

Peace Haven Baptist Church
Constitution & Bylaws

Table of Contents
CONSTITUTION

[ARTICLE I DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF THIS CONSTITUTION](#)..... 4

[ARTICLE II NAME](#)..... 4

[ARTICLE III PURPOSE: Mission Statement](#) 4

[ARTICLE IV DOCTRINE](#)..... 4

[ARTICLE V DOCTRINAL STATEMENT](#) 5

[I. The Scriptures](#)..... 5

[II. God](#)..... 5

[III. Man](#) 5

[IV. Salvation](#)..... 6

[V. God’s Purpose of Grace](#) 6

[VI. The Church](#) 6

[VII Baptism and the Lord’s Supper](#) 6

[VIII. The Lord’s Day](#)..... 6

[IX. The Kingdom](#) 6

[X. Last Things](#)..... 7

[XI. Evangelism and Missions](#)..... 7

[XII. Education](#) 7

[XIII. Stewardship](#)..... 7

[XIV. Cooperation](#) 7

[XV. The Christian and the Social Order](#) 7

[XVI. Peace and War](#) 8

[XVII. Religious Liberty](#)..... 8

[XVIII. The Family](#)..... 8

[ARTICLE VI GENERAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE](#) 8

[ARTICLE VII Denominational Relationship](#)..... 9

[ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS](#) 9

[ARTICLE IX Authority and Limitation of Constitution](#) 10

[ARTICLE X DISSOLUTION OF PROPERTY](#)..... 10

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I CORE VALUES AND VISION STATEMENT	11
ARTICLE II CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	13
<u>A. Union in the Universal Body of Christ</u>	13
<u>B. Union With a Local Assembly of Believers</u>	13
<u>C. Church Membership</u>	13
<u>D. Procedure for Membership</u>	13
<u>E. Membership Roll</u>	13
<u>F. Congregational Affirmation and Meetings</u>	14
ARTICLE III MEETINGS	14
<u>A. Legal Meetings</u>	14
<u>B. Other corporate meetings</u>	14
<u>1. Biblical Purpose of meetings</u>	14
<u>2. Time and Place of Meetings:</u>	14
ARTICLE IV CHURCH LEADERSHIP	15
<u>A. General Statement</u>	15
<u>B. General Prerequisites</u>	15
ARTICLE V ELDERS	15
<u>A. The role of elders:</u>	15
<u>B. The plurality of elders:</u>	15
<u>C. Qualifications</u>	15
<u>D. Authority</u>	16
<u>E. Duties of Elders</u>	16
<u>F. Appointment (General Principles)</u>	16
<u>G. Appointment of Non-Paid Elders</u>	17
<u>H. Tenure</u>	17
<u>I. Voluntary Resignation</u>	17
<u>J. Involuntary Dismissal</u>	17
ARTICLE VI PAID ELDERS AND STAFF	18
<u>A. Paid Elder(s): The Role of the Pastor-teacher</u>	18
<u>B. Paid Elder(s): Duties, Qualifications and Authority</u>	18
<u>C. Paid Elder(s): Selection</u>	18
<u>D. Paid Elder(s): Tenure and Removal</u>	19
<u>E. Associate Pastoral Staff</u>	19
<u>F. Non-Pastoral Staff</u>	19
ARTICLE VII DEACONS	19
<u>A. The Role of Deacon</u>	19
<u>B. Qualifications</u>	19
<u>C. Duties</u>	19
<u>D. Appointment</u>	19
<u>E. Removal of Deacons</u>	20
ARTICLE VIII MINISTRY TEAMS	20
<u>A. Definition of a Team:</u>	20
<u>B. Biblical Basis</u>	20

<u>C. Appointment:</u>	20
<u>D. Responsibilities:</u>	20
<u>E. Accountability:</u>	21
<u>F. Possible Current ministry teams</u>	21
<u>ARTICLE IX GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES</u>	21
<u>ARTICLE X CORRECTIVE CHURCH DISCIPLINE</u>	22
<u>A. The Pattern and Basis for Discipline</u>	22
<u>B. The Purposes of Church Discipline</u>	22
<u>C. Goals of Church Discipline</u>	22
<u>D. The Practice of Church Discipline</u>	22
<u>ARTICLE XI FINANCES</u>	23
<u>ARTICLE XII GLOBAL MISSIONS</u>	24
<u>ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS</u>	24

Peace Haven Baptist Church Constitution

ARTICLE I DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF THIS CONSTITUTION

This written document is a declaration of our beliefs and understanding of the Holy Scripture, as to our doctrinal beliefs, form of church government, organizational structure, and purposes as a body. It is vitally important for a church, if it is to glorify God and accomplish His purposes, that its people be in agreement with regard to doctrine, organizational structure and goals (1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3, 13).

This is thus designed to be a statement of these things that it might promote a oneness of mind within our own body, and that those interested in becoming a part of this ministry might have a clear concept of our beliefs and objectives.

This document is not a higher authority than the Word of God. Neither is it a higher authority than the authority that God Himself has invested in those believers He has appointed to lead in this local church (Heb. 13:17). It must be remembered that the local church itself is a living, growing, and flexible body subject ultimately to the authority of Jesus Christ alone as it is declared in the Word of God (Eph. 1:22; 4:12-16). As we grow in the Word, this document is therefore subject to amendment according to the provisions of Constitution, Article VIII. This document is, however, to be followed in all its parts as a protection to all, until part or all is amended according to its provisions.

ARTICLE II NAME

The name of this local church shall be Peace Haven Baptist Church of North Wilkesboro, Incorporated, a corporation under the laws of the state of North Carolina, henceforth referred to as PHBC.

ARTICLE III Purpose: Mission Statement

*Our purpose is
To glorify God through...
worshipping Him, becoming mature in Christ, and reaching the world with the Gospel.*

ARTICLE IV DOCTRINE

Since the Word of God is foundational and absolutely essential to true spirituality, fellowship, spiritual sustenance, effectiveness in service and ministry, faith and doctrinal accuracy, we believe that the most important function of this local church, and its central thrust, is consistent teaching and study of the Word of God (1 Tim. 4:6-7).

The study of the Word of God is not **an end in itself**, but it is a high priority and a necessary means for fellowship with God and thereby also of effective ministry to one another and to the world. It will not therefore, be bypassed or made secondary in the interest of social concerns, actions, or activities, but must be so promoted that the Word, and the teaching of the Word, become the pulse and heartbeat behind all church and non-church related activities or concerns (Psa. 119, 138:2; Rom. 15:4, 16:25-26; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Tim. 1:3-5, 4:1-16; 2 Tim. 3:15-17, 4:1-3).

This church shall thus function as a unified local assembly committed to the foundational historic truths recorded in God's inerrant revelation—the Holy Scriptures. To hold positions within PHBC, all elders, ministerial staff, deacons and teachers must wholeheartedly agree with the Doctrinal Statement, Constitution, Article V, of this church.

ARTICLE V

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

(The Baptist Faith and Message, 2000, Southern Baptist Convention, revised)

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation. *Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

a. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men. *Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

b. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord. *Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

c. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherits a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Grace is the perfect gift of God, which is made available to the believer through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. It is perfect in all things and consistent with God's love for his church. Grace cannot be earned, but is a foundational aspect of repentance and faith. We believe grace to be a necessary part of growth in the believer's relationship with Christ and our ability to reflect His love for others through us. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming. *Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. *Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.*

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people. In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists. *Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.*

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

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 of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent life-style example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

ARTICLE VI GENERAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

There are several principles that form the foundation for the life and ministry of Peace Haven Baptist Church.

