

New Hope Baptist Church of Imlay City, Constitution and Bylaws

PREFACE

THE CHURCH DEFINED:

It is from the New Testament primarily, if not really exclusively that the real meaning and idea of the Church is derived. The Christian Church is a New Testament institution, beginning with Pentecost and ending with the rapture.

Two words are of special importance in this connection:

A) Ecclesia: from two Greek words meaning "to call out from." This word is used in all about one-hundred-eleven times in the New Testament. It is used in a secular sense in Acts 19:39. "It shall be determined in a lawful assembly;" of Israel in the wilderness (Acts 7:38), and the assembly of believers in Christ (Matt. 16:18; 18:17, 1Cor. 1:2; Eph. 5:25-27). In keeping with this idea the saints are said to be the "called out ones" (Rom. 8:30; 1Cor. 1:2; cf. 2Cor. 6:17)

B) Kuriakon: that which belongs to the Lord. We have the "supper of the Lord" (1Cor. 11:20); the "day of the Lord" (Rev. 1:10). See also Luke 22:25 and Romans 14: 8-9, as illustrating that over which the Lord has dominion and authority.

DESCRIPTION: The Church is composed of the body of believers who have been called out from the world, and who are under the dominion and authority of Jesus Christ.

*The Great Doctrines of the Bible Author: William Evans, D.D. Moody Press Chicago copyright 1912 (ISBN0-8024-3300-6)

Note* The purpose of this preface is to biblically define and clarify the true meaning of Christ's Church.

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

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CONSTITUTION
OF
NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH
Imlay City, Michigan

PREAMBLE

We the members of New Hope Baptist Church of Imlay City, Michigan, hereby adopt the following constitution, which is based on biblical principles. This constitution is neither a substitute for nor a supplement to the Word of God. It is simply a systematic review of the doctrines and their application to practical matters as taught by the New Hope Baptist Church of Imlay City, Michigan. It is a guide to aid in the application of biblical principals to Church policy. The Word of God shall be the first and final authority on all Church matters, and any issue whereon this constitution is silent shall be governed by the clear statement of the Word of God.

ARTICLE ONE

NAME

The name of this Church shall be NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH. This organization is incorporated under the laws of the state of Michigan section 92 of Act 327, Public Acts of 1931 as amended. It is a non-profit organization the sole objective of which is to teach and preach the Word of God, and, to that end, shall maintain a Church and provide a place of public worship in the county of Lapeer, State of Michigan: may establish, maintain and conduct schools for religious instruction of the young; shall further other religious and charitable work, and, to that end, may make all rules and regulations deemed necessary and expedient for the management of its affairs in accordance with the law; and shall, take, manage, hold, lease, mortgage, and dispose of real and personal property, and borrow money, if necessary, to accomplish these purposes.

ARTICLE TWO

PURPOSE

This congregation which shall be known as NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH of Imlay City, Michigan,

shall have as its primary purpose to be the fulfillment of the Great Commission given us in Matthew 28:19-20: go win, baptize, and teach converts until Jesus Christ returns.

A. GO: We believe it is the responsibility of the Church to reach the lost through every scriptural means, such as personal soul winning and tract evangelism, and not to rely merely on evangelism from the pulpit. It is the responsibility of every Christian to seek opportunities to witness for Christ.

B. WIN: Soul winning is not a responsibility reserved only for Pastors and Deacons but is to be accepted as the responsibility of all members of this body. Soul winning is not merely witnessing or testifying. It is making disciples.

C. BAPTIZE: Immersion of the believer in water is a testimony of the convert's identification in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and should be the first act of obedience following salvation. Those believers saved through personal soul winning efforts or in the public invitation during the preaching services should be baptized as soon as they are able to give a clear testimony of their salvation.

D. TEACH: Regular services and classes shall be held for the purpose of teaching of the Word of God to the believers. Teaching shall include doctrines, principles, commandments, and facts found in the Word of God. The King James Version of the Bible shall be used in all reading of scriptures at the Church premises.

ARTICLE THREE

COVENANT: Having been lead by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into this covenant with each other as a local assembly of the body of Christ.

We shall ever seek to allow the Holy Spirit full freedom to do His work of convicting, converting, cleansing, empowering, teaching, comforting, and guiding. We determine by the power of the Holy Spirit, that ours shall be a faith that is balanced in every area of life; that we shall maintain a spiritual walk in practical matters as well as spiritual matters. With the help of God, we shall strive for our services to be fervent and scriptural; for every member to be a witness, and every preacher to be a prophet of the whole counsel of God. We determine to walk together in Christian love; to work for the advancement of this Church in holiness, knowledge of God's word, and soul winning; to be faithful in its worship, ordinances, discipline, preaching of the truth and doctrines; to give cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, to the relief of the poor, and to the spread of the gospel throughout the world. We determine to maintain personal and family devotions and to train our children in the fear and admonition of the Lord; to seek the salvation of our loved ones and acquaintances; to live separated lives from that which is worldly; to be honest and faithful in our business; to walk daily in a manner that honors the Lord Jesus Christ, and to avoid participation in activities that would bring reproach to His name; to be zealous in our

love and service for the Lord; to discern our spiritual gifts and employ them in this local Church. We further determine to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation. We further determine that if we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other Church where we can carry out the principles of the Word of God.

ARTICLE FOUR

ARTICLES of FAITH

SECTION 1: DOCTRINE OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that every word of the original autographs of the scriptures was breathed out by God Himself (II Timothy 3:16-17); that by virtue of the superintendence and empowering of the Holy Spirit, the human writers of the scriptures wrote not their private interpretations but the very words of God (II Peter 1:19-21), preserved from error of any kind on any subject whatsoever (John 10:35). We believe that the scriptures are, therefore, the unique, absolute, and authoritative standard of faith and practice, to be studied, proclaimed, obeyed and defended (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 19:7-11; John 17:17; Jude 3-4); that they are to be interpreted literally, historically, and grammatically (Matthew 12:39-41; II Peter 1:16) unless the context clearly indicates otherwise (John 6:35,51:58; 10:7;15:1); and that every portion is without exception profitable for doctrine and Christian growth (II Timothy 3:16). We believe, therefore, that the denial of their inerrant authority contradicts the clear position of Christ and the apostles and thus undermines all facets of their doctrines as reliable for faith and practice; that the sixty-six books of the Bible constitute the complete and only authoritative revelation of God to man (I Corinthians 14:37; II Peter 3:15-16); and that anyone who adds to or takes away from this completed revelation is cursed of God (Revelation 22:18-19).

SECTION 2: DOCTRINE OF GOD

A. EXISTENCE

We believe in one unique and infinite God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:21-22; John 17:3), the supreme ruler of heaven and earth (Psalm 104; Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:25, 35; Matthew 6:26-30), whose existence, clearly evident from what He has created and innately recognized by the conscience of man (Romans 1:19-20), has always been and shall always be (Genesis 21:33; Deuteronomy 33:27 ; II Peter 3:8; Psalm 90:2-4).

B. SPIRITUALITY

We believe that God is a spirit (John 4:24), and as such is an immaterial (Luke 24:3-9), invisible (John 1:18; Romans 1:20; Colossians 1:1; Timothy 1:17; 6:16), and life giving (Psalm 36:9; John

5:26) person.

C. TRIUNITY

We believe that God comprises three distinct persons in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit coequal in every divine perfection and fulfilling distinct yet harmonious functions within the Godhead (Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:4; John 16:13-14).

D. TRANSCENDENCE

We believe in the infinite and unlimited transcendence of God; in perfection, holiness (Exodus 15:11; Psalm 99:9; Isaiah 6:3; 1 Peter 1: 15-16) and immutability (Psalm 102:27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17); in knowledge, omniscience (Proverbs 15:3; Isaiah 46:10; Hebrews 4:13); power, omnipotence (Isaiah 40; Matthew 19:26; Luke: 1:27; Ephesians 3:20; Job 42:2); and in presence, omnipresence (Psalm 139).

E. IMMANENCE

We believe in the immanence of God, as evidenced by His gracious love for and merciful interaction with the creation, notably with man (Psalm 103), demonstrating His trustworthiness (Psalm 100:5; John 17:3; I John 5:20; Romans 3:4); righteousness (II Chronicles 12:6; Ezra 9:15; II Timothy 4:8; Revelation 6:4) and goodness, love (I John 4:7-8), benevolence (Psalm 145:9; Matthew 5:45; Acts 14:17), mercy (Ephesians 2:4; James 5:11; I Peter 1:3), and grace (Romans 5:21; II Corinthians 12:9; Titus 2:11).

