

Hickory Road Baptist Church Constitution & Bylaws

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CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern this body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches of like faith and order.

ARTICLE I. NAME

This body that operates under the name of “Hickory Road Baptist Church, Inc.”, shall be known as Hickory Road Baptist Church.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

Section 1. Purpose of the Church

This church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God. The Glory of God will be the ultimate purpose of all that we do.

This Church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through worshipping Him; Equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study;

Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching, personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teaching of Holy Scripture;

Encouraging, supporting, and participating in mission work, local, domestic, and international; Administering the ordinances of believers’ baptism and communion;

Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers; and

Mercifully serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for their physical and spiritual needs.

Section 2. Purpose of the By-Laws

The purpose of these By-Laws is to guide the church in governing herself under the direction of the Holy Scriptures. These By-Laws are intended to liberate the church to move swiftly and safely in fulfilling her purpose in the world, and they are also intended to protect her from unbiblical and destructive abuses of power. Each individual article must be read in light of the whole set of By-Laws, and in light of our Congregational Affirmation of Faith and Church Covenant.

ARTICLE III. – STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and is the basis for our beliefs. This church receives the word of God as recorded in the Bible as its authority of faith and practice. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost humanity, locally and globally. The ordinances of the church are Believer’s Baptism by immersion and the Lord’s Supper.

ARTICLE IV. – CHURCH COVENANT

1. We believe the Spirit of God has led us, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior.
2. And on the profession of our faith, we have been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
3. In the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, **relying upon the grace of God**, we sincerely and joyfully (enter into/renew our) covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.
4. We will make every effort to keep ourselves united in the Spirit, binding ourselves together with peace.
5. We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for one another.
6. We will 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.
7. We will work together, with our brothers and sisters in Christ, to continue the faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines.
8. We will walk together in brotherly love, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and encourage one another as occasion may require.
9. We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.
10. We will seek, to live in a manner worthy of our calling, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, remembering that we have been voluntarily buried and raised with Christ in baptism to lead a new and holy life for the glory of God.
11. We will endeavor by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family, friends and those whom the Lord places within our sphere of influence.
12. We will, if upon leaving this fellowship, unite with another church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.
13. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

ARTICLE V. – CONGREGATIONAL AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts. It is the written record of God's supernatural revelation of Himself to man, absolute in its authority, complete in its revelation, final in its content, and therefore constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice. *2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1Thess. 2:13; John 17:17; Heb. 4:12*

THE TRINITY

We believe that there is one true God, eternally existent, creator of heaven and earth, perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, and manifested in three persons: FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT. These three persons are one God; distinct in personal attributes, yet without division of nature, essence, and being. They execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. *Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; John 14:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 John 5:7; Gen. 1:2, 26*

GOD THE FATHER

We believe that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, is an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He infallibly foreknows all that shall come to pass according to His own purpose and grace, that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ adopting them as His children. *Luke 10:21-22; Matt. 23:9; Ephesians 1:4-6, John 3:16; 6:27; Rom. 1:7; 1 Tim. 1:1-2; 2:5-6; 1 Pet. 1:3; Rev. 1:6*

JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, is the eternal Son of God, and became man without ceasing to be God. We believe that He was born of a virgin, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit, lived a sinless life, performed miracles and taught divine truth. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and His personal visible return to earth. *Matt. 1:18-25; 20:28; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1; 20:28; 30-31; Rom. 5:6-8; 6:9-10; 9:5; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:4; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:21-23*

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to supernaturally regenerate all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe He indwells, sanctifies, instructs, guides, helps, and empowers all believers for service. We believe He baptizes all believers into the body of Christ upon regeneration, sealing them unto the day of redemption. *John 3:3-8; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; Rom. 3:9; 6:19; 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 3:16; 12:4-7, 13; Gal. 5:22-26*