These principles form the basis for our Constitution and Bylaws:

A. Principle One

The local church is governed by Christ. The authority of Christ to govern the local church was given to the apostles and their close associates. Today, Christ still rules through the words of his apostles as they are preserved for us in the inspired writings of the New Testament. Therefore, our Church will make every effort to conform the structure, procedures and spirit of church government as closely as possible to New Testament guidelines (Mt. 16:18; Eph. 2:19-20; 1 Cor. 2:12-13, 7:17, 10:31, 14:37-38; Phil. 1:25; 2 Thess. 3:14).

B. Principle Two

The ministry of the local church is primarily the work of its members in the activity of worship toward God, nurture toward

each other and witness toward the world. Internal structures of church government are not the primary ministry of the Church, but are necessary for equipping and mobilizing the saints for the work of ministry. Government structures should be lean and efficient to this end, not aiming to include as many people as possible in office-holding, but to free and fit as many people as possible for ministry. (Eph. 4:11-12)

C. Principle Three

Christ is the head of the Church and, spiritually, all his disciples are on a level ground before him, each having direct access to him and responsibility to intercede for the good of all as a community of priests (Mt. 23:8-11; Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 4:15; 1 Tim. 2:5; Hebrews 3:13; Revelation 1:6). The local government is invested in the body of believers who compose the local body under the headship of Jesus Christ according to the Word of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Mt. 18:20; Eph. 1:22-23, 4:16, 5:21; Col. 1:18; 2:19).

D. Principle Four

The local church body is composed of one body with many members all of whom are in vital relationship with Jesus Christ, but the body also has "joints of supply," units of control, and unity, i.e., church leaders (Eph. 4:16). This together suggests body participation under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ with leadership direction, submission and an authority in a two-directional manner.

Executive authority or leadership is invested by the congregation, as authorized by Scripture, in a plurality of elders who lead the church and to whom the congregation is to submit under the headship of Christ. These men have the authority and responsibility to delegate to individuals, committees or other Teams (as a Team of Deacons) authority and responsibility to carry out the business or ministry of the church in spiritual and physical (material) matters (Acts 20:28, 15:6; Eph. 4:11-12; Phil. 1:1; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:7, 17). In using its delegated authority, and in making its decisions, the Team of Elders must seek to be guided by the Scripture, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and by input from the congregation (Acts 20:32, 6:2-5a, 11:22, 15:22; 2 Cor. 8:19). In the event of the misuse of the delegated authority, the church has recourse to the principles as set forth in Bylaws, Article V, Section J.

E. Principle Five

The Elders and ministry leaders of the Church should be people who are spiritually mature and exemplary (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9), gifted for the ministry given to them (Rom. 12:6-8), have a sense of divine urging (Acts 20:28), and are in harmony with the duly established leadership of the Church (Phil. 2:2). Spiritual qualifications should never be sacrificed to technical expertise. (Acts 20:28; Rom. 12:6-8; Phil. 2:2; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Tim. 3:1-13)

Article VII Denominational Relationship

We recognize that there is mutual helpfulness in the association of churches who are in agreement in faith and practice as to encourage the spirit of fellowship and voluntary cooperation in ministry. Peace Haven Baptist Church is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, and subscribes to the doctrinal statement known as the "Baptist Faith and Message" (Constitution, Article V) as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention (2000). As an autonomous local church, Peace Haven Baptist Church has the prerogative to associate with and participate in organizations in keeping with the church's mission, vision, and core values. The church will consistently evaluate its relationships to Christian organizations and only maintain affiliation with those organizations that do not conflict with the doctrine and policies set forth in the Constitution and By-laws of this church.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended or replaced when the need for change is recognized by the elders and the members of the church body. At the time such need is believed to be present, the elders shall make provisional modification in light of Scripture and all essential information on this matter shall be communicated to the congregation in written form, providing adequate time for study and response. A date will be proposed for acceptance of the revisions at a congregational meeting (Bylaws, Article II, Section F). Following affirmation by the congregation, the amendments to the Constitution will become effective.

Article IX

Authority and Limitation of Constitution

The Scriptures shall be our final court of appeal in all matters of church governance. It is understood that the Scriptures supersede the constitution and give definition where the constitution is silent or not exhaustive. This constitution is subject to the application of Scriptures, not vice versa. As we submit to the authority of Scripture, this document is an endeavor to apply Biblical principles to our local church.

ARTICLE X

DISSOLUTION OF PROPERTY

If, under the providence of God, circumstances arise that stand irrevocably in the way of the continuation of this ministry, a resolution calling for the dissolution of this Church shall be entertained at a Special Business Meeting.

In the event of the dissolution of PHBC, as a non-profit corporation, the assets of the corporation shall be given and paid over to a non-profit corporation of like faith and order which would satisfy the remaining membership and qualify under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and its regulations. The decision to dissolve or disband must be approved by two-thirds of the membership of the congregation by means of the procedure outlined in Bylaws, Article II, Section F.

Peace Haven Baptist Church

BYLAWS

Article I

Core Values and Vision Statement

Our Core Values:

1 – We value the pursuit of God's glory alone as our number one priority.

God created us to fulfill a specific purpose—to reflect His glory (Isa. 43:7). It is the motivation and guiding influence behind everything we do. As a church body, it is our privilege to view every day, every thought, every breath as an opportunity to live out what is commanded in the Scriptures, “Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31). We glorify God by rejoicing in the supreme perfection of His glory, and by living lives of faith and obedience that reflect His glory (Ps. 115:1; Rom. 8:18, 12:1-2, 15:6; 1 Cor. 6:20; Eph. 1:3-14; Col. 1:18, 27; 2 Thess. 1:11-12; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

2 – We value the Bible as God’s revealed Word and our only authoritative standard for all we think, say, and do.

God has graciously revealed Himself to us through the breathing out of His written Word (2 Pet. 1:19-21). We learn and live solely by the timeless standard of God’s inerrant, inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17). God has sovereignly ordained the teaching of His inspired word in the power of the Holy Spirit as a primary means of grace, whereby His church may grow and flourish toward spiritual maturity (Eph. 4:13-14; Col. 1:28). The goal of such teaching is to communicate the clear meaning of the Biblical text, and its relevant application to every aspect of our lives (Heb. 4:12). We humbly seek all that God wants to say to us through His Word, making it the lens through which we view our relationships, circumstances, and decisions.

3 – We value genuine, Biblical worship of our Triune God.

The essence of worship is valuing God more than all the world has to offer (Col. 3:1). God is eternal and created us for an eternal relationship with Him, and so we worship Him by living for His eternal purposes (Ps. 90:2, 93:2; Eph. 5:15-16; Col. 3:1-4; Rev. 22:13). We see worship not simply as an activity or event, as much as a way of life for every believer (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 10:31). Since believers are linked to one another (Eph. 2:11-22), we also worship God corporately as His people. This corporate worship should be God-ward focused, as believers participate in exalting God the Father, Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God, and the Holy Spirit of God in ways which engage both our hearts and our minds (“...in spirit and in truth.” Jn. 4:24). Expositional biblical teaching is essential to proper corporate worship (2 Tim. 2:15), as is sacrificial giving of all our God-given resources (Rom. 12:1; Phil. 4:18; Heb. 13:15-16).