F. CREATORSHIP

We believe that God directly created out of nothing the universe and all that is in it, including mankind, as literally set down in Genesis 1-2; that all theories of evolution, secular or religious, not only deny observable natural law but also deny the veracity of the scriptures and undermine the rightful authority of God over His own creation (Genesis 1:31; Isaiah 45:11-12,18; John 1:3; Romans 5:12; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

G. PROVIDENCE

We believe that God providentially oversees the affairs of the universe, both spiritual and physical, sustaining and guiding it according to His predetermined purpose (Nehemiah 9:6; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3); that on occasion He has used literal miracles to bring about His will (notably in the days of Moses, of Elijah and Elisha, and of Christ and His apostles); that even those things that are inherently bad and evil cannot ultimately thwart His will, but become tools in His hand to bring about the divine consummation of history (Psalm 76:10; Acts 4:25-28).

SECTION 3: DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. DEITY

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God, coequal with the Father and the Son, as demonstrated by His attributes (I Corinthians 2:10; Psalm 139:7; Hebrews 9:14), works (Genesis 1:21; II Peter 1:21; Luke 1:35; John 16:8; John 3:5-6; Titus 3:5; Romans 8:26-27; II Thessalonians 2:13), and association within the Trinity (II Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:30; Matthew 28:19).

B. PERSONALITY

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a distinct person of the Godhead and as such possesses the attributes of personality (Acts 5:3, 9; 7:51; Matthew 12:31; I Corinthians 2:11 Ephesians 4:30; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14).

C. WORK

i. WITHIN THE GODHEAD

We believe that the Holy Spirit participated in the creation of the universe; that He empowered the writers of scripture to pen the very breathed-out words of God, that he bears witness to the truth; and that He testifies of Christ and brings honor to Him (Genesis 1:2; II Peter 1:19-21; John 16:13-15; John 15:26).

ii. IN RELATION TO BELIEVERS

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the agent of the new birth (John 3:5-7; Titus 3:5; II Corinthians 5:17); that He baptizes all true believers into the body of Christ (Mark 1:8; I Corinthians 12:13), indwelling (John 14:16-17; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19), sanctifying them, and thereby sealing them unto the day of full redemption (Romans 8:26) and gives gifts to each believer (Romans 12:6-8; I Corinthians 12: 8-11; I Peter 4:10-11), empowering (Acts 4:31; Ephesians 5:18), guiding (Galatians 5:16, 25; Romans 8:14), and teaching them (I Corinthians 2: 12-13); that the true test of His control is not how spiritually gifted a person is, nor what supernatural experience he or she enjoys, but that the person honors Christ as Lord, living in love toward the Church and in obedience to the scriptures (I Corinthians 12:1-11; 14:16-17, 26; Galatians 5:22-6:1),

iii. IN RELATION TO THE WORLD

We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; that He restrains the Evil One in the world until God's purpose is fulfilled (Genesis 6:3; John 16:7-11; II Thessalonians 2:6-7).

SECTION 4: DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

A. PERSON

We believe that Jesus Christ is the unique, eternal Son of God (John 1:14,18; 3:16,18; Hebrews 11:17; I John 4:9), one Person consisting of two natures, human and Divine.

i. HIS DEITY

We believe that God the Son, Jesus Christ is completely God, possessor of divine attributes and agent of divine works, to be worshipped and honored as Jehovah God Himself (John 1:14, 18; 3:16-18; Hebrews 1:8; I John 5:20; John 1:3; Isaiah 42:5, 45:12; Philippians 2:10-11; Isaiah 45:21-23; Matthew 3:3; Isaiah 40:3; John 12:41; Isaiah 6:3; Hebrews 1:10-12; Psalm 102:25-27; Ephesians 4:7-8; Psalm 68:18; Genesis 3:15; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 9:6).

ii. HIS HUMANITY

We believe by virtue of His incarnation and virgin birth, Jesus Christ is completely man, yet without sin, able to function as both our mediating advocate and sustaining comforter (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14; Romans 8:34; Philippians 2:6-8; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; I John 2:1).

B. WORK

We believe that according to the will of the Father, Jesus Christ took upon himself human nature, laying aside the prerogatives of Deity, that He lived His early life without sin or sins, and voluntarily sacrificed Himself on the cross in bloody death once and for all on behalf of mankind, bearing the sins of the entire race in His own body; that in so doing He paid sin's penalty and appeased the wrath of God {"Sufficient for all; efficient for some."}; that He arose again bodily from the grave to die no more and is exalted to the right hand of God to reign forever; that only in Him, by virtue of His exalted person and vicarious work, can man find salvation from sin and death Isaiah 53; Mark 10:45; John 10:11; Romans 5:8; II Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:8-11; I Peter 3:18; I John 2:2; I Corinthians 15: 3-8; Matthew 28; Mark 16: 1-14; Luke 24; John 14:5 Acts 4:12).

SECTION 5: DOCTRINE OF MAN

We believe that man was created in the image of God and is, therefore unique among all God's creation; that in Adam man willfully sinned against God, thus forfeiting his original innocence and alienating the entire race from God and eternal life; that every man from Adam's fall onward is a sinner by birth and by choice, utterly incapable apart from God of escaping his sinful condition or its rightful eternal punishment (Genesis 1:26; 2:7; 3:1-9; 9:6; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Psalm 51:5; 58:3; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10-23; 5:12, 17-19; I Corinthians 15:21-22; James 3:9).

SECTION 6: DOCTRINE OF ANGELS

A. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

We believe that angels are spirit beings, created by God to serve as His ministers (Job 38: 4; 7; Hebrews 1:14; Psalm 104:4); that although some rebelled against God and thus are forever wicked and doomed, they all were created sinless and pure (Jude 6; Genesis 1:31); that their ministries and ranks differ, but they are not to be worshipped (Revelation 19:10); that their strength, appearance, and travel are beyond human capabilities (II Peter 2:11; II

thessalonians1:7); that they are immortal and do not marry (Luke 20:36; Matthew 22:30; Mark 12:25); and that their proper abode is in heaven (Jude 6).

B. GOOD ANGELS

We believe that the good angels (those that kept their first estate) are the spirit ministers of God; as such they proclaimed the birth of Jesus Christ (Luke 1:26-33; 2:13) and His resurrection (Matthew 28:2,6), as well as protecting and strengthening Him (Matthew 2:13; 4:11; 26:53; Luke 22:43); they take interest in Christians prayer and witnessing and give aid in danger and death (Hebrews 1:14; I Corinthians 4:9; I Timothy 5:21; Luke 15:10; Acts 12:7; Luke 16:22); and they also execute God's providence toward and judgment on the nations (Genesis 19:13; Daniel 10:21; Matthew 13:39; Acts 12:23; Revelation 8,9,16; 14:6-7).

C. FALLEN ANGELS

i. SATAN

We believe in one literal, personal devil, once a holy angel with God, who led the angelic rebellion against God and, hence, against His creation; that the devil is the accuser of the brethren, the destroyer of men's souls, the god of this world, whose network of demons (fallen angels) carry out his battle against God and man; that just as he cannot exceed the prescribed limits of God on his activity, so he also will not ultimately succeed, but will be rendered inactive for the thousand years of the millennium and then, subsequent to one final rebellion against Christ, be cast into the lake of fire to burn forever in utter torment (Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Luke 10:18; John 8:44; Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; Job 1 and 2; Revelation 12:9-10; I Thessalonians 2:18; II Corinthians 4:4; 11:14-15; I Peter 5:8; Matthew 25:41; I John 3:8; Revelation 20:1-10).

ii. DEMONS

We believe that when Satan rebelled against God, a great number of angels followed in his sin; that they are confirmed in unrighteousness, some chained in darkness awaiting their final judgment and others free to aid Satan in his efforts to thwart the purposes of God, inflicting disease and pain, possessing humans and animals, opposing God's children, promoting immorality, and spreading false doctrine; that they are nonetheless under the sovereign control of God, who can use them to carry out His own purpose; and that their doom in the lake of fire is sure (Daniel 10:10-14; Revelation 16:13-16; Ephesians 6:11-12; Matthew 9:33; 12:22; Acts 8:7; Mark 5:8-14; I Timothy 4:1-3; I Samuel 16:14; II Corinthians 12:7; Matthew 8:29; 25:41).

SECTION 7: DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of sinners is a gift only by the grace of God; that it is received by turning from sin unto God through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work

(John 1:12; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 9:24-25; 10:19; 12:24; I Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 1:5).

