

Constitution and Bylaws

Hilton Baptist Church

101 Main Street

Newport News, Virginia 23601

Adopted May 28, 1986

Revisions approved February 3, 2009

Hilton Baptist Church

Newport News, Virginia

Preamble

We, the members of Hilton Baptist Church, in order to bring men, women, and children to Christ, to spread the gospel of the grace of God, to encourage believers in the faith and knowledge of Christ, and to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, for ourselves and for others who shall become members of this church do ordain and establish this Constitution and Bylaws. We do this to ensure that this body be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the scripturally-based tenets of the missionary-minded Baptist denomination, preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and ensuring the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches of the same faith.

Article I. Name

This body shall be known as the Hilton Baptist Church of Newport News, Virginia.

Article II. Objectives

To be a dynamic Spirit-guided church empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ in our church, in our community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leading.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and His loving relationship with man.

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and world in Jesus' name.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

Article III. Articles of Faith

We are in agreement with the doctrinal statement of the "Baptist Faith and Message", as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963, as our larger statement of faith and the following main tenets it embodies.

(For an even more detailed explanation of our belief, you may check out a copy of the book, *Baptist Faith and Message by Herschel Hobbs.*

We believe the Holy Bible as the Inspired Word of God, without any error, the all-sufficient authority in matters of faith, doctrine, and Christian living. (Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Psalm 19:7-10; 119: 105; Isaiah 40:8; Luke 24:44-46; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:19-21)

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1; Exodus 15:11-14; 20:1-6; Psalm 19:1-3; Matthew 6:9-10; John 14: 6-13; 1 Corinthians 8:5-6; Hebrews 11:6)

We believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, and that He is true God and man. He died on the cross and paid the penalty for our sins. He rose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of the Father and is now our High Priest and Advocate.

We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ and that His second coming inspires believers for dynamic and zealous life and service for Him while waiting for His return. (Isaiah 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:16-17; 28:1-6; Luke 1:35; 24:46-47; John 1:1-18; 11:25-27; 14:7-11; 20:1-20; Acts 2:22-24; Romans 3:23-26; 5:8-21; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 12:2; 1 Peter 2:21-25; Revelation 1:13-17; 5:11-14)

We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is, therefore, lost. Only through regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit can man's salvation and spiritual life be obtained. (Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5, 7, 18-22; 3: 9:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6, 12, 19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11)

We believe that eternal salvation is free, a gift of God, entirely apart from man's works, and is possessed by any and all who have faith in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. (John 3:3-21; Romans 1:16-17; 3:23-24; 6:22-23; 8:1-3; 8: 28-30; 38-39; 10:9-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Colossians 3:10-17; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 1:5-9; Revelation 3:20)

Humans were created to exist forever. Each person will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally united with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally united in union with him is eternal life. A person who genuinely accepts salvation through Jesus Christ cannot lose his or her salvation. The true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security .(1Peter 1:3-5; Revelation 20:15 John 3:16; 10:29; 14:17; Romans 6:23; 8:17-18; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10, 14; 1)

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the everlasting blessedness of the saved in Heaven, and the everlasting punishment and separation from God of the unsaved in Hell. (Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27, 30, 36, 44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11, 17:31; Romans 14:10, 1 Corinthians 4-5; 15:24-28; 35-38; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5, 3:4, 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1 to 22:13)

We believe there is one universal church known as the “Body of Christ” in scripture, composed of all those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior. We believe in the ‘Priesthood of the believer’. We believe in the autonomy of the local church which manages its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization. (Matthew 16:15-19; 28: 19-20; Mark 14: 22-26; Acts 2:41-42, 47; 9:31; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 4:11-12; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Peter 5:1-3)

We believe that baptism is by immersion and the Lord’s Supper is a memorial to His suffering and death on the cross. These are ordinances to be observed by the church in its present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means for man’s salvation. (Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21:11:23-29; Colossians 2:12)

This body of Hilton Baptist Church leaves room for honest differences of opinions as to biblical interpretation on doctrine which is not essential to salvation; and it cannot bind the conscience of individual members in areas where the scripture is silent or does not provide clear direction.

