

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
Of
NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.

PREAMBLE:

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Southern Baptist churches; and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith and order, we do declare and establish this constitution.

ARTICLE I **NAME**

This body shall be called the NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.

INCORPORATIONS: To implement this purpose legally, the church is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio, so that it may own, provide and/or maintain a place of worship (including suitable real estate and buildings), receive, hold and disburse gifts, bequests and funds, and/or do all and sundry things necessary or incident to carry on such purpose.

ARTICLE II **ARTICLES OF FAITH**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this church is to see unbelieving people become committed followers of Jesus Christ. It shall seek to attain this end through evangelizing unbelievers, encouraging believers in their personal faith, fellowship and service. Our focus will always be to exalt His name and His Word. (Matthew 28:18-20 & Psalm 138:2)

We accept the Scriptures as our authority in matters of faith and practice and Articles of The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention 2000, a copy of which is on file and becomes a part hereof.

ARTICLE III **COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior (Colossians 2:6, John 11:27), and on profession of our faith (Ephesians 3:12, Romans 10:9-11) having been baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:41), we do in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ (Ephesians 3:21).

We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love (John 13:34-35, Colossians 3); and to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline (Galatians 6:1, I Corinthians 5:6, I Timothy 5:20 and Matthew 18:15-18) and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the gospel through all nations (I Corinthians 16:1-4, II Corinthians 9).

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children. (Deu 6:2, 6:6-9, Matthew 6:33) ; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary (Colossians 4:2-6) in our conduct (1Peter 3:15,16; Colossians 3:17,23,24); exhibit the fruit of the spirit in all our activities and relationships;(Galatians 5:19-26); to avoid all tattling, back biting, and excessive anger; to abstain from all forms of ungodliness which are contrary to the teachings of God's word, to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour (Romans 1:29-32).

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love (Hebrew 13:1); to remember each other in sickness and distress (Matthew 25:39-40); to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the teachings of our Savior.

We moreover, engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, of like faith and order, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

ARTICLE IV

AUTONOMY

The government of this church is vested in the body of active believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligation of mutual counsel and co-operation which are common among Baptist churches. It is affiliated in such voluntary co-operation with the Southern Baptist Entities.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

The membership of the New Hope Baptist Church shall be:

1. Any person may become a member upon professing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9-10) and upon being baptized (Mark 1:8-11, Acts 2:41) according to the Articles of Faith governing same.
2. Those who have transferred into this fellowship by letter from other churches of like faith and order; the same showing them to be in fellowship and good standing in that church and have been scripturally baptized by emersion (Mark 1:8-11, Acts 2:41).
3. Those who may be unable to secure a letter of recommendation, may be received upon statement of past membership of a church of like faith and order, transfer of letter or recommendation of statement of faith shall be voted on by the church.
4. If a member in good standing requests by letter to be released from his/her membership to this church for reasons which the church may deem satisfactory

Section 2

- (A) It shall be the policy of the New Hope Baptist Church to grant letters of transfer on behalf of any member in fellowship for whom same is requested by a church of like faith and order.
- (B) Membership in this church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights in the Corporation, but shall only entitle the member to vote at a meeting of the members on those matters that the Pastor or Deacons chooses to submit to the church membership for affirmation. In such cases, voting privileges are restricted to members who are in good standing, who are not under any disciplinary action, having regularly attended services of, and supported, this church for a period of at least three consecutive months prior to the date of the vote and who have passed their sixteenth (16) birthday.
- (C) Discipline of Members: The purpose of church discipline is to affect a return to a Biblical standard of conduct and doctrine in a member who errs (Galatians 6:1) to maintain purity in the Church (I Corinthians 5:6) and to deter sin (I Timothy 5:20). Any member of this church who teaches or insists on holding false doctrine (Romans 16:17-18); or persistently conducts himself or herself in a manner inconsistent with Biblical teaching, or who persists in disturbing the unity or peace of the church (Titus 3:10-11) shall be dealt with as follows, according to Matthew 18:15-18:
1. It is the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of an erring member's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct the erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
 2. If the erring member does not heed this warning, the warning member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two other Deacons as witnesses to warn and correct, seeking repentance and restoration.
 3. If the erring member still refuses to heed the warning, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Deacons, who, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall tell it to the church encouraging the congregation to pray for repentance and restoration of the erring member.
 4. If the erring member refuses to heed the warnings of the Deacons and the church, he or she shall be dismissed from the church pursuant to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 5:1-5). There shall be no appeal of the discipline process or the dismissal to any court. The congregation shall be encouraged to pray for the repentance and restoration of the erring member. It is clearly understood that the discipline process will continue to conclusion even if the erring member leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership.
 5. All requests for termination of membership of action leading thereto in accordance with Section 2 must be submitted in writing to the deacons who shall make recommendation to the church. The membership of no person shall be terminated, except at the business or special called meeting when the recommendation for such action is made.