MAN

We believe that God directly created man in His image to glorify Him. We believe that by one man's disobedience (Adam), all were made sinners thereby incurring the penalty of physical, spiritual and eternal death, and the wrath of God. Therefore, all people are born with a sinful nature and are sinners by choice and therefore under condemnation, being hopelessly lost apart from the saving grace of God through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. We believe that there is a difference between those who have been declared righteous and the wicked. *Gen. 2:7-25; Mal. 3:18; Rom. 5:12, 19; Eph. 2:1-3; Jas. 3:9; Rev. 4:11*

SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly a work of grace, not of human works whatsoever. Salvation is made free to all who repent and forsake sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The blessing that Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification. Those who are justified are those who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit whereby the divine nature and life are given, making them new creatures in union with Christ. *Mark 1:15; Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:33; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-9; 1 Tim. 2:4, Titus 3:5; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 1:9, 3:3-7, 5:1*

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the process, begun in justification, by which we are made partakers of God's holiness. Through the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live in obedience to the Word of God and a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more mature in Christ. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin. True believers are kept eternally by God's power and thus are secure in Christ forever, but sin may interrupt the joy of his fellowship with God and bring divine chastening. *John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23; Heb. 12:6-11; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 John 3:5-9; Jude 24*

THE CHURCH

UNIVERSAL: All regenerated believers are immediately placed into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, the bride of Christ, of which Christ is the head. *1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph 5:22-32*

LOCAL: A congregation of baptized believers who have committed themselves to one another to carry out the commission given by Jesus Christ by gathering for worship, work, and fellowship under the leadership of qualified men who serve and lead by lovingly shepherding the flock. *Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-47; Phil. 1:1; Col. 3:15-17; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Heb. 10:23-25; 1 Peter 5:1-3*

ORDINANCES

We believe that the Church has two scriptural ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of the believer in water into the name of the triune God as a testimony of his salvation. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death until He returns. *Matt. 3:13, 16; 28:19; Luke 22:19; Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 11:26*

THE FUTURE

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal joy of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked. *Matt. 16:27; 25:1-23; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Cor. 4:5; 15:1-58; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 4:15; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2 Tim. 4:1; Titus 2:13; Heb 2:8 ; Rev. 20:4-6, 11-15*

ARTICLE VI. – CHURCH STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God sovereignly creates people as male or female. The Bible teaches that the very image of God is reflected in these two distinct and complementary genders (Gen. 1:26-27). To accept one's own biological sex is to accept one's potential in reflecting the image of God. To reject one's biological sex is to work against the accurate reflection of the image of God within that person. For this reason and others, we believe that transgender behavior is not the will of God. We understand that in this fallen world for a variety of complex reasons, many people legitimately struggle with their gender and sexual identity. We believe we are called to have compassion for such individuals, but we believe that transgenderism is not the answer and is actually an offense to God.

We believe the term "marriage" means only a legal, exclusive union between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman as husband and wife (Gen. 2:18-25). Marriages outside of these parameters will not be performed by church ministers or on church premises. The term "spouse" refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or wife.

We believe that it is God's plan for 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). Any form of sexual immorality outside of marriage between a man and a woman – including adultery, pre-marital sex, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, incest, use of pornography, etc. – is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that redemption and restoration are available through Jesus Christ for all types of sin. In order to receive forgiveness, the Bible says that we must confess and forsake our sins, whatever they may be (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

We believe that as a church, we should teach and encourage one another to live according to God's Word in spite of the world's changing views on marriage and sexuality. Married individuals should be encouraged to remain faithful to their wedding vows. Unmarried individuals should be encouraged to rely upon God's strength to remain sexually pure. We should seek ways to minister to and to support those who desire to remain obedient to God despite struggles with same-sex attractions. Furthermore, we should reach out with the love of Christ and the truth of God's Word to those outside the church who identify themselves sexually in ways that are contrary to the will of God. In doing so, we should also find ways to support and to be sensitive to those among us who have family members or friends who identify in these ways.

In holding fast to our convictions, we believe that we are called to show love, kindness, and respect to every person (Mark 12:28-31, Luke 6:31, 1 Peter 3:15). Hateful and harassing behavior or demeaning attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the beliefs of Hickory Road Baptist Church.

