

# Constitution of Living Hope Community Bible Church

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# Constitution of Living Hope Community Bible Church

This is the first constitution adopted: 2016

## **Witness**

The following signatories witness the adoption of this new church constitution during the 2016 Business Meeting of the church.

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Chairman of the Church

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

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Church Clerk

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

## **Article I. Name and Organization.**

The name of this organization shall be: "Living Hope Community Bible Church". The church was organized on September 6, 2015.

## **Article II. Purpose.**

The purpose of Living Hope Community Bible Church shall be to establish and develop fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. It shall do this through worship of God, the teaching of His Word, practice the teachings and example of Jesus Christ as set forth in the New Testament, participation in His ordinances, sustaining His doctrines, and propagating among all peoples the Gospel of Salvation through personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

## **Article II. Affirmation of Faith.**

Living Hope Community Bible Church adheres to the Affirmation of Faith as here stated, with accompanying Scripture references.

### **Section A. The Word of God.**

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matter of faith and conduct. II Timothy 3:16-17. I Peter 1:24-25. II Peter 1:20-21.

### **Section B. The Trinity.**

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons; that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. Matthew 28:19. Ephesians 4:5-6.

### **Section C. God the Father.**

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. Matthew 23:9. John 3:16-18. Rev. 1:6.

### **Section D. Jesus Christ.**

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal, visible return to earth. Matthew 1:18. John 1:1-5. Acts 1:11. I Corinthians 15:3-4. II Corinthians 5:21. Galatians 4:4-5. Hebrews 7:25.

### **Section E. The Holy Spirit.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and the Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgement, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide. John 16:7-15. Romans 8:9. I Corinthians 3:6

### **Section F. Regeneration.**

We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. II Corinthians 5:17. Titus 3:4-7.

### **Section G. The Church.**

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of a local church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world. Ephesians 1:19-23. Acts 2:42-46. I Peter 2:9-10.

### **Section H. Christian Conduct.**

1. We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of his fellowmen; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions; and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ. Romans 12:1-3. I Corinthians 4:2. Galatians 6:1-2. II Peter 1:3-9.
2. Human Sexuality and Biblical Marriage.
  - a. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; 19:5-7, 13; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)
  - b. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

### **Section I. The Ordinances.**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 26:26-29. Matthew 28:19.

## **Section J. Religious Liberty.**

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by an ecclesiastical or political authority; that therefore Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other. Deuteronomy 24:16. Matthew 22:15:22. Acts 5:27-32. I Timothy 2:5.

## **Section K. Church Cooperation.**

Cooperation in a denominational organization and/or a regional or district conference exists and functions by the will of the church. Cooperation in such organizations is voluntary and may be joined or terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with inter-denominational fellowships on a voluntary independent basis. Acts 15:36. Acts 16:5.

## **Section L. The Last Things.**

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgement, the eternal felicity of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked. Matthew 16:27. Mark 9:48. Acts 1:11. I Corinthians 15. II Thessalonians 1:8-9.

## **Article IV. Membership.**

### **Section A.**

The church shall consist of member and non-member participants.

### **Section B.**

The membership of this church shall consist of those persons who desire integration and participation in the church community, who conform to the pertinent requirements for membership as described in the by-laws of this church, and who have been received into membership by formal vote.

## **Article V. Government.**

### **Section A.**

1. Under the ultimate authority of Jesus Christ, through the Word of God, the authority to govern the church is vested in its members. This authority shall normally be exercised through the election and affirming of officers.
2. The membership, through a duly convened meeting of the membership, holds the sole governing authority over the following matters:
  - a. Admission and involuntary dismissal of members.
  - b. Election, affirmation or dismissal of church officers.
  - c. Approval of call, job description, and the initial salary of vocational pastors and ministers.
  - d. Adoption, amendment or repeal of the constitution or by-laws of this church.
  - e. Approval of purchase, sale, conveyance, or mortgage of real property.
  - f. Merger or affiliation with any other church.
  - g. Dissolution of the corporation.
  - h. Any matter which the members shall, at a duly convened membership meeting, reserve for themselves.
  - i. Any matter submitted to the membership by the Board of Elders.
  - j. Any matter not specifically assigned to a board of officers of the church.
3. Except as provided above, the Board of Elders may act on behalf of the church.