6. Restoration: Any person whose membership has been terminated and/or under church discipline for any offense may be restored by majority vote at the business or special called meeting when the recommendation for such action is made. This recommendation will be made upon evidence of his/her repentance and restoration.

Section 3

Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the deacons (or a duly constituted subcommittee thereof), the names of any members who have not attended a worship service, Sunday School class session or small group meeting at New Hope Baptist Church for a period of twenty four months or longer may be removed from the membership rolls.

ARTICLE II

MEETINGS

Section 1

WORSHIP

- (A) Public services shall be held stately on the Lord's Day and on any other time determined by the church.
- (B) Church Ordinances:
 1. Baptism (Mark 1:8-11, Acts 2:41, 1 Peter 3:21) is a symbolic act of obedience whereby any person who has accepted Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord and Savior. Baptism shall be by immersion in water and to church membership (Acts 2:41). The pastor, or whoever the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism.
 2. The Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26-29, 1 Cor 11:23-34) is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming. (1) The Lord's Supper shall be observed on such time as determined by the church and open to all Christians (2) The pastor, church staff, and deacons shall be responsible for administration of the Lord's Supper.
- (C) It shall be understood that the various education opportunities, including but not limited to Bible Studies, fellowships and small group events of the church shall constitute a meeting of the church in its educational effort, these same to be responsible to the church and to the Articles of Faith and/or Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 2

BUSINESS

- (A) The regular business meeting of the church shall be conducted, unless otherwise agreed upon for necessities sake, as selected by the church.
- (B) In the event of any matter demanding immediate or emergency action upon business not specifically covered by other sections of this document, the Pastor and/or the Deacons or Trustees may call a special session of the church for business.

- (C) Twenty-five (25) active members shall constitute a quorum, except, that for the call of a pastor, in which event a quorum shall consist of fifty-five percent (55%) of the active membership. Active membership for the purpose of this section is defined as attendance of four consecutive Sunday morning Worship services.
- (D) The moderator may, and shall, when requested by the Deacons, Trustees, or a standing committee, call from the pulpit special business meetings, the particular object of the meeting being clearly stated in the notice and the call to be given at least two regular services in advance of said meeting unless unanimously waived by the quorum present.
- (E) The Senior Pastor shall be the moderator. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Chairman of Deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both; the Clerk shall call the church to order and a male moderator pro-tem shall be elected.
- (F) All business meetings shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order.

ARTICLE III

OFFICERS

Section 1

SENIOR PASTOR

- (A) The qualifications for Senior Pastor shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. A Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting held on the Lord's Day which has been called for that purpose and of which at least one week's notice has been given.

A Pulpit committee shall be elected by the church in a business meeting to seek out a suitable pastor. The Pulpit committee should contain a minimum of five members and at least three of those shall be Deacons. Their recommendation shall constitute a nomination, though any member shall have the privilege of making recommendations to the committee. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot, and affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the active members present being necessary for election.

