

**NEW HOPE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS**

November 17, 2019

PREAMBLE:

We, the members of the New Hope Evangelical Free Church, in order to more effectively obey the Great Commandment and more efficiently fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, do ordain and establish the following Constitution and Bylaws to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this church shall be New Hope Evangelical Free Church, located in Mount Horeb, Wisconsin, being an affiliate of the Forest Lakes District Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America, and hereinafter called "the church".

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the church shall be to glorify the Lord through all its activities and ministries. We glorify God by uniting our hearts to worship the Lord, by proclaiming the saving gospel of Jesus Christ to our community and the world, by nurturing one another in spiritual discipleship, and by living as the caring family of God. This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law).

ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF DOCTRINE

God

1. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

The Bible

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

The Human Condition

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

Jesus Christ

4. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

The Work of Christ

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

The Church

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Christian Living

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

Christ's Return

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

Response and Eternal Destiny

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, who give evidence by their confession and their conduct that they are living in real fellowship with the Lord, and who are received by affirmation of the membership present at a congregational meeting.

ARTICLE V. PROPERTY

SECTION A. FINANCIAL ASSETS

No part of the financial assets or any other church assets shall ever become of advantage to the benefit of any donor, member, director or officer of the church; and no donor, member, director or officer of the church, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of the church assets.

SECTION B. PROPERTY

The church shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold such real, personal, and mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the State of Wisconsin and as is deemed necessary for the business of the church, and shall have power to dispose of such property by mortgage, deed, or otherwise. All such property shall be held in the name of the church.

In case of a division of the church (from which we pray God by His mercy to preserve us), the property of the church shall belong to those who abide by its Constitution and Bylaws. In the case of dissolution of the church organization, the property shall be assigned to the Forest Lakes District Conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America, to enable said Conference to renew the work or use the values thereof for further Gospel enterprises. The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the organization, or when the church has not held an annual meeting for three years, or when less than six (6) members remain.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any business meeting of the church, provided that such amendments do not change the character or incorporated purpose of this church body as stated in Article II.

A written notice containing a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be printed in the Church bulletin or other recognized form, for at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting at which such amendments will be considered. A three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the active membership shall be required to amend the Constitution and Bylaws. Absentee voting may be used, if necessary, for the total membership vote.

ARTICLE VII. CANCELLATION

This Constitution and these Bylaws as adopted on this 17th day of November, 2019, supersede and cancel all other Constitutions and Bylaws and amendments thereto, and shall be effective from said date.

BYLAWS

INTRODUCTION

Our Constitution, which precedes these sections, contains the name, purpose, doctrinal statement, and legal incorporating statutes of the church. It states our belief as Christians in the saving Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is important to distinguish between our Constitution and the Bylaws that follow. By contrast, our Bylaws have been determined to be procedural in nature. In this sense, they contain statements and principles setting forth how the Constitution is to be carried out.

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION A. ELIGIBILITY

Any person who has been born again by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has assurance of salvation, who is manifesting in his life the fruits of a true and living faith, agrees to abide by this Constitution, and who sincerely desires to wholeheartedly support the services and activities of the church may become a member of the church. Observance of the ordinances of Baptism and Communion is strongly encouraged for all prospective members; however, such observance is not a requirement for membership.

SECTION B. ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP

New members may be received at any business meeting of the church in the following manner:

1. Application shall be made to the Pastor or any member of the Elder Board.
2. Applicants shall successfully complete the membership course as offered prior to acceptance into membership.
3. The Elder Board and the Pastor shall investigate as to the faith and life of the applicant, hear the personal testimony, and then make membership recommendations at the following business meeting.
4. The church shall then affirm the acceptance of the applicant.
5. The applicant is encouraged to give personal testimony before the membership at a church meeting.
6. If any member cannot in good conscience affirm the acceptance of the applicant, the Scriptural reason for doing so must immediately be given to the Elder board, which shall inquire into the matter. Only if the reason is valid will the applicant be barred from membership.

