

**BYLAWS,
Hillside Baptist Church
2016**

SECTION 1

NAME and INCORPORATION

The name of the church shall be Hillside Baptist Church (hereafter HBC) and is incorporated under the laws of the state of North Dakota.

SECTION 2

PURPOSE

HBC's purpose is to bring glory to God as he grows his kingdom. Since we are on God's mission, we see our mission as loving God, loving others, and serving the world. We commit ourselves to accomplish this by means of gospel proclamation and teaching, discipling believers to Christian maturity, and by means of evangelization and missions for the purpose of serving the world.

SECTION 3

DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

HBC is affiliated with the North American Baptist Conference (NAB), and is not subject to any body. HBC shall seek fellowship with non-NAB churches that are similarly submitted to the authority of the inerrant Word of God.

SECTION 4

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Our statement of faith is that of the NAB (Appendix 1).

SECTION 5

MEMBERSHIP

A. New member requirements.

1. Confession of Jesus as Lord and Savior, as evidenced by the new birth.
2. Giving one's testimony of conversion before the elders.
3. Baptism by immersion or evidence of immersion.
4. Upon the elders' agreement to accept the prospective member, s/he shall be presented to the church in a subsequent worship service as a new member.
5. It is recommended that every member take the membership classes.

B. Transfer of membership from another church.

1. A prospective member may present a letter of transfer from another church.
2. If the transfer is from a church of like faith and practice (as determined by the elders), a testimony before the elders is not necessary, but a meeting of introduction with the elders shall take place.
3. If the transfer is from a church that is not of like faith and practice, the transfer will follow the same procedure as new membership.
4. Baptism by immersion is necessary.
5. Upon agreement by the elders, the transfer member is presented to congregation during a subsequent worship service as a new member.

C. Members are expected to be involved in the following three areas of church life:

1. Attendance and participation in HBC's services.
2. Small group participation.
3. Knowing one's gift and using it in a ministry.

D. Leadership responsibilities to members of HBC.

1. Open, transparent, and approachable leadership.
 - a) Open means that leadership will listen and evaluate criticism, questions, and inquiries from the church body.
 - b) Transparent means elders, deacons, and deaconesses are accountable to the church body for explaining leadership decisions. Leadership is real and genuine when decisions are *not all* made behind "closed doors" with little or no explanation of the process or rationale behind the decision. Some discussions/decisions must remain "behind closed doors" especially when concerning members, peacemaking, and personal problems.
 - c) Approachable means leadership is open to discussion and counsel from the body concerning the church. Leadership is serving and equipping the body for ministry.
2. Prayerful and sober handling of the Word of God.
3. Compassionate pastoral care.

E. Membership classification.

1. Active member: Active members meet the requirements of membership (see C. Membership responsibilities). From this point forward in this document, "member" refers to active member unless otherwise stated.

2. Inactive member: Habitual absence from HBC's membership responsibilities (C. above) for a period of twelve months without valid cause, and upon review by the elders the active member can be added to the inactive list. An inactive member faces possible negative censure (see Section 8.B.1.). They may neither vote, hold office, nor be involved in ministry at HBC.
3. Non-member: Inactive members are moved from inactive status to non-member if they are not persuaded to reaffirm their membership, and are thus erased from the church's roll.

F. Termination of membership may occur in the following cases:

1. Death.
2. Transfer: Upon receiving a written request for transfer from any member, the elders shall provide a letter of transfer for that member.
3. Habitual absence from HBC's stated meetings for a period of at least 12 months without valid cause. The member shall at that time be required to state his or her intention with regard to membership.
4. If the member wishes to remain as a member, he or she shall be asked to reaffirm their understanding of a member's responsibilities (Section 5.C.).
5. If the member wishes to withdraw his/her membership, they shall provide the elders a written request for removal.
6. Failure to agree to the process administered by the elders during the peacemaking process.

G. Reinstatement to membership.

1. Transfer (back) to HBC: follow the same procedures as Section 5.B.
2. If a former member has gone through the process of peacemaking, the elders, if satisfied at the repentance and reconciliation of the relationship(s), will reinstate member following the same procedure as for a transfer (Section 5.A.).

H. Distribution of bylaws.

Each member will receive a copy of the bylaws and is encouraged to sign the peacemaking covenant.

I. Voting responsibilities of members.

1. The calling, reinstatement, and/or termination of pastors.
2. Reinstatement of an elder.
3. Acceptance of the budget.

4. The buying, selling, remodeling, and dissolution of the property.
5. Amending the bylaws (see Section 13.C.).
6. Substantial purchases (as defined by the elders) not already included in the budget.
7. Other issues deemed necessary by the elders.

J. Church government

The government of HBC shall be vested in the membership of the body as administered by the elders.

SECTION 6 LEADERSHIP

The offices of HBC are elder and deacon and deaconess—the latter two offices will be written as deacon(ess). The name of these offices is not as important as their functions. In a word, the elder oversees: the deacon(ess) serves or ministers.

A. Elders.

This office comprises both pastoral staff and lay leaders. The number of elders shall be determined by elders themselves and shall meet as they deem necessary.

