

NAGS HEAD CHURCH CONSTITUTION
NAGS HEAD, NORTH CAROLINA

PREAMBLE

Let all things be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40)

Let all things be done with love (1 Cor. 16:14)

Let all things be done to edify (1 Cor. 14:26)

Do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus (Col.3:17)

ARTICLE I: NAME

A. The name of this church shall be Nags Head Church.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose of Nags Head Church shall be to:

A. *Evangelize* the lost in our community through the witness of the church, and abroad through the sending and supporting of missionaries (*Mt. 28:19-20*);

B. *Edify* the saints through the exercising of the gifts and regular opportunities of corporate worship and discipleship (*Eph 4:11-16*).

ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF FAITH

A. We believe and teach that the Bible was inspired by God, and is inerrant and infallible in the original autographs, and is preserved by God in such a way as to be authoritative and totally reliable today. We also believe that it is truth without any mixture of error in all realms of reality--historically, scientifically, doctrinally and prophetically, and is our only rule of faith and practice. (*2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Ps. 19:7-11*)

B. We believe in and teach the unity and trinity of the Godhead. (*Dt. 6:4; Mt. 3:16-17; 28:19*)

C. We believe and teach that God the Father--the first person of the Trinity--is sovereign in all things. (*Ps. 8; Is. 46:10-11; Dan. 4:35*)

D. We believe and teach that Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son, the sole Mediator. We further believe and teach His pre-existence, His incarnation, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the grave, His personal, visible return from heaven. (*Lk. 1:34-35; 24:5-6; Jn. 1:1,14; 3:16; Ac. 1:11; Rom. 5:8; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 4:15*)

E. We believe in and teach the Holy Spirit, His personality and His activity in regeneration, sanctification, and preservation. (*Jn. 3:5-6; 14:26; Rom. 15:16; Eph. 1:13-14*)

F. We believe and teach that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned in Adam, and that he is now a sinner by nature and by choice. (*Gen. 1:27; Rom. 5:12,19*)

G. We believe and teach that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ apart from human merit, works or ceremonies. Those who are in Christ are eternally secure, kept by God's power to eternal salvation. (*Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 8:29,35-39; Titus 3:5*)

H. We believe and teach that the Church is the spiritual Body of Christ. He is the Head and His body is twofold in nature, that being universal and local. Also that the ordinances of the local church are two in number: baptism--the immersion of the believer in water following salvation; and the Lord's Supper--a memorial of the atoning death of Christ until He comes. (*Mt. 16:18; 28:19; Lk. 22:14-23; 1 Cor. 12*)

I. We believe and teach the resurrection of the human body; the everlasting existence of all men, either in heaven or hell; divine judgments, rewards and punishments. (*Mt. 25:46; 1 Cor. 1:51-53; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15*)

J. We believe and teach that marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church, and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel for sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. (*Gen. 1:27-28; 2:18, 21-24; Eph. 5:22-30; Col. 3:18-19*)

Therefore, we also believe and teach that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are contrary to Scripture, and perversions of God's gift of sex and are unacceptable behavior.

(*Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9*) Therefore, the directors and ordained members of the corporation shall not officiate a same-sex marriage or union.

The elders of this church are hereby charged with keeping the doctrinal purity of this body. (*Titus 1:9-13*)

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1- Church Membership

- A. Nags Head Baptist Church is composed of all those who have trusted in Christ as personal Savior, been scripturally baptized, and have been accepted into membership. The Church has the right to deny membership if the candidate:
- 1) does not confess Christ as Savior;
 - 2) has not been baptized by immersion by a church of like faith and practice;
 - 3) currently exhibits a lifestyle contrary to the Scriptures.
- B. Minor children who meet the above qualifications must be sixteen years of age to be accepted into the membership of the church. Those under-age children who are saved and baptized will be accepted into a "watchcare" relationship, and may, at age sixteen, present themselves for church membership.
- C. To become a member of the Church one must:
- 1) present him/herself to the church as a candidate for membership;
 - 2) give testimony to his/her salvation and baptism experience;
 - 3) complete the new members course within eight (8) months of applying for membership;
 - 4) agree to the doctrinal statement and bylaws of the church;
 - 5) be visited and recommended by the Elders for membership;
 - 6) be welcomed by the congregation.