4 – We value humble dependence upon God expressed through prayer.

Apart from the power of Jesus Christ working in and through us by the Holy Spirit, we can accomplish nothing of lasting spiritual value that magnifies God’s glorious grace (Jn. 15:5). We see prayer as a means of demonstrating our dependence upon God, rather than a means of requesting God to fulfill our wishes. We pray to God in recognition of His holiness and supremacy, and as a confession of our humanity and need—and He rewards us with a deeper knowledge and experience of Himself (Jn. 4:4-26; 1 Thess. 5:16-18). We believe that God desires His people to pray, and that He hears and answers prayer (Mt. 7:7-11; Jas. 5:13-18). Therefore, prayer for others, for oneself and family, for our nation and its leaders, for the nations of the world, and for the ministry of the church is crucial to all that the church is and does (1 Tim. 2:1-8). The ministries and activities of our church in their conception, planning, and implementation will be characterized by prayerful reliance on Him.

5 – We value a grace-oriented, growing community of maturing believers.

We are committed to growing into fully devoted, developed, and mature followers of Jesus Christ who love God intimately and love others intensely. God’s unconditional acceptance and full forgiveness through Jesus Christ, rather than guilt, shame, and duty should motivate us to love and service in a grace-oriented community (Jn. 13:34-35; Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 1:2-10, 2:1-10, 4:2-16). Spiritual maturity can only happen in the context of gathered community that emphasizes authentic relationships of encouragement and accountability with other followers of Jesus (Acts 2:42-47; 1 Cor. 12:12-27). In this community of believers, we seek to provide an atmosphere that strengthens, rather than fractures marriages and families as God’s Word is taught and lived out.

6 – We value communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our central message and only hope.

We believe that the Incarnation of Christ, His sacrificial death on the cross, and His bodily resurrection is the heart and soul of Christianity (1 Cor. 1:18-25, 2:2, 15:1-5). The Gospel of Christ is of first importance to us, our only hope, and the message that we seek to proclaim to the world (Mt. 5:13-16; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 15:1-8, 14; 2 Tim. 1:10). Therefore, we attempt to both integrate the Gospel into every facet of Christian living and teaching (Rom. 6-8). We seek to communicate the Gospel message to those who have yet to hear by giving, praying, and intentionally sharing the Gospel to our community and to the “ends of the earth” (Mt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; Phil. 4:15-20; 1 Tim. 2:1-4). Our motivation for the task is that “the love of God controls us” (2 Cor. 5:14). We prepare future leaders by the intentional transfer of the Gospel from person to person and generation to generation (Romans 15:14; 1 Cor. 9:19-23; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:15-16).

7 – We value multiplication-designed discipleship of believers.

Jesus Christ has commissioned and commanded us to go and make fully devoted followers of Jesus (Mt. 28:19-20). God intends for believers to undergo a life-long process of transformation by the Holy Spirit, which aims for being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3:18). This process involves investing our lives spiritually in others that they in turn might do the same. Therefore, we will intentionally develop means and methods whereby all who profess to follow the Lord can progress from spiritual birth to spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity involves reproducing itself in future generations of believers who love God intimately and love others intensely as they become increasingly more like Christ (Rom. 8:29; 2 Tim. 2:2). Intentional, multiplication-designed discipleship must be a part of our church’s culture, and a driving motivation for all members.

8 – We value a local church in which every member is in ministry, led by a plurality of servant-leaders.

Every believer is spiritually gifted by God’s Spirit (1 Cor. 12). We purposefully equip all believers to exercise their spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:11-16), and appoint leadership that facilitates, mentors, and equips rather than dictates. We expect every member to involve themselves in works of ministry in all areas of life; however, we do not expect them to do so alone (Eph. 2:10; Tit. 3:8; 1 Pet. 2:12). For God’s people to thrive, He has prescribed the shepherding ministry of a plurality of elders, accountable to Christ the Chief Shepherd, who exercise authority for the building up of His church. We desire to faithfully pray for, train up, and set apart godly men whose maturity, example, and gifts mark them as God’s appointed servants for the care of His precious sheep (2 Cor. 10:8; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). The church must be led by servant-leaders whose motives are pure, and are guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Lk. 22:26; Jn. 13:1-20; 1 Thess. 2:3-8). Such men will influence the church to grow into maturity in Christ.

Our Vision Statement:

**Our vision is
to be a community of maturing believers in Christ who are making disciplemakers !**

ARTICLE II CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

A. Union in the Universal Body of Christ

At the time of personal faith in Jesus Christ, the believer is called into the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor. 1:2, 9; 12:12-13, 20; Col. 1:18), and joined into union with the universal body of Christ, the church, by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-13; Col. 1:18).

B. Union With a Local Assembly of Believers

There is another aspect of this fellowship into which the believer is joined. He is brought into the fellowship of fellow members of that body, other living believers on earth, that he/she might share and participate in the various blessings and ministries of the body of Christ. For this to occur properly, believers are to seek the fellowship of one another in a local body or assembly of believers through which they are to become a reflection of the greater and universal flock of God (1 Pet. 5:2-3; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1).

Believers in isolation, operating independently of other believers of a local assembly, is an idea contrary to Scripture. Scripture teaches that there are to be local assemblies of believers, united together by a common faith, by union in Christ, and the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, by common purposes, commitments and responsibilities, and with a common leadership of that specific body, independent in government from other local assemblies (Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Pet. 5:1-3; 1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13). The local church is to be a body of people allotted to the charge of elders (1 Pet. 5:1-3; 1 Thess. 5:12,13; 1 Pet. 4:8-10; 1 Cor. 12:20-27), and subject to the discipline of that body or assembly (1 Cor. 5:2; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14; 1 Tim. 5:20).

This of necessity implies more than a loose relationship of a believer or believers to a particular body or assembly. It involves a tie, an involvement, a commitment, responsibility and submission to both the leadership and to each other.

C. Church Membership

The Scriptures contain neither a mandate for nor a command against an official membership roll. In Acts, we see that believers were added to the church in Jerusalem, however, this serves primarily to show the growth in the early church (Acts 2:47, 9:31, 16:5). These people were devoting themselves to a local assembly and its leadership for teaching, leadership, fellowship and worship (Acts 2:42). There were also letters of commendation or acceptance written on behalf of both men and women to be welcomed and accepted into the fellowship or various assemblies. These letters commended believers to other assemblies regarding their faithfulness and ministry and thus they were not a transfer of membership by letter (Rom. 16:1-2; 1 Cor. 16:10; Col. 4:10; 2 Cor. 3:1, 8:16-24).

The emphasis of these Scriptures is that every believer become identified and committed to a specific local assembly of believers following the leading and direction of God. This commitment is revealed by their attitude, faith, attendance, involvement, giving and submission to that assembly. Thus a membership roll cannot, in and of itself, serve as the sole means of commitment a believer has to a local body.