1. Qualifications.
 - a) After prayer the elders shall ask a prospective elder to prayerfully consider becoming an elder.
 - b) He shall be a member of HBC.
 - c) He shall have the aspiration for and have the character as described of elders in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.
 - d) He shall complete an elder internship of one year, unless he has previously served as an elder.
 - The elders shall determine the content of the internship.
 - Elements of the internship may consist of attendance at elder meetings, and the fulfillment of various assignments (book, video, or a study).
 - Upon completion of the internship the prospective elder is asked if he still wishes to become an elder. If his answer is affirmative he is presented to the congregation at the annual meeting for affirmation.
2. Installation and term.
 - a) Having met the qualifications, the prospective elder shall be presented to the congregation as a prospective elder.
 - b) An elder shall be approved by congregational consensus for a term of three years by affirmation.
 - c) He may serve for two consecutive terms before stepping down as elder.
 - d) Termination of an elder's term of office can occur voluntarily or involuntarily. If a legitimate complaint is brought against an elder (1 Tim 5:19), he will be asked to step down if the complaint is proven true (see Section 7. C.).

3. Responsibilities.

- a) To oversee the ministries of HBC (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1).
- b) To teach, either formally or informally (1 Timothy 3:2).
- c) To care for the people of HBC (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:5), including pastoral care, peacemaking, and protection against non-biblical influences (Hebrews 13:17).
- d) To see that the congregation and its ministries are covered in prayer (James 5:13–15).
- e) To preserve the purity of the HBC's devotion to the Bible (Acts 20:29-32).
- f) To delegate finances, facilities, and benevolence to appropriately gifted people (Acts 6:1–6).
- g) A quorum is required for all elder meetings in which decisions must be rendered. A quorum shall be one third of the elders, not including elder interns.

B. Deacons and deaconesses.

These men and women are servants recognized for their giftedness and attitude of service. Their number shall be determined by the needs of HBC as delineated by the elders.

1. Qualifications.

- a) The elders shall ask an individual if s/he wishes to serve as a deacon(ess) in the area of his/her giftedness.
- b) S/he shall be a member of HBC.
- c) 1 Timothy 3:8-13 lists the qualifications.
- d) The elders shall lay hands on the newly affirmed deacon(ess) before the congregation (Acts 6:6).
- e) Deacon(esses) shall be in full agreement with HBC's purpose and statement of faith.

2. Installation and term.

- a) The elders shall ask the deacons(ess) annually if s/he wishes to continue to serve. If not, the elders retain discretion with regard to replacement.
- b) Affirmation of a deacon(ess) shall be confirmed before the congregation by a laying on of hands by the elders.

3. Responsibilities.

- a) The deacon(ess) serves as advisor and assistant to the elders and pastoral staff (1 Timothy 3:10b).
- b) Principally, but not exclusively, the deacon(ess) shall be concerned with the church's physical needs; e.g., the building and benevolence (Acts 6:3-6).

4. Termination of the duties of deacon(ess).

- a) A deacon(ess) may step down from the office with a three-month notice to the elders.
- b) The time period may be shortened by mutual agreement.
- c) A deacon(ess) may be asked to resign when the elders are convinced s/he is no longer capable of serving.

- If the termination is not for a moral failing, members shall be informed of the deacon(esse's) desire to step down.
- If the termination is for disciplinary action, the members shall be informed the deacon(ess) is no longer an officer of the church.

**SECTION 7
FINDING AND RELEASING A PASTOR OR ELDER**

A. Search.

1. The first decision is determining if the position needs to be filled (pastor or elder).
 - a) If the position is not to be filled, the elders shall determine the best method for meeting HBC's pulpit or other pastoral needs.
 - b) If the position is to be filled, they shall seek the names of qualified candidates by means of a search committee (SC).
 - c) The elders are responsible to create a ministry description for the search committee.

2. Nominating a search committee (SC) for pastor(s) only.
 - a) The elders shall discuss potential SC members.
 - b) The elders may receive names from members for nomination.
 - c) The SC comprises
 - A minimum of three members (at least 1 elder, at least 1 deacon(ess), and 1 member at large);
 - d) The prospective SC members shall meet these qualifications:
 - An active member of HBC
 - Willing to serve, not simply as a volunteer, but sensing the nudge or call of the Spirit to serve.
 - e) The SC shall be selected by the elders and presented to the congregation for affirmation.

3. The work of the SC.
 - a) The SC must keep the elders and congregation apprised of the progress by means of regular communication (personal, written, and digital).
 - b) Search all available resources for available candidates.
 - c) Conduct background checks, phone interviews, and evaluations of candidates.
 - d) When the SC believes it has a reasonable number of legitimate candidates, second and third interviews should be conducted.
 - e) When the SC has determined it has found the correct number of candidates to meet personally, the SC shall work in conjunction with the elders to arrange a visit to HBC.
 - f) Included with the invitation to candidate at HBC should be a copy of the bylaws, ministry description, and salary package.

4. Candidacy: shall include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a) Interaction with the congregation.

- b) Meetings with ministry teams.
 - c) Preaching(s) on Sunday morning.
 - d) Teaching a Sunday school class.
5. On the Sunday following the candidate's visit, the elders shall call a business meeting for the purpose of prayer and voting.
- a) The congregation is given the opportunity to ask questions of both the candidate and his wife (if married).
 - b) The candidate shall be dismissed and the congregation shall spend time in prayer before voting on the calling of the candidate.
 - c) The voting shall be ballot by members only.
 - d) The elders shall be responsible to relay the results of the vote to the candidate (as soon as possible) and the congregation.

B. Number of elders and finding an elder.

1. The elders shall determine the number of elders, but there shall be at least three.
2. When there is the need for an elder (i.e., resignation, termination, or death), the elders shall pray and discuss among themselves possible nominations for elder.
3. Names for nominees may also come from the congregation to the elders.
4. The nominee's name will be released to the members two Sundays prior to the next business meeting at which time he is or is not affirmed.