Article IV. Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe by the spirit of God, to receive Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to

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 locally and to all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotion; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings; faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all gossip, backbiting and excessive anger; to seek God's help in abstaining from all drugs, food, drink and practices that bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian compassion in feeling and courtesy in speech to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, being mindful of the example of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we move from this place, we will, if possible, unite with a church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Article V. Governance and Relationships

Section 1. Membership

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who have made a public profession of their faith in Christ as Savior and Lord, who, upon their application have been received into its fellowship by vote of the congregation, who have been baptized following such profession of their faith, and who are in agreement with and subscribe to the faith and practices of this church. A class will be made available to all new members in order to share the tenets of our faith and the practices of this church.

Section 2. Polity

Hilton Baptist Church shall govern itself as a democratic and autonomous body. The body shall be the final arbiter in all matters of practice, the conscience of each member shall be the final arbiter in all matters of faith. It recognizes the needs for mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. The church will cooperate with and mutually work with the Peninsula Baptist Association, Baptist General Association of Virginia, and the Southern Baptist Convention and other likeminded fellowships.

Hilton Baptist Church Bylaws

Article 1. Membership

Section 1. Admission

Persons may be received into the fellowship of this church by majority vote at any regular meeting for worship of the church in one of the following ways:

- 1. By baptism upon profession of faith.**
- 2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from a Baptist church of like faith and order.**
- 3. By statement of having had an experience of saving faith in Christ followed by immersion in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit when no letter is obtainable.**
- 4. By restoration to the church membership after having been removed from the roll, upon request of the excluded person according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8.**

Section 2. Duties

Members shall be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life: to attend church worship services, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in its organized work. Members shall also uphold the Articles of Faith, Constitution (including the Covenant of the Church) and Bylaws. (A class will be made available to all new members in order to share the tenets of our faith and the practices of this church.)

Section 3. Rights

Members who are in full and regular standing shall have the right and privileges to full participation in the life and work of the church; may act and vote in the transactions of the church; are eligible for elective offices in the church; and to participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

Section 4. Termination

A. Termination of membership may be accomplished in the following ways by majority vote of members present at a business meeting:

- (1) Letter. Any member in good and regular standing who desires a letter of recommendation to the membership of any other Baptist church of like faith and order is entitled to receive it. Except for unusual circumstances, the letter shall be sent to the church from which the request is received instead of being given to or sent to the individual requesting it.**
- (2) Request from member. If a member in good standing requests to be released from his covenant obligations to this church for reasons which the church may finally deem satisfactory, after it shall have patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his continuance in its fellowship, such request may be granted, and his membership terminated.**
- (3) Nonresident or inactivity. The church may also, after due notice and hearing and kindly effort to make such action unnecessary, terminate the membership of persons.**
- (4) Immoral or unchristian conduct. Should a member become an offense to the church and its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his covenant vows, the church may terminate his membership, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and**

amendment. All actions looking toward the termination of membership by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct shall first be considered by the Deacons who shall make recommendations to the church.

B. Termination of membership may be accomplished by removal from church roll by the Clerk in the following instances:

(1) Death.

(2) Uniting with church of another denomination.

Article II. Staff Members

The church shall call or employ such staff members, as the church determines the need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined. Staff members, other than the Pastor, shall be recommended to the church by the People Support Team, working with the Pastor. Call and employment shall be by church action, with terms of employment and termination in accord with the adopted church Personnel Policy.

Staff members shall understand that the Pastor is the spiritual leader of the church and the administrator of the paid staff. He shall give overall direction and guidance to the total life of the church. Staff members shall be sensitive to his leadership, and shall communicate with him for counsel in matters pertaining to methods of accomplishment to fulfill the church's role as a New Testament church.