We believe that in order to preserve the function, the unity, and the integrity of Hickory Road Baptist Church as the local Body of Christ, it is imperative that all church staff and volunteer leaders be willing to abide by this Statement personally and be willing to refrain from actively promoting views which oppose or undermine the church's beliefs on these matters as explained in this statement (Matt. 5:16, Phil. 2:14-16, 1 Thess. 5:22).

ARTICLE VII. – THE PASTOR AND CHURCH IN COVENANT

Pastor's covenant to the congregation of Hickory Road Baptist Church:

Having been called to be pastor of this church, I take this people to be my people, this field of labor to be my field, without reservation of mind or heart.

I promise to give myself faithfully to the ministry to the Word and to prayer, to be a good shepherd of this flock of God, to minister to the needs of all alike, to be the friend of all who will permit me, to seek the salvation of souls and the nurture of the saved, to put the service of Christ and His Kingdom above all else, if wronged to forgive as I expect to be forgiven, to seek always to keep myself mentally alert and physically fit, as much as in me lies to be at peace with all men, and to lead this church in the ways of Christ as the Holy Spirit may give me wisdom and strength.

Member's covenant to the pastor of Hickory Road Baptist Church:

I promise to hear attentively the preaching of the Word, to participate reverently in the services of worship, to share with this pastor in the responsibilities of teaching and learning, to assume my proportionate part of the church's benevolent ministries, to receive him into my heart and home, to counsel with him concerning the welfare of the church and the winning of souls, to encourage him in his stand for right, to forgive him when he makes mistakes, and to follow his leadership as he follows Christ.

ARTICLE VIII. POLICY AND RELATIONSHIP

The government of this church is vested in the body of members who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (For voting rights, see Bylaws Part I. Church Membership, Section 4. Rights of Members)

All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the appropriate church authority, unless otherwise specified by church action.

This church is autonomous and is therefore subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains, the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches as part of the body of Christ, insofar as is practical this church will cooperate with and support the Etowah Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

BYLAWS

PART I. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. GENERAL

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

SECTION 2. CANDIDACY

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. A person must be present when joining the church and if not able to be present because of physical disability, a written request must be submitted. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for affirmation to proceed in becoming a member in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church.
3. Upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism according to the policies of this church when no letter is obtainable.
4. By restoration as provided in Bylaws PART I, SECTION 5.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate before being voted upon as a member, such dissent shall be referred privately to the pastor, chairman and vice chairman of deacons for a review.

Upon completing the orientation for membership, the candidate will be presented for membership in the next scheduled church conference. A three-fourths vote of church members present shall be required to elect candidates to membership.

SECTION 3. CANDIDATE ORIENTATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

All candidates for church membership shall be required to meet with the pastor and complete training. In these sessions, the candidate will participate in the church's New Member Orientation Plan and will be required to affirm and sign the church's Affirmation of Faith Statements. This will enable the candidate to become more familiar with the beliefs and workings of this church fellowship and the responsibilities inherent in being a member of this church. After the candidate's completion of these sessions and at the pastor's discretion, the candidate will then be presented for membership in the next scheduled church conference.

SECTION 4. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

Member status, defined as active or inactive, is to be determined unanimously by the Deacon Body along with the Senior Pastor and is to be documented by the church clerk. The Senior Pastor and Deacon body shall determine members' status at a minimum of once a year.

1. Every active member of the church, 12 years of age or older, is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present.
2. Every active member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church, unless otherwise specified by office requirements.

SECTION 5. DISCIPLINE

It shall be the practice of Hickory Road Baptist Church to exhaust every reasonable measure to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. Restoration rather than punishment shall be the guideline which governs the attitude of one member to another.

Should some serious condition exist in which a member becomes a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18:15-35. If, upon the recommendation of the pastor and the chairman of deacons, it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, this matter will be brought before the church in conference. A three-fourths vote of the members present is required to remove someone from the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be conducted in a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any persons previously excluded, upon request by the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation, in accordance to ARTICLE 1 SECTION 2 PART 1 of the bylaws.