C. Termination of a pastor/elder.

1. A pastor/elder shall retain the right to resign with a written notice to the elders three months prior to his leaving.
 - By mutual agreement, the time period may be shortened.
2. A pastor serves until removed by the Lord, the elders, or by congregational vote.
 - a) Removing a pastor/elder is a serious matter. There must be a good amount of prayer, fasting, and discussion before action is taken.
 - b) The removal of a pastor/elder by congregational vote can only succeed by a two-thirds vote by the members.
3. Peacemaking with a pastor (also applies to elders).
 - a) "Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or more witnesses. As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear" (1 Timothy 5:19). The process of 1 Timothy 5 is not meant to proceed in a wooden manner. The elders must err on the side of grace rather than ruthless condemnation throughout the process.
 - b) For the sake of clarity, all grievances against a pastor/elder must be written and signed by at least two witnesses to the grievance (one of the witnesses, is

- of course, the person bringing the charge). This shall be submitted to the elders.
- c) The elders shall investigate the grievance to the best of their abilities.
 - d) If the grievance has merit, the elder/pastor shall be corrected (publicly or privately depending upon the circumstances of the offense) by the elders “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:2–3). The goal is correction and reconciliation of the relationship of the pastor/elder for the sake of unity.
 - e) What does public correction look like?
 - If the offense was public the correction shall be made before those before whom the offense was made. For instance, elder A has accused elder B of a wrong while both were in the church lobby. If the charge is proven false, elder A faces public correction since the lobby is a public place.
 - If the offense is private, the correction shall be private. For instance, elder C has accused elder D of a wrong while meeting over coffee. If the charge is substantiated, elder D will be corrected privately.
 - f) When correction of the pastor/elder is necessary, but he refuses to accept the correction, the elders have the discretion to immediately call for a vote of dismissal. Dismissal shall occur if two thirds of the members agree.
 - g) If the pastor/elder accepts the correction, at the elders discretion, they may ask for a certain time for the pastor/elder to seek counseling, receive mentoring or discipling, or some other form of trust-building activity or remediation in order to restore the pastor/elder’s integrity and trust with the members.
 - h) In order for the pastor/elder to return to his responsibilities,
 - He will have completed successfully and to the satisfaction of the elders the activities prescribed for him;
 - He must be re-affirmed by the congregation.

SECTION 8

PEACEMAKING PROCESS

A. Conflict in the body of Christ.

Conflict is inevitable among believers in the church. Conflict offers us an opportunity to exhibit our oneness in Christ. Our desire to see God glorified, even in the middle of conflict, is a high calling. Jesus said, “They will know you are my disciples by your love” (John 13:35). The world will look at us to see what love looks like. Conflict provides us that opportunity.

B. What is church discipline?

1. Church discipline is not simply censuring a Christian for sinful behavior; rather it is a wide array of both instructive (positive) and corrective (negative) actions by the leadership and members. The goal of positive discipline is the equipping of the saints (Eph 4:11-12), whereas the goal of corrective discipline is restoration of a wayward brother or sister to the unity of the body of Christ. Because we

hold a high view of Christ's Church, we take unity and purity in the church very seriously; hence, discipline is a sober matter.

- a) The instructive (or positive).
 - Teaching everything Jesus commanded (Mt 28:20).
 - Modeling and imitating (John 13:15; Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:6-7).
 - Encouraging one another (Col 2:2; 1 Thess 5:11).
 - Equipping for ministry (Eph 4:11-12).
 - Peacemaking (Mt 18:15-17).
 - b) The corrective (censure or negative).
 - Warning, public or private, to stop certain behaviors (2 Cor 13:2; Titus 3:10-11).
 - Rebuke, public or private, in order to stop a behavior or heretical teaching (1 Tim 5:20; Tit 1:9, 11; 2:15).
 - Delivering into the hands of Satan (1 Cor 5:5-7). This is what we consider to be excommunication (with the understanding that the notion of excommunication is not fully developed in the Scriptures).
2. Excommunication.
- a) Excommunication is the final action to a process that has included the instructive and corrective steps, all of which has failed to bring about reconciliation and unity.
 - b) Excommunication means the church, through the oversight of the elders, informs the recalcitrant that s/he is
 - no longer a member;
 - prohibited from entering HBC's property or attending any HBC meeting;
 - not able to participate in any of HBC's ministries;
 - and remains excommunicated until reconciliation of relationship(s) is accomplished.
 - c) For the membership of HBC, the one who is excommunicated is to be prayed for, encouraged toward repentance, shown hospitality and politeness, but is **not** one with whom Christian fellowship is possible (Mt 18:17; 1 Cor 5:12-13; 2 Cor 13:1-4; 1 Tim 5:20; Titus 3:10-11).