Section 2- Responsibilities of Church Members

- A. Church members are responsible to obey the commands of God's Word in demonstrating a growing, maturing relationship with Christ. They shall be actively involved in service to the Body with their respective gifts and abilities, faithful in attendance of worship services and communion, and supportive in the regular giving of offerings. They shall endeavor to minister to a lost world.
- B. Church members also are responsible to abide by the doctrinal position of the church body and matters of faith and practice as expressed in this Constitution and By-laws. Upon the adoption of this constitution, all church members on roll and all new members thereafter shall be deemed to have agreed to submit to the terms and conditions of this Constitution and Bylaws.
- C. The Elders, in conjunction with the Deacons, shall regularly review the membership roll. If, after failing to uphold the responsibilities of membership for a continued period of six months (as determined by the Elders and Deacons), an inactive member shall forfeit all voice in the Church Conference. During this time the Elders and Deacons will seek to reclaim the inactive member. If, after a continued period of six additional months (one year total) of inactivity, membership shall, in Church Conference, be terminated. Those deemed by the Deacons to be shut-ins shall be exempted from this procedure.

Section 3- Discipline of Church Members

Church members who exhibit a continuing, unrepentant lifestyle of sin in regard to doctrine or conduct shall be dealt with according to the biblical process of church discipline. This is always to be done for the ultimate goals of glorifying God, purifying the church, and restoring the individual.

A. The first step in this process shall be for fervent, continual prayer to be made on behalf of the sinning member by the one who has knowledge of the sin (*James 5:16-20*). It shall also be the responsibility of any member of the church who has knowledge of a sinning member's heresy or misconduct to reprove and seek to correct and restore the sinning member in private (*Matt. 18:15-18; Gal. 6:1*).

B. If said sinning member repents, he/she shall be considered to be restored. If said sinning member does not repent, then the reproving member shall again go to the sinning member accompanied by one or two witnesses to reprove, correct, and restore. If the sinning member still refuses to heed this reproof, it shall be brought to the attention of the Elders (*Heb. 13:17*).

C. If, after reproof from the Elders, the sinning member still fails to repent, the Elders shall tell it to the church (*Matt. 18:17*). If the sinning member still refuses to repent, the Elders shall announce the sinning member's public removal from church membership and fellowship (*Matt. 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:14-15*). There shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.

D. If after the removal of fellowship the sinning individual shows evidence of repentance, he or she shall be joyfully restored back into fellowship (as per Article 1 Section 1C).

E. If during the process of church discipline the sinning member requests his/her membership be terminated or transferred, the request will be denied.

F. These actions must be carried out with a gentle, loving, and humble attitude, and with a sensitivity to God's timing.

Section 4- Termination of Membership

Church membership may be terminated in the following ways:

A. The granting of a requested church letter of transfer from another church of like faith and practice;

B. The granting of a written request for removal from the church roll, either from the member himself/herself or from the church to which he/she is joining;

C. The death of the member;

D. Inactivity for one calendar year (see Article I, section 2C).

E. Exclusion by Church discipline of the member (section 3).

ARTICLE IV: MINISTRY STRUCTURE

Section 1- Elders

A. *Responsibilities*- The primary work of the Elders (pastors, bishops) shall be to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. Their responsibilities shall include the following:

1. General oversight of the flock (*Acts 20:28; 1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:17*)
 - a. in practical matters (*Acts 6:1-6; 11:29-30*)
 - b. in matters of doctrine (*Acts 15; 16:4*)
 - c. in matters of discipline/character (*Heb. 13:17*)
2. Shepherding and protecting the flock (*1 Pet. 5:2-3; Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17; James 5:14*)
3. Equipping the saints for the work of ministry (*Eph. 4:11*)
4. Teaching and exhorting the flock in sound doctrine (*1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12 Titus 1:9*)
5. Managing and leading God's church (*1 Tim. 3:5; 5:17*)
6. Refuting those who contradict sound doctrine (*Titus 1:9*)
7. Modeling the standard of godliness (*1 Tim. 3:1ff; 1 Pet. 5:3*)

The Elders are responsible to lead and shepherd the church body in all decision-making matters. They will at times gather the congregation for open discussion, proposals, information, prayer, and/or affirmation (see section 3). At other times, decisions will be made solely by the Elders (*Acts 6: 15; 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:17*).

The Elders are responsible to oversee and promote a high level of financial accountability through such means as the presentation of the annual budget and quarterly financial business reports. All financial records (except individual giving records of other members) shall be open to any member.

At all times church members are responsible to exercise their God-given privilege to communicate their thinking on any issue to the Elders for the purpose of together discovering the truth as revealed in God's Word. At all times the Elders are responsible to help promote and develop an educated, involved, and sufficiently informed congregation. In this manner, all members of the church body participate, although not all lead.

