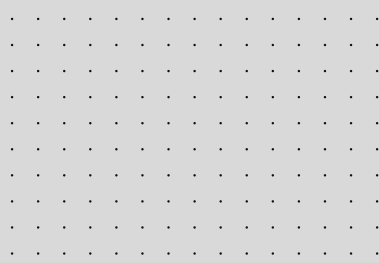


New Haven Church Constitution & Bylaws

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ADDRESS:

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PREAMBLE

We, the members of New Haven Church, do hereby declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, to govern the body in an orderly manner, to preserve the liberties of each individual member.

I. NAME

01

This body shall be known as New Haven Church.

II. OBJECTIVE

02

Section 1: Purpose

This organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. No substantial part of the activities of this organization, or any receipt of its funds, shall be utilized for any other purpose except those stated here or in this Constitution. New Haven Church shall handle affairs concerning its property and other temporal matters required by the civil authorities.

II. OBJECTIVE

02

Section 2: Mission

This church exists by the grace of God and for the glory of God. The ultimate purpose of this local body is to glorify God by the following means:

- Loving God and obeying His commands.
- Worshiping Him in spirit and in truth.
- Equipping the saints by means of bible instruction and study.
- Proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, along with any other means dictated by the Holy Scriptures.
- Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work locally, domestically, and internationally.
- Administering the sacraments of baptism and communion.
- Encouraging biblical fellowship among members.
- Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing physical and spiritual needs in the name of Jesus Christ.
- Multiplying disciples who will endorse, support, and/or lead church plants.

III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

03

Our various creeds and confessions express an important part of who we are as a church. We confess and believe together with our fathers in the faith and our brothers throughout the world. The elders of New Haven Church therefore subscribe to these creeds and confessions.

1. The Apostles Creed
2. The Nicene Creed
3. The Definition of Chalcedon
4. The Westminster Confession of Faith (American Version)

IV. MEMBERSHIP

04

Section 1:

The organization of membership outlined below is designed solely for the purpose of maintaining Scriptural and accountable local church government (Heb. 13:17), such that our affairs are conducted in decency and order (1 Cor. 14:40). In no way is our practice of membership to be construed in such a way as to disrupt our Christian unity and fellowship with true saints who attend church elsewhere, locally or universally (Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 3:1-4).

Section 2:

In order to be eligible as a member of New Haven Church, an individual must meet the following conditions:

- Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and repent of their sin.
- Demonstrate biblical regeneration by not contradicting their profession of faith through manner of life.
- Be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Willingly submit themselves by vows to the government and discipline of this church.
- Willingly commit themselves and family to support the worship and work of New Haven Church.
- Confess the faith summarized in the Apostles Creed in good faith.
- Submit to the Membership Covenant found in the New Haven Church Bylaws.

Section 3:

While members are not required to agree with every doctrinal position of the church and may be admitted into membership based on the criteria stated in Section 2, each member must agree to refrain from divisiveness and submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith found in this Constitution. The elders shall have sole responsibility for determining each person's qualifications for membership.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

04

Section 4:

When a child from a covenant home becomes financially independent and permanently moves out of his/her covenant head's home he or she becomes eligible to be their own head of a household. The elders will meet with these individuals and ask if they agree to the membership vows their parents took. If they answer "yes," then the elders will introduce them as a new head of household at the next scheduled heads of households meeting. If they answer "No," they will be removed from the New Haven Church membership roll and encouraged to find and join a church where they can be shepherded and disciple as soon as possible.

Section 5:

The elders of the church recognize, through admitting the head of the household into membership, that they carry the primary responsibility before God for knowing and shaping the spiritual condition of that household. Recognizing that role does not transfer the authority and use of the keys of the kingdom from the elders into the hands of heads of households – but does make it incumbent upon the heads of households to make recommendations to the elders concerning members of their household on such matters as baptism, the Lord's Supper, and church discipline. According to Scripture and under the headship of Christ, the administration of church ordinances and discipline remains with the elders. In such administration, the elders are to consider carefully the spiritual responsibility of the head of the household.

Section 6:

Because water baptism is required of those seeking membership, the following guidelines will apply.

When someone is brought to faith and makes a profession of that faith in Christ, he should be immediately instructed on the subject of baptism, and subsequently baptized if he was not properly baptized previously.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

04

Section 6 Continued:

When an unbaptized Christian comes to this church, he will be instructed on his responsibility to be baptized at the first opportunity, and subsequently baptized. He will not be admitted into membership in this congregation until he is baptized.