C. Matthew 18:15–17.

1. A word of caution.
 - a) Think of the passage as a guideline: Keep offenses private (involving only those who will be part of the solution) with the goal always being reconciliation of relationships.
 - b) If peace and reconciliation are refused, the privacy circle expands to include two or three others.
 - c) Finally if peace and reconciliation are still refused, the circle of privacy may reach to the church: the elders, and possibly the church body (members).
 - d) The seriousness of the offense will often affect the extent of the process of reconciliation and the need for public disclosure of the actual sin.
 - e) Questions to ask when determining whether or not to reveal the sin to the congregation:

- How many of the congregation does the sin directly affect? Theft of a paper clip and child molestation are both sins, but what is their affect on the congregation?
 - What is to be gained by revealing the sin to the congregation?
 - What best preserves human dignity—as opposed to giving in to our own gossipy interests—for both offended and offender in this case?
2. “If your brother sins against you” (v.15a).
Can this grievance be overlooked? Think of overlooking of an offense as pre-emptive forgiveness. Consider Proverbs 19:11, “Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.” When to overlook:
 - a) If the offense does not create a wall between the two involved in the grievance, it could be overlooked.
 - b) If the offense is not part of a destructive pattern of behavior, it could be overlooked.
 - c) If the offense produces no serious harm or problems in a relationship, it could be overlooked.
 3. “Go and tell him his fault between you and him alone” (v.15b).
 - a) A general principle of offering forgiveness is that there is spiritual and psychological release that accompanies the first instance of forgiveness.
 - b) More times than not, “I was wrong,” or “I’m asking you to forgive me,” or “Brother, we need to get things right between us” will act as a key that opens a door with more forgiveness pouring out from the other side.
 4. “But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses” (v.16).
 - a) The witnesses may or may not be eyewitnesses of the grievance, offense, or sin.
 - b) The witnesses are to witness the attempt at reconciliation by the aggrieved party.
 - c) The witnesses may also act as mediators, encouraging forgiveness.
 5. “If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church” (v.17a).
 - a) “Tell it to the church” does not necessarily mean announce the member’s sin to the entire church. It is left to the discretion of the elders to whether or not to discuss the specific sin.
 - b) The principle guidelines are as follows:
 - A public sin is more likely to receive a public correction than a private sin.
 - A private sin, one that is between two or very few members, means that the phrase, “Tell it to the church,” could be an announcement of discipline, not necessarily the publication of the sin itself.
 6. “And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector” (v.17b).
 - a) If there is a consistent obduracy against reconciliation, the member may be placed under censure by the elders. The censure may include one or all of the following: time for reflection; dismissal from responsibilities or duties within

HBC; counseling; warning and rebuke to stop the behavior; excommunication (see 8.B.2.).

b) The members shall be informed that the person is under discipline.

7. Apology, confession and reconciliation.

a) Apology. An apology is not simply saying, "I'm sorry." Using peacemaking language (the seven A's), an appropriate apology will look something like this:

- ADDRESS everyone affected and involved. If the offense was personal and private, address ONLY those involved—without forgetting that every sin is against God, so he is also included. If the offense was public, the apology must involve many more people.
- AVOID "if," "but, and "maybe." Using these words in your apology lessens the power of an apology, as well as often redirecting the blame on the one sinned against. "I'm sorry if I hurt you" really means, "You are too sensitive."
- ADMIT your sin specifically. "I'm sorry" is not good enough. Rather, "I was rude and I hurt you. There was no excuse for my lousy behavior. Please forgive me."
- ACKNOWLEDGE the hurt. Your apology should not sound like you are sorry you were caught or that you have a cavalier attitude. You must let the other person know that *you know* you have hurt them and that you sincerely regret your actions.
- ACCEPT the consequences. If there is an item that was broken, offer to buy another one. If the relationship is broken, offer to restore it.
- ALTER your behavior. Consider your apology a wake up call to bring glory to God. Altering your behavior, not simply by will power, but by the work of the Holy Spirit, is sanctification.
- ASK for forgiveness. Give the offended person(s) the opportunity to forgive you, the offender. This is also an opportunity to glorify God through mutual recognition that brothers/sisters in conflict can be a blessing to the other.

b) Confession.

- 1 John 1:8–10. Confession of our sin to God brings the restoration of a relationship (this passage is not about salvation).
- James 5:16. Confession brings healing, but the passage is not about confession to God, but to brothers and sisters (implying they are the ones against whom one has sinned).
- Proverbs 28:13. When we hide sin rather than confessing it, we will not prosper or enjoy the life God has given us. Confession of sin opens the door to experience mercy and blessing.

c) Reconciliation (the goal).

- Reconciliation is the restoration of a relationship (Mt 5:23–24).
- It is the end result of an apology, confession and forgiveness.
- It is the beginning of rebuilding trust into a relationship.

D. Lawsuits between believers are forbidden by Scripture (1 Cor 6:1–10)

1. Any HBC member who is the plaintiff in a civil matter against another believer without just cause shall face correction and discipline.
2. If a member is the defendant in a suit, even if brought by another Christian, s/he is not liable for discipline by HBC.
3. Exceptions to the prohibition of suing one's Christian brother may be these:
 - When one has a legal responsibility, perhaps as a legal representative for another party, it can be that a lawsuit is necessary to fulfill one's fiduciary and/or otherwise legal responsibilities. Or it may be necessary to sue another brother over an accident involving an insurance claim in which case the insurance company is actually leading the suit.
 - The guideline is that believers do not sue other believers over silly things; and above all, before even thinking of a lawsuit we must ask, which action (a lawsuit or overlooking the matter) will bring glory to God?
 - The context of 1 Corinthians 6 is about civil matters, not criminal; therefore these guidelines do not apply to criminal trials.

SECTION 9 STEWARDSHIP

A. Stewardship responsibilities.

The elders shall be responsible for overseeing all ministries and financial matters of HBC.

B. What is stewardship?

1. The owner of everything is God (Psalm 24:1). Therefore biblical stewardship expresses our gratitude for who he is and our understanding that we are merely the guardians or stewards of someone else's property.
2. Management or stewardship demands taking responsibility for how we handle God's property (Deuteronomy 8:17–18)
3. Understanding our role as stewards means we are accountable to the owner for how we handle his property (Luke 19:11–27).
4. Stewardship applies to more than simply finances, rather it governs the entirety of our lives: our talents, our spiritual gifts, our recreation, our relationships, etc. (1 Peter 4:10; Acts 2:42–45; Proverbs 3:9–10).
5. Stewards will be rewarded for their responsible, accountable management of God's property and gifts (Colossians 3:23–24).
6. Therefore, stewardship is a life encompassing principle in which we live out our relationship with God as managers of all that belongs to him.