PHBC does have a membership roll to aid in conducting business in an orderly manner and to provide legal protection in important, yet potentially controversial church decisions (such as discipline, Bylaws, Article X). An individual's decision to be placed on the membership roll should flow from their commitment to the church. The individual should remember that being on the membership role has no merit or value so far as his/her spiritual maturity or growth is concerned. It is, however, an important tool in helping the church function smoothly.

D. Procedure for Membership

Any individual who confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and who is in agreement with this Constitution is qualified and eligible for membership in PHBC. While baptism by immersion is not necessary for salvation, this local assembly encourages the member to be baptized by immersion. Though church membership is encouraged, the church will not solicit anyone to become a member and thus will respect the privacy and personal initiative of the individual in this matter. Anyone who desires to become a member should contact one of the elders and request membership. The Elders will meet with the individual to discuss this decision. If the individual meets the qualifications for membership, he/she will be placed on the roll and will be acknowledged before the flock as a new member.

E. Membership Roll

The elders will review the membership roll annually. Members may be removed from the roll by the member's choice, by church discipline (Bylaws, Article X), or by noninvolvement with the body. If an individual appears to no longer be involved with the church, an elder(s) will meet with the person to verify their membership status. No individual will be removed from the roll without being contacted by an elder.

F. Congregational Affirmation and Meetings

The purpose of congregational affirmation is not to simply obtain a "majority-rules" consensus. Rather, congregational affirmation in this church is designed to show God's leading within the body on an issue. A strong affirmation in favor of an issue shall signify to the church leadership that the flock agrees that God is leading favorably in the decision being considered. If a strong affirmation is not achieved, the leadership will reevaluate the situation. No steps will be taken on any issue without strong affirmation by the body.

Any member of the church may participate in the affirmation process. The person may participate in person or by absentee ballot. An absentee ballot is valid if the person writes down on any piece of paper the issue being considered, their decision, and their signature. Absentee ballots must be turned in to an elder no later than the date of the meeting.

The means of affirmation will be done visibly (raising hands, standing), rather than secret ballot. This may vary, however, if the leadership announces the form of affirmation to be used when the meeting is announced.

ARTICLE III MEETINGS

A. Legal Meetings

As an incorporated local church, the IRS requires that we conduct an annual informational meeting which documents decisions that are made by this congregation.

Similar informational meetings may be called throughout the year. The purpose of those meetings is for the church leadership to present ministry plans, update the church on previous and current ministry work, and affirm certain recommendations if necessary.

B. Other corporate meetings

This local church will provide for the regular gathering of the church body. Foundational to any corporate meetings is our mission statement (Constitution, Article III) and core values (Bylaws, Article I).

1. Biblical Purpose of meetings

We see worship and ministry not simply as an activity or event, as much as it is a way of life for every believer (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 10:31). However, since believers are linked to one another (Eph. 2:11-22), and the local church is the visible manifestation of the Universal Body of Christ, we recognize the importance of the church gathering visibly. Spiritual maturity can only happen in the context of gathered community that emphasizes authentic relationships of encouragement and accountability with other followers of Jesus (Acts 2:42-47; 1 Cor. 12:12-27).

The New Testament does not indicate that the church scheduled meetings, but it is clear that they were committed to meeting together (Acts 2:42, 46, 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:18, 14:26-40). It is also clear that the early church's practice was to meet on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7-12; 1 Cor. 11, and 14). There was a great variety in the kinds of participation and activity in which the believers were engaged in the church gatherings. The New Testament indicates that there was singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), prayer (Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 2:1-2, 8), teaching (Acts 2:42, 20:7), the reading of Scripture (1 Cor. 14:26; 1 Tim. 4:13), and the giving of money to the Lord for His work (Acts 2:42, 45; 1 Cor. 16:1-4) and worship (Acts 2:46,47; Eph. 5:18-20).

2. Time and Place of Meetings:

Elders, Deacons and Ministry Teams will determine the time and frequency of Team meetings. The elders will determine times and places of corporate gatherings of the church body.

Since the New Testament makes no requirements regarding times and places of meetings, we will meet only to fulfill Biblical purposes (Constitution, Article III) and core values (Bylaws, Article I) and in obedience to the Lord, "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" (Heb. 10:24-25).

ARTICLE IV

Church Leadership

A. General Statement

Jesus Christ alone is the Head of His Church (Col. 1:18). He has ordained that individual churches should be governed by Himself through leaders whom He appoints, who are endowed by His Spirit with the gifts and graces needed to accomplish their work. Christ has ordained that local churches are to be administered by elders and deacons. Beside these two offices the Scriptures acknowledge no office which continues in the church today (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13).

B. General Prerequisites

1. All leaders of this church must be members.
2. Any individual set apart as a leader must not only be able to wholeheartedly and conscientiously affirm his full agreement with the church's Doctrinal Statement and Constitution -- but also have the capacity to biblically defend them.
3. While we acknowledge the valuable gifts which God has given women and the valuable assistance they may render to the leaders of the church (Rom. 16:1-6; Phil. 4:3; 1 Tim. 3:11), the Bible prohibits women from holding either the office of deacon or elder in the church (1 Cor. 14:33b-35; 1 Tim. 2:8-15, 3:1-7). We believe that God has designed men and women differently and assigned them different roles in marriage and within the church (Eph. 5:22-24; 1 Cor. 11:3). Women may be involved in any church ministry under the submission of the elders (1 Cor. 11:3). The principle is that women must not usurp authority over the men particularly in regard to teaching and preaching the Word (1 Tim. 2:11, 12; 1 Cor. 11:3, 14:34).
4. An interim pastor will be considered a church member, since he is appointed by elders and affirmed by the body to serve in a pastoral role.

Article V Elders

A. The role of elders:

Those who have been called of God to oversee and teach in the church are called elders, pastors, or overseers. These are three, interchangeable names designating one and the same office in a biblically functioning church (Acts 20:17, 28; Eph. 4:11, 12; Titus 1:5, 7). In other words, elders together 'pastor' or shepherd the church body by exercising spiritual oversight over the church body -- teaching, admonishing, nurturing, praying, and discipling.

B. The plurality of elders

Though a plurality of elders is the New Testament norm for every church, Scripture does not specify the number of elders each church should have, nor does it dictate the length of an elder's term of office. (Heb. 13:17; Acts 11:30; Jas. 5:14-15; Acts 14:20-23, 15, 20:17, 21; 1 Tim. 3:1-7, 5:17-25; 1 Pet. 5:1).

C. Qualifications

Two key New Testament passages (1 Tim. 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9) provide us with the essential qualifications that such men must demonstrate in order to be qualified to serve the local church.

1. The Nature of the Qualifications

- a) They are the marks of leadership
- b) Primarily they are marks of maturity
- c) They are marks of identification and confirmation for elders
- d) They are qualities of examples, patterns to follow

2. The Biblical qualifications:

- a) They must **desire** the office of elder and demonstrate spiritual leadership abilities among the church body.
- b) They must be **able to teach** and use the Word of God with wisdom and patience.
- c) They must be **lovers of God**. Men who take God and His Word seriously.
- d) They must be **able to manage their household** in a biblical manner.
- e) They must be able to spiritually manage their interpersonal relationships.
- f) They must be men who are seeking to be controlled by Christ and His Word rather than by worldly and fleshly desires.
- g) These men shall hold to the doctrinal statement of this Constitution in accord with the statements of Constitution, Article V, and be supportive of the entire Constitution and Bylaws.