When a baptized Christian moves to this church, the elders must verify and acknowledge his baptism as Christian baptism in receiving him into the membership of this church. If the baptism was administered by an apostate church, or a non-Christian sect or cult, as officially declared by the elders of the church in session, the individual will be instructed on his responsibility to be properly baptized. This is not rebaptism. At the first opportunity following proper instruction on baptism and upon his readiness to receive this sign and seal of the covenant of grace, he will subsequently be baptized. As an act of an ecclesiastical government, a valid baptism does not depend upon the personal integrity of the elder administering the baptism, or the doctrinal and moral integrity of the administering church. Nevertheless, if the doctrinal and moral corruption of that church are so far advanced as to require our elders to consider that church to be not a Christian church at all, then the baptisms administered by such a church will not be recognized as valid. But given the complexity of all such issues, the elders shall determine each situation on a case-by-case basis.

Infants and children who are not baptized are still considered members if the head of household is admitted into membership at New Haven Church.

Section 7:

Provided in Section 7 are questions for incoming members.

- Do you believe yourself to be a sinner in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope except in His sovereign mercy?
- Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered to you in the Gospel?
- Do you believe in the statement of faith found in the Apostles' Creed?

IV. MEMBERSHIP

04

Section 7 Continued:

- Do you here and now vow, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will strive to live all of your life in the way that is fitting for a follower of Christ and which brings glory to Him?
- Do you vow to support this Church in its worship and work, which would include regularly attending worship and tithing?
- Do you vow to submit yourself to the government and discipline of this Church, and to strive earnestly for its purity and peace?
- Do you vow to refrain from the sin of gossip (James 3:10) and grumbling (Phil 2:14) and boldly strive to be at peace and in fellowship with all of your brethren at all times to the best of your ability?

Section 8:

The Conclusion of one's membership shall occur upon these conditions:

- The death of the member
- Upon the request of the member.
- A revocation of membership as an act of church discipline.

If a member requests to withdraw membership because of specific problems or disappointments with the church, the Elders will attempt to resolve those issues. If resolution proves impossible, the member may be assisted in locating a church of like faith and order that can respond more effectively to the members needs. If it appears that a member has requested removal merely to avoid church discipline that request shall not be given effect until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded. Individuals may be removed from membership for persistence absence after a period of one year (failure to attend for one full year). Exceptions to this are those physically unable to attend (shut ins), and others who have temporarily relocated for work (military or otherwise) or for educational purposes. Every possible means of contact and encouragement will be undertaken to prevent this, as we strive as the church to never abandon a brother or sister in Christ (Matt. 18:12-14).

V. CHURCH GOVERNMENT

05

Section 1:

New Haven Church shall be governed by the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head, through the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The membership of this church shall worship and labor together according to the discipline, rules, and fellowship set forth by this Constitution and accompanying Bylaws. New Haven Church is incorporated and chartered under the laws of the state of West Virginia. The offices of this church shall be Elders (Teaching and Ruling Elders) and Deacons. The primary functions of the officers are to govern, care for, and equip the body of believers for the work of the ministry. Members will carry out the promises to serve individually, collectively, and universally as outlined in the New Haven Church Covenant for the good of the local church and for the glory of God.

Section 2: Elders

The Elders of New Haven Church shall be responsible for the teaching of the Word and caring for the needs of the flock and shall be the executive body of the congregation in all its dealings. The Elders shall have supervision over the business transactions and general work of the church and its organizations. They shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function.

Section 3: Deacons

The Deacons shall assist the Elders in any service to the church as needed, but especially in the areas of caring for physical needs of the congregation, administration, and implementation of ministry plans.

Section 4: Members

Congregational voting will take place to confirm all forms of church discipline, and to gain insight to the opinion of the congregation on various matters. These will be known as discipline votes and insight votes, respectively. Congregational votes shall be reached by at least 50% plus one of the active members voting.

V. CHURCH GOVERNMENT

05

Section 5: Election of Officers

A prospect for church officer may be identified by the Elders and by others in the congregation. The elders will do due diligence in discussing the prospect, examining them, and narrowing the list down as appropriate, and present those names for their nomination.

If the nominee has any disagreement or mental reservation about any portion of the church's Statement of Faith or this constitution, he must inform the Elders of it. All prospects for Elder and Deacon must meet the qualifications for the office set down in Scripture.

Once approved, the nominee will work through a short course of training under the oversight of the current session.

The election of a prospective officer shall take place at a Sunday morning service. At least 2 weeks notice shall be given of the upcoming vote. Election shall be by a measurable affirmative majority insight vote of 50% plus one of voting members present. If the candidate receives the support, the Elders will ordain him through the laying on of hands and prayer. If any elector casts an insight vote of "no" and includes a reason for the "no" vote, the elders will carefully weigh the scriptural merit of the objection before ordaining the prospect.