Pastor

Section 1. Call.

A Pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs. The Pastor shall be called, or pastoral relations may be dissolved, by a vote of three-fourths of the members of the church present at a meeting called by the church especially for this purpose, after one week's notice to the church membership.

In the election of a Pastor, a Pastor Search Committee shall be composed of seven members from the church at large, to be recommended by the Vision Team. This Committee shall elect a Chair and Secretary and proceed with as little delay as possible to select some minister of the gospel whose Christian qualifications fit the office of Pastor of this church. When this committee shall have made a choice, it shall give at least one week's notice of the meeting at which it will submit its report.

At any meeting held for election of the Pastor, no nominations shall be made or considered except that presented by the committee. The vote shall be on the adoption of the report of the committee. If three-fourths of the members present vote to approve the committee's recommendation, the Moderator shall declare the nominee elected. Should the committee's report fail to receive the necessary three-fourths vote, the Moderator shall declare the nominee not elected, then refer the matter to the committee for further choice. The meeting shall then be adjourned without debate.

Section 2. Duties.

The qualifications for pastor shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. His training, skills, and experiences are needed in this area of leadership. His responsibilities generally fall into the following areas: preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.

A. The Pastor shall conduct religious services on stated and special occasions, administer the ordinances, and minister to members of the church and community as an undershepherd of Jesus Christ. He shall have charge of the pulpit ministry of the church and shall provide for pulpit supply when he is absent. In cooperation with the Worship Team, he shall arrange for persons to assist in revival meetings and other special services.

B. The Pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The Pastor shall have charge of the welfare and oversight of the church, leading the congregation, the organizations and church staff to perform their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism. He shall be administrative head and shall approve all absences and vacations of the church staff.

C. The Pastor shall preside at the services of the church. He may serve as Moderator in a business meeting in the absence of the Moderator and Vice Moderator.

D. The Pastor shall serve as ex officio member of all councils and teams of the church. He may serve as messenger to the Peninsula Baptist Association, Baptist General Association of Virginia, and the Southern Baptist Convention, his expenses being provided in the church budget.

E. The Pastor's compensation, time off, vacation and sick leave shall be in accord with church action and church Personnel Policy.

F. The Pastor shall be responsible to the church.

G. The pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least thirty (30) days' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed. The dismissal of the Pastor shall be by a three-fourths vote by secret ballot at an announced meeting of the church for that purpose. Previous notice shall be given at two preceding Sunday morning services. Such a meeting may be called upon the request of the Vision Team or upon the request of ten percent (10%) or more of the active members.

Article III – Church Officers

All who serve as officers of the church and those who chair Teams shall be members of this church. Nominees for church officers shall be recommended to the church by the Vision Team.

A. Moderator

The Moderator shall be the presiding officer for all regular and special business conferences of the church and serve as chair of the Vision Team.

The Moderator shall be elected for a three-year term of office by the church.

Duties:

(1) Preside at all of the business conferences of the church, both regular and special; preside as chair of the Vision Team.

(2) Be familiar with parliamentary procedure.

(3) Appoint a Parliamentarian to see that all meetings of the church are conducted in accordance with the established procedures of the current Robert's Rules of Order, Revised. The Vice-Moderator or the Pastor shall serve at such times as the Moderator is unable to serve.

B. Clerk

The Clerk of the church shall be elected for a three-year term by the church.

Duties:

(1) Keep in a suitable book a record of all the official transactions of the church.

(2) Keep a register of the names of members, with dates and methods of admission or removal from the roll.

(3) Issue letters of recommendation voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary as indicated by these Bylaws.

(4) Serve as Secretary of the Vision Team.

(5) Prepare the annual letter to the Peninsula Baptist Association after the various Team chairpersons have furnished the information.

In the absence of the Church Clerk, the Moderator shall appoint a temporary clerk.