SECTION 6. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-11), the church will require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblical principles without reliance on the secular courts. When consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church will encourage the use of biblical principles and the avoidance of suits of law to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or non-Christian and whether individuals or corporate entities.

PART II. CHURCH OFFICERS AND MINISTRY TEAMS

Only members of this church shall be eligible to serve as officers of the church and on church committees. The officers of this church shall be the pastor, elders, directors, the pastoral staff, the deacons, a moderator, a clerk, a treasurer, and trustees.

SECTION 1. PASTOR (Preaching Elder)

A. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTOR

The pastor is responsible for overseeing the ministry and the resources of the church. The pastor will seek the mind of Christ through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God as he shepherds the flock of God. He will be given to prayer, study, and teaching of the Word; he will gladly and honorably shepherd the flock, teach and exhort, refute those who contradict the truth, pray for the sick, and care for the souls of the church members. The pastor will also be responsible for:

1. Interviewing candidates for membership.
2. Examining and recommending all prospective candidates for offices including elders, pastoral staff, and deacons.
3. Overseeing the work of the deacons.
4. Conducting worship services, administering baptism and the Lord's Supper.
5. Equipping the members for the work of the ministry, encouraging sound doctrine, overseeing Church Discipline, and mobilizing the church for missions.

He shall be the church moderator and preside at all meetings of the church except as might hereafter be provided and shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees of the church.

B. SELECTION OF THE PASTOR

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs.

ELECTION OF THE PASTOR SELECTION COMMITTEE

A pastor selection committee shall be elected by the church at large to seek a suitable pastor. This committee will be composed of five persons selected as follows:

1. At a regular Sunday morning service of the church, slips of paper will be passed out to all voting members and nomination of no more than ten persons will be written on such slips by each voting member present.
2. The ten members receiving the highest number of nominations and willing to serve will be selected, and these names will be presented to the church on a subsequent Sunday morning church service.
3. From these nominations, the five members receiving the highest number of votes will become the pastor selection committee of five. The deacon body will be responsible for both dispersing and counting the ballots.

PROCESS FOR SELECTING A PASTOR

1. The pastor selection committee is responsible for seeking resumes, interviewing, and determining the qualifications of perspective pastors for the church.
2. The pastor selection committee shall bring to the church, for consideration, only one man at a time, and its recommendation shall constitute a nomination.
3. One week's notice must be given to the church before a man is brought to the church for consideration.
4. An opportunity for the congregation to meet with the prospective pastor will be provided prior to the Sunday that he will be voted upon by the church.
5. The election shall be held at a special called conference immediately following the service that has been conducted by the prospective pastor. Election shall be by secret ballot with an affirmative vote of three fourths of the voting members present and voting being necessary to elect.
6. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request.

C. TERMINATION OF PASTOR

The Pastor shall give at least two weeks' notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities. However, the length of stay after resignation will be determined by the Deacon Fellowship. Compensation shall be no less than 1/12 of annual salary unless otherwise stated herein.

In the event that a problem occurs between all or any portion of the congregation and the Pastor, it is the intent of the Constitution, By-laws, and Practice and Procedure Manual to exhaust every avenue possible to resolve the problem in accordance with Scripture.

CHURCH DECLARATION OF THE OFFICE OF PASTOR VACANT

The church may vote in conference to declare the office of Pastor vacant under the following guidelines:

1. Any request to declare such an action must be presented in written form to the Deacon Fellowship after all attempts to resolve the problem with the pastor have been exhausted.
2. The conference to declare the office of Pastor vacant may be called upon recommendation by three-fourths vote of the Deacon body.
3. A one week written notice, explaining the purpose of the conference, must be given to the membership.
4. The vice-moderator shall preside at the conference.
5. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot (no absentee ballot).
6. An affirmative vote by three-fourths of the active members present, in accordance to SECTION 4 RIGHTS OF MEMBER ITEM 1 shall be necessary to declare the office vacant.
7. The termination shall be immediate. In cases of proven immoral activity and gross misconduct by the pastor, as determined by the Deacon Fellowship, the church shall not be obligated for further compensation to the pastor.