Since Elders have the authority to ordain officers, the ordination of the prospective officer rests with session. The Elders will prayerfully consider all objections and the insight of the congregation.

VI. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

06

All members and officers of New Haven Church are committed to resolving, in a biblical manner, all disputes that may arise within the Body. This commitment is based on God's command that Christians should strive earnestly to live at peace with one another (see Matt. 5:9; John 17:20-23; Rom. 12:18; and Eph. 4:1-3). When disputes arise, we covenant to resolve them solely according to the principles set forth in Holy Scripture (see Prov. 19:11; Matt. 5:23-25; 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8; Gal. 6:1). We believe that these commands and principles are obligatory on all Christians and absolutely essential for the wellbeing and work of the Church. Therefore, any and all disputes in or against this Church or amongst its members shall be resolved according to biblical principles.

VII. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

07

Section 1: Discipline of Members

The ordinary course of discipline is informal. Members are encouraged to self-discipline, overlooking the failings of others in love (1 Pet. 4:8), and encouraging other members to covenant faithfulness (Matt. 18:15).

Formal church discipline is applied through the formal action and a majority vote plus one of the elders. Except in cases of scandal requiring immediate action, the pattern of church discipline will generally include formal private admonishment by two or three (Matt. 18:16), formal public admonishment and suspension from the Supper (2 Thess. 3:14- 15), and a formal hearing which may result in excommunication (Matt. 18:17).

Un-baptized members of member households are subject to pastoral admonishment from the church, but not excommunication. Christians who attend church regularly, but are non-members, are subject to pastoral admonishment from the church, but not excommunication. If another church has disciplined one of its members, and that person subsequently comes to our church, the elders will decide whether to honor the discipline of the other church after due consultation with the person concerned and after all appropriate information is sought from the disciplining church.

The elders shall establish the specific procedures for all formal discipline on a case-by-case basis, as appropriate to the circumstances and individuals involved. However, at minimum these procedures should include a clear and timely warning of the individual that he is in the process of formal discipline, two or three visits or communications involving two or three witnesses, and clear records and/or minutes of the entire proceedings kept by the elders.

When the elders determine that a hearing is necessary, they will establish the specific procedures for each trial on a case-by-case basis, as appropriate to the circumstances and individuals involved. However, at minimum these procedures should include informing the accused in writing of the specific charges, the time, place, and date of the trial, and ample time for the accused to prepare a defense.

The members of New Haven Church will be informed of the hearing at the first opportunity. At the hearing, one of the elders will present a solemn charge from the Scriptures on the responsibilities of those present, the evidence against the accused will be presented, and the accused will have time to make a reasonable defense, including the right to question any witnesses.

VII. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

07

Section 1: Discipline of Members Continued

At a separate meeting of the elders, a vote will be taken on each of the charges. A majority vote is required for a guilty verdict. A final vote of excommunication should be taken. A majority vote is required for excommunication. If the vote fails to reach a majority plus one, the party should be returned to full fellowship. The elders will declare their verdict to the congregation on an appointed Lord's Day, following an appropriate exhortation. The accused will be given a written copy of the verdict. The elders will establish an official file containing all the records pertaining to the hearing, including all pertinent correspondence, transcripts, and minutes. If he requests it, the accused will be given one copy of this file at the expense of the church. Any appeals to higher church courts will be conducted in accordance with the Constitution of that higher church court.

Excommunication will end when in the opinion, decided by a majority vote, of the elders the one under discipline has repented. A confession of this repentance will be read to the congregation on the Lord's Day, and the elders shall formally announce the end of the discipline and restoration of fellowship.

Section 2: Discipline of Officers

A church officer may resign or take a leave of absence from their position by submitting a resignation to the Elder session of the church with at least 14 days written advance notice. At the first appropriate meeting, the elders will notify the congregation.

If a church officer believes himself to be qualified to continue in office, but two or three believers hold that he is disqualified, these two or three witnesses should request a special meeting of the Elder Session where they would be allowed to present their case (1 Tim. 5:19). If the elders decide that the case has merit, with a majority vote plus one, that church officer, depending on the gravity of the charges and their response to the correction, will be rebuked (1 Tim. 5:20), or will be removed from office (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9), or both.

For cases that do not involve moral failures or disciplinary proceedings (Acts 15:33-41, Rom. 15:22-33, 1 Cor. 16:5-12), the procedure for terminating the call of a pastor, thereby dismissing him from service at New Haven Church, is as follows: If a pastor desires to terminate his call, he shall duly inform the session of his desire.