A. REGENERATION

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again by the Spirit of God; that the new birth makes one that is dead in trespasses and sins a partaker of the divine nature and of eternal life, the gift of God; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and newness of life (John 3:1-8, 33; Romans 6:23; II Corinthians 5:19; Ephesians 2:1-9; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:3).

B. JUSTIFICATION

We believe that justification is the judicial act of God whereby He declares one to be righteous, thereby pardoning his sin and imputing to his account Christ's righteousness (Acts 13:3, 9; II Corinthians 5:18-25; Romans 5:1, 8-11; Ephesians 1:7).

C. SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is an act and a process by which God sets apart all believers from sin and the world unto Himself, thus conforming them to the image of Jesus Christ, which transformation shall be made complete at the return of Christ for His saints (Romans 8:29; I Corinthians 1:2; Hebrews 10:14; Ephesians 1:3-4; 4:11-13; Thessalonians 5:23-24; Philippians 1:6; 3:21; I John 3:2; Jude 24).

D. ELECTION

We believe that God ordained before the foundation of the world those that will be saved and that His election cannot be ultimately thwarted, that this election in no way negates the responsibility of sinners to repent from sin and turn to God not that of saints to proclaim the gospel of Christ to every person (John 6:37, 44, 65; Acts 13:48; Romans 9:11, 15-16; 10:8-17; Ephesians 1:4, 11; Revelation 22:17).

E. PERSEVERANCE

We believe that all true believers will never totally or finally fall from grace; that their perseverance is in itself evidence of the reality of their profession; that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal and complete salvation (John 10:27-28; Romans 8:28-39; Ephesians 4:30; Philippians 1:6; II Timothy 1:12).

F. GLORIFICATION

We believe that when Christ comes for His Church, all believers will be transformed in a moment into His likeness, their bodies made immortal and incorruptible (Romans 8:30; I Corinthians 15:51-54; I John 3:2).

SECTION 8: DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

A. DEFINITION

i. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

We believe that the true Church, founded by the risen Christ at Pentecost, consists of all who have put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior; that the true universal Church shall never die out, although local assemblies may; that it constitutes the body of Christ; that the Church is in this dispensation the vehicle of the kingdom of God, as was the theocracy of Israel in old testament times; that just as national Israel was a mixed multitude, so the professing Church includes hypocrites alongside of the true born again believers; that those who apostatize, although they may have enjoyed spiritual benefits, reveal that they were not truly regenerate (Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; I Corinthians 10:1-12; Ephesians 1:20-23; 3:3-11,21; 5:23-32; Colossians 1:18,24; Hebrews 6:4-8; I John 2:19; Revelation 2:14-16,20,24).

ii. THE LOCAL CHURCH

We believe that the local Church is a local representative body of the Church universal; that it is a body of believers that meet together to worship God, to receive instruction, to observe the Christian ordinances and to render whatever service the gospel requires; and that the local Church is autonomous, directly responsible to Christ the Church's head (Acts 2:38, 41-47; I Corinthians 11: 17-34; Ephesians 1:1-2; 4:11-16).

a. FELLOWSHIP

We believe local Churches, while maintaining their autonomy, should fellowship and work together with Churches of like faith and practice as needs and opportunities arise (Acts 11:22; II Corinthians 8 and 9; III John 10; I Corinthians 12; I Corinthians 1: 10-13).

B. SEPARATION

We believe that the scriptures demand of the Church, corporately and individually, separation from this world's unrighteous system, repudiation of those that teach false doctrine and spread discord among the brethren, and corrective disassociation from professing brethren that are flagrantly disobedient; that the carrying out of these spiritual directives is fundamental to the spiritual integrity and survival of the Church and the individual believer; and that those professing Christian groups or individuals that refuse to obey these commands are erring brethren and should be treated as such (I John 2:15-17; Ephesians 5:11; II Corinthians 6:14-18; Matthew 7:15-20; II Corinthians 11:13-15; Acts 20:28-30).

ARTICLE V

BY-LAWS

SECTION I - CHURCH GOVERNMENT

We believe in the autonomy of the local Church and shall never submit to the ecclesiastical authority of any man or group of men (other than the prayerfully chosen Pastors and Deacons of this local assembly) or to any ecclesiastical or human decree that is contrary to the Word of God.

A. CONCERNING AUTHORITY

The Word of God shall be the supreme law of this Church. The will of God shall be the supreme guide. All members in full fellowship shall have the opportunity to express their desire without fear of intimidation or coercion. The will of God shall be determined by the clear statement of scripture, when possible, or by the leadership of the Pastors and Deacons under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Decisions both spiritual and temporal, will be made "in one accord" not self-willed, but seeking God's Will. When there has been genuine discernment of God's Will and sufficient teaching of God's Word, there will be one accord among the Pastors, Deacons and a majority of the assembly.

B. CONCERNING OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

We believe the scripture teaches that there are two offices of the local Church: Pastor (also called "Elder" and "Bishop") and Deacon. The Pastor(s) have the spiritual authority and responsibility of the Church. The Deacons are ministering servants of the Church.. Although these are the only offices discussed in scripture, other offices shall be authorized, as necessary, for the proper administration of Church business. These offices, while not mandatory, may include Clerk, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Trustee, Pulpit Committee, Building Committee, Music Director, Youth Director, Sunday School Superintendent, and Missions Board Director. The duties of these and other officers shall be determined by the Senior Pastor and Deacon Board members and put into writing prior to their appointment or election by the congregation.

C. CONCERNING PASTORS

While the Bible does not command a plurality of Elders for the local Church, it is permissible and advisable for the leadership of a larger local Church to provide more than one Elder (Pastor). There shall be a Senior Pastor and, as necessary, other Pastors. Although the congregation shall have the opportunity to express their desire on any issue and to vote on certain issues, the leadership of this assembly shall be provided by the Pastor(s).

Qualifications (see Appendix A)

1. The scriptural qualifications of the Pastor are those given in I Tim 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, Acts 6:4, and I Peter 5:1-4.
2. The Pastor shall be male and should be a graduate of a Bible college and be an ordained minister of the Baptist persuasion in name and conviction.
3. He must believe and unreservedly adhere to the Word of God, this Constitution and its By-Laws, the Articles of Faith, the spiritual and moral standards set forth in this document, and be uncompromising in preaching these truths.

4. He shall not have been divorced.

Duties & Responsibilities

1. The Senior Pastor shall be a spiritual leader and a preacher and teacher of the Word.
2. He shall preside over the gatherings of the Church and act as the leader of the congregation.
3. The Senior Pastor shall have ex-officio representation in all organizations and committees, but not in the capacity as a Chairman. He will be the Moderator at each meeting, unless absent, in which case the Chairman will be the Moderator. He will be able to preside at all business and official board meetings and to perform the various duties incidental to his office. He will have voting rights at all meetings except for the Deacon Board and the Trustee Board (should one be created).
4. It is the duty of the Pastor to administer ordinances of the Gospel (baptism and the Lord's Supper) and take charge of the worship services of the Church.
5. He shall have authority, with prior approval from the Deacon Board, to select Preachers, Evangelists and Missionaries to speak in this Church when he deems advisable
6. The Pastor shall articulate a vision for the congregation, train and prepare leaders, equip the saints for the work of ministry in order to evangelize the lost, care for the sick and bereaved and in various other ways guide and advance the spiritual welfare of the Church.
7. Working jointly with the Deacons and Treasurer, shall prepare an annual budget.

Calling and Selection

1. A Pulpit Committee shall be composed of three Deacons and two other spiritually-minded Church Members at-large elected by the Church at a Business Meeting.
2. The Pulpit Committee must by an 80% majority vote agree to recommend a qualified man to pastor the Church.
3. Only when the need occurs, and the membership is notified in a regular service shall the Pulpit Committee act. After a candidate comes to preach, the Congregation will discuss and vote on whether to have him come back to preach again. If so, then he will be asked to return and preach at a time agreed upon by the Pulpit Committee and the Congregation.

4. After careful examination of his person, family , ministry, doctrine, and character, they shall bring him to preach at least 2 Sunday services as a candidate and have him interviewed by the congregation.
5. The committee shall inform the congregation of the candidate's credentials prior to his visit, such as schools attended, degree type, and general experience.
6. They shall have already informed him about the proposed call, the pastoral responsibilities, tenure, and financial stipulations, along with all other matters pertaining to the Church's ministry and stand.
7. Upon proper announcement by the Pulpit Committee, the membership shall vote on the candidate's call to the pastorate by secret ballot. Voting shall take place at a Business Meeting. He shall be elected by no less than a three-fourths (75%) majority of the qualified members present.
8. The Church shall notify the candidate in writing whether they have voted to extend a call to him or not. The candidate shall notify the Church in writing whether he accepts the Church's call or not.
9. Should the candidate fail to receive the three-fourths majority or refuse the call, the Pulpit Committee shall seek out another acceptable candidate.