He shall remain in office an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations: The church reserve the right to dismiss the Senior Pastor upon giving him one month's written notice of its intention to dismiss with thirty day severance compensation to the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor will be asked to vacate the pulpit at the time of written notice. In the instance of gross misconduct which would exclude him from the pastorate he will be immediately be removed from the pulpit. The Senior Pastor must give one month's notice if he intends to resign. The time limit of a Senior Pastor resignation is subject to a lesser time if both the Senior Pastor and the church by mutual agreement provide otherwise. The call may be terminated by a majority vote of the active members present at a meeting held on the Lord's Day which has been called for that purpose and of which at least one week's notice has been given.

- (B) The responsibility of the Senior Pastor will be to faithfully preach God's Word (2 Timothy 4:2) and model the priority of discipleship within the church (Matthew 28:19). The Senior Pastor shall have in charge the welfare and oversight of the church. He shall preside at all meetings of

the church and be considered an ex officio member of all councils and committees, except as hereinafter provided.

- (C) The Senior Pastor shall secure evangelists and pulpit supplies unless otherwise directed by the church.
- (D) The Senior Pastor and his wife shall be messengers to all Association, State and Convention meetings.
- (E) The church may send the Senior Pastor to the Southern Baptist Convention.
- (F) The Senior Pastor and Associate Pastor (he must meet the requirements of Section A of this Section) shall be ordained.

Section 2 **MINISTRY STAFF**

- (A) All members of the Ministerial Staff shall be chosen and called by the church whenever necessary. Each Staff election shall take place at a business meeting held on the Lord's Day which has been called for that purpose and of which at least one week's notice has been given.

A search committee shall be elected by the church in a business meeting to seek out a suitable staff. The search committee should contain a minimum of five members. Their recommendation shall constitute a nomination, though any member shall have the privilege of making recommendations to the committee. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one person at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot, and affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the active members present being necessary for election.

They shall remain in office an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations: The church reserve the right to dismiss the Ministerial Staff upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor and Deacons and giving them one month's written notice of its intention to dismiss with thirty day severance compensation to the Ministerial Staff. The Ministerial Staff will be asked to vacate the position at the time of written notice. In the instance of gross misconduct which would exclude them from the service they will be immediately be removed from the position. The Ministerial Staff must give one month's notice if they intend to resign. The time limit of a Ministerial Staff resignation is subject to a lesser time if both the Ministerial Staff and the church by mutual agreement provide otherwise. The call may be terminated by a majority vote of the active members present at a meeting held on the Lord's Day which has been called for that purpose and of which at least one week's notice has been given.

- (B) The Ministerial Staff shall answer to the Senior Pastor and perform their duties as the Senior Pastor and church determine.

Section 3 **SUPPORT STAFF**

- (A) Support Staff, (Secretary, Custodian, etc.), will be hired by the Senior Pastor. They answer to the Senior Pastor and/or Ministerial Staff. Support Staff will be required to fulfill responsibilities designated by the Senior Pastor, and/or Ministerial Staff. Support Staff will be considered at will employees and hired and terminated by the Senior Pastor.

Section 4

DEACONS

- (A) It shall be the policy of the church to have a maximum of three (3) active deacons for the first one hundred (100) members, with one additional deacon for each additional fifty (50) members. However, this is not to be construed that the church is obligated to elect or to limit this number of deacons if the necessary qualified men are not available or if the need is greater. These shall be recommended by the Pastor and Deacons and their recommendation shall constitute a nomination. The qualifications for Deacons shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Acts 6: 1-6. The Deacon should be the "husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:12), the man shall have never been divorced. They shall be elected by secret ballot at a business meeting. The chairman shall be elected annually by the Deacons.
- (B) They shall serve as a council of advice and conference with the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. With the Pastor they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the church in all things pertaining to the development of Christians, and the extension and growth of the kingdom of God. They shall meet regularly.
- (C) By proper organization and method among themselves, they are to establish and maintain personal relations with, and inspiring oversight of, all the membership of the church. Especially are they to seek, to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the membership; and they are to serve, minister and encourage all who are in need.
- (D) In counsel with the Pastor, and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct, in accordance with the New Testament teaching, they are to have oversight of the discipline of the church in administering which, they are always to be guided by the principles set forth in I Thessalonians 5:12-15, and in accordance with the constitution of the church.
- (E) As the need of the church dictates, the number of deacons may be added to as determined by the existing active deacons upon approval by the church. Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. Each year the assigned term of office of one-third of the number of deacons shall expire and an election shall be held to fill vacancies and to add to the deacons such number as the church size warrants. In case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three years assignment, a deacon shall be eligible for re-election only after the lapse of at least 365 days. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, the rotation of deacons becomes enough of a burden to the church to make the suspension of the practice desirable, the deacons may freeze the rotation on a year by year basis.