VII. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

07

Section 2: Discipline of Officers Continued

In the case of an involuntary termination of his call, a pastor may be recommended for dismissal from service at New Haven Church by a majority vote of the session (excluding said pastor). In such a case, the pastor may have recourse to the electors by calling for a vote to either sustain his call as pastor or not (with an option to abstain). If the electors sustain his call by a majority plus one vote, the other elders must afterwards either concede to his call or refer the matter to higher church courts for binding arbitration.

VIII. TAX EXEPTION

08

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the Statement of Purpose (Article 2 Section 1) hereof. The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to the 501(c)(3) exempt purpose(s) of New Haven Church, and no part of the net income or assets of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer, or member thereof, or to the benefit of any private individual. The Church shall not issue shares of stock or bonds. No part of the income or assets of the Church shall be distributed to any member as a result of a business transaction without full consideration received in return. The Church may not lend money to guarantee the obligation of a member of the Church. The Church may contract for fair consideration with its members, however, without violating this provision.

IX. POLITICAL ACTIVITY

09

No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, this corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this corporation.

X. DISSOLUTION

10

Section 1: Dissolution

All property of New Haven Church is irrevocably dedicated to religious and charitable purposes and upon the liquidation, dissolution or abandonment by the owner, will not inure to the benefit of any private person except a fund, foundation, or corporation organized and operated for religious or charitable purposes and which agree in general with the Doctrinal Statement as set forth in Article 5. Upon the dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

Section 2: Indemnification

The Congregation, in its sole discretion and by majority vote, may choose to indemnify and advance the Church-related expenses of any officer, employee, or agent of the Church.

BY LAWS

Article 1: Church Covenant

Having, as we trust, been brought by Divine Grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

- We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- We will walk together in brotherly love, which is becoming of the members of a Christian Church, exercising an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonishing and entreating one another as occasion may require.
- We will endeavor to take sins to one another privately, making no occasion for gossip or slander, working towards restoration and repentance. If such ends are not reached, we will follow the pattern of church discipline given in sacred Scripture.
- We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.
- We will not be given to divisiveness by teaching contrary to the established articles of faith of this Church.
- We will endeavor to bring up those under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends.
- We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation to lead a new and holy life.
- We will renew covenant with the Lord every Lord's Day by participating in the covenant meal of Communion.
- We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.
- We will, when we move from this place, as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

BY LAWS

Article 2: Voting

Section 1: Active/Inactive members

Active members reserve the right to vote in the situations herein. An active member is one who is not presently under discipline by New Haven Church. Members under the age of 15 may vote at their discretion, and under the guidance of the head of their household. Each member present is entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy is not permitted. Tie votes shall be broken by the moderator. Officers must also be members. A member may reach an inactive state and relinquish his or her right to vote by undergoing a disciplinary development plan, or by not attending or giving financially for eight (8) consecutive weeks.

Section 2: Insight vote

Elders may cast a vote to gain insight from the church and its individual or collective preferences. A majority vote in no way constitutes or guarantees that the option(s) will be carried out, but that the shepherds are seeking out what is in the best interest of the flock.

Section 3: Absentee voting

In order to vote via absentee ballot, one must be an active member of New Haven Church, and must pre-register to vote via absentee ballot. Absentee voting may take place digitally (email, polling software, etc.), or by mail.

Article 3: Meetings

Section 1:

The church shall meet regularly for worship and the study of the Word. The elders shall set times and schedules according to the spiritual needs of the body.

Section 2:

Any regular or called meeting of the congregation may constitute a meeting for the transaction of business.

BY LAWS

Section 3: Accounting Procedures

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the church treasurer and be properly recorded. A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the elders, deacons, and church treasurer. The treasurer shall provide an accurate accounting at the end of each year to those members who have contributed during the year.

Article 4: Kids and Youth Ministry

Section 1: Background Checks

All individuals who operate or are seeking to operate in New Haven Church's Kids Ministry must first receive a full background check as well as cross-referenced with the national offender database before serving in any role with children or youth.

Section 2: Check In and Check Out Policies

New Haven Church Kids Ministry shall provide a Check In and Check Out to ensure the safety of their children. There shall be provision made for a Permission Policy that shall allow families to designate others to check their children out other than themselves.

Section 3: Training

New Haven Church shall provide Kids Ministry volunteers with training on an annual basis to communicate update policy, procedures, and safety strategies.

Section 4: Accountability

All individuals who serve in New Haven Kids Ministry shall be accompanied at all times with another adult who serves as well. This shall provide an extra level of accountability for the safety and security of our children.