SECTION C. PASTOR'S MEMBERSHIP

The membership of a Pastor and his spouse begins with the acceptance of his call and terminates with the conclusion of his ministry in the church.

SECTION D. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP

Every member is encouraged to:

1. Attend to his personal spiritual life and that of his family, and to pursue a life of holiness and godliness.
2. Pray constantly for the church, its Pastor(s) and leaders, its members, and its ministry.
3. Manifest sincere interest in the life, growth, and development of the church, and to attend, to the best of his ability, its services and meetings.
4. Practice the regular and systematic stewardship of all that which the Lord has so bounteously supplied, including the contribution of time and talent in the form of service to the church, the exercising of spiritual gifts, and financial support.
5. "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and respect", (1 Pet. 3:15), and to seek opportunities to "do the work of an evangelist". (2 Tim. 4:5)
6. Guard the testimony of the church before non-members by a spoken and unyielding loyalty to the church.

SECTION E. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

1. It shall be the privilege of every active member 18 years of age and above to vote in the affairs of the church.
2. It shall be the privilege of members to use the facilities of the church property for weddings, funerals, and other church-related activities.
3. It shall be the privilege of church members to serve in official capacities of the church and give leadership to various church boards, committees, and ministries.

SECTION F. MEMBERS MEETINGS

1. The regular Annual Meeting of the church shall be held within 40 days following the close of the church fiscal year on March 31st. The date of the meeting is to be announced at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. At this Annual Meeting reports shall be received, a full and complete financial statement for the preceding fiscal year shall be presented, officers elected, and other necessary business transacted.
2. Special meetings of the church may be called at any time by the Church Board. Notice of each special meeting shall be given either by public announcement at the regular Sunday services of the church at least three (3) days prior to the date of the meeting, or by written notice delivered electronically or mailed in time to reach the members at least three (3) days prior to the date of the meeting, and shall state the purpose(s) for which the meeting is called, the place, and time of the meeting.

3. Rules of order. The chairman of the Elder Board shall conduct meetings according to governing principles of Roberts Rules of Order (revised).
4. Quorum. Forty percent (40%) of the active voting membership shall constitute the minimum required attendance at a meeting for the transaction of business.
5. Present. This word as used in Section F of these bylaws shall be defined in the following manner: being in attendance either physically or by electronic means. Presence via electronic means shall be allowed for those unable to attend due to physical limitations, or due to other unforeseen circumstances, with advance notice given to the elders.
6. Voting. All eligible voting members present shall have the right to vote at all business meetings of the church. In accordance with Roberts Rules of Order (revised), a simple majority of the active voting membership present shall be required to pass any measure in a business meeting, so long as the requirement of a quorum has been met. As an example: With an eligible voting membership of 100, 40 would be the minimum attendance of eligible voting members required at a meeting to transact business and a minimum of 21 of those 40 would be required to vote in favor of a measure in order for that measure to pass.

SECTION G. INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

In light of the importance of current knowledge and background on the issues normally brought to a vote in our business meetings, attendance is strongly urged upon each member. Any member who misses three (3) consecutive business meetings without prior excuse will be moved to inactive membership status. A person may be excused from attendance only if he is required to work or is ill and if he notifies the church Chairman prior to the meeting. Inactive members have no voting power and are not counted on membership rolls either for the Evangelical Free Church yearbook, or for the purpose of establishing meeting quorums. A member holding inactive status may regain his active status, his voting rights, and will be counted in future quorums after he attends a regular or special congregational business meeting. The church secretary should contact any member who has missed two (2) consecutive meetings concerning the fact that he is one absence away from being moved to inactive status. Those members with extenuating circumstances during some defined period of time may be excused from these attendance requirements for that stated period of time upon notification to the church Chairman and approval of the elder board.

Those members who elect to temporarily live in a warmer climate during some defined period of time may be excused from these attendance requirements for that stated period of time upon notification to the church Chairman.