B. *Qualifications*- Elders shall be men who are members of the Church and meet the qualifications listed in *1 Timothy 3:1-7* and *Titus 1:5-9*.

C. *Number*- There shall be a plurality of Elders (providing there is a plurality of qualified men), with no set limit (*Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1*). The number will be determined by the number of men qualified and the need of the church. At all times, the church shall seek to have no more salaried Elders than non-salaried.

D. *Selection*- New Elders shall be added through the following process. From start to finish the process should take no less than six (6) months:

1. Any adult male member, thirty (30) years old or older, who desires the office shall express that desire to the Elders;
2. The Elders shall then examine the prospective elder for qualifications and doctrine, evaluate his willingness and ability to lead and to work with the Elders. Following examination and evaluation, the Elders will determine whether or not to continue the process.
3. The Elders shall then invite the prospective elder to attend *ex officio* their meetings.
4. The congregation will then be notified at Church Conference of the prospective Elder's desire to be appointed. For the purposes of prayer and affirmation, the congregation shall be given a period of not less than thirty (30) days to consider the nominee. Questions or concerns should during that time be directed to the Elders.
5. If, after the thirty day period, in the unanimous opinion of the Elders the nominee has been affirmed by the church body, at a special service of the Church, he shall be appointed (ordained) an elder by the Elders and recognized as such by the body.

E. *Term*- Elders shall serve continuously as long as they possess the desire, character qualities and fulfill the standards of leadership and service described above.

Any member of the church body may and should initiate church discipline against a sinning elder who is not exhibiting the character or fulfilling his responsibilities as an elder. An accusation against an elder should not be received "except on the basis of two or three witnesses" (*1 Tim. 5:19*).

F. *Termination*- Any elder may resign by written notification to the remaining Elders.

Any elder(s) may be removed from office by the unanimous decision of the remaining elders for any of the following reasons:

1. Physically incapacitated;
2. Spiritually or morally unqualified, or failure to fulfill his responsibilities or meet the qualifications for the office.
3. Doctrinally unqualified: fails to agree with the doctrinal statement of the church.

If his removal is because of sin, and he refuses to repent, he is to be dealt with as outlined under Article 1, Section 3 "Discipline of Members", and is to be "rebuked in the presence of all" (*1 Tim. 5:20*).

G. *Meetings*- Meetings of the Elders shall be held on a regular basis at a time, date and place of their choosing. Special meetings can be called by any elder and require that each elder be given at least 48 hours advance notice. A majority of Elders currently serving shall constitute a quorum. Elders shall operate under the principle of total unanimity among themselves in all decision-making matters (*1 Cor. 1:10; Acts 15:25; Phil. 2:2*).

H. *Pastor-Teacher*

1. Duties and responsibilities- The Pastor-Teacher (P/T) holds no greater authority than the remaining Elders other than that of influence, but is to be regarded as the "first among equals", providing leadership to the Elder body. He shall be responsible for the primary preaching and teaching ministries of the church (*Eph. 4:11*), the conducting of all public and regular services, and the general oversight of the church. He is accountable to the Elders.
2. Selection and call- In the event of a vacancy in the office of P/T:
 - a. The Elders shall appoint a "Pastor-Search Team" from the membership at-large to seek out and recommend to the Elders, who, with their unanimous agreement, shall then recommend to the Church a man whose qualifications have been examined and are found to fit the needs of the Church. The Elders shall inform the church of the names of the "Pastor-Search Team".
 - b. The call of the P/T shall take place at a Church Conference set aside especially for that purpose. The extension of a call shall be made upon an affirmation of three-fourths of the members present at the Conference. Affirmation shall be by secret ballot. Only one P/T candidate shall be considered at a time.
3. Interim leadership- The Elders shall be responsible for the duties and responsibilities of the P/T until a new P/T has started.
4. Termination- The P/T may be terminated from service by the following procedure:
 - a. The P/T shall serve under a continuing call until the pastoral relationship is dissolved at the request of the P/T or the Elders. The P/T must give at least four (4) weeks' advance notice in writing of his intention to resign his position, unless otherwise mutually agreed.
 - b. If the Elders are convinced that it would be in the best interest of the P/T and the Church to dissolve the relationship, the Elders shall call a special meeting with the P/T to resolve the differences. If agreement cannot be reached, the Elders may call a special Church Conference in order to recommend to the Church that the membership affirm their decision to terminate the pastoral relationship. If two-thirds of the members present (by secret ballot) agree to terminate the relationship, the P/T call shall end. Arrangements for a severance agreement would be made by the Elders.