C. Trustees

At least three (3) trustees shall be elected by the church to hold in trust the property of the church. They shall affix their signature to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of Trustees are required by law. Trustees shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property, or in any way obligate the church without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action.

Vacancies

In case of vacancy in any office, the vacancy shall be filled by the church at a regular or special business meeting as soon as possible after such vacancy has occurred.

Article IV. Church Organization

Every believer is gifted by God to be a vital part of the equipping and maturing of the body of Christ. Our church organization strives to mobilize the body for service and ministry. Members are challenged to become servants and servant leaders for the benefit of the church. The ideal leader is humble and servant like in spirit. Leaders desire to serve the church with their gifts and to build a functioning Christian community. The spirit of cooperation and appreciation is one of God's greatest blessings to our church family.

To carry out the objectives of the constitution, the church will have the Deacons and working teams each led by a chairperson, who carry out operations and have direct responsibility for assuring that the objectives of the church are accomplished in the areas of ministry, missions and resource management with the church staff acting in an advisory and resource capacity. Every program or function of the church shall be sponsored by the Teams or Deacons. Each team shall consist of as many people as necessary and in such a fashion as to best fulfill its objective. Teams will utilize whenever possible the results of a Spiritual Gifts Analysis tool to

find the persons God has best suited for a given position. Team membership will be affirmed at the annual Leadership Planning Retreat.

The team chairpersons shall be elected by the church for a term of 3 years and serve until their successors assume office. All Deacons shall be elected by the church.

Each team and the Deacons shall submit a program of action to the Vision Team after the annual Leadership Planning Retreat and to the church for approval.

The Vision Team, elected annually, will:

Pray for the church

Oversee the work of the church toward its objectives and goals, Constitution and Bylaws, Review and support the ongoing coordinated program plans recommended by the Pastor, church staff, church officers, and teams.

Recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to yearly objectives and goals coordinated with the Leadership Planning Retreat.

Evaluate program achievements in terms of church goals and objectives.

Provide direction and support to the Pastor to implement through the staff such specific duties as the responsibility for coordination and monitoring of church programs.

Facilitate a yearly planning cycle with the teams for program planning, coordinating, implementing and evaluating their program of actions and budgets. Coordinate the annual Leadership Planning Retreat.

Solicit and nominate the team chairpersons to the church.

The Vision Team shall consist of the pastor and other pastoral staff, 12 lay members and the Moderator and Clerk. The lay members shall include the chairpersons of each of the teams and the Deacons and 4 at-large members. The Vision Team will be elected annually. The Vision Team shall meet monthly. The Vision Team shall elect a Vice Moderator from its ranks to serve in the absence of the Moderator at the first meeting after the Annual Leadership Planning Retreat.

The two Ministry teams and the Deacons will coordinate programs and efforts within the Fellowship.

Worship Team

Tasks:

Plan, promote and give guidance for worship events/services of the church including dramatic presentations

Provide for pulpit supply in the absence of the Pastor

Prepare for the observation of the Lord's Supper and administration of the Ordinance of Baptism

Provide for placing flowers in the church, making and displaying banners and seasonal decorations

Operate and maintain the sanctuary sound system including the recording and reproduction of tapes of services

Administer the delivery of tapes to shut in members

Plan, promote, enlist and administer the church music program

Provide for greeters to provide personal contact with members as they enter and leave the church building, welcome and direct guests to Sunday School classes and nursery care, seat

the congregation for all services, take up the offerings, and look after the general comfort of the congregation

Discipleship Team

Tasks:

Plan, promote and execute programs which will lead persons to a mature understanding of the Christian faith and in their daily walk as Christian disciples including Bible, Christian theology, Baptist polity, Christian history, and Christian ethics.

*Provide spiritual gifts analysis and opportunities for service through those identified gifts
Conduct a program of reaching, teaching, witnessing, ministering, worship and bible study for all age groups (Sunday School)*

Maintain the Media Center including selecting, processing, circulating and promoting printed, audio, and video materials along with related equipment.