Tenure

1. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite term.
2. In case either the Pastor or Church shall desire to sever the pastor relationship, not less than three months notice shall be given by either party so desiring. However, this period of time may be shortened by mutual agreement.
3. Letters of resignation shall be turned in to the Chairman of the Board of Deacons.

Salary

1. The Deacons shall determine, with all due consideration for his private affairs, a reasonable rate of compensation and benefits for the Senior Pastor, and will be set prior to the time of election, and may be changed at any Business Meeting of the Church (special or regular) provided that the usual two week public notice has been given. The amount to be voted on shall be approved by the Church congregation.
2. Deacons will annually review the Salary/Benefits package no later than December first of each year for Church approval, and if need be will recommend changes in the salary/benefit package with Church approval.

Discipline or Removal

The Deacon Board has the authority to investigate the disqualifications of any Pastor, i.e., if he is guilty of heresy or immorality. A majority vote of the Deacon board is required, and then a two thirds vote of the Church members present is sufficient to dismiss the Pastor(s). The Pastor shall have the right to answer all charges brought against him in the presence of the Deacon Board before the board votes on his dismissal. Likewise the Pastor shall have the right to answer all charges in any meeting of the members called to vote on his dismissal before any vote is taken. All charges made against the Pastor must be proved beyond a shadow of any reasonable doubt. In the event of the dismissal or resignation of the Pastor, he shall be relieved of all duties immediately (shall not preach or pastor the Church), a three weeks salary shall be given as severance pay and the use of any housing for 30 days, if appropriate, pending a majority vote at a special Business Meeting called for that purpose.

D. CONCERNING DEACONS

Qualifications (see Appendix A)

1. Found in Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-13
2. He must be a tried man, have a good reputation, have a heart to serve the Lord, tithe regularly and be willing to give of his time to the services of the Lord by serving with the Pastor(s) in his local Church.
3. Must be an active member of the Church for at least one (1) year, with the exception of the first Charter Vote.
4. Must have attained the minimum age of 21 years.
5. He shall be the husband of one wife, ruling his children and his own house well.

Duties & Responsibilities

1. Shall assist the Pastor(s) in having charge of the spiritual interests of the Church.
2. With the Senior Pastor, the examination of applicants as herein provided for admission into or dismissal from the Church membership.
3. The supervision of the membership roster, and to provide the Church Clerk or secretary with information regarding the Church Rolls.
4. With the Senior Pastor, to develop and be responsible for the observance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
5. To establish, determine policies, and distribute the Benevolent Fund to meet benevolent and emergency needs,
6. To visit the sick and distressed.

7. In the absence of the Senior Pastor provide pulpit supply for the Sunday Services and leaders for the prayer meetings.
8. The Chairman of the Deacon Board or his designate, shall be responsible for all worship services in the absence of the Senior Pastor, and will act as Moderator of the Deacon Board meetings in the absence of the Senior Pastor. The Chairman shall have voting privileges as well as the other Deacons.
9. The Deacons shall be responsible to investigate reported cases of laxness on the part of committee and board members, or any other Church officers, in regard to the performance of duties and/or attendance as required by their office and take appropriate action. according to Matthew 18:15-17 (see Appendix A)
10. The Deacons shall be responsible to see that all missionaries, mission boards, and agencies, are in agreement with our basic doctrinal statement.
11. The Deacons, together with the Senior Pastor, shall supervise the visitation work so that each family of this Church is called on annually and a record kept of such calls giving date and name of family visited.
12. They shall present to the Church new members and explain their responsibilities and privileges, giving them an opportunity to make known their interests in the work of the Church.
13. As a Board the Deacons have the authority to hold a meeting which is required to dismiss any Pastor or Deacon.
14. The Deacon Board shall assist the Senior Pastor in matters relating to membership discipline and grievances. Spiritual counseling of a member is the responsibility of the Senior Pastor.
15. In the absence of a Trustee Board, the Deacons shall serve as Trustees. They shall care for the Church property and arrange for its preservation. They shall exercise only those rights given to them by the Church in respect to acquiring and disposing of property and receiving and disposing of funds. Expenditure amounts of over one thousand dollars (\$1,000) will require approval of the Congregation by a majority vote at a Business Meeting scheduled for that purpose.
16. With the Senior Pastor, the Deacons shall prepare an annual budget.
17. The Deacons shall meet once a month, unless otherwise provided, and at the call of the Chairman or any Pastor, and shall maintain permanent records of all business transactions.

18. Following the Annual meeting of the Church, the Senior Pastor and Deacon Board, unless otherwise provided, shall convene promptly for organization, election of officers, appointment of committees and formulation of rules for the government and function.
19. At least two persons, one of which (preferably, at least one should be a Deacon) shall count the offerings on a rotating basis.

Selection

1. Deacons shall be nominated and elected to the Deacon Board by active members of the Church Congregation at a Business Meeting scheduled for that purpose, with at least 4 weeks notice to the Church members of this meeting so that members can sign up as a candidates in the upcoming vote. Voting will be decided by a closed ballot. The minimum number of Deacons shall be at least 1 Deacon for every 50 members of the Church, and no more than twice that amount.
2. The Number of Deacons should be an Odd Number to prevent deadlocks at Deacon Board meetings when voting on key issues.
3. A Chairman of the Deacon Board shall be elected by a majority vote at the first Deacon Meeting at the Annual Business Meeting.

Tenure

1. Two (2) Years and can be re-elected if qualified. Cannot hold office more than 2 consecutive terms after which one year must elapse before again being elected to the office.
2. A majority of Deacons shall not be elected at one time, except for the initial Charter Election. A number of Deacons will retire annually, as determined by the Deacon Board, with replacement elections occurring annually by Dec 1st of each year.

Discipline or Removal

1. Deacons can be dismissed by a majority vote of the Deacon Board. An election for his replacement must be scheduled within a month after his dismissal at a Business Meeting scheduled for that purpose.

E. CONCERNING A FINANCIAL SECRETARY (ASSISTANT TREASURER)

Qualifications

1. The Financial Secretary must have been a member of New Hope Baptist Church for at least one (1) year, except for the initial Charter election.
2. All candidates for the position of Financial Secretary shall be active members in good standing, in full fellowship with the congregation.
3. Must be capable of understanding and transacting necessary financial business.
4. Must be familiar with filing systems and be proficient in typing and computer skills.

Duties & Responsibilities

1. Provide offering envelopes for each member.
2. Store all financial records and receipts.
3. Shall deliver immediately to his or her successor all books and records in his or her possession.
4. Assist the Treasurer or Deacons when requested.

Selection

The Financial Secretary shall be elected or re-elected at the annual election meeting when his or her tenure has expired.

Tenure

Three (3) Years.

F. CONCERNING A RECORDING SECRETARY (CLERK)

Qualifications

1. The Clerk must have been a member of New Hope Baptist Church for at least one (1) year, except for the initial Charter election.
2. All candidates for position of Clerk shall be active members in good standing, in full fellowship with the congregation.
3. Must be familiar with record keeping, taking meeting minutes, archiving documents.
4. Must be a person of discretion
5. Must be familiar with filing systems and be proficient in typing and computer skills.

Duties & Responsibilities

1. The Clerk shall have access to all non-financial records of the Church and shall be capable of setting up a record system, sufficiently able to handle Church records, Sunday School records, Missions, and records of other committees and meetings.
2. The Clerk shall not declare information concerning Church records to any member who does not hold office unless specified. She (he) shall receive permission from the Senior Pastor in such cases. Church records shall not be shown nor talked about by any officer of this Church, unless specified. If any officer discloses information about Church records, he/she shall be required to come before the Senior Pastor and Deacon Board for discipline. Their decision shall be final.
3. Shall keep the minutes of all business meetings of the Church and shall present the same to the Church for its approval.
4. Shall keep a registry of the membership of the Church, tabulating the number of members qualified to vote, noting changes as they occur, issue letters of dismissal and certificates of Christian standing, as authorized by the Church.
5. Create and sign all letters of transfer and recommendation.
6. The Clerk shall enter into the records of the Church, current events in the life of the Church that are likely to be of historical value, making the Church records a true and complete history of the Church.
7. Keep and sort paper Church records in a safe place on the Church premises.
8. Set up a system of user and administrative passwords to use the Church computer(s), and change these passwords periodically. Access to the computer(s) will be determined by the Deacon Board members.
9. Periodically archive important electronic documents in permanent (CD-ROM) storage.