C. What is the intersection of stewardship with HBC?

1. Understanding biblical stewardship influences our vision.
 - a) The vision and purpose of HBC's ministry in Dickinson and in the world comes from God.
 - b) Therefore our understanding that we steward God's property directly affects how we implement our vision; and our vision directs us as to how we use God's money.
 - c) Proper stewardship of God's vision means we ask such questions as these:
 - How are we implementing our God-given vision?
 - Are we listening to God when it comes to how we spend his money and use his property?
 - Is HBC first and foremost a business organization that works solely on sound business principles? Or is HBC a spiritual organization that seeks to practice sound business principles as long as they do not interfere with the vision God has given us?
 - d) Understanding biblical stewardship impacts our giving and budgeting. The manner with which we steward God's property reveals the condition of our hearts.
 - e) Biblical stewardship guides our budgeting.
 - f) The process of developing a budget is not primarily a good planning strategy (it is certainly that). Budgeting is primarily a spiritual exercise of listening to God and acting according to his heart.
 - g) The budget should reflect the vision God has given HBC.
 - The budget must never drive the vision (that is, "We can't do that because we don't have the money").
 - The vision must drive the budget (that is, "God wants us to do 'x' so let's budget accordingly" or "We know God wants us to do this, so when God makes the money available it will happen").
2. Understanding biblical stewardship enhances the effectiveness of leadership.
 - a) Effective leadership understands that stewardship is not about dollars and cents, rather it is about God's heart and mind.
 - b) Effective leadership communicates the value of stewardship to the members through example, biblical teaching, and by using the budgeting process as a means to teach and encourage the congregation.

SECTION 10 MEETINGS AND VOTING

A. Definitions.

1. Voting.
 - a) Voting shall be voice vote unless
 - the issue is sensitive in the view of the elders or moderator; or
 - the moderator determines the vote is too close to determine;

- in either case, the secret ballot becomes the preferred method of voting.
- b) Qualifications for voting.
- Active membership at HBC
 - Age 18 or older

2. Affirmation.

a) These bylaws refer to both voting and affirmation. Affirmation is understood as follows:

- a consensus or decision of the body is reached without voting;
- a process that follows a free course of discussion in which all sides have the opportunity to express their views;
- and following the discussion, the affirmation is a decision stated by the moderator to the membership to which the memberships gives their consensual approval.
- An example of biblical consensus making is found in Acts 15:1-21.

b) There are at least three key differences between consensus building and voting.

- When consensus building takes place, those who still remain unconvinced or in disagreement, have, however, a desire to maintain Christian harmony. It is understood that it is best to agree with the larger group's thinking. There is a sense of submission to the leading of God's Spirit among the members.
- The goals of voting and consensus building may be quite different. Voting primarily seeks to bring about a decision. Consensus building primarily seeks to allow relationships and a larger view of Christian unity to bring about a decision.
- If a consensus cannot be reached, any decision on the issue is tabled for a later time. This may be disadvantageous if a decision must be made within a specific time period., but the advantage of a consensus over voting is sense of unity about a decision or a direction.

B. Business meetings.

1. The regular business meetings of the church may be held during the months of January, April, July and October. Exceptions can be made during the months of April and July if there is not enough pending business to warrant a regular business meeting. In these instances, the elders shall give members prior notice on two (2) successive Sundays.
2. The affirmation of elders and deacons, and approval of the church budget will generally take place during the October business meeting. Exceptions made for unexpected vacancies and amendments to the budget.
3. The annual report and other annual business matters will be handled at the January quarterly business meeting. The church audit should be finalized by no later than the April meeting if possible.

4. Members of HBC shall receive notice (by all or some of the combination of oral announcement, posted announcement, in the bulletin, emails, and personal conversations) of a meeting at two Sundays before any business meeting.
5. The minutes from a business meeting shall be posted, emailed, and otherwise made available to all members within one week of the meeting.
6. Annual reports from pastoral staff member, church officers, and ministry team leaders shall be given to clerical staff at least two weeks before the January business meeting.

C. Special business meetings.

The elders may call special business meetings by giving members notice on two successive Sundays.

D. The moderator.

1. The moderator is chairman of all business meetings.
2. Qualifications.
 - a) The moderator shall be an elder.
 - b) He shall also have a working knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order.
3. Responsibilities.
 - a) In collaboration with the administrative team, the moderator shall set the agenda for the business meeting.
 - b) To conduct the business meeting.
 - c) To see that minutes are taken for the business meeting, and to ensure the minutes are sent out within one week of the meeting

D. Quorum.

1. One-third of the members of HBC constitutes a quorum.
2. If a quorum is not reached for a business meeting, discussion may ensue, but no vote may be taken.
3. Absentee and proxy ballots are not permissible.

E. Worship service.

1. HBC will gather as a church for worship and celebration on the first day of the week with the understanding this can be altered with a legitimate cause.
2. Legitimate causes include but are not limited to weather emergencies, road closures, or for the purpose of serving the city of Dickinson and its communities.

SECTION 11

STAFF

The staff of HBC comprises those paid wages or a salary by HBC.