SECTION H. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Withdrawal from membership will be granted upon written request. By written request, a transfer will be granted to any member in good standing who wishes to unite with another church.
2. Any member living locally who is absent from services, showing no interest in the work of the church and giving no response to letters of inquiry for six months, may be automatically removed from church membership by recommendation of the Elder Board. Any member moving away from the area shall be placed on the inactive membership list for a period of one year. After this, they may be automatically

removed from church membership by recommendation of the Elder Board. Reinstatement to membership may be made according to regular process of membership (Bylaws, Article I, Section B).

3. If any member of the church is found to live or teach contrary to the Word of God and the statement of faith of the church, he shall be approached privately and admonished in love. If there is no repentance, the procedure of church discipline shall be followed according to Matt. 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5; and Gal. 6:1-2.

A. Go and show the member their fault, privately one on one.

B. If the member will not repent after step A, one or two other members will be asked to participate in admonishing the erring member, so that every matter may be established in their presence.

C. If the member refuses to repent after step B, the matter will be admonished before the church.

D. If the member refuses to repent after step C, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken as follows:

Restoration of the member shall be the sole purpose of these procedures, and love shall be the sole motivation. However, in the event that restoration is refused, the deviant member shall be dismissed from membership by recommendation of the Elder Board.

4. Any member who has withdrawn or been discharged from membership has no right in any business meeting of the church or to its property.

ARTICLE II. GOVERNMENT

SECTION A. PASTOR

1. Qualifications. All Pastors shall meet the Scriptural qualifications for his office as outlined in 1 Tim. 3:1-3 and Titus 1:1-9. He shall be a man of established Christian character, sound in faith and doctrine, and shall be qualified to proclaim the whole counsel of the Word of God. He shall be an example in his life and teaching and shall uphold the church Statement of Doctrine.
2. Call. Upon investigation, the Search Committee shall recommend a candidate to the church. A call shall consist of a favorable vote of the membership as specified in Article I, Section F of these Bylaws.
3. Duties. A Pastor shall perform such duties as are outlined in the pastoral job description and incumbent upon his office as enjoined in the Word of God. A pastor shall be an equal among the elders of the church and participate in all meetings of the elders. A Pastor is not expected or required to attend the numerous meetings of other boards and committees since that would be an unreasonable burden. The intent of being an ex-officio member is to enable the Pastor to be free to participate on church boards and committees as deemed necessary within the discharge of pastoral oversight.
4. Resignation. A pastor shall notify the Elder Board in writing of his intent to resign. The final date of his employment and severance pay arrangements shall be determined after consultation with the Elder Board.
5. Termination. In the event that a Pastor departs from the doctrinal position of the church, does not satisfactorily perform the duties of his position, or is found to live or teach contrary to the Word of God and the statement of faith of the church, the church may terminate a Pastor's ministry by a qualified vote of the membership as specified in Article I, Section F of these Bylaws.

SECTION B. OFFICERS

“Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer (elder) desires a noble task” (1 Timothy 3:1).

1. Qualifications. The officers of the church (i.e. Elders and Deacons) shall be members in good standing who fulfill the responsibilities for church membership as set forth in Article I of these Bylaws. They must display a Spirit-filled life, demonstrate a servant's heart, and meet the qualifications for leadership as stated in passages such as 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3.

2. Elders

To desire to serve as an elder in New Hope Evangelical Free Church is a privilege as well as a responsibility. It is a privilege because an elder represents the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, in his service to the local congregation. It is a responsibility because he is an overseer of the doctrine, the teaching/preaching, and the overall ministries of the church, while being a shepherd of the people in his care.

- a. Elder Training. Those desiring to be an elder will be part of elder training where there will be time to consider the qualifications, spiritual gifts, expectations, and responsibilities of serving in this capacity.