D. Authority

The ministry of PHBC shall be under the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ working in and through the Team of Elders. The elders will be the primary decision-making body within the church. However, it is critical that the elders make decisions based on carefully assembled facts, scriptural insight, the individual and corporate leading by the Holy Spirit, and input from the body (Acts 6:5, 15:6, 22; Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13).

The church is not a democracy or a government where the majority rules. Jesus Christ Himself is the Head and Ruler of the church. However, the Lord Jesus leads and directs through both the body and the elders. Since the Lord Jesus dwells in each member of the body of Christ, it is important and necessary for the elders to seek input, information and guidance from the body, especially on practical matters of church life. In major decisions of church life, the congregation will meet to affirm elders' recommendations, to show a unified movement toward the direction in question and to show a sense of God's leading. The elders will not move forward with a decision until the majority of the body is unified on the matter.

E. Duties of Elders

Because of external and internal Christian testimony to be promoted with the local body, the elders must first and foremost exercise a personal spiritual walk which promotes self-examination, maintain a servant-like quality in life, and serve with gentleness and humility in all that he does. Out of his biblical perspective, the elder is to joyfully undertake the following duties:

1. Give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4; 1 Tim. 3:1).
2. Guard and protect the church body (1 Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:17-35; Heb. 13:17).
3. Oversee and provide spiritual direction for the activities and growth of the church body (1 Pet. 5:2, 3).
4. Aid in finding and developing gifted teachers of the Word (2 Tim. 2:2).
5. Warn and discipline (2 Tim. 2:14; Titus 3:10) as outlined in Bylaws, Article X.
6. Support, encourage, counsel and lead in humility (1 Pet. 5:2, 3).
7. See to the appointment of deacons (Acts 6:1-6) as per Bylaws, Article VII, Section D.
8. Provide guidance to the deacons as needed (Acts 6:1-6).
9. See to the oversight of the finances of the church body (1 Tim. 5:17) per Bylaws, Article XI.
10. Pray for and encourage the sick (Jas. 5:14).
11. Seek the Lord's will to interpret the Articles and provisions of this Constitution in the light of Scripture.
12. Make decisions and perform any other duties as situations within the church dictate, either directly or through proper and orderly delegation of ministry teams or persons as necessary.
13. Appoint a team leader or moderator to lead all elders' meetings.

The elders shall strive to maintain open communication with the church body, both to discern needs, concerns and viewpoints, and to communicate information and decisions. This may be done both publically and one-on-one personal contact (Acts 6:1-5, 11:22, 15:1, 6, 22, 16:2).

F. Appointment (General Principles)

The Scriptures emphasize that elders in the church are not appointed by men, but by God (Acts 20:28). The task of the people in the church is to seek and discover God's direction and leading within the church body in the appointment of elders. The need for an additional elder, paid or non-paid, may be recognized by either the elders or other members of the church body. The elders, in consultation with or in response to the request of body members, shall seek to discern the nature of the need and to follow God's leading in deciding if the need justifies the appointment of an elder. Upon a decision by the Team of Elders that a need does exist, the church will prayerfully and carefully seek God's direction in choosing the right man or men.

It is the purpose of PHBC to base the selection process upon an orderly, proper sequence of events which will most easily facilitate the recognition of God's appointment of men to this ministry. The whole church body should be on the alert for men whose lives characterize the qualifications laid out in Scripture. Only qualified men will be appointed. If no qualified men are available, or if men are unwilling to serve, who would otherwise be qualified, no appointment will be made. The church should wait on the Lord either to remove the need or to provide qualified men.

The Scriptures speak of two categories of elders within a church body: non-paid elders and paid elders (1 Tim. 5:17-18).

The following procedures outline the steps regarding appointment, tenure, and removal of non-paid elders:

G. Appointment of Non-Paid Elders

When the need arises for a new non-paid elder (either for a new position or to replace an elder who has left the Team), the existing Elders should assume a guiding and directing role in the search for the right man. The specific nature of the need and the decision to seek a new elder should be announced to the church body. The church body will be asked to suggest qualified men for the position based on the biblical criteria for elders (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus. 1:6-9; Acts 14:23).

After a period of time and prayerful consideration, the elders will meet to consider all the nominees as to their qualifications for the position. If the Team believes a man to be qualified, after they have considered the man's qualifications, a member of the Team will be appointed to approach each nominee to explain the specific nature of the need and to determine his willingness to serve (1 Tim. 5:22).

If the elder nominee(s) signifies his understanding of the specific nature of the need and his willingness to serve, the Elders will announce this to the church body. A time and place will be announced for conducting an affirmation by the church body to insure substantial agreement among the church body and of God's selection of the nominee(s) (Acts 20:18). The affirmation will be conducted as outlined in Bylaws, Article II, Section F. After the above steps are successfully completed, the appointment of the man as a non-paid elder will be announced to the church body. The new elder will be ordained by the Elders.

H. Tenure

Elders are appointed to an indefinite tenure consistent with their continued desire and ability to serve in this capacity. This must be evaluated and recognized by themselves, by the other elders, and by the church body (Rom. 12:3-8). There is no biblical evidence for a rotating system of tenure church leaders.

The removal of elders from office shall be by personal resignation or by disciplinary actions in accordance with the following:

I. Voluntary Resignation

An elder may step down at any time he so chooses. The elder should prayerfully reflect on his decision and seek counsel from the Team before making a final decision.

J. Involuntary Dismissal

Involuntary dismissal of any elder, paid or non-paid, will be a disciplinary action of the church body in accordance with the instruction of 1 Tim. 5:19-20; Gal. 6:1 and Mt. 18:15-18. The specific procedures for this are spelled out in Bylaws, Article X, Section D, with the following differences:

(1) If the situation is such that it necessitates dismissal from office, the elders may suggest voluntary resignation by the person involved. If he refuses, or believes he has been unfairly treated, then it is to be brought before the congregation to hear the issues and to allow the person concerned to present his case. It will then be decided by a simple majority vote of the body at a congregational meeting. The body must be informed of such meeting at least two weeks prior to the time of the meeting.

(2) If members of the body believe they are not being properly and biblically represented by the elders or any member of the Team of elders, they are to follow the procedures of Mt. 18:15-16 and first discuss the issues with the elders. If, after following the above procedures, the issue is not resolved, then they may call for a congregational meeting (Mt. 18:17) where the issues may be presented and ruled on by affirmation of the congregation. Again, a two-week announcement period will be necessary before the meeting can be held. The congregation, at such time, may remove any or all members of the Team of elders.

ARTICLE VI PAID ELDERS AND STAFF

A. Paid Elder(s): The Role of the Pastor-teacher

As an elder, the pastor-teacher serves along with other elders as a leader among leaders. He is part of this team. Together, they oversee the body. But, as a pastor-teacher, he has been given by the Lord to the body in a unique role (Eph. 4:11-17). "Some" indicates the uniqueness of this teaching role. Because of the unique role as a gift to the church, he is supported financially by the body (1 Tim. 5:17-18). The paid elder(s) plays a critical role in the growth, maturity, spirituality and effectiveness of the church. He is responsible for the quality and content of the teaching and counseling within the church body (Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Tim. 4:6-16). PHBC recognizes that the Lord has given spiritual gifts to all believers and therefore does not expect the paid elder/(s), pastor-teacher(s) to provide all the teaching, evangelism and counseling, etc., within the body (Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Pet. 4:10-11). Rather they are to serve with other elders and lead in the equipping of the saints "for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12).