A. Pastor(s):

1. Qualifications.
 - a) It is desirable the lead past be ordained or willing to be ordained; other pastors may or may not be ordained.
 - b) Every pastor shall be believer in and a preacher of the faith as embodied in the Holy Bible.
 - c) Every pastor shall agree to abide by these bylaws.
 - d) Every pastor shall become a member of HBC immediately upon acceptance of the church's call to ministry.
2. Responsibilities.
 - a) The pastors' responsibilities are defined by the elders and pastors with input from the congregation.
 - b) The elders shall determine the appropriate methods of evaluation of pastors.
 - c) The lead pastor shall manage all other pastoral staff.

B. Other staff (non-pastoral).

1. The elders shall determine how to oversee and manage the non-pastoral staff (custodian[s] and administrative assistant[s]).
2. These staff positions shall be available first to members of HBC until the position is filled.
3. Termination of staff may take place for reasonable causes as determined by the elders.
4. Resignation of non-pastoral staff requires 30 days written notice to the elders.

SECTION 12

ORGANIZATION OF MINISTRY

A. Ministry Teams.

1. The foundation of HBC's organizing principles is found in Mark 12:30-31. "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" From these words of Jesus our desire is to love God, love others, and serve the world.
2. Ministry teams (MT) are considered long-term; committees are temporary.
3. MTs are composed of those gifted and interested in various ministries of the church. Teams shall organize themselves in whatever manner the team believes

is necessary to utilize the gifts of team members. The team shall meet as deemed necessary by the team itself.

B. Participation on an MT.

1. MTs may comprise both members and non-members.
2. Leadership will be by members only unless the elders make an exception. In the case of a non-member leadership, the elders shall share the reasons the congregation before the position is filled.
3. Qualifications for MT participation.
 - a) The desire to serve on an MT.
 - b) Giftedness that complements the MT.

C. The ministry teams.

The following list is neither exhaustive nor necessary (that is, these bylaws do not demand the existence of these MTs), Other MTs may form as the need arises.

1. Worship team (*loving God with all your heart*).
 - a) Purpose statement: We love God through heartfelt worship, adoration and creativity (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).
 - b) Goal: We teach about and lead the congregation in various forms of worship (e.g., music, painting, poetry, writing, etc.).
 - c) Composition: members and attendees who are gifted with talents and skills that fulfill the purpose and goal of the team.
2. Fellowship and prayer team (*loving God with all your soul*).
 - a) Purpose statement: We love God by maintaining an intimate relationship with Jesus and our brothers and sisters (Galatians 5:16–17; Ephesians 5:1–2; Colossians 3:2–4).
 - b) Goal: We encourage healthy souls by means of *koinonia* (deep mutual sharing) and prayer (e.g., potlucks, banquets, picnics, prayer meetings, special meetings or programs).
 - c) Composition: members and attendees who are gifted with talents and skills that fulfill the purpose and goal of the team.
3. Facility and benevolence team (*loving God with all your strength*).
 - a) Purpose statement: We love God by keeping our physical structure, benevolence, and finances sound (Acts 2:44–46; 6:1–4).
 - b) Goal: We love God by encouraging HBC to maintain a neat and clean property that meets the needs of our ministries, by administrating the benevolence to the HBC family, and through maintaining orderly and accurate financial records.
 - c) Ministry team composition: members and attendees who are gifted with talents and skills that fulfill the purpose and goal of the team.
4. Administrative team (AT; *loving God with all of your mind*).

- a) Purpose statement: We love God through devotion to the Word of God and oversight of the congregation (Acts 2:42; Romans 1:16–17; Titus 2:1).
 - b) Goal: We encourage the church's dependence upon the Word of God by equipping believers for ministry and protecting the integrity of the body of Christ.
 - c) AT composition: elders and the MT leaders.
 - Leadership of this team shall be an elder.
 - They shall meet only as often as the team deems necessary.
 - Their purpose is the administration of all the MT's.
 - They will see that lines of communication between all MT's remain open and that all necessary coordination between teams takes place.
 - d) Responsibilities of the AT.
 - General oversight of all the ministries of the church.
 - To appoint heads of various ministries, if necessary, that may be carry-overs from the previous constitution and bylaws (committees such as the discipleship committee, fellowship committee, assimilation and visitation committee, audit committee, et al).
 - To facilitate ministry organization, leadership, and authenticity by encouraging education, instruction, and other means of growth of MT members.
 - e) Separate from the AT, which comprises the elders and MT leaders, are the elders (see Section 6.A.).
5. Missions team (*loving your neighbor*).
- a) Purpose statement: We love God when we love our neighbors, local and global, proclaiming good news of the kingdom in both words and deeds (Acts 11:29–30; 1 Cor 10:27–33).
 - b) Goal: We encourage HBC to be a means of God's blessings in the local and global community.
 - c) Composition: members and attendees who are gifted with talents and skills that fulfill the purpose and goal of the team.
6. Discipling team (*Loving your neighbor as yourself*).
- a) Purpose statement: We love God by mutually encouraging, serving, and pastoring the family of believers of our congregation (1 Timothy 4:11–16; Titus 3:8).
 - b) Goal: We facilitate the discipling, mentoring, or coaching members toward an intimate walk with Jesus and other believers (e.g., Sunday school, VBS, small/community groups, special projects, seminars).
 - c) Composition: members and attendees who are gifted with talents and skills that fulfill the purpose and goal of the team.
 - d) Teachers at every level must be members unless an exception is made by the elders, in which case the reasons must be shared with the congregation before the non-member begins teaching.