Plan, support, and implement the overall program of Youth Ministry in coordination with the Associate Pastor for Family Ministries, Education and Youth.

Provide for child care for all church functions as required.

Plan and implement a ministry to senior adults.

The two Mission teams will coordinate programs and efforts of outreach from the church.

Outreach Team

Tasks:

Encourage the intercessory prayer of the congregation for world evangelization.

Mobilize members' evangelism efforts such as visitation, special evangelistic meetings inside and outside the church, and other needed programs (such as the Singing Saints or Kid's Night Out) to reach people with the gospel.

Communicate the truth of the gospel in ways seekers will understand and appreciate.

Be responsible for discovering possibilities for starting new congregations.

Plan training events for soul-winning, as well as production of securing evangelistic printed materials to be used by the church.

Mission Action Team

Tasks:

Seek possibilities for local, state, national mission projects, share findings with church mission organizations and serve the church in establishing and conducting such mission projects.

Encourage and challenge individuals for missionary service.

Raise the awareness of and promote missions by providing: WMU Mission Organizations for women, girls, and preschoolers and mission organizations for men and boys; special mission projects for the church; mission involvement for families; mission involvement for individuals; and periodic mission emphases during the year.

Provide Benevolence to those in need by planning and developing potentially needed resources and sources of support. Upon a specific request, assess the individual/family situation and respond with appropriate required resources.

The three Resource Management teams will support efforts of the other teams through the management of resources.

Finance Team

Tasks:

Lead the membership to understand the mission of the Church and to commit to a biblical concept of stewardship.

Insure the responsible handling of the gifts of the membership to the cause of Christ.

Be responsible for receiving, counting, depositing, recording, and reporting revenues of the church.

Work closely with the Ministries/Financial Assistant in the distribution of moneys by check as authorized by the church.

Guide the church to know that mission support means meeting the needs in the community where the church serves, as well as supporting the extended mission of the church through the Cooperative Program.

Plan the budget process, develop the budget, present the budget, administer the budget (maintain a balance between contributions and expenditures) and evaluate the budget process.

Determine that funds are adequate for council expenditures or to develop and recommend methods of funding for non-budgeted, church approved expenditures. Determine the adequacy of funds and not have the responsibility for any other determinations regarding any particular expenditure.

Initiate the annual audit during the first week in February and report no later than the May business meeting.

Facilities Resource Team (Current Admin Commission, Property & Space, Kitchen Services, Transportation/Care of vehicles)

Tasks:

Be responsible for the maintenance, cleaning, and upkeep of the building, all equipment and grounds. Recommend to the church needs and implement approved actions;

Be responsible for formulating policies regarding use of the building and equipment, and for communicating these policies to the church membership;

Be responsible for the overall operation of the Wednesday Night Supper Ministry. Specifically, it shall set policies, assist in menu preparation, insure cost effectiveness, review and recommend any price adjustments and periodically monitor kitchen operations in coordination with hired staff.

Recommend to the church vehicle needs and satisfy approved actions; recommend to Trustees purchase of insurance; enlist and train drivers; determine policies consistent with church policies; schedule the use of the vehicles; request and administer the budget related to transportation needs; and maintain the vehicles and evaluate condition after use (e.g. clean, gas, lubrication, tires, etc.)

People Support Team

Tasks:

Survey the need for additional church staff position; develop and recommend to the church position descriptions and personnel policies; prepare and maintain an organization chart and manual; recruit, interview, and recommend to the church potential staff members for approval; develop and recommend salary scales, salaries, and benefits for employed personnel, including such merit raises as may be appropriate.

Be responsible for planning official church functions, such as receptions, retirements, or other special recognition services as voted on by the church.

The Church Hostess will be available to discuss with brides and/or their families the rules governing the use of the church for weddings and receptions.