- b. Elder Nominations. Members of the congregation can nominate those they sense are qualified to be part of Elder Training to the Elder Board. Nominations should be those who...
 - Give evidence of the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4.
 - Show consistent and faithful leadership skills in the church.
 - Have given you their consent to submit their name.
- c. Review of Candidate Qualifications
 - The current Elder Board shall review the qualifications of those submitted for Elder Training according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4.
 - The Elder Board will meet with the nominee for Elder Training to hear his testimony of faith in Christ, his personal growth in the Lord, as well as his understanding of the Doctrine of the church, the Constitution, and Bylaws. Also, his leadership experiences in the church and availability to serve as an elder will be discussed. A qualified candidate will be invited to complete Elder training. If there is a decision by the Elder Board not to approve the candidate, he will be notified.
- d. Selection of Elder Board
 - Nominees for the Elder Board shall be selected by the active Elder Board from qualified and trained elder candidates and presented to the congregation for affirmation. The Elder Board shall consider each candidate's gifts in relation to the giftedness of currently serving elders and any gaps that may be present in those gifts in order to build or preserve the widest possible range of gifts among the active elders.
 - Elders are affirmed by the congregation by secret ballot at a business meeting of the church. Said vote of affirmation shall not be withheld by any voting member for reasons other than those which would disqualify the elder from service under Section B, number 2b of these bylaws.
 - Tenure of Elders. While there is no limitation on the number of consecutive years that an elder may serve, the Elder Board should coordinate departures to maintain effective leadership, and individuals should consider taking a sabbatical for the purpose of personal renewal.

3. Deacons

a. Deacon Candidate Qualification Process.

- Candidate Recommendation. Candidates for the office of deacon shall be identified to the Elder Board by individual request of the candidate.
- Review of Candidate Qualifications. The Elder Board is responsible for reviewing candidates for the office of deacon and making a decision regarding their qualification for office. Biblical criteria for determining qualified candidates includes, but is not limited to 1 Timothy 3:8-13. When the Elder Board believes that a man meets the Biblical qualifications for the office of deacon and when that man himself expresses his desire to serve in the office of deacon, he shall meet with the Elder Board and Pastor(s) for a review in which:
 - The candidate will explain his testimony of salvation and Christian growth and he will explain why he desires to hold the office of deacon.

- The Elder Board will examine the candidate as to his doctrine, his personal walk before God, and his willingness to uphold the church constitution in order to confirm his spiritual condition and fitness for the office and solemn responsibility of deacon.
- In addition to the candidate's spiritual qualification, the Elder Board shall consider 1) the success of his previous leadership experiences within the church, and 2) his availability to serve in the capacity of an officer.
- If there is a decision of approval, the candidate shall be added to a list of qualified candidates for deacon nomination. If there is a decision of disapproval, the disqualifying reason(s) for disapproval shall be provided to the candidate.
- **Qualified Deacon List.** The Elder Board shall administer and maintain a list of qualified candidates for the office of deacon. The list is called the "Qualified Deacon List" and shall be made available for members of the church upon request.

b. **Affirmation.** Nominees for the Deacon Board shall be selected by the active Elder Board from the Qualified Deacon List and presented to the congregation for affirmation.

4. Officers shall assume their offices at their first meeting following the annual meeting. The active serving elders will choose from among themselves which position each individual will hold for the coming year.
5. **Duties.** The legal statutory officers of this church shall be members of the Elder Board. These include the church Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. These officers shall have custody of the corporate seal and execute all legal documents. Specific job descriptions of these and other positions are maintained in the church policy manual.
6. **Vacancy.** Vacancies shall be filled by the Elder Board subject to ratification at the next church business meeting.

SECTION C. BOARDS

Jurisdiction and Function: We believe that Christ stands above the church and directs it through the Holy Spirit. Christ is the head of the Church (Ephesians 1:22). The Lord has assigned leadership responsibility in the church to the Elders and Deacons (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 1:1-5). The government of this church is vested in its membership and executed through the Elder and Deacon Boards.

1. Elder Board

a. **Duties.** The Elders shall have general oversight and administration of all matters pertaining to the church body (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3; 1 Timothy 3:2,5; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:9; James 5:14-15). They shall be responsible for determining direction, facilitating ministry, establishing procedure, and supervising personnel. They shall also be responsible for processing all applicants for membership and leadership positions, interviewing and hearing the Christian testimony of non-members for service, and dealing with any personal or discipline problems which may arise.

b. **Composition Guidelines.** The Elder Board shall consist of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Trustee, Pastors actively serving on staff, and others elected by the church.

c. Meetings. The Elder board shall meet once a month or more often as needed to do church planning, discuss policy, or deal with other matters of importance affecting the church.