Selection

The Clerk shall be elected or re-elected at the annual election meeting when his or her tenure has expired.

Tenure

Three (3) Years.

G. CONCERNING A TREASURER

Qualifications

1. The Treasurer must have been a member of New Hope Baptist Church for at least two (2) years, except for the initial Charter appointment by election.
2. All candidates for position of Treasurer shall be active members in good standing, in full fellowship with the congregation, and must be persons of discretion.
3. Must be capable of understanding and transacting necessary financial business.

Duties & Responsibilities

1. The Treasurer shall have custody of all Church and Sunday school monies. He or she shall have authority to receive, disburse, and manage all money belonging to the Church or committed to its trust in accordance with the budget or approved programs of the Church.
2. The Treasurer shall keep accurate records of all Church receipts and expenditures.
3. Make regular Quarterly and Annual reports to the Church congregation. The Treasurer may have the assistance of a professional accountant in creating and maintaining the document(s).
4. Shall collect and verify information necessary for assisting the Senior Pastor and Deacon Board in the preparation of the Church budget.
5. Supervise the counting of all monies received and arrange for the deposit of it in the designated Church bank account(s). Note: the counting of funds is to be performed in the presence of at least two members, preferably members of the Deacon Board.
6. Payment of Church bills will be by check, unless approved for direct Bank withdrawal and tracking by the Deacon Board On-Line. Bills will be paid by check only if they are approved by the Chairman of the Deacon Board, or by an appointed Deacon while he is away, and fall within the approved annual budget amounts. The Treasurer and one other person designated from time to time by the Deacons shall sign all checks.
7. The Treasurer will have responsibility for keeping records of the giving of the individual supporters of the Church and mailing these records out to members of the congregation. The Treasurer shall turn over records at the end of the fiscal business year to the Financial Secretary for archiving.

8. They shall have the assistance of the Financial Secretaries or bookkeepers as available and necessary

Selection

The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Deacon Board and approved by the Congregation for an indefinite term as a paid employee. A "Vote of Confidence" every 3 years will be held at the Annual Business meeting by members of the Congregation.

H. CONCERNING TRUSTEES

Qualifications (see Appendix A)

1. Found in Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-13
2. Unless a separate Trustee Board is created in the future, some of the Deacons will serve as the Trustees, as selected by the Deacon Board members themselves.
3. All candidates for position of Trustee shall be active members in good standing, in full fellowship with the congregation, and must be men of discretion.
4. Must be capable of understanding and transacting necessary financial business.
5. He must be a tried man, have a good reputation, have a heart to serve the Lord, tithe and be willing to give of his time to the services of the Lord by serving with the Pastor(s) in his local Church.
6. Must be an active member of the Church for at least one (1) year..
7. Must have attained the minimum age of 21 years.
8. He shall not have been divorced.

Duties & Responsibilities

1. The duties of the Trustees shall include all things attendant with the financing of Church construction, Church maintenance, and the execution of mortgages, notes, leases, deeds, contracts, and any and all other documents which may be desirable or necessary to be used in conjunction with the borrowing of money, buying and selling of Church property, real or personal. They shall not sell, mortgage or encumber the property of the Church without consent of two-thirds of the membership at a constitutionally called business meeting for that purpose.

2. It shall be the duty of the Trustees to represent the Church in certain legal matters, as required by law, and to hold in trust the property of the Church.
3. Manage the extracurricular use of Church facilities and determine charges for such use.
4. They shall be responsible for the maintenance and safekeeping of the Church's legal papers and valuables.
5. Oversee the opening, closing and setup of the building for approved meetings.
6. The members of the Board of Trustees are collectively the managing agents and business directors of the Church. They shall be responsible for the designation of a bank or banks for general banking and a depository for securities and other valuables of the Church they shall supervise the handling of trust, endowment , and similar funds for designated definite projects in which the Church is interested.
7. Any proposed non budgeted expenditures in excess \$1,000 shall be authorized by the Church.
8. They shall have direction over the janitor, be responsible for the condition of the house and grounds, and in cooperation with the Senior Pastor, they shall have supervision of the order and arrangement of the rooms for the services of the Church.
9. They shall consider the Church staff salaries before the annual meeting.

Selection

1. The Senior Pastor and Deacons shall determine the number of Trustees according to the needs of the Church.
2. The Trustees shall be selected and approved by the Deacon Board and Senior Pastor.

Tenure

1. Three (3) Years and they can not succeed themselves.

Miscellaneous

1. Meetings of the Trustees may be held at any time upon the call of the Deacon Chairman, the Senior Pastor, or any three members of the Deacon Board, provided that reasonable notice of such meetings be given.
2. They shall hold regular meetings once each month.

I. CONCERNING BUSINESS MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

Business will be handled through the Pastors, Trustees, Deacons and employees of the Church, or

members, as applicable to their sphere of responsibility.

Voting members shall be at least eighteen (18) years old and must be active members. Absentee ballots will not be allowed.

Business meetings shall be held quarterly in January, April, July and October. They will be held on the second or third Sunday evening of the month.

The dates and times of all business meetings shall be announced in a regular service preceding the business meeting by at least two weeks. Special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or by the Deacons with two weeks notice.

When major decisions are being made, such as those involving budget approval, missions support, major expenditures, election of officers, adoption or revision of standing resolutions, and calling or dismissing the Senior Pastor and/or associates, the Pastor(s) shall call a general business meeting. Nomination for new Deacons and other needed officers and committee members shall be approved by the Senior Pastor and Board of Deacons beforehand, and then approved by a vote of the voting Church members at the meeting.

Twenty (20%) percent of all voting members shall constitute a Quorum for the transaction of business. Meetings at which less than a quorum is represented may, however, be adjourned from time to time to a future date by those who attend, without further notice other than the announcement at such meetings, and when a quorum shall be present upon any such forwarded day, any business may be transacted which might have been transacted at the meeting as originally called.

J. CONCERNING DISSOLUTION AND LIQUIDATION OF PROPERTY

In the event that the dissolution of New Hope Baptist Church of Imlay City, Michigan should ever become necessary, the elected officers and active members remaining at the time of dissolution shall have full authority to enforce this provision.

i. CONCERNING AUTHORITY TO DISSOLVE

All active members shall be notified, in writing, at least ten days prior to a meeting called for dissolution of the Church. The meeting to vote on dissolution shall be carried out according to the guidelines on business meetings

ii. CONCERNING DISPOSITION OF ASSETS

In the event of dissolution, its assets shall be used to satisfy all Church debts, and the residual assets of the organization will be turned over to other non-profit organizations of like faith and practice which are exempt as organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, amended to February 1, 1992 (or its successor provision) for their religious purposes.

iii. CONCERNING SELECTION OF A RECIPIENT OF ASSETS

In the event of dissolution, the elected leaders remaining, or an authorized group from within the remaining active membership, shall propose a worthy recipient to be approved by a majority vote of those who attend the meeting called for dissolution of the Church.

iv. CONCERNING DISTRIBUTION OF ASSETS

The Deacons shall be responsible for distributing the assets. None of the assets shall be given to the members of New Hope Baptist Church.

K. CONCERNING ACQUISITION AND USE OF PROPERTY

Decisions relative to the acquisition or sale of real property shall require a three-fourths (75%) majority vote of the members at a properly called business meeting. All building, property, and equipment shall be used only by permission of the Senior Pastor and Deacons. They shall be principally for the use of this Church, its functions, and its related activities.

SECTION II - PERSONNEL AND EMPLOYEES OF THE CHURCH

Since no man can serve two masters, there must be a clear line of authority for each employee of the Church. The Senior Pastor and Deacon Board will establish the organizational structure for the Church employees. They will work in the establishment of working schedules, vacations, rates of compensation, and benefits for the employees and other related matters.

A. CONCERNING HIRING AND DISMISSING PERSONNEL

The Senior Pastor and Deacon Board shall have the authority to employ needed personnel at their discretion, within the approved budget of the Church. They may hire and/or appoint Pastoral assistants. They shall have the authority to dismiss or replace any employee of the Church.

B. CONCERNING LOYALTY, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

The leadership of New Hope Baptist Church stands for internal harmony, and while friendly to constructive criticism from employed staff, will not tolerate destructive criticism. Every employee will be informed that at any time he or she has any cause for complaint, he/she may come to the Senior Pastor and Deacon Board and make his/her complaint; but no complaint is to be made to anyone with whom he/she associates in the Church or anyone away from the Church, as long as this person is employed by the Church or its related ministries. No employee will criticize the administrative policies of the Church, except to the Deacon Board or proper executive to whom he/she is responsible.