Provide an up-to-date, permanent record of the church Bylaws and Policies. As Bylaws and Policies need adjusting, this function shall draft new Bylaws and Policies to be approved by the church including a five year review. Provide training and planning documents for Vision Team, Deacons and team members.

Be responsible for preserving for future generations documents which relate to the ongoing life of Hilton Baptist Church including a summary of special events and programs conducted by church members both within and beyond the church facilities. A brief summary of the year's events and mission accomplishments is to be prepared annually for publication and/or preservation.

A. Deacons

The guiding image for a deacon at Hilton Baptist Church shall be that of a servant. The New Testament word "deacons" or servant literally means one who "raises the dust" in hastening to serve.

The role of deacon at Hilton Baptist Church shall be to nurture and build up the fellowship of Christians. In the New Testament the deacons is portrayed as serving in many ways to foster the health of the fellowship. In Acts 6, seven persons were selected to serve the early church because there had arisen a fellowship problem. Their particular task was of a social service nature. They were to provide for the feeding of widows in an equitable manner, thus solving a problem which threatened the harmony of the church fellowship. Consequently, while the guiding image of a deacon shall be a servant, the primary target group to serve shall be the church fellowship.

The specific characteristics of persons we wish to serve the fellowship, as deacons are those presented in the New Testament. The primary source texts we rely on are Acts 6 and I Timothy 3. We understand the characteristics to be the following:

(1) One who has demonstrated a high degree of concern for the health and unity of the church fellowship through attendance, financial support, and positive spirit. (Acts 6)

(2) One who is worthy of respect because the behavior exhibited outside church is of the same high quality exhibited inside the church. (I Timothy 3:8)

(3) One who is able to keep confidences that may be entrusted to them.

(4) One who is temperate in all aspects of life. That is, one who exercises Christian management of all things, whether possessions, wine, sexuality, food, the environment, etc. (I Timothy 3:8). We realize that how we live, affects others and our church fellowship.

(5) One who practices the Christian faith without reservation. (I Timothy 3:9)

(6) One who is willing to undergo a period of internship to personally test one's gift and motivations. (I Timothy 3:10)

(7) One who is loyal and dedicated to commitments as demonstrated by family life. If one's commitments to family members, whether spouse, or children, are doubtful, one's commitments to church family may be questioned. Therefore, one's family relationships need to be supportive of the role of deacons. (I Timothy 3:12)

(8) One who has evidence of spiritual gifts which are needed to build-up the fellowship, including any or all of the following gifts:

(a) Exhortation (comfort, consolation, encouragement).

(b) Helping (enabling members to utilize their gifts effectively).

(c) Mercy (feeling compassion and concern for those in distress and able to translate that compassion into deeds that reflect Christ).

(d) Serving.

(e) Shepherding (counselor, encourager of the spiritual welfare of other).

These characteristics shall be used to guide those whose task it is to select deacon interns and be applied after the Intern and Deacons consider the candidate for nomination.

The deacons shall have primary responsibility for leading members to accomplish the church objective, "To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers." (Constitution, Article II) The deacons are to assist in the spiritual leadership of the church along with the Pastor. They are servants to nurture and build-up the fellowship of Christians known as Hilton Baptist Church. They shall seek to help persons grow in the ability to relate in a "Christ-like" fashion to one another and to relate in obedience to God.

Functional areas of responsibility shall include:

To nurture and build up the fellowship of Christians.

Provide spiritual leadership for the church and help persons grow in the ability to relate in a "Christ-like" fashion to one another and to relate in obedience to God.

Maintain personal contact with members.

Provide an organized ministry to church members who experience crisis needs (ex. Death) in their family.

Develop methods to facilitate the bonding and assimilation of new members to the church family.

Provide for periodic recognition of individual church members who are utilizing their spiritual gifts to build up the church family. Special attention is to be given to members who provide "hidden" and "quiet" service to God through His church.