Section 5

TRUSTEES

- (A) The church shall elect and maintain a minimum of three (3) trustees from church membership. A chairman shall be elected annually by the trustees.
- (B) It shall be the duty of the trustees to procure title of all property according to law and enter into all contracts. They are encumbered with the sale of building, grounds, and equipment for the church, under the direction of the church as passed in regular business meetings.

- (C) The Trustees shall meet at least twice each year for an inspection of church property and make recommendations concerning the preservation of same to the church. Additional meetings may be called for by the Trustees individually, the church, or the Pastor.

Section 6

CLERK

- (A) The church shall annually elect the clerk, whose duties will consist of keeping minutes of all business meetings, keeping records of the membership, receiving and granting of letters of fellowship and any other duties in accordance with instruction of the church.

Section 7

TREASURER

- (A) The church shall annually elect a treasurer whose duties will consist of assisting in managing the financial affairs of the church with advice of the Pastor and Finance Committee under the instruction of the church.

Section 8

OTHER LEADERS AND COMMITTEES

- (A) All leaders and committees of the church shall be responsible to report the direction of their work to the church at regular business meetings.
- (B) The terms of the leaders, teachers and committees are as follows: A listing of all leaders, committees and teachers shall be presented at the first business meeting of the new calendar year.
- (C) All leaders, committees and teachers shall appoint by the Senior Pastor and/or Staff plus three members which will serve for the term of one year.
- (D) Leaders, teachers, and committee members in the church are expected to be faithful in all duties outlined in the church covenant.
- (E) Church council shall meet as need or upon the call of the Senior Pastor. The council shall consist of all chairpersons of active committees and directors.

Article IV

POLICY/PROCEDURES MANUAL

Section 1

The policy/procedure manual serves as a central repository for the general administration and operation of the Church. It provides the Church an overview of all job descriptions, and policies and procedures to operate under and sets clearly establish the lines of authority and accountability.

ARTICLE V

FINANCIAL POLICY

Budget

Section 1

The church will operate under an annual budget prepared and presented by Finance Committee and approved by the church.

Financial System

Section 2

- (A) This church adopts as its policy the encouragement of its member to tithe (Number 18:24, Hebrews 7:9) and to make special offerings (Proverbs 18:16, Luke 21:1-4, Philippians 4:18) as God may prosper them.
- (B) The church shall provide envelopes to each member of the church. A Financial Secretary shall be elected when it deems necessary by the church. A Statement of contributions made shall be mailed or given to each contributor after the close of the calendar year and prior to January 31 of the New Year. The information kept by the Financial Secretary shall be confidential. In the absence of a Financial Secretary, the Treasurer will fulfill this responsibility.
- (C) A Finance Committee shall be elected by the church to count all offerings. Two (2) (2 males or 2 females) of the members shall be present each Sunday to count, or their proxies at each counting. Members of the Finance Committee who were responsible for counting will then make the required deposit to our bank. No more than two family members may serve on Finance Committee.
- (D) The Treasurer shall pay all bills and keep a record of the same. A monthly report shall be given to the Finance Committee of all moneys received and expended. A written report will be given to the church at the regular business meeting.
- (E) The treasurer shall be bonded in an amount satisfactory to the church.

ARTICLE VI

AMENDMENTS

- (A) This Constitution and By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority at any regular business meeting; provided, that notification of the proposed amendment is given from the pulpit on the Lord's Day and in written form at least one (1) week in advance of the voting.
- (B) Every two years, a review committee may be appointed by the pastor and elected by the church for the purpose of reviewing this constitution and by-laws for needed revisions.