2. Deacon Board

a. Duties. The Deacons shall have responsibility for the material and temporal needs of the church body, as well as having responsibility for the church building and grounds. They shall supervise the economy of the church, shall keep the deeds and all valuable papers, and see that all church property is kept in good condition. The Deacons shall submit an annual budget proposal to the Elder Board for inclusion in the church budget and are responsible for all matters within the scope of their control as defined by the Elder Board.

b. Composition Guidelines. The Deacon Board should consist of a Chairman, Secretary, and others selected from the Qualified Deacon List and appointed by the Elder Board.

c. Meetings. The Deacon Board shall meet once a month or more often as needed to fulfill its purpose.

d. The Deacon Board shall execute their responsibilities under the authority of the Elder Board.

e. Funding approval for transactions in excess of \$5000 as directed by the Deacons must have the authorization of the Elder Board.

SECTION D. COMMITTEES

Committees differ from Boards in that they exist to fulfill specific ministry responsibilities rather than provide ministry oversight. An elder will be assigned oversight of each committee.

Committees Composition. An elder will chair or the committee will appoint a chair for each committee. Other committee members serve by appointment.

1. Standing Committees

1.1 Christian Education

a. Duties. The Christian Education committee shall be responsible for the educational ministry of the church. They shall seek to coordinate all Christian education activities within the framework of the total church program, be responsible for both curricula and personnel for the various educational ministries, plan, program, and review the total educational ministry annually, and shall prepare and submit an educational budget proposal to the Elder Board for inclusion in the church budget.

b. Composition Guidelines. Committee membership could consist of Sunday School Superintendent, Children's Church Director, Awana Commander, Youth Directors, Vacation Bible School Director, Adult Education Director, etc.

1.2 Worship Committee

a. Duties. The Worship Committee shall assist in all the functions that pertain to the worship services of the church. They shall oversee the music program; coordinate the worship leader schedule; be responsible for ushering and the greeters; plan, program and review the total worship ministry annually; and shall prepare and submit a worship and music budget proposal to the Elder Board for inclusion in the church budget.

b. Composition Guidelines. Committee membership could consist of the Choir Director, Music Coordinator, Worship Leaders, Head Usher, Pastor, etc.

1.3 Missions Committee

Duties. The Missions Committee shall be responsible to organize and supervise the local congregation in the faithful proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ beyond our church. They shall be responsible to produce and maintain a missions policy to define the missions program and establish committee procedures, delineate the church's responsibilities toward missionaries and their responsibilities toward the church, and provide an objective framework for making support decisions. As well, the committee shall plan, program, and review the total missions ministry annually, and they shall prepare and submit a missions budget proposal to the Elder Board for inclusion in the church budget.

1.4 Fellowship Committee

Duties. The Fellowship Committee shall be responsible for the coordination of all fellowship ministries of the church. They shall plan, program, and review the total fellowship ministry annually, and shall prepare and submit a fellowship budget proposal to the Elder Board for inclusion in the church budget.

2. Task Committees

2.1 Audit Committee

The Audit Committee shall consist of at least two members to be appointed by the Elder Board. They shall annually perform an audit of the financial records of the church, including all ministries and organizations, according to accepted auditing standards, and shall report their findings at the annual meeting of the church.

2.2 Search Committee

In the event there is a need to seek a Pastor, the Elder Board shall appoint a Search Committee, subject to ratification by the voting members at a regular or special meeting of the church. The work of this committee shall be to find, screen, and recommend a candidate for the position of Pastor.

SECTION E. MINISTRIES & ORGANIZATIONS

The church may sponsor, support, and/or authorize any ministries or organizations which it deems advantageous to fulfilling the purpose of the church.