SECTION 2. ELDERS

A. Function of Elders

1. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-7 (the role of the twelve), 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:17; James 5:14; and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the elders will help the pastor in overseeing the ministry and the resources of the church.

2. The elders will be no less than three men who meet the qualifications of the office as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9. Only men can serve as elders in accord with 1 Tim. 2:12, 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9, and following the example elsewhere set forth in Scripture. All elders must be wholeheartedly in agreement with the Congregational Affirmation of Faith and Church Covenant. These men will be recognized by the church as gifted and willing to serve in this calling, and they will be received as gifts of God to the church and set apart as elders. If an insufficient number of qualified men are available then the church is not required to have three elders and should seek the leadership of a biblically qualified preaching elder, Titus 1:5.

3. An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or dismissal. Any member with reason to believe that an elder ought to be dismissed should express such concern to the elders, and, if need be, only afterwards to the congregation. Any such action ought to be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:17-21. Any elder may be dismissed by a vote of 66% of the members at any members' meeting of the church.

Discipline of an elder for immorality, heresy or a divisive spirit will be conducted in the following manner: The pastor and other elders will talk to the elder in question, encouraging an attitude of repentance in him. If he does not show signs of repentance by correcting his behavior, the pastor and elders shall give him 30 days to seek true repentance in his closet with the Lord. During that time, the elder shall cease to function in all his church duties. If the pastor and elders do not feel that proper changes in behavior and attitude are evident in the elder in question after the 30-day period, his resignation will be submitted and accepted.

4. The board of elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities without congregational approval. They may propose paid staff positions for congregational approval. The board of elders have the primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, evaluation, and termination of staff members, any of which they may delegate to others. Should the need arise; the board of elders may appoint a member to an "acting office," excluding the office of elder. This appointment would then be subject to a congregational vote at the next members' meeting.

5. The pastor (preaching elder) will serve as chairman and will moderate all elders meetings, church council meetings, and church conference meetings. In his absence, the elders will appoint another to fill his place.

6. From time to time the church may grant to an elder an appropriate sabbatical, which must be passed by a vote of 75% of the members present at any members meeting.

B. Election of Elders

1. – Principles

The election of officers ought to be undertaken with substantial prayer both individually and corporately, and the process ought to express a spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. – Selection of Officers

a. The elders should seek input and nominations from the membership. Those submitted for the office of elder shall have been a member of Hickory Road Baptist Church for a minimum of two years. These nominations for any office within the church will go to the elders for their approval. Only elder-approved nominees will be presented to the congregation.

b. The elders will present to the church a list of nominees for offices at least two weeks prior to voting. Any member with reason to believe a candidate nominated by the elders is unqualified for an office should express this concern to the elders as soon as possible.

c. The chairman of the elders will declare elected all persons receiving a 75% majority of all votes cast for any office. Each candidate will be presented to the congregation on a “yes” or “no” ballot. The persons elected will assume office at the beginning of the fiscal year unless another date has been specifically designated. Elections to fill any vacancies that may occur during the course of the year may be held at any members’ meeting upon the recommendation of the elders. In order to insure the smooth flow of ministries and to ease the creation of new ministries, the elders may appoint a member to an “acting position” until the congregation can vote on this decision.

SECTION 3. MINISTRY DIRECTORS

Ministry Directors-those members appointed by the pastor and affirmed by the congregation by a vote of 75 % in church conference, to serve annually and give oversight to particular ministry teams/ team leaders in the church.

SECTION 4. CHURCH STAFF

The church staff shall include both pastoral staff members and non-pastoral staff members. Church approval is required if the need is determined for additional pastoral staff members.

The following guidelines must be observed:

1. A recommendation to bring on additional staff must be presented to the church by the pastor.
2. A job description is required for each staff member.
3. The salary of each staff member should be determined by the pastor, personnel team, and budget and finance team before being presented to the church for approval.
4. The pastor may organize, at his discretion, a search team to aid him in seeking candidates to fill such offices.
5. Those staff members, of whom the church requires evidence of a personal call of God to minister, shall be called by church vote in conference.

