a period of at least one year, having exhibited characteristics of consecration, dependability, initiative, and leadership within our fellowship. They must have knowledge of the history and practice of this church, and have earned the respect, trust, and support of the church members.

Section C – Pastors and Ministers

Offices of Pastor and Minister are typically, but not necessarily, paid staff positions. The Lead Pastor shall be an Elder with certain restrictions as specified in Article 2 Section B above. The Elders will define the scope and duties of each Pastoral Staff position, their reporting structure, and associated compensation, when applicable. Pastors and Ministers shall give themselves to prayer and the study of God's Word so that they may provide Biblical leadership and direction to the Church, and equip its members for ministry.

The Elders and Pastoral Staff, shall perform all the Scriptural duties of the office, preach the Word, administer the ordinances, tenderly watch over the membership and spiritual interest of the Church, and organize and develop its membership for the best possible service.

Pastors and Ministers must be persons of exemplary Christian character. Pastors must conform to the qualifications for Elder as given in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Ministers must conform to the qualifications given in I Timothy 3:8-13. Pastors and Ministers shall accept and support the Core Documents of this church, and be (or become) members of this body. The Lead Pastor shall be licensed. Other pastors and ministers may or may not be licensed.

Section D. Selection and Terms for Elders

The incumbent Elders shall appoint a team of at least 4 members, consisting of at least one Elder, to prayerfully seek those who, by God's leading, "aspire to the office" of Elder. They shall, with the consent of those selected, present their recommendations to the Elders for initial approval. The Elders will present those meeting the qualifications of I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 for Elder to the membership for final approval.

The term for lay Elder shall be three (3) years. An Elder may serve two (2) consecutive terms, but must agree to serve and be confirmed by the congregation prior to each term. A lay elder must take a minimum of one year off after serving two (2) consecutive terms.

An Elder may leave office before his term is completed upon his own request. An Elder may be removed from office by a seventy percent (70%) majority vote of the Elders, should the Elders decide that the person is no longer living up to the qualifications described in sections B and D. Removal of an Elder from office shall be effected in accordance with I Timothy 5:19-21 and Galatians 6:1.

Section E. Selection and Terms for Pastors and Ministers

To fill vacant offices of Pastor or Minister, the Elders shall appoint a search team of at least 4 members, consisting of at least one Elder or individual designated by the Elders to represent the Elders, and at least two members not currently serving as Elder, Pastor or Minister. The team shall prayerfully seek those who, by God's leading, desire to give their occupational time in pastoral care and ministry to our body. They shall, with the consent of those selected, present their recommendations to the Elders for initial approval. The Elders will take the recommendation to the congregation for final approval.

The membership shall consider only one (1) prospective candidate at a time. The congregation may vote, according to Article 3 Section B to extend a "call" for ministry. Appropriate compensation, and other terms of employment, shall be determined by the Elders, in accordance with I Timothy 5:17-18.

There is no fixed term for the office of Pastor or Minister. Employment may be terminated at any time, with or without cause. Either party desiring to terminate the employment relationship shall give thirty (30) days written notice.

Pastors and Ministers may be removed from office, and their employment terminated, by a majority vote of the Elders. Removal proceedings shall result when the Elders, after thorough and prayerful investigation, have determined that the Pastor or Minister has failed to maintain the high conduct fitting his or her office, has deviated from the Core Documents of this church, or has failed to carry out the duties of the office.

Article 3. Meetings

Section A. Public Worship

Public worship services shall be held at a minimum each Sunday morning. Other meetings may include, but are not limited to, Sunday School for all ages, additional worship services, small group meetings, Bible study groups, youth activities, prayer, praise, fellowship, and special events.

Section B. Congregational Meetings

The Elders shall ensure that three congregational meetings will be held each year, and additional special congregational meetings, as needed.

When needed, advanced information pertaining to a voting matter shall be made available to the congregation at least two weeks before the vote is to take place. Information required in advance of a vote includes, but is not limited to, the following: names of those nominated to the office of Elder; information regarding the call of a Pastoral Staff member, the annual budget, and other financial matters requiring a congregational vote.

Voting for confirmation of Elders, or for calling a Pastoral Staff member, shall be by closed ballot. All other voting will be by show of hands or by closed ballot, at the discretion of the meeting moderator (Elder Chairman, or his designee).

Confirmation of Elders, the calling of a Pastoral Staff member, and budget approval require a three-fourths majority vote. Other issues will be decided by a simple majority vote. A quorum shall be a minimum of 20% (twenty percent) of the active membership.

Article 4. Organizational Procedures

The Constitution and Bylaws address the general issues of church organization and government. Additional policies and procedures may be established for accomplishing the day-to-day function of the church. Financial practices shall be handled in compliance with the Evangelical Council For Financial Accountability's "Standards of Responsible Stewardship". The Elders will review and approve these policies and procedures as necessary.

Article 5. Authority

The Elders shall have the responsibility and authority for the direction and ministries of the church. They may delegate such authority as is necessary and appropriate to carry out assigned ministries. Pastors and Ministers shall serve under the authority of the Elders. The Elders may appoint commissions, committees, ministry teams, and individuals to serve as long as needed to carry out the ministries of the church.

In accordance with the laws of the State of Oregon, the Elder Chairman, Elder Treasurer and Elder Secretary shall serve as the legal trustees or agents of the church, and be responsible to the membership and to the State of Oregon for all church assets and financial decisions. They have no authority to mortgage, or otherwise encumber the assets of the church unless so authorized by the members under the provisions set forth in Article 3.

The Elders may authorize expenditures in accordance with the congregationally affirmed annual budget, or as otherwise deemed necessary for the continuing operation of the church.

The corporation shall indemnify, to the fullest extent provided in the Oregon Nonprofit Corporations Act, any Elder or Officer who has or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any proceeding (other than an action by or in the right of the corporation) by reason of or arising from the fact that he is or was an Elder or Officer of the Corporation. The determination and authorization of indemnification shall be made as provided in the Act.

In the event of the dissolution of the Corporation, property of the Church shall be distributed for Christian evangelical purposes as determined by the Elders. If that is not possible, the Northwest Conservative Baptist Association will be given the responsibility.