D. Organization of MTs.

1. Each team shall organize, as it deems best.
2. Leadership may be an individual or several individuals, but the guiding principle is that the leadership is organic; i.e., a leader is one whom people will follow because s/he inspires confidence, communicates effectively, and lives an authentic Christ-filled life.

E. Communication between teams.

1. Each team must be in regular communication with the elders and AT. Decisions made by a ministry team shall include reasons for the decision.
2. In turn the AT shall be in regular communication with MTs.
3. Every MT is uniquely empowered to make decisions that will fulfill its purpose and goals. The responsibility of the elders and AT is not to second-guess a team's decisions; however, there must be oversight by the elders and secondarily by the AT, therefore there must be a means to straighten out misunderstandings.

F. Disagreements.

1. In the event an MT makes a decision that is questioned by the elders and/or AT, a reconciliation process shall take place.
2. The process shall follow the same principles as in Section 8, Peacemaking.

SECTION 13

BYLAWS ADMINISTRATION AND AMENDMENTS

A. The elders shall be responsible for establishing, maintaining, and administering and interpreting the bylaws.

1. Any member may suggest or propose changes to bylaws at anytime by submitting a written proposal to the elders. The proposal shall also include the reason for the change.
2. If the elders believe the proposal merits a discussion among the congregation, they shall approve the proposal for discussion at a duly called business meeting.
3. A member may raise any dispute over the elders' interpretation of the bylaws for discussion at a business meeting. If the dispute is not clarified and resolved, the moderator may call for a vote to determine the interpretation.
4. Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed to maintain clarity and orderliness during these and any other procedures of HBC business.

B. The bylaws shall be made available to the members and attendees of HBC.

C. Changes to bylaws.

1. Minor changes do not require a vote from members. Minor changes are considered to be word-smithing or stylistic changes.
2. When the elders believe a proposed change is significant, they shall inform the members, thus providing an opportunity for discussion and voting.
3. Significant change refers to requirements for membership, financial matters, and any changes to procedural matters.
4. Every change, whether minor or significant, will be made known to the congregation.
5. The elders shall inform the members of HBC at least two successive Sundays before a business meeting by oral, written, publicly posted, and digital formats.
6. The proposed changes to the bylaws shall be affirmed with a quorum of members present and a two-thirds affirmative vote.

SECTION 14 OTHER MINISTRY POSITIONS

A. Qualifications.

1. Membership and over 18 years of age
2. Giftedness in the specific area.
3. Appointment by the elders.

B. Necessary Positions.

1. Treasurer
 - a) Oversee that all money is deposited correctly into the proper accounts.
 - b) Provide timely information to the elders, and to members at business meetings.
2. Clerk
 - a) Take the minutes of all business meetings.
 - b) Oversee the distribution of the minutes to the congregation.

C. Optional positions (for which the elders are responsible to provide the ministry description).

1. Sunday School Superintendent.
2. Head usher.
3. Historian.

4. Librarian.

APPENDIX 1

Statement of Faith

1. **We believe the Bible is God’s Word given by divine inspiration, the record of God’s revelation of Himself to humanity** (II Timothy 3:16). It is trustworthy, sufficient, without error—the supreme authority and guide for all doctrine and conduct (I Peter 1:23-25; John 17:17; II Timothy 3:16-17.) It is the truth by which God brings people into a saving relationship with Himself and leads them to Christian maturity (John 20:31, I John 5:9-12; Matthew 4:4; I Peter 2:2).

2. **We believe in the one living and true God, perfect in wisdom, sovereignty, holiness, justice, mercy, and love** (I Timothy 1:17; Psalm 86:15; Deuteronomy 32:3-4). He exists eternally in three coequal persons who act together in creation, providence, and redemption (Genesis 1:26; I Peter 1:2; Hebrews 1:1-3).
 - The Father reigns with providential care over all life and history in the created universe. He hears and answers prayer (I Chronicles 29:11-13; Matthew 7:11). He initiated salvation by sending His Son, and He is Father to those who by faith accept His Son as Lord and Savior (I John 4:9-10; John 3:16; John 1:12; Acts 16:31).
 - The Son became man, Jesus Christ, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (John 1:14; Matthew 1:18). Being fully God and fully man, He revealed God through His sinless life, miracles, and teaching (John 14:9; Hebrews 4:15; Matthew 4:23-24). He provided salvation through His atoning death in our place and by His bodily resurrection (I Corinthians 15:3-4; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4:23-25). He ascended into heaven where He rules over all creation (Philippians 2:5-11). He intercedes for all believers and dwells in them as their ever-present Lord (Romans 8:34; John 14:23).
 - The Holy Spirit inspired men to write the Scriptures (II Peter 1:21). Through this Word, He convicts individuals of their sinfulness and of the righteousness of Christ, draws them to the Savior, and bears witness to their new birth (James 1:18; John 16:7-11; I Thessalonians 1:5-6; Romans 8:16). At regeneration and conversion, the believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13). The Spirit indwells, seals, and gives spiritual gifts to all believers for ministry in the church and society (Romans 8:9-11; Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 12:5-8; I Peter 4:10). He empowers, guides, teaches, fills, sanctifies, and produces the fruit of Christlikeness in all who yield to Him (Acts 4:31; Romans 8:14; I Corinthians 2:10-13; Ephesians 5:18; II Thessalonians 2:13; Galatians 5:16; 22-23).