1. If, after presenting a complaint and after the matter has been discussed and the Senior Pastor and Deacon Board has made a decision, the decision is not satisfactory, the employee must still be loyal to the decision made and to the policies of the Church. If not, he/she cannot remain as an employee and his/her relationship as an employee must end immediately. This policy will be part of an agreement that every person enters into when he/she is employed by New Hope Baptist Church, or its related ministries.

2. The Senior Pastor and Deacon Board is directed to discharge anyone who, while in the employment of this Church, criticizes the administrative policies or fails to cooperate in maintaining the position of the Church regarding doctrine, evangelism and discipline.

3. If at any time an employee is discharged and feels that he/she has not been treated justly, such a person may present his/her complaint to the Pastors and Deacons in a meeting called for that purpose. The employee is ensured that the case will be judged in a frank and unbiased way by the Pastors and Deacons, but there will be no appeal beyond the decision of this group.

4. The wife or husband of an employee of New Hope Baptist Church, or its related ministries, is to be as loyal to all positions set forth in the creed, covenant, and standing resolutions as the employee is; and if it is found that the husband or wife of the employee has a critical attitude toward the Church, or is not cooperating and maintaining the positions set forth therein, the employee shall be discharged.

SECTION III - FINANCES OF THE CHURCH

The entire program of this Church shall be supported by free will tithes and offerings. At no time may this Church be permitted to use any unscriptural method or methods for raising funds. This outlaws all suppers for pecuniary gain, all profitable sales of tickets, chances or merchandise and all other profit-making methods that are not supported by God's word. The sale of any item or merchandize or the promotion of any item or merchandize from the pulpit or in the sanctuary will be forbidden at New Hope Baptist Church (Matthew 21:12-13, see Appendix A). Real property or equipment owned by the Church may be sold for replacement or liquidation.

A. CONCERNING FINANCIAL RECORDS & THE FISCAL YEAR

The financial records of New Hope Baptist Church shall be open for inspection by any member, for any reason, at any time, consideration for normal business activities having been given. The Church Fiscal Year shall begin January 1st and conclude December 31st of each year.

B: CONCERNING INSPECTION OF CHURCH FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS.

Financial reports shall be periodically inspected by a competent Certified Public Accountant as the Deacon Board sees fit.

C. CONCERNING CONTRIBUTION

A systematic record of contributions will be maintained by the Treasurer or his/her authorized representative. These records will be sent to the contributors regularly. No records can be maintained for a single contribution, but a receipt will be sent for any gift upon request of the contributor. Funds may be received and distributed for designated purposes in accordance with the approved program of the Church. All gifts received for any purpose are received as charitable contributions to the New Hope Baptist Church and its auxiliary ministries. The duly elected authorities of this non-profit corporation shall have final authority for the distribution of all contributions received.

D. CONCERNING FINANCING

Extreme restraint should be exercised whenever it becomes necessary to secure financing for any Church project. Tithes and offerings, as well as other property, belong to God and will be treated as His property. Every available means of securing necessary funds for approved projects will be exhausted prior to borrowing money. Money shall not be borrowed for depreciating items unless a cost analysis shows the investment to be profitable despite the depreciation of the actual value of the item requested. Money should not be borrowed on the basis of projected growth or increase in income alone.

E. CONCERNING AN ANNUAL BUDGET

An annual budget shall be jointly created by the Senior Pastor and Deacon Board and aided by the Treasurer of the Church, using information provided by the individuals responsible for the various ministries of the Church. The projected budget should include all existing and projected ministries. Although growth may be occurring, the budget should not exceed the clearly indicated growth pattern. The annual budget and adjustments shall be approved by the Deacons, Pastors and congregation and shall guide the expenditures of money received by the Church.

SECTION IV - MEMBERSHIP

We believe that just as the ordinances are physical pictures of spiritual facts, so is membership in a local Church a physical picture of a spiritual fact. New Hope Baptist Church members shall seek to have fellowship with all believers of like mind; and doctrine and that we will abstain from fellowship with that which is ungodly, worldly, or otherwise contrary to the Word of God.

Qualifications of Membership

To be received as members into this Church, any person shall meet these following conditions.

1. To publicly confess Jesus Christ as his or her personal Lord and Savior.
2. To have been baptized as a believer by immersion. The baptism required must be a baptism subsequent to salvation.
3. To express agreement and willingness to abide with the New Hope Baptist Church Constitution and Statement of Faith.
4. Members of another Church of like faith and practice may, by a Letter of Transfer, become candidates for membership into this Church. The letter will show such a person to have been in good standing at the previous Church.

5. By restoration: If having been removed from membership, upon confessing, made publicly before the Church membership, of the sin or sins involved and satisfactorily evidencing repentance.

Procedure for Membership

1. Baptized believers desiring membership into this Church are to present themselves as candidates for membership in the public invitation at the end of the Sunday Church service.
2. All persons applying for membership in this Church shall be given a copy of the Constitution and Doctrinal statements.
3. They shall at a later time or date be examined and recommended by the Deacon Board and Senior Pastor before they are voted upon by the Church.
4. Such persons as are found to be in accord with the faith and practice of this Church, having been counseled and approved by the Pastor and Deacons, will be presented to the Church as a candidate for membership, either at the Sunday service or at a Business Meeting.
5. Applicants for membership should receive the unanimous vote of the members present, and no person may be received to whose admission five members object.
6. New members shall receive the right hand of fellowship from the other members of the Church, and will become active Official Members with full privileges and responsibilities, and will immediately be added to the Church rolls by the Church Clerk.

Membership Responsibilities

Members are expected to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life, including:

1. The demonstration of a positive Christian character and lifestyle consistent with the Scriptures.
2. Our responsibility as members should include regular attendance at the service of God's House (including the Lord's Supper), and to contribute regularly for its financial support and benevolence
3. Having a faithful prayer life.
4. Each member further covenants to love, honor, and esteem the Pastor; to pray for him, and to recognize his authority in spiritual affairs of the Church, to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the Church and support the Church in prayer.

5. To use their God given spiritual gifts for the building up of individuals and of the Church.
6. To learn God's Word and obey His revealed will.
7. To find and fill an active place of service in the work of the Church.
8. Members agree to reject all practices and lifestyles that are forbidden by Scripture, some of which are outlined in this constitution.
9. Members should strive to win others to Christ through public and private testimony.

Membership Restrictions

1. Slanderous gossip is forbidden. The slandering of the character of any member of the Church, or destructive criticism of the methods and practices of the Church, the Pastor, and other officers of the Church, shall be considered as grounds for discipline.
2. Unauthorized meetings. The calling of a private or unauthorized meeting with the purpose of hindering or interrupting the work of an officer, board, or committee, is prohibited. Persons calling such a meeting without permission of the Senior Pastor and Board of Deacons shall be subject to discipline.
3. The circulation of a petition among members without having secured the permission of the Board of Deacons shall not be allowed. The person(s) so doing shall be subject to discipline.
4. Members should separate themselves from every appearance of evil, and to avoid entangling alliances with unbelievers, including secret orders and the occult. This includes but is not limited to witchcraft, fortune telling, numerology, astrology (horoscopes) and other superstitious observations and practices.
5. The Bible commands us to not be outwardly focused like the world, but inwardly focused. We are admonished to avoid over-preoccupation with outward beauty, (e.g., the clothing and jewelry we wear and how we do our hair). Instead, we should be modest in our dress and cultivate a heart that loves God and a character shaped by His

Word. Then people will see the real beauty of a meek and quiet spirit. This is precious to God!