B. Paid Elder(s): Duties, Qualifications and Authority

The duties, qualifications and authority of the paid elder(s) shall be the same as for non-paid elders (Bylaws, Article V, Section C, D), with the following additional duties:

- 1) Provide the majority of the teaching during worship services (1 Tim. 4:13).
- 2) Provide guidance, as needed, to the Team of Elders concerning church business and spiritual concerns within the body.
- 3) Unless designated by the Team of Elders to another elder, the lead paid elder (pastor-teacher) shall supervise the paid church staff (secretaries, assistant pastors, youth pastors, etc.).

C. Paid Elder(s): Selection

Upon recognition of the need for a new paid elder/ pastor-teacher, the Team of Elders will guide and direct the selection process. The attitude of the Team should be one of submission to the Lord, waiting on Him to fill the need with the right man. They should also be expectant, knowing that God will provide a person to fill the need.

The following procedure outlines the method PHBC will follow in selecting a new paid elder/pastor-teacher:

1. The Pastoral Search Team (PST) shall be appointed with a member of the Team of Elders as the head of this Team. The team shall consist of non-paid elders, along with at least an equal number of members of the church body as chosen by the elders.
2. The PST shall seek the names and resumes from any qualified and interested men by any means at their disposal. This may include contacting doctrinally sound seminaries to assist in finding qualified men for the position and seeking information from the congregation about possible candidates.
3. The PST will carefully and prayerfully consider any resumes submitted. The resumes will be evaluated in light of the man's character, doctrinal beliefs, experience, interests, and philosophy of the ministry and in light of the needs of the church body.
4. The PST will contact the candidate who appears to fill the needs of the church based on the resumes and other gathered information. He may be invited to visit the church one or more times. These visit(s) should include time for the PST and church body to evaluate the man and his family, time for him to present the Word and time for him to evaluate the church and the community.
5. After each visit, the PST will prayerfully consider the candidate. During the process, they will seek input from the church body concerning the individual. All questionnaires will be reviewed by the PST. After evaluation of the candidate, the PST will announce their recommendation to the church body.
6. A congregational meeting will be called to affirm PST's recommendation. The meeting date should be at least two (2) weeks after the PST's recommendation is reported to allow the church ample time to prayerfully consider the decision. The affirmation will be conducted as outlined in Bylaws, Article II, Section F. If at least two-thirds of the members agree with the PST'S recommendation, the Elders will offer the position to the man.
7. If the man turns down the offer, or if the church body does not agree with the committee's recommendation, the above procedure will be repeated until a qualified man is appointed.

D. Paid Elder(s): Tenure and Removal

Tenure and removal of a paid elder will follow the same guidelines as outlined in Bylaws, Article V, Section H,I, J.

E. Associate Pastoral Staff

The need for paid associate pastoral staff (including youth pastor), to assist in meeting the needs of the church body may be recognized by any member of the church body or leadership. Such need must be agreed to by the lead Pastor-teacher (in consultation with the Team of Elders) before action is taken. The need for this expenditure should be discussed with the church body. The procedure for hiring associate pastoral staff members shall be the same as for a lead paid elder/pastor-teacher. The pastor-teacher will automatically head the Pastoral Search Team for any associate staff.

All paid pastoral staff will look to the lead pastor-teacher for supervision of their duties and for periodic reviews of their performance.

A written job description will be prepared for all paid staff members. This description will be prepared by the lead elder/pastor-teacher in consultation with the Team of Elders. After appropriate consultation with the church leadership, a recommendation by the lead elder/pastor-teacher will be sufficient for modifying the duties or redirecting the efforts of any paid staff member. Removal of any associate pastoral staff member shall follow the same guidelines as outlined in Bylaws, Article V, Section H, I, J.

F. Non-Pastoral Staff

The hiring of building and ground's maintenance, janitorial services, secretary, etc., will be planned for and directed by the Team of Elders.

Since the secretary will be working primarily with the lead elder/pastor-teacher, he will make the final decision, in consultation with the Team of Elders, on who will fill the position.

ARTICLE VII: DEACONS

A. The Role of Deacon

The word for 'deacon' means 'servant'. As such, deacons play a crucial role in the life of a healthy church. Specifically, deacons provide 'any kind of service that supplies the need of another person'. Being subject to the elders, deacons serve in the capacity of assisting the Elders / Pastors with administrative responsibilities, business affairs, and practical care of the church body (Acts 6:1-4). The church shall set apart, according to its need, men who evidence the scriptural qualifications for that role (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim. 3:8-13).

B. Qualifications

Deacons shall be men who desire to be servants of the local church body, who are able to serve, who meet all the qualifications of Scripture set forth in Acts 6:3 and 1 Tim. 3:8-12, and who are conscientiously and wholeheartedly in agreement with the Constitution of this church.

C. Duties

In Acts 6:1-4, certain men were appointed to minister to the physical needs of the church body, to relieve the elders so they would have more time to concentrate on prayer and on the Word. Deacons shall be helpers of the elders in ministering to the needs of the body, especially the physical needs (such as caring for the building and property), though they may serve in other capacities as their gifts and training allow.

D. Appointment

Deacons will be appointed as the need arises. They shall be appointed to serve as long as they are qualified and willing to serve and as long as a need for their ministry exists. 1 Tim. 3:10 teaches that potential deacons are to be tested. The primary means of testing is time; time for the church body to evaluate a man's commitment to the Lord, his qualifications according to 1 Tim. 3:8-12, his doctrinal understanding and his willingness to serve the local body. The church body and the Team of Elders should be on the alert to those men who demonstrate the qualifications of a deacon. However, only qualified and willing men will be appointed. If no qualified men are available, or if those qualified are unable or unwilling to serve, no appointment will be made. The church shall wait on the Lord to provide a qualified man or men to meet the need.

The following outlines the procedure PHBC will follow in selecting deacons:

1. The Elders shall decide if the need for a deacon(s) exists (Acts 6:1-7).

2. When there is a need, then the Elders shall notify the congregation of the need and ask them to recommend to the Team those men whom they believe meet the qualifications.
3. The Elders will review the names submitted to them along with any additional names of men they believe to be qualified.
4. Each name submitted will be carefully and prayerfully considered and reviewed according to their qualifications, gifts, the need, and the individual's willingness to serve.
5. The elders will then appoint that man (men) whom they believe to be the most qualified to serve according to the specific needs and the qualifications.
6. The elders will seek the affirmation of the body and ordain the new deacons.

E. Removal of Deacons

1. Voluntary

A deacon may voluntarily step down from his position at any time he so chooses. The deacon should prayerfully reflect on his decision and seek counsel from the Team of Elders before making a final decision.

2. Involuntary Dismissal

Involuntary dismissal of a deacon shall be in accord with the procedures for church discipline outlined in Bylaws, Article V, Section J, if the situation is such that it necessitates dismissal from office, the Elders may suggest voluntary resignation by the person involved. If he refuses, the Elders may remove him from office, but only after the principles for church discipline have been prayerfully considered and followed (Mt. 18:15-18).