3. **We believe God created an order of spiritual beings called angels to serve Him and do His will** (Psalm 148:1-5; Colossians 1:16). The holy angels are obedient spirits ministering to the heirs of salvation and glorifying God (Hebrews 1:6-7; 13-14). Certain angels, called demons, Satan being their chief, through deliberate choice revolted and fell from their exalted position (Revelation 12:7-9). They now tempt individuals to rebel against God (I Timothy 4:1; I Peter 5:8). Their destiny in hell has been sealed by Christ’s victory over sin and death (Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:10).

4. **We believe God created man in His own image to have fellowship with Himself and to be steward over His creation** (Genesis 1:26-28). As a result, each person is unique, possesses dignity, and is worthy of respect (Psalm 139:13-17). Through the temptation of Satan, Adam chose to disobey God; this brought sin and death to the human race and suffering to all creation (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12-21; 8-22). Therefore, everyone is born with a sinful nature and needs to be reconciled to God (Romans 3:9-18, 23). Satan tempts people to rebel against God, even those who love Him (Ephesians 4:27; II Corinthians 2:11; Matthew 16:23). Nonetheless, everyone is personally responsible to God for thoughts, actions, and beliefs and has the right to approach Him directly through Jesus Christ, the only mediator (Romans 14:12; I Timothy 2:5).
5. **We believe salvation is redemption by Christ of the whole person from sin and death** (II Timothy 1:9-10; I Thessalonians 5:23). It is offered as a free gift by God to all and must be received personally through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (I Timothy 2:4; Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 20:21). An individual is united to Christ by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27). As a child of God, the believer is acquitted of all guilt and brought into a new relationship of peace (Romans 5:1). Christians grow as the Holy Spirit enables them to understand and obey the Word of God (II Peter 3:18; Ephesians 4:15; I Thessalonians 3:12).
6. **We believe the Church is the body of which Christ is the head and all who believe in Him are members** (Ephesians 1:22-23; Romans 12:4-5). Christians are commanded to be baptized upon profession of faith and to unite with a local church for mutual encouragement and growth in discipleship through worship, nurture, service, and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world (Acts 2:41-42, 47; Luke 24:45-48). Each church is a self-governing body under the lordship of Christ with all members sharing responsibility (Acts 13:1-3; 14:26-28). The form of government is understood to be congregational (Matthew 18:17; Acts 6:3-6; 15:22-23).
 - The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20). It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's identification with the death, burial and resurrection of the Savior Jesus Christ (Romans 6:3-5). The Lord's Supper is the partaking of the bread and of the cup by believers together as a continuing memorial of the broken body and shed blood of Christ. It is an act of thankful dedication to Him and serves to unite His people until He returns (I Corinthians 11:23-26).
 - To express unity in Christ, local churches form associations and a conference for mutual counsel, fellowship, and a more effective fulfillment of Christ's commission (Acts 15; I Corinthians 6:1-3).
7. **We believe religious liberty, rooted in Scripture, is the inalienable right of all individuals to freedom of conscience with ultimate accountability to God** (Genesis 1:27; John 8:32; II Corinthians 3:17; Romans 8:21; Acts 5:29). Church and state exist by the will of God. Each has distinctive concerns and responsibilities, free from control by the other (Matthew 22:21). Christians should pray for civil leaders, and obey and support government in matters not contrary to Scripture (I

Timothy 2:1-4; Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-16). The state should guarantee religious liberty to all persons and groups regardless of their religious preferences, consistent with the common good.

8. **We believe Christians, individually and collectively, are salt and light in society** (Matthew 5:13-16). In a Christlike spirit, they oppose greed, selfishness and vice; they promote truth, justice and peace; they aid the needy and preserve the dignity of people of all races and conditions (Hebrews 13:5; Luke 9:23; Titus 2:12; Philippians 4:8-9; I John 3:16-17; James 2:1-4). We affirm the family as the basic unit of society and seek to preserve its integrity and stability (Genesis 2:21-25; Ephesians 6:1-4). We believe the Bible teaches that marriage refers to the covenant relationship exclusively between one man and one woman, as instituted by God in the beginning (Genesis 2:20b-24; 1 Corinthians 7:2; Hebrews 13:4).
9. **We believe God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring all things to their appropriate end and establish the new heaven and the new earth** (Ephesians 1:9-10, Revelation 21:1). The certain hope of the Christian is that Jesus Christ will return to the earth suddenly, personally and visibly in glory according to His promise (Titus 2:13; Revelation 1:7; 3:11; John 14:1-3). The dead will be raised, and Christ will judge mankind in righteousness (John 5:28-29). The unrighteous will be consigned to the everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25-41, 46; Revelation 20:10). The righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and dwell forever with the Lord (Philippians 3:20-21; II Corinthians 5:10; I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Adopted by the North American Baptist Conference delegates, August 10-15, 1982, Niagara Falls, NY. Section 8 amended by the delegates, July 15-19, 2009, Winnipeg, MB.

APPENDIX 2

Peacemaking Covenant

I, _____, covenant with the family of Hillside Baptist Church to live by the biblical principles of peacemaking as set out in the Scriptures (Matthew 5:21–26; 18:15–17; Romans 12:18; 1 Timothy 5:17–20) and in HBC’s bylaws (Section 8).

I will

- *seek to glorify God in any conflict, asking myself, “How can I respond so as to lift up the name of Jesus?”*
- *first examine my responsibility for a conflict, taking ownership for what I have done wrong, confessing that wrong to both God and the one I have wronged.*
- *not pretend conflict does not exist, but will gently restore my relationship with my brother or sister without condemning them.*
- *not accept premature compromise, but I will actively pursue peace and reconciliation as far as I am able with the help of the Holy Spirit.*

SIGNATURE

DATE