Sponsor a prayer support team (prayer chain) to meet the critical and everyday needs of the members, friends and larger community.

Sponsor a members' visitation team.

Election of Deacons shall be through the following process:

Church members may recommend other members for nomination as deacons. The recommendation shall be made through the use of a form listing the above requirements for a deacon, along with the name of the individual submitting the recommendation to the Deacon chair.

(1) Those individuals shall then be interviewed by the Pastor and the Chair of the Deacons in order to answer questions from the individual and to examine the individual's willingness and qualifications for service. They shall insure that no violation of the bylaws occurs by the recommended person serving.

(2) Individuals satisfying these qualifications shall then be recommended to the church for election as deacon or deacon intern, as appropriate. Anyone who has not previously served under the Deacon Intern Plan will be asked to serve for one year as an intern. At the conclusion of that year, the Pastor and Deacon Chair will interview the intern for possible continued service. If the intern has previously been ordained, He would be eligible to serve for a three-year period. If the nominee has not previously been ordained, the possibility of ordination and election shall be discussed during the interview.

(3) Life Deacons will be elected as an honorary office with nominations coming from the deacon body. Considerations will be given to deacons having reached 60 years of age, having served at least twelve years as deacon, and who has been faithful in his/her stewardship in the name of Christ.

Section 1. Collection of Money.

All money collected by and through the church or any church organization shall be turned in to the church treasury through the Finance Team, except that Sunday School classes and other church groups may have incidental funds for flowers, cards, socials, and community mission activities.

Section 2. Special Offerings.

The only special offerings taken shall be:

(1) The five mission offerings each year for foreign, home, state, associational and world hunger (Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong for North American Missions, Peninsula Association Missions, World Hunger and Virginia State Missions).

(2) The Vacation Bible School mission offering.

(3) The Vacation Bible School expense offering at the close of the school, which will supplement budget funds provided for Vacation Bible School.

(4) Revival offerings.

No other special collections shall be taken, nor shall any campaign to raise funds be promoted within the church without the approval of the deacon body. This does not preclude individuals making designated gifts at any time as the spirit of God may move them.

Section 3. Financial Monitoring

The Finance Team will administer the church finances in accordance with the Bylaws, adopted church budget, and church approved fiscal policies.

Article VI. Meeting

Section 1. Worship

(1) Worship services shall be held each Sunday morning and at other hours conforming to the wishes of the church. The midweek Prayer Service shall be held on a day and hour designated by the church.

(2) The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at least once every quarter, and at such other times as may be determined by the Worship Team, in consultation with the Pastoral staff.

(3) Baptism, immersion in water, shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church. This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

(4) Other religious meetings may be scheduled by the Vision Team in consultation with the Pastoral Staff.

Section 2. Business Meeting

(1) The church shall hold quarterly business meetings (February, May, September, and November) at which time all Team Chairs shall make written reports of their work. Work of the teams during non-business meeting months shall be communicated to the body through the Forecast and Service bulletins and announcements. The Vision Team will meet monthly.

(2) At any of the regular meetings for worship, the church may, without special notice, act upon the reception of members or upon the granting of letter of recommendation to other churches, and upon the selection of messengers to councils, but not upon other business.

(3) The Pastor shall call a special business meeting when requested by the Deacons, Trustees, or the Vision Team. He shall announce the meeting at any regular Worship Service. The particular subject of the meeting shall be clearly stated in the announcement.

Special meeting of the church may also be called by the Clerk, upon the written application of any ten adult members specifying the object thereof. Notice shall be read at the regular Worship Services on the Sunday immediately preceding the day designated for the special meeting.

(4) At regular or special business meetings, twenty-five members age eighteen or over shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article VII. Amendments

This Constitution and accompanying Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any regular business meeting of the church, provided notice accompanied with the suggested changes has been given in writing at a previous business meeting.

Adopted Sept. 2009