ARTICLE VIII – MINISTRY TEAMS

Rather than a complex system of elected Teams or committees, PHBC provides for the appointment of ministry teams as needed to effectively carry out our mission.

A. Definition of a Team:

A team is a group of people who have complementary gifts and skills, who share the common purpose of carrying out one specific area of ministry that contributes to implementing PHBC's mission. The church's vision and core values (Bylaws, Article I) form the basis for any team's ministry.

B. Biblical Basis

The team concept is in keeping with the principle of each part functioning to profit the whole body (Eph. 4:16). Jesus worked with the team of twelve (Mt. 10:1-5; Mk 3:14; Lk. 6:12-13), three (Mt. 17:1-13), and sent missionary teams in groups of two (Mk.6:7). The team concept is seen in the early church (the twelve (Acts 1:13, 2:14, 43; 5:12, 29, 6:2); the seven (Acts 6:1-7); Barnabas and Paul (Acts 9:26, 27, 11:25-26, 13:1, 2, 7) ; the five (Acts 13:1); Paul with Barnabas (Acts 13:13-15:36), Silas (Acts 15:40), Timothy (Acts 16:1-3), Luke (Acts 16:11-40 among others), Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18), Titus (2 Cor. 2:12-13, 7:5-7) and Erasmus (Acts 19:22).

C. Appointment:

On an as-needed basis, ministry teams may be appointed by elders and affirmed by the church body.

D. Responsibilities:

- 1) To set forth objectives and goals in keeping with our mission statement and core values
- 2) To work together to plan and implement activities, programs, and methodologies related to their area of ministry in keeping with stated objectives and goals
- 3) To consistently evaluate all programs related to their area of ministry.

The purpose and structure and desired outcome of each team will be developed by its leaders and presented to the elders and affirmed by the body. Each team will keep an accurate record of its proceedings and report to the Elders. A Ministry Team will cease to exist at the point when it loses its purpose or no longer operates within the vision and values of the PHBC.

E. Accountability:

Teams must be able to minister with a submissive and cooperative spirit under the direction of the elders and in keeping with the church's mission and core values. Each team will keep an accurate record of its proceedings and report to the Elders. A deacon may serve as moderator/leader of a ministry team.

F. Possible Current ministry teams

- 1) Worship Ministry Team – This team will provide guidance and planning for all corporate worship gatherings.
- 2) Discipleship- This team will develop and oversee the church's process of edification.
- 3) Evangelism Team- This team will develop and oversee the church's evangelistic efforts.
- 4) Missions Sending Team- This team will develop and oversee the church's global missions' involvement.
- 5) Stewardship Ministry Team – This team will be responsible for the receipt and disbursement of all funds and development of the church budget.
- 6) Facilities Ministry Team – This team will oversee and maintain the facilities of PHBC.

Sub teams and additional teams may be added based on ministry needs.

ARTICLE IX GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Suggestions and proposals from the flock can be a vital and healthy avenue by which the leadership may minister to the rest of the flock. When handled scripturally, this type of communication edifies the body, ministers to the needs of the flock, helps preserve and promote unity within the church and brings glory to God.

Following the principles outlined above, any member of the flock who harbors a disagreement about any policy or procedure promoted by the church or its leadership, should as a first step, prayerfully and privately approach the leadership. This may be done through informal consultation with an elder, by means of a signed letter to the Elders, or meeting with the Elders at the church member's request. It is recognized that these steps should be taken prior to public discussion of any issue so as to help the leadership minister to the body more effectively and to help avoid discord and disunity within the flock (Prov. 13:3; 16:27-28; 17:4).

The church leadership should seek to prayerfully accept and address any complaint thus presented and seek to resolve all problems in a manner which best promotes those benefits mentioned above (Prov. 16:21-24).

When these policies are not followed, causing factions and strife, it will be necessary to exercise church discipline to deal with the offending member as per Bylaws, Article X (Titus 2:9-14).

ARTICLE X

CORRECTIVE CHURCH DISCIPLINE

We believe in the responsibility and necessity of church discipline as clearly outlined in Scripture. It is a very difficult area and hard to practice. Nevertheless, church discipline has the divine authority of Scripture and is vital to the purity of the church. In church discipline, the following matters must be carefully understood and applied.

A. The Pattern and Basis for Discipline

The discipline of the church is first patterned after the fact that the Lord Himself disciplines His children (Heb. 12:6) and, as a father delegates part of the discipline of the children to the wife, so the Lord has delegated the discipline of the church family to the church itself.

Discipline is further based on the holy character of God (1 Pet. 1:16; Heb. 12:11). The pattern of God's holiness, His desire for the church to be holy, set apart unto Him, is an important reason for the necessity of church discipline. The church is therefore to clean out the leaven of malice and wickedness from its ranks (1 Cor. 5:6-8). A failure to discipline in a church today evidences a lack of awareness of the holiness of God.

Church discipline must be patterned after and based on the divine commands of Scripture. We have numerous passages which both command and give us biblical directives on the how, when and where of church discipline. Again, a failure to exercise this responsibility demonstrates a lack of obedience and belief in the authority of the Bible (1 Cor. 5:1-13; Mt. 18:17-18; Titus 3:10; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 5:20; Gal. 6:1).

A final basis for the necessity of church discipline is the testimony of the church in the world. The world observes the behavior and life of the church. When the church acts no differently than the world, it loses its credibility and authenticity (1 Pet. 2:11-18, 3:8-16, 4:1-4).

B. The Purposes of Church Discipline

1. Concern for the glory of God and the testimony of the flock. (1 Pet. 1:16; Heb. 12:11).
2. The restoration and building up of the sinning believer (Mt. 18:15; 2 Thess. 3:14-15; Heb. 12:10-13; Gal. 6:1-2; Jas. 5:20).
3. The purity of the local body and its protection from moral and doctrinally impure influences, knowing a little leaven can leaven the entire lump (1 Cor. 5:6-7; 1 Tim. 5:20).

C. Goals of Church Discipline

1. It must be done in the spirit of humility, gentleness and patience, looking to yourself lest you too be tempted (Gal. 6:1-2; 2 Tim. 2:24-25).
2. Those who walk disorderly are to be admonished, warned, and appealed to in love (1 Thess 5:14-15; 1 Tim. 5:1-2; Eph. 4:15; 2 Tim. 4:2). This admonishing, etc., is not restricted to the leaders but may be done by any member (1 Thess. 5:14).
3. If there is no response in repentance and obedience, then members are to withhold intimate fellowship until there is obedience (2 Thess. 3:6, 14). This is to indicate to the offender that his action has caused a rupture in the harmony of the body. Its goal is restoration and the person is still to be counted as a brother (2 Thess. 3:14-15).
4. If the person persists after admonition and withdrawal of intimate fellowship, the final step is rejection or excommunication (Titus 3:10; Mt. 18:17b), accompanied by public rebuke before all (1 Tim. 5:20). Examples of church discipline are found in Scripture. The Corinthian believers were to be "gathered together" in order to take action against the offending brother (2 Cor. 2:6). We also find that it was the whole church in Rome and in Thessalonica who were to take action with regard to the unruly and schismatic and not just a few (2 Thess. 3:6-15; Rom. 16:17).
5. Finally, discipline in the name of our Lord always includes a readiness to forgive. The many or majority who discipline must also be ready and eager to forgive, comfort, and reaffirm their love to the sinning person (2 Cor. 2:6-8).