Section 2- Deacons

A. *Responsibilities*- Deacons responsibilities shall be as follows:

1. To assist the Elders so that the Elders may be released to be devoted to "prayer and the ministry of the Word" (*Acts 6:2-4*);
2. To administrate the benevolence ministries of the church, and any practical tasks assigned by the Elders;
3. To be an example of servanthood to the Church (*Acts 6:2-4; Mt. 23:11; 1 Tim. 3:13*).
4. The Deacons are accountable to the Elders.

B. *Qualifications*- A deacon must exhibit the characteristics as listed in *1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3*.

C. *Number*- There shall be a plurality of Deacons (provided there are qualified men). The number shall be determined by the Elders and Deacons, according to the number qualified and the need of the Church (*Acts 6:3*).

D. *Selection*- Deacons shall be selected by the following procedure:

1. Selections shall be held annually to fill new positions, or as the need for additional Deacons requires.
2. Deacon candidates shall be nominated by the congregation (*Acts 6:3*) to the Elders. Upon approval of the Elders, with the consultation of the Deacon body, the candidates shall begin and complete a course of Deacon training. Thereafter the candidates shall be recommended to the congregation for approval.
3. Not less than thirty (30) days after the recommendation, at a regular or special called Church Conference, the congregation shall give affirmation to the candidates. By secret ballot, a three-fourths majority shall be required.
4. The new deacon(s) shall begin service immediately. Soon thereafter, at a special service of the Church the new deacon(s) shall be ordained (appointed) to the office.

E. *Term*- Deacons will serve continuously as long as they possess the character qualities and fulfill the standards of ministry and service described above.

Any member of the church body may and should initiate church discipline against a sinning Deacon who is not exhibiting the character or fulfilling the responsibilities of a Deacon.

F. *Termination*- Any Deacon may resign by written resignation to the Elders. Any Deacon may be removed from office by the unanimous decision of the Elders for any of the following reasons:

1. Physically incapacitated;

2. Spiritually or morally unqualified or fails to fulfill their responsibilities or meet the qualifications outlined in this document.
3. Doctrinally unqualified- fails to agree with the doctrinal statement of the church.

If a deacon's removal is because of sin and he refuses to repent, he is to be dealt with as outlined under Article 1, Section 3 "Discipline of Members".

G. *Meetings*-Deacons shall meet on a regular basis at a time and place of their choosing. Special Deacons' meetings may be called by the Deacons when needed, with at least 48 hours advance notice.

Section 3- Church Conference

A. *Meeting times and place*: Church Conferences may be called by the Elders periodically throughout the year as they feel necessary for the good of the church and to share vision and communications vital to the church's health. Regular financial reports from the treasurer will be made available to the church within thirty days of the close of each quarter. **

An annual Church Conference shall be held in the last quarter of the year at a date no later than the second Sunday of December and announced two weeks in advance to approve the annual church budget and affirm annually elected stewards. The church fiscal year shall begin January 1 and end December 31. All conferences, barring unforeseen reasons (ie. the building being unusable), will be held at the church's facility. **

B. Agendas

1. Agendas and motions for any Church Conference must be published in writing one week in advance of the meeting to consider any *substantive matter*.

Substantive matters shall be those of major importance, but not limited to: affirmation of the annual budget; affirmation of new elders and deacons; selection of full-time ministry staff; selection of messengers to conventions; any acquisition or disposition of real estate; the incurring of any indebtedness (other than current operating expenses).

2. Agendas need not include *routine matters* prior to the meeting, but such matters may only be discussed after the published agenda and *substantive matters* have been covered.

C. Procedures

1. The operation of any Church Conference shall follow biblical principles of order and courtesy (*1 Cor. 14:40; Rom. 14:19; Phil. 2:1-5*).
2. The presiding officer (moderator) shall be an elder appointed annually by the Elders.

D. *Quorum*- The members present shall constitute a quorum. If, in the opinion of the Elders, a sufficient number of members is not present, the Elders may use discretion in re-scheduling the Conference.

Section 4- Ministry Staff

A. *Responsibilities*- Ministry Staff responsibilities shall be determined by the Elders. They are responsible to serve under the general oversight of the Elders.

B. *Qualifications*- Every individual on the Ministry Staff should be striving to the goal of the character defined of an Elder or Deacon. The Pastor-Teacher must have these qualities and serves as an elder. Other staff members may become elders or deacons as they go through the selection process. Ministry Staff may be salaried or non-salaried.