A pastoral staff member shall give at least two weeks' notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as a staff member. However, the length of stay after resignation will be determined by the pastor (or deacon fellowship in the absence of a pastor).

Upon recommendation of the pastor, the church may terminate a pastoral staff member by majority vote. If termination shall be immediate, two weeks' salary will be paid, in the absence of gross misconduct.

SECTION 5. DEACON MINISTRY FELLOWSHIP

1. In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministry tasks; proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; care for church members and other persons in the community; aid the church to achieve its mission.
2. The number of deacons shall be sufficient to minister to all the families of the church. (See Operations Manual for procedures regarding deacons)
3. There shall be no obligation to constitute as an assigned deacon one who has been a deacon in another church. But in such instances as one might be chosen by this church for assignment as deacon, his previous ordination by another church of like faith and order shall suffice for this church.

SECTION 6. MODERATOR

The pastor shall serve as moderator of the church. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator.

SECTION 7. CLERK

The church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall preserve on file all communications and written official reports pertaining to church conferences.

The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office.

SECTION 8. TREASURER

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer:

1. To receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements.

2. To render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by an auditing committee or public accountant.

All yearly financial records should be approved by the church and delivered to the church clerk to be preserved as a part of the permanent records.

SECTION 9. TRUSTEES

The church shall appoint three trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When signatures are required, trustees shall sign legal documents related to church-approved matters.

Trustees shall serve at the discretion of the church. In the event that a trustee is replaced, the state must be notified in accordance with state laws.

SECTION 10. CHURCH COMMITTEES

Unless otherwise specifically provided by church policy, all committees shall be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by the church. Other nominations can be received from the floor. Nominees for committees shall be for a one-year term except as otherwise specified in the Constitution, By-laws, and Practice and Procedure Manual.

The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and others of the pastoral staff shall be ex-officio members of committees as assigned by the pastor. The Chairman of Deacons, in the event the church is without a pastor, or during an interim pastorate, shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. (See Practice and Procedure Manual for a list of all committees, responsibilities, and procedures for the selection and election of committee members.)

PART III. CHURCH MINISTRIES/PROGRAMS

The church shall maintain ministries/programs for the purpose of discipleship, outreach, and evangelism. All organizations related to the church ministries/programs shall be authorized by the church. All ministry/program activities are subject to pastor and/or church coordination and approval. The standing ministries/programs are listed below with a summary of its purpose and organization.

1. **SUNDAY SCHOOL**-The mission of the Sunday School ministry is to teach the Word of God for the purpose of building a biblical foundation in the lives of individuals that will transform families, friends, and the community for the glory of God. The Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the church-elected Sunday School Director.
2. **LINC MINISTRY**- The mission of the "Ladies IN Christ" Ministry is to engage women with the gospel and facilitate activities that promote Biblical fellowship and growth in the grace of God. The LINC Ministry shall be conducted under the direction of the church-elected LINC Ministry director.

3. **MEN'S MINISTRY**-The mission of the Men's Ministry is to engage men with the gospel and facilitate activities that promote Biblical fellowship and growth in the grace of God. The Men's Ministry shall be conducted under the direction of the church-elected Men's Ministry director.
4. **MUSIC MINISTRY** The mission of the Music Ministry is to magnify Christ and celebrate God's presence in worship by supporting the ministries of Hickory Road Baptist Church through the creative arts. The Music Ministry shall be conducted under the direction of the church-elected music director/ minister.
5. **AWANA**-The mission of AWANA ministry is to help children and youth to know, love and serve Christ. The AWANA ministry shall be conducted under the direction of the church-elected AWANA Director.
6. **YOUTH MINISTRY**-The mission of the Youth Ministry is to teach the Word of God for the purpose of building a biblical foundation in the lives of individuals that will transform them into the likeness of Christ and prepare them for life after high school. The Youth Ministry shall be conducted under the direction of the church-elected Family/Youth minister.
7. **SMALL-GROUP MINISTRY**-The mission of the Small-Group Ministry is to engage people with the gospel and facilitate activities that promote Biblical fellowship and growth in the grace of God. The Small-Group Ministry shall be conducted under the direction of the church-elected Family/Youth minister.