## **Section B. Officers and Directors.**

1. General. Offices of the Church shall consist of Elder, Deacon/Deaconess, financial officers (Financial Secretary and Treasurer), Church Clerk, and Auditor.
2. Elders. Elders serve as the directors of the corporation, and collectively shall constitute the governing board of the church. The Board of Elders shall be responsible for governing the church, teaching the Word, administering the ordinances and tending the flock of God gathered in this local church. The elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function.
3. Deacons/Deaconesses. Deacons and deaconesses shall assist the elders by performing services of advice to the elders, and administration and implementation of the specific ministries of the church. The deacons and deaconesses may be specialized in function.
4. Financial Officers. Financial officers shall administer the receipt, accounting and distribution of financial assets, under the supervision and direction of the church through the Board of Elders.
5. Church Clerk. The church clerk shall serve as secretary of the corporation.
6. Auditor. Auditors shall audit the financial operations of the church, and report their findings to the membership.
7. Calling.
  - a. Elders shall be elected by ballot by the membership at a business meeting of the church.
  - b. All other officers shall be appointed by the Board of Elders and affirmed by the membership at a business meeting of the church.

## **Section C. Ministry Teams.**

Ministry teams shall be created or dissolved as needed by the Board of Elders to administer and implement the mission, vision, and purposes of the church.

## **Section D. Authorized Agents.**

The Board of Elders, having obtained authorization by the membership at a business meeting of the church, shall have the authority to receive, purchase, acquire, sell, mortgage deed, or otherwise convey property of the church, or to enter the church into binding legal agreements. All contracts, notes, mortgages, conveyances, assignments, leases, releases and other legal documents in behalf of the church shall be executed by the Board of Elders through the signature of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the church.

## **Article VI. Disposition of Property.**

### **Section A.**

This church shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold such real, personal or mixed property as is deemed necessary for the business of the church and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage deed or other legal manner. All such property shall be held in the name of the church.

### **Section B. Consolidation.**

Should conditions arise where consolidation with another church be advisable, the Board of Elders shall be authorized to negotiate the terms of such consolidation, with approval of the membership.

### **Section C. Church Division.**

In case of division of the church membership, the property of the church shall belong to those members who abide by this constitution. Should a controversy arise as to who is abiding by the constitution, the questions shall be submitted to the governing body of a local church or churches.

### **Section D. Dissolution.**

Should conditions arise when, for any reason, the church work ceases, the church assets shall be transferred, subject to liabilities, to (an)other non-profit Christian organization(s) as directed by the remaining membership.

## **Article VII. Liability of Officers and Volunteers.**

### **Section A.**

A pastor, minister, officer or other volunteer of the church shall not be personally liable to the church or its members for monetary damages for a breach of the pastor, minister, or officer's fiduciary duty arising under applicable law. However, this shall not eliminate or limit the liability of a pastor, minister, officer or other volunteer for any of the following:

1. A breach of the pastor, minister, officer or other volunteer's duty of loyalty to the church or its members.
2. Acts or omissions not in good faith or that involve intentional misconduct or knowing violation of the law.
3. A violation of Section 551 (1) of the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act/
4. A transaction from which the pastor, minister, officer or other volunteer derived an improper personal benefit.
5. An act or omission occurring that is grossly negligent.

### **Section. B.**

The church assumes all liability to any person (other than the church and its members) for all acts or omissions of a pastor, minister, officer or other volunteer arising out of the good faith performance of his or her duties.

## **Article VIII – Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct**

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Living Hope Community Bible Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy and discipline, our pastor(s) and Board of Elders are our church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

## **Article IX. Revisions and Amendments.**

This constitution may be revised or amended. Revisions or amendments to this constitution shall be introduced by a written motion at any business meeting of the church. Proposed revisions or amendments shall be offered for discussion at not less than three business meetings of the church, prior to being put to vote. A 75% majority of those voting, by ballot, and a quorum not less than 50% of active members in good standing, shall be required to pass any revision or amendment. At no time will any revision or amendment be adopted that is contrary to the Affirmation of Faith as set forth in Article III of this constitution.

## **Article X. By-Laws.**

By-Laws to this constitution may be adopted as necessary to implement its purposes, and shall not conflict with or supersede any part of the constitution.