D. The Practice of Church Discipline

1. When it is to be practiced

Great care must be exercised here. According to Scripture, there are five categories which warrant church discipline. These are:

- a) Difficulties between members (Mt. 18:15-17).
- b) Divisiveness. People causing divisions in the church (Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-11).
- c) Disorderly conduct. Conduct clearly out of line with the prescribed commands of Scripture (2 Thess. 3:6-15).
- d) Sins of the type mentioned in 1 Cor. 5: incest, immorality, covetousness, idolatry, abusive speech, drunkenness, and swindling (1 Cor. 5:1, 11).

- e) False teaching. Erroneous teaching and views which concern the fundamentals of the faith, not lesser differences of interpretation (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17-18; also implied in Rev. 2:14—16; Phil. 3:2-3, 15-19; Rom. 16:17-18).

2. How it is to be practiced

Scriptural procedure here is clear and specific steps are prescribed. They are as follows:

- a) Recognize the offense. Caution—one must be sure it is an offense which calls for discipline. Again, the Word is our criterion.
- b) Seek private correction and/or reconciliation with the offender (Mt. 18:15). This is when the problem involves two believers. The one offended or the one who recognizes the offense is to go privately and try to rectify the problem. If this fails, he is to take witnesses, preferably spiritual leaders, so that if it has to be brought before the whole church it can be firmly proven or established (Mt. 18:16-17).
- c) Seek reconciliation through the spiritual leadership (Elders) if the problem involves an offense that is against the whole body, or is a threat to its unity. Initiatory action following the concept of Galatians 6:1 should be taken by the elders of the church rather than by just one person. This initial contact provides opportunity for loving admonition, correction and forgiveness. On the other hand, if this first step is not heeded, it constitutes a warning that further action will be taken and gives occasion for serious rebuke (2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:12-14; Titus 2:15, 3:10).
- d) Seek reconciliation through the whole body. If further action is necessary, it is to be taken before the whole church (Mt. 18:17). This action would consist of a minimum of loss of voting privileges, but may result in more severe action. Any action taken must be approved by a congregational affirmation as outlined in Bylaws Article II, Section F.
- e) In essence then, this is the action of the Lord carrying out discipline through the action of the whole body through the leadership of the elders or the spiritually mature (1 Cor. 5:4). Similar heavenly authority is seen in the ratification of this disciplinary action as spelled out in Mt. 18:18-19.

ARTICLE XI FINANCES

Believers are to give financially from an attitude of commitment to the Lord (2 Cor. 8:1-6). It is the policy of PHBC to keep the congregation informed of financial needs by means of public communication to the congregation. This will not include individual solicitation of members to taking of financial pledges. The purpose of this information is not to coerce or pressure anyone into giving, but rather to provide avenues for giving as the Lord provides. Each believer is to give according to their ability with a cheerful heart (2 Cor. 9:7).

This body does not believe that the New Testament believer is required to tithe as was the Old Testament Jew. The tithe, which the Old Testament Law commanded, required that each Jew give a certain percentage of his income to the Lord. However, the Jews could give gifts above and beyond their tithe. The required tithe served more as a "tax" than a gift. Scripture records no such required tithe for believers in the church age. Each believer is to give as God provides from an attitude of cheerfulness and commitment to the Lord (2 Cor. 8:12-15, 9:7), recognizing that we are only stewards of what God already owns.

Because giving is done unto the Lord, it is critical that the local church handle the finances given with care and wisdom both for the glory of the Lord and for the testimony of the church (2 Cor. 8:20-21). With this view in mind, the following outlines the policies of handling financial decisions:

(1) All paid staff shall be paid a salary commensurate to their duties and abilities (1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gal. 6:6-7; 1 Cor. 9:6-11).

(2) All gifts given as a designated gift will be used as designated so long as those designations are in accord with biblical principles. If any special gifts are given with the directions to use it in whatever area has the greatest need, the Team of elders will decide how that gift will be used. All other gifts will go into the general fund.

(3) The local church has the privilege and responsibility to provide financial support for those in service for the Lord (missionaries, seminary students, etc. (Phil. 4:14-17; 2 Cor. 8:1-5). PHBC will support certain of those in service as the Lord leads and provides. All of these supported must hold a doctrinal view in agreement with the doctrinal statement presented in this Constitution. The Team of elders will recommend to the congregation which people and ministries PHBC will support.

(4) Depending on the amount of money involved, the lead paid elder/pastor-teacher may make a financial decision in consultation with the elders, and in some cases affirmed by the congregation.

(5) On an annual basis, during the first quarter of the year, a finance team will be appointed to examine the salaries of all paid salary members, the amount of support given to the persons and ministries supported in number 3 above, and the expenditure limits for the paid elder(s) and Team of elders. This committee shall consist of at least two elders and the church treasurer. All recommendations concerning changes in these areas will first be presented to the Team of Elders. The elders will present the recommendations to the congregation for affirmation as outlined in Bylaws, Article II, Section F. The final decisions made per this procedure will be recorded in the written minutes of the next elders' meeting following the meeting with the congregation.

(6) In order to keep orderly records, a treasurer shall be appointed by the Team of elders. The treasurer shall keep all necessary books, write necessary checks to pay bills, prepare monthly financial statements and any other duties as prescribed by the Team of Elders.

ARTICLE XII: GLOBAL MISSIONS

We believe that the Gospel of grace in Jesus Christ is the only hope for all mankind (Jn. 14:6; Rom 3:21-26), and that God has mandated the Body of Christ to engage all peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations (Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Rom. 10:14-15, 16:25 -27) with the message of the Gospel as His ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20-21). Therefore, as a local church, we are committed to sacrificially utilizing our resources (time, finances, gifts, facilities, etc.) for the sake of making disciples locally and globally. We will engage in, and evaluate all outreach ministries as guided on the following principles:

- 1) Balance: We see the value of pursuing balance in terms of local and global ministry for the sake of obedience and vitality. Each member should understand and be engaged in both their local and global role in disciple making.
- 2) Partnerships: We recognize the advantage and privilege of forming partnerships in the Gospel (Phil. 1:3-6, 4:15-20). Therefore, we will intentionally seek partnerships with individuals and organizations who are likeminded in beliefs and values. Our partnerships must never replace our own responsibility to make disciples as a local church, and as individuals.
- 3) Least reached: Because God desires people from all tribes, tongues, and nations to know and glorify Him (1 Tim. 2:4; Rev. 5:9-10), we place priority on carrying the Gospel to places and people, both locally and globally, where the revealed knowledge of the Gospel is scarce or non-existent
- 4) Focused: We must continuously evaluate our efforts and partnerships to ensure that we are pursuing and accomplishing our primary aim: to make disciples to the glory of God.

Article XIII AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended or replaced when the need for change is recognized by the elders and the members of the church body. At the time such need is believed to be present, the elders shall make provisional modification in light of Scripture and all essential information on this matter shall be communicated to the congregation in written form, providing adequate time for study and response. A date will be proposed for acceptance of the revisions at a congregational meeting (Bylaws, Article II, Section F). Following affirmation by the congregation, the amendments to the Bylaws will become effective.