

HillSong Church Constitution and Bylaws

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HillSong Church Constitution

ARTICLE I. NAME

This body will be known as HillSong Church, A Baptist Fellowship of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, using facilities located at 201 Culbreth Road.

ARTICLE II. MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

Mission

Our mission is to make passionately devoted followers of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Vision

Our vision is to credibly present Jesus Christ to spiritual seekers. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

Values

A PASSION FOR JESUS CHRIST

Foremost in the life of our church is a passion for Jesus Christ manifested by an adherence to God's Word and a dependence on the Holy Spirit's empowering presence. (John 14:23-26)

WITNESSING TO THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

Flowing out of God's love for the world is our commitment to lovingly witness the good news of Jesus Christ to our family, friends, and other seekers. (John 3:16-17)

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

We value as essential establishing and nurturing a Christian community united in love for Jesus Christ and one another. (John 13:34-35)

DISCIPLESHIP

We are dedicated to helping Christians become passionate in their devotion for the person, mission and lifestyle of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:16-20)

THE MINISTRY OF GRACE

Having received and benefited from God's unconditional love, our desire is to minister His grace to others. (Ephesians 2:1-10)

ARTICLE III. BELIEFS

The Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of *The Baptist Faith and Message*, as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963.

ARTICLE IV. RELATIONSHIPS

We are governed by Jesus Christ, who is the head of the church. This church is subject to no other ecclesiastical body. Although HillSong Church is autonomous, it is our church's intention to cooperate with and support, for the purposes of doing ministry and mission, other Christian organizations it deems appropriate.

HillSong Church Bylaws

ARTICLE I. ORGANIZATION

HillSong Church is characterized by an organizational structure that is consistent with scripture and, therefore, historic Baptist belief. The beginning point for this organizational structure is the New Testament teaching that the church is to be an autonomous self-governing body. Therefore, ultimate authority for the church's direction resides with the church body. Spiritual, administrative and legal authority is delegated, as occurred in the New Testament, to trusted and spiritually mature members of the church body to enhance the church's ministry and increase potential for growth. Respectively, the Elders, Deacons, and Corporate Officers have been entrusted with the spiritual, administrative, and legal oversight of the church.

Section 1. Church Body—Ultimate decision-making authority