6. Recognizing the pervasive influence that sexual sin has on men and women at every level of our society, members must reject:

A. Adultery (sex outside of marriage)

Exodus 20:14; Proverbs 6:25-29;

Matthew 15:18-20; I Corinthians 6:13, 15-16, Ephesians 5:3

B. Cohabitation & Fornication (sex before marriage)

Matthew 5:27-28; Acts 15:20; I Corinthians 6:9, 15, 18-20;

I Thessalonians 5:22

C. Homosexuality/Lesbianism (sexual desire or behavior directed toward persons of one's own sex).

Romans 1:21-27; I Corinthians 6:9-10, Deuteronomy 22:5

D. Sodomy

Genesis 19:4-7, Deuteronomy 23:17; I Kings 15:11-12;

Romans 1:24, 26-32; Ephesians 5:3-7

E. Incest

Leviticus 18:6-16; I Corinthians 5:1-5

F. Pornography and Profanity.

Exodus 20:7, 16; Psalms 12:2-4; Psalms 34:12-14; Psalms 59:12;

Proverbs 15:28; Luke 6:45; Matthew 12:34-37; Romans 1:29-30; 3:14;

Ephesians 5:4; Ephesians 4:29, 31; James 1:26; Jude 8:10

- G.** We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman, and that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 5:2, Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29, Rom. 9:20, 1 Cor. 11:14-16, 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4). The only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman for life. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

7. There are many injurious and addictive influences and behaviors in the world, and we deplore all addictions as a form of idolatry dishonoring to God.
8. Marriage is God's gift to His children for all of life and it is not to be entered into lightly or unadvisedly. Consequently, God hates divorce. In the case of divorce of an active member of this Church, the Senior Pastor and Deacon Board reserve the right to investigate each case and take an appropriate disciplinary action if it is deemed necessary.

9. Lawsuits Between Believers. We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the Church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members (Including Arbitration). We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32; Matt. 18:15-17)

Active and Inactive Types of Membership

1. All members who willfully fail to attend worship services on a regular basis and/or do not contribute financially for a period of six months shall be considered for a status of inactive membership. The member shall receive a letter calling attention to his absence and urging him to again become active.
2. The Pastor and/or Deacons will make a reasonable effort to contact this member and restore him or her to proper fellowship.
3. If these efforts are unsuccessful, upon recommendation of the Deacon Board and a majority vote of the Church, this member will be placed on the inactive roll.
4. The above shall not apply to a member physically prevented from active membership.
5. No person on the inactive roll shall be entitled to vote, to hold office, to teach, or to take official participation in public services or Business Meetings.
6. Persons on the inactive roll may be reinstated as an active member at their request and by vote of the Board of Deacons, after a visible resumption of attendance and financial support.
7. After an absence of 1 year, the inactive member shall have his/her status reviewed by the Deacon Board and where the member has not evidenced a change in attitude, shall be removed from the Church rolls with the reason for removal noted in the records maintained by the Church Clerk.
8. An inactive member may have his/her membership forwarded upon request to another Church of like faith and practices provided an explanation for his or her inactivity is given and accepted by the Deacon Board.

Member Discipline

1. All members of this Church shall be subject to Church discipline.
2. When the Senior Pastor and Deacons learn that a member is living an inconsistent Christian life or is charged with an offense which requires discipline, it shall be their duty to inquire into the matter, and if it shall appear that the case requires it, they shall proceed to a

thorough investigation and take whatever steps are deemed necessary, all of which shall be done in the Spirit of Galatians 6:1 and Matt 18:15-17 (see Appendix A).

NOTE: The membership of any individual member shall Immediately Terminate Without Notice if the Deacons and Senior Pastor become aware of a member's open and unrepentant involvement in any sexual misconduct described in the "Membership Restrictions" Section 6, Items A - G above, or if a member files a lawsuit in violation of "Membership Restrictions" in Item 9 above.

3. There must be a recommendation for dismissal. Such a recommendation may be made only by the Senior Pastor or at least one Deacon and it must be in writing to the body constituted of the Pastor and the Deacons. The recommendation shall describe the actions justifying the recommendation of dismissal with reasonable specificity and the specific spiritual means of persuasion and prayer used to draw the errant member back to acceptable behavior.
4. Upon receipt of a recommendation for dismissal the Senior Pastor and Deacons shall, by majority vote, make a determination that all reasonable spiritual means of persuasion and prayer have not effected a change in the errant member's actions and that the conduct of the errant member justifies dismissal.
5. The Chairman of the Deacons or the Senior Pastor shall then notify the errant member of the determination, recommendation, and the date and time the Church members will vote on disciplinary action. This notification must be at least two weeks before the day of the Church business meeting in which the dismissal is to be brought before the members.
6. The Deacons' recommendation shall include only the grounds necessary to justify dismissal.
7. Only voting members may be present during consideration of disciplinary dismissal, and passage of the dismissal shall require a quorum and an affirmative three-fourths (75%) vote of those present.
8. If the voting members fail to vote for dismissal all written records of the actions taken leading to the vote (including but not limited to the initial recommendation, the determination, and the Deacons' recommendation for dismissal to the membership) shall be destroyed.
9. The dismissed member shall be excluded from membership and removed from the Church rolls, with the reason for removal noted in the records and maintained by the Church Clerk.

Restoration of Membership

1. The Church shall lovingly regard any individual dismissed from membership, endeavoring by prayer and invitation to restore the errant individual back into fellowship with Christ and the Church.

2. Upon confession to God personal offenses that resulted in removal, erasure, or dismissal, giving satisfactory evidence of repentance and demonstrating the desire for restoration as a member, the individual that has been dismissed from the membership may be restored to membership by a near unanimous vote of the members at a Sunday service of the Church, following recommendation by the Senior Pastor or Deacons. No person may be restored to membership with five or more members objecting.

Transfer of Membership to another Church

1. If any member unites in membership with another Church, he or she is automatically removed from membership in this Church.
2. Any member in good fellowship desiring to resign from membership may do so by submitting a signed and dated request to the Deacon Board.
3. Upon request, a letter of dismissal or transfer to another Church of like faith and practice will be granted, and the member's name will be removed from the Church roll.

SECTION V - MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH

In order to fulfill the scriptural purpose of this Church, various ministries will be necessary other than the general public services. The following resolutions shall be the guidelines for these ministries.

A. CONCERNING THE PREACHING MINISTRY

The preaching ministry is to be conducted by the Pastors under the direction of the Senior Pastor. The preaching of the Word of God is the primary ministry of this Church. No other ministry or activity is to take precedence over the preaching, and no Pastor is to neglect his responsibilities to pray and to study the Word, regardless of his other responsibilities. All other obligations shall be subordinate to this one.

B. CONCERNING MINISTRY PRIORITIES

Soul winning and discipleship shall have priority in the schedule and finances of the Church, under the direction of the Holy Spirit through the Pastors of the Church. Specialized ministries to reach the lost, in accordance with the Word of God, may be organized or discontinued as necessary.

C. CONCERNING EDUCATION

The Bible teaches that the proper education of children is the responsibility of the parents and the concern of the Church. Education shall be accomplished in the following manner:

i. TEACHING FROM THE PULPIT

The pulpit ministry of the Church shall be aimed at the goal of teaching the whole counsel of God through Bible exposition, topical emphasis, and Bible content studies. Practical application shall be an important aspect of the preaching. Although evangelism should be included in most messages from the pulpit, the primary thrust should be to teach.

ii. TEACHING IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

A Sunday school is advantageous and should be utilized to the fullest extent to reinforce the

father's or spiritual guardian's teaching in the home. The Sunday school can never take the place of this teaching and should be subordinate to it. Graded or specialized classes and curricula can be used profitably when competent and willing instructors are available to teach and set an example and are not to be neglected when it is possible to use them. Curriculum materials are most effective when prepared locally, but curricula that are true to the principles of the Word of God and are consistent with the philosophy presented in this Constitution may be considered, if necessary. The evangelistic thrust of the educational ministries of the Church will be centered primarily in the Sunday school, and non-members will be encouraged to attend.

iii. TEACHING BY OTHER MEANS

Day care centers, kindergartens, and Christian day schools offering graded classes through secondary education, Bible institutes, colleges, etc., for both normal and specialized groups, are within the responsibility of the local Church, and may be organized and operated as necessary. Whenever a directing body or board is required to govern the activities of any educational ministry of the Church, the Pastors shall appoint qualified persons.

D. CONCERNING MISSIONS

Any missionary or missions enterprise supported in part or in whole by this Church must be of like faith and practice.

i. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MISSIONARIES

Faith missions which directly strengthen or build indigenous local Churches shall be preferred for support, and will be allocated a majority of the budget. However, other types of missions may be supported, pending the pre-approval of the Deacon Board and Senior Pastor.

ii. MISSIONS SUPPORT

The Senior Pastor, with approval of the Deacons, shall invite supported and prospective missionaries to speak at the Church at his discretion. Total mission support should be maintained at a minimum of ten percent (10%) of annual receipts. The missions committee will propose missions policies to guide the missions support.

E. CONCERNING MUSIC

The music ministry of the Church shall be under the authority of the Music Pastor or a person appointed by the Deacon Board and shall be conducted in a manner that glorifies God, rather than attracting attention to man or his fleshly nature.