Part IV. CHURCH COUNCIL

1. The church council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.
2. The Pastor shall serve as chairman.
3. The primary function of the church council shall be to recommend to the church objectives and goals, with strategies of implementing and achieving those goals, and to assess the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.
4. The church council shall have as voting members: the pastor along with the directors and elders overseeing church ministry/program leaders. Other voting members shall be added as needed by church action.
5. The church council shall serve as the recommending administrative body of Hickory Road Baptist Church.
6. All matters agreed upon by the council, which call for action not already approved, shall be referred to the church for vote.

PART V. CHURCH ORDINANCES

Section 1. Baptism

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord. The candidate for baptism shall go through a counseling session with the pastor prior to his or her baptism.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water. As an exception, only persons with physical problems and approved by the Church shall not be required to observe the immersion of water as baptism.
2. The pastor, or any other ordained male person as approved by the church, shall administer baptism.
3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.

Section 2. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper 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 at least quarterly or as otherwise scheduled.
2. The Lord's Supper shall be observed during any worship service of the church.
3. The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
4. The deacons shall be responsible for the oversight of the physical preparations of the Lord's Supper.
5. The Lord's Supper is open to all born again believers.

PART VI. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services

Worship services will be held each Lord's Day, and may be held throughout the week as the church determines. As a norm, the church will regularly meet on Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening.

Section 2. Church Year

The church year will be from January 1st through December 31st.

Section 3. Church Conference Meetings

Church Conference meetings shall be held on a designated date and time to conduct church business and receive committee/ministry reports.

Church Council, along with the pastor, shall set the agenda prior to conference. Any item of business that involves a major action by the church membership shall be given to the moderator in writing a minimum of one (1) week before such business is brought to the church in a business meeting. Any business presented in conference that is determined to be a major action, by the moderator, may be delayed a minimum of one week before being presented to the church in conference.

Any motion brought to the floor of a business meeting that requires the total expenditure of \$1,000.00 or more, and receives a second, will be deferred to the next business meeting to allow appropriate committees to report on the motion. In emergencies, the moderator may leave the motion open until the next regular service or allow the motion to proceed.

Section 4. Special Church Conference Meetings

The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A minimum of two announcements during regular church services, one of which should be on Sunday morning, must be given for the specially called business, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and time and place; and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have opportunity to be made aware of the meeting.

Section 5. Quorum

The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Section 6. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

PART VII. CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. Budget

The stewardship committee, in consultation with the church council shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses.

In accordance with the church covenant, the membership ought 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.

Section 2. Accounting Procedures

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of either the church treasurer, financial secretary, or associate treasurer and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the stewardship committee, including a routine annual audit.

Section 3. Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year shall run concurrently with the church year, which begins on January 1st and ends on December 31st.

PART VII. CHURCH OPERATIONS MANUAL

The By-laws Committee/Team of the church shall develop a church operations manual to include church policies and procedures. The By-laws Committee/Team shall review the manual as needed, with authority to recommend changes for the church to consider. The manual shall be kept in the church office. Additions, revisions, or deletions to the church Operations Manual require approval by the church in a business meeting.

PART VIII. AMENDMENTS

Changes in the Constitution and Bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the Constitution shall be by three-fourths vote of active church members present and voting. Amendments to the by-laws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the active members present and voting.

PART IX. DEFINITIONS

1. Ex-officio member – a non-voting committee member.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

Bob Dameron, Chairman
Robert Wolford, Vice Chairman
Ralph Cagle
Phil Morneault
Bryan Edenfield, Pastor and Ex-officio Member

Date Submitted to Church Oct 21, 2018

Date Approved by Church Nov 18, 2018