C. *Number*- Size of the Ministry Staff shall be prayerfully determined by the Elders

D. *Selection*- The Elders shall act as a search team or designate a search team as they see fit for all full-time Ministry Staff positions. (*For Pastor-Teacher see Article IV Section H 2.*) This team shall, after prayerful consideration and unanimous consensus, present the prospective Ministry Staff member to the church in Conference. A three-fourths majority of members present shall constitute selection.

E. *Termination*- Any Ministry Staff member may resign by written notification to the Elders. At least thirty (30) days notice is to be given regarding their resignation, unless a shorter time is mutually agreed upon by the Ministry Staff member and Elders. (*For Pastor-Teacher see Article IV Section H 4.*)

Section 5- Other Paid Employees

The Elders shall oversee all church employees or may delegate such authority. The oversight includes, but is not limited to: employment; designation of responsibilities; supervision; and termination. Employees are responsible to the Elders unless otherwise designated.

Section 6- Church Stewards

A. *Selection*- The Elders, with the consultation of the Deacons, shall select such Church Stewards as *Treasurer, Clerk, Trustees* and any others needed to assist in the performance of their duties. The Church Stewards may not be Elders.

Trustees: shall be owners of real property in the state of North Carolina; shall have charge of and hold in trust for legal purposes all Church property and physical equipment, but shall have no power to buy, sell, lease, or transfer any property without the authorization of the Church; shall annually review church insurance policies, and update as needed; shall serve three (3) year terms, staggered so that each year a new trustee is selected.

Treasurer: shall be the custodian for all Church monies; shall keep a correct record of receipts and expenditures; shall make quarterly and annual reports of the same to the Church; shall serve one year terms which may be successive. All expenditures shall be paid as directed by the annual budget. Other expenditures not covered by the budget shall be paid as directed by the Elders. Church expenditures shall be paid by check. Upon resignation or appointment of a new treasurer all financial books and records shall be returned to the Elders.

Clerk: shall keep accurate minutes of each Church Conference; shall keep accurate records of church membership; shall serve one year terms which may be successive. The minutes and membership records are property of the Church and shall be returned to the Elders upon resignation or appointment of a new clerk.

Section 6 - Ministry Teams

The Elders shall organize or delegate the authority to organize Ministry Teams for any reason deemed necessary for the proper functioning of the church. These Ministry Teams shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties, powers, and length of tenure specifically delegated to them.

ARTICLE V: GENERAL

A. Policies and Procedures

The Elders shall be responsible for compiling and maintaining a *Policies and Procedures Manual* for the day-to-day administrative functions of the Church not covered in the Constitution and By-laws. Subjects covered shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- * Personnel policies and procedures;
- * Church property policies and procedures;
- * Missions policies and procedures;
- * Annual audit of church financial records by an external auditor;
- * Other policies and procedures as needed.

The *Policies and Procedures Manual* shall be available from the Church Clerk for review by any member of the congregation. Any suggested changes or additions shall be recommended to and decided by the Elders.

B. Exempt Status*

Nags Head Baptist Church is organized exclusively for exempt purposes. Therefore, it will engage in religious, charitable or educational purposes. It will not engage in nonexempt purposes.

C. Procedures for Distribution of Assets upon Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of Nags Head Baptist Church due to any cause, the assets will be distributed as follows:

1. All real and personal property owned by the Church will be sold;
2. All debts will be paid in full;

3. All Church employees will be given 6 months salary. If insufficient funds remain, they will be split proportionately, based upon salary, among Church employees.

4. All remaining funds will be distributed at the discretion of the Elders of Nags Head Baptist Church (if no Elders remain, at the will of the congregation) to one or more organizations which qualify as an exempt organization as described in Sections 501(c)(3) and 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or the corresponding provision of any prior or future law.

ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS/CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

This document shall be reviewed at least annually by the Elders. Amendments can be made only by the unanimous consent of the Elders and affirmation by the church. Proposed amendments/changes will be posted publicly for a period of thirty (30) days for the purpose of consideration by the church body through the following means:

A. Prayer by the church body;

B. Question or comment by the church body regarding the proposed amendments/changes should be directed to an elder;

C. At the called Church Conference a vote shall be taken regarding the proposed changes. A two-thirds vote of members present shall constitute adoption of the proposed changes.

Adopted by the Church September 14, 1994

*Amended by the Church January 23, 2000

** Amended by the Church January 29, 2012