1. Formation. The sponsors of all new ministries and organizations must submit their proposals and plans to the Elder Board for their approval and sanction before it may use the church name and be considered a part of the church.

2. Consultation. Various ministries and organizations are expected to regularly confer with the Ministry Facilitator assigned to them by the Elder Board. Matters of importance to the entire church shall be brought to the Elder Board.

3. Composition. No ministry or organization shall be permitted to function under the name of the church whose chairman, director, or sponsor is not a member of the church.

4. Finances. All ministry and organization finances operate under the jurisdiction of the church. They may submit annual budget requests, disperse their budget through the church general fund, and use the church's tax exemption number. While they may be permitted to function through their own bank accounts, they are expected to provide an annual financial summary and are subject to audit by the church audit committee. Fund raising efforts shall be subject to the approval of the Elder Board.

SECTION F. RESOLUTION OF LEADERSHIP CONFLICTS

Plurality of leadership is God's prescribed structure for governing the church, and as such each individual leader is accountable to Christ as head of the church and to the appointed leadership of the church. The elders of the church are accountable to Christ to exercise their leadership with a servant's heart, not as lording it over those allotted to their charge, but proving to be examples (1 Peter 5:3). It is a responsibility of the leadership, which includes elders, deacons and pastors, to acknowledge and resolve significant disagreements which may arise amongst themselves. Ultimately, each individual leader must voluntarily submit to the headship of Christ and to their fellow leaders in the church (Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5).

1. Conflicts Over Sinful Offenses

Some conflicts are caused because an individual sins against another individual and/or God. Matthew 18:15-20 provides the Lord's procedure for dealing with conflicts caused by sin. Restoration must be approached with an attitude of humility and gentleness (Galatians 6:1-2).

2. Conflicts Over Convictions and Philosophy of Ministry

Other conflicts may be precipitated by differing convictions or philosophies of ministry. These types of conflicts must be prayerfully approached by the leaders to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in determining the Lord's mind in the matter. An attitude of humility, gentleness and diligence to preserve the unity of the Spirit is essential (Ephesians 4:1-3, 15). However, if oneness of mind cannot be achieved between an individual leader and the other leaders then the individual elder, deacon, or pastor should resign from his position rather than behaving in a manner that would trigger strife and disharmony in the congregation at large.

ARTICLE III. FINANCES

SECTION A. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall be from April 1 to March 31 each year.

SECTION B. SUPPORT

The financial support of the general fund of the church shall be by the systematic, proportionate giving of tithes and freewill offerings of its people. To that end, some clarifications are needed for certain activities of the church and/or its members.

1. Banquets & Like Programs

Tickets may be sold for events held in, or sponsored by the church, but they must be priced only so as to meet estimated expenses.

2. Church Directory

Use of the church directory for personal business is prohibited.

3. Fundraising Activities

Supplementary funds beyond the bounds of the church budget may be needed at times by various ministries and/or organizations of the church. In such cases, a love offering shall always be the first consideration. When necessary, fundraising activities may be considered, but must be carried out on a donation-only basis. In all cases, fundraising of any kind shall require approval from the elders of the church.

ARTICLE IV. DOCTRINAL & PRACTICAL POSITIONS

POSITION #1.

New Hope is a “non-charismatic” church. This does not mean that we are “anti-charismatic”. We invite everyone to fellowship and worship with us; however, speaking in tongues is not part of our worship service. For more information on our understanding of scripture in this area, see attachment #1.

POSITION #2.

We believe all people are created in the image of God. Therefore, we do not discriminate on the basis of race for any reason, regardless of position, title, or vocation. Further, any differences must be dealt with through love, understanding, and a willingness to live in harmony with one another. Any standard or practice, whether accepted by culture or not, that is contrary to Biblical standards must be addressed as sin.

POSITION #3.

Human Sexuality.