F. CONCERNING OTHER MINISTRIES

This Church, through the Deacon Board and Senior Pastor shall have authority to establish any other necessary ministry in accordance with procedures outlined in this Constitution. This includes bookstores, bus ministries and support activities for any other ministry, such as school lunch programs, transportation, etc.

SECTION VI - SEPARATION AND STANDARDS

The Bible teaches "that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared

with a hot iron", we believe it is necessary to state our sincerely held beliefs on certain issues that are leading people astray and dividing the brethren. As Baptists, we believe in soul liberty that each man must give an account of himself to God-- and in no way intend, by clarifying these beliefs, to deprive any person of his liberty or rights under God or the laws of the United States.

A. CONCERNING THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

We believe that attempts for Church unity, such as the National and World Council of Churches and denominationalism, which foster accommodation with the Roman Catholic Church are satanic in origin and objective; we call upon all regenerate believers to separate from this apostasy.

B. CONCERNING NEO-ORTHODOXY

We believe that any theology which teaches that the Bible contains the Word of God rather than the clear statement that the Bible is the Word of God is a false theology.

C. CONCERNING NEW EVANGELICALISM

We believe that the New Evangelicalism has encouraged disobedience to the plain teachings of Scripture concerning separation and that it has changed the message, mood, method, morals, and music of those who were formerly known as fundamentalists, and is to be rejected. New Evangelicalism is characterized by an attitude of infiltration, rather than separation.

D. CONCERNING FORMALISM, MODERNISM, and LIBERALISM

We reject all trends toward formalism, modernism, and liberalism, which are characterized by Roman practice and false doctrine.

E. CONCERNING THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

We believe that the so called charismatic movement is a counterfeit of true Christianity and a catalytic agent in the formation of the one-world Church of the Antichrist.

F. CONCERNING CALVINISM/ARMINIANISM

We reject the position which negates or eliminates human responsibility in either the proclamation or the reception of the gospel, whether these positions are openly taught or subtly suggested. We also reject the teaching that man can lose his salvation or the suggestion that "believing" is a merit of salvation. We are neither Calvinist nor Armenian.

G. CONCERNING THE KING JAMES VERSION

We believe the King James Version of the Bible carries the full authority of the original autographs.

H. CONCERNING HUMANISM

We believe that by its own statement The Humanist Manifestos of 1933 and 1973, secular humanism is a religion and that, according to the Word of God, it is satanic in origin. We hold to the traditional dogmatic and authoritarian position condemned by humanism, and we are intolerant of the acceptance of any contrary doctrine.

SECTION VII - AMENDING THE CONSITUTION

This constitution may be changed or amended at any business meeting of the Church members by a three-fourths vote (75%) of the voting members present, provided that such amendment, in writing, shall have been presented to and approved by the Deacon Board and announced at the regular services on the three consecutive Sundays preceding said meeting. An exact copy of the text of such proposed amendment(s) shall be posted by the Clerk in a conspicuous place within the Church building or mailed to all members at least two Sundays immediately preceding the meeting. An exact copy of the proposed amendment(s) shall be distributed to the Congregation in written form at the meeting. The Clerk shall record all amendments and changes to this constitution. These amendments and changes shall be noted in the Revisions History at the end of this document, including the date of the change and the new Version Number of the filename.

Appendices

Appendix A: Relevant Scriptures

Excerpted from The Complete Multimedia Bible based on the King James Version. Copyright (c) 1994 Compton's NewMedia, Inc.

1. The Office of Pastor.

I Timothy 3:1-7

- 1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.
- 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;
- 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;
- 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;
- 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?)
- 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.
- 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:5-9

- 5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:
- 6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.
- 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;
- 8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;
- 9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Acts 6:4

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

I Peter 5:1-4

1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

2. The Offices of Deacon and Trustee.

Acts 6:1-7

1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God, and serve tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

7 And the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

I Timothy 3:8-13

8 Likewise must the Deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a Deacon, being found blameless.

11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

12 Let the Deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have used the office of a Deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

3. Church Discipline

Matthew 18:15-17

15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of

two or three witnesses every word may be established.
17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

Galatians 6:1

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

4. Finances of the Church

12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Appendix B: Revision Notes

Document History

Version#	Author	Date	Revision History
0.0	Carl J. Hemak	12/7/20	Original Draft Document
1.0	Carl J. Hemak	2/6/21	Changed title from "New Hope Baptist Church Constitution and Bylaws" to "New Hope Baptist Church of Imlay City, Constitution and Bylaws"
1.0	Carl J. Hemak	2/6/21	Pastor's Tenure Was: 2. In case either the Pastor or Church shall desire to sever the pastor relationship, not less than three months notice shall be given by either party so desiring. Now: 2. In case either the Pastor or Church shall desire to sever the pastor relationship, and the Pastor is not under any discipline , not less than three months notice shall be given by either party so desiring.

1.0	Carl J. Hemak	2/6/21	Discipline or Removal of the Pastor Was: A majority vote of the Deacon board is required, and then two thirds vote of the Church members present is sufficient to dismiss the Pastor(s). The Pastor shall have the right to answer all charges brought against him in the presence of the Deacon Board before the board votes on his dismissal. Likewise the Pastor shall have the right to answer all charges in any meeting of the members called to vote on his dismissal before any vote is taken.... Now: A majority vote of the Deacon board is required, and then two thirds vote of the Church members present is sufficient to dismiss the Pastor(s). The Pastor shall have the right to answer all charges brought against him in the presence of the Deacon Board before the board votes on his dismissal. Likewise, the Pastor shall have the right to answer all charges in any meeting of the members called to vote on his dismissal before any vote is taken. The Pastor cannot be the Moderator of this meeting; an impartial Moderator shall be appointed by the Deacons instead, and the Moderator shall not interrupt "pro or con" statements by Church members before the vote takes place.
1.0	Carl J. Hemak	2/6/21	Membership Procedure Was: 3.They shall at a later time or date be examined and recommended by the Deacon Board and Senior Pastor before they are voted upon by the Church. Now: 3.They shall at a later date be examined and recommended by the Deacon Board and Senior Pastor before they are voted upon by the Church.
2.0	Carl J. Hemak	7/25/21	Qualification of Pastors Was: 2. The Pastor shall be male and should be a graduate of an accredited Bible college and be an ordained minister of the Baptist persuasion in name and conviction. Now: changed "an accredited Bible" to "a Bible"
2.0	Carl J. Hemak	7/25/21	Calling & Selection of Pastors Was: <u>2.</u> The Pulpit Committee must unanimously recommend a qualified man to pastor the Church. Now: changed "unanimously" to "by an 80% majority vote agree to"
2.0	Carl J. Hemak	7/25/21	Was: 3. Only one man shall be considered at a time. Each must be voted on prior to another being permitted to be a candidate for the position. Only when the need occurs and the membership is notified in a regular service shall the pulpit committee act. Now: (a major rewrite) 3. Only when the need occurs, and the membership is notified in a regular service shall the Pulpit Committee act. After a candidate comes to preach, the Congregation will discuss and vote on whether to have him come back to preach again. If so, then he will be asked to return and preach at a time agreed upon by the Pulpit Committee and the Congregation.

2.0	Carl J. Hemak	7/25/21	Was: 4. After careful examination of his person, family, ministry, doctrine, and character, they shall bring him to preach at all Sunday services as a candidate and have him interviewed by the congregation. Now: changed " all " to " least 2 ".
2.0	Carl J. Hemak	7/25/21	Qualifications of Deacons Was: 5. He shall not have been divorced . Now: 5. He shall be the husband of one wife, ruling his children and his own house well .
2.0	Carl J. Hemak	7/25/21	Tenure of Deacons Was: 1. Three (3) Years and can be re-elected if qualified. Cannot hold office more than 2 consecutive terms after which one year must elapse before again being elected to the office. Now: changed " Three(3) " to " Two(2) "
3.0	Carl J. Hemak	10/15/23	Membership Restrictions Section 6, added Item G. Forbidding any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance.
3.0	Carl J. Hemak	10/15/23	Membership Restrictions, added section 9 regarding Christians being prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians to resolve personal disputes.
3.0	Carl J. Hemak	10/15/23	Members Discipline, added note to Immediately terminate Church membership of members violating Sections 6 or 9 of the Member Restrictions mentioned above.
3.0	Carl J. Hemak	10/15/23	Membership Restrictions, Item 6: Was: ... members should reject: Now: ... members must reject:
3.0	Carl J. Hemak	10/15/23	I. CONCERNING BUSINESS MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH Deleted: Parliamentary procedure not mentioned in this Constitution shall be governed by current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.