1. We believe God provides two life-enhancing options for sexual behavior: monogamous marital relations between one man and one woman (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:18, 21-24; Matt. 19:4-6; Mk. 10:5-8; cf. Heb. 13:4) or sexual celibacy (1 Cor. 7:7; Matt. 19:12).
2. We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23).
3. We believe that marriage is a relationship established by God and God intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage are adultery, except on the grounds of fornication; however, God’s forgiveness is granted to all who repent and divorced and remarried persons, or divorced persons, may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)
4. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, and that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual roles for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the servant leader in the home and men are to be the pastors and elders of the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12).

POSITION #4.

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of an unborn human life. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

POSITION #5.

We believe that scripture describes the pre-millennial, glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rev 19:11-20:15)

ARTICLE V. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the church. Written notice containing a copy of the proposed amendments shall be provided to church members at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting at which the amendments will be considered.

Attachment #1.

Clarification of "non-charismatic".

The body of Christ has been instructed through the apostle Paul to "be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. (To) make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:2-3). Many of our brethren in Christ are involved what is commonly known as the Charismatic Movement, a movement having varied forms. This paper is offered to clarify what is meant in the by-laws of New Hope Evangelical Free Church by the term "non-charismatic". Our aim is not to judge another's spirituality, but to help unite the body in love.

I. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The Bible clearly teaches the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the work of God whereby the believer is placed in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-13) and is united with Christ in His death and resurrection (Rom. 6:1-10; Col. 2:12). It is indicated in Romans 8:9 and Galatians 3:27 this act occurs at the moment of saving faith and is not repeated. It results in the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life (John 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19). The Bible also teaches it is essential that a believer be continuously controlled by the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). This control may or may not be evident in a believer's life. More than simply a repeated experience, it is to be a continuous way of life.

II. The Fruit of the Holy Spirit

The emphasis of the New Testament is not on the gifts of the Spirit (as essential as they are), but on the fruit of the Spirit in the individual believer and in the corporate assembly. The fruit of the Spirit is those qualities of the character of Christ which are a result of the Spirit's control in the life of a believer (Gal. 5: 22-23). The apostle Paul reminds the Church in 1 Cor. 13:1-2, although one may have certain gifts, if the love of Christ is not evident in our life, we are nothing.

III. The Nature of a Spiritual Gift

Spiritual gifts are gifts of God's grace (1 Peter 4:10), given to the believer by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11) to build the body of Christ into maturity (Eph. 4:16).

God has given a variety of spiritual gifts to His church (1 Cor. 12:4-6). These gifts are not for one's own edification, but for the building of other believers (1 Cor. 12:11, 18-20). The aim of God in the distribution of the gifts is diversity within the unity of one Body (1 Cor. 12:20-27). The ultimate goal of the working of the Spirit through the gifts is the glory of God. (Eph. 1:22-23, 3:21).

IV. The Gift of Tongues

One of the gifts given to the Church is the ability to speak in another human language, without having learned that language. The word used in the New Testament for the gift of tongues indicates that this is not an angelic language, but a language of mankind.

Throughout history God has used the sound of a foreign language as a sign (1 Cor. 1:22) to the Jewish nation (Is. 28:11; Acts 2:4, 8, 16; 1 Cor. 14:21-22). It is evident that the gift of tongues is given primarily as a sign to the nation of Israel of God's working among men.

The apostle Paul instructed that when the gift of tongues is exercised in the collective assembly;

1. Two, or at the most three, may speak (1 Cor. 14:27).
2. If no interpreter is present, no one is to speak (1 Cor. 14:28).
3. All must be done in an orderly manner (1 Cor. 14:40).

Nowhere in Scripture do we find evidence of a gift of tongues as a "prayer language". Such an ability would contradict the nature of a spiritual gift: the glorification of God by the building up of other's lives.

Conclusion

We want to be abundantly clear that we in no way want to limit God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ. Every member of the body has been gifted for service. Our goal is to encourage the development and ministry of these gifts. We must admit, however, there are unfortunate extremes within the Church today. Some brethren follow teaching based on experience; others place defined limits on God's working among His children. Our aim is unity in love, without the excesses which are dividing the body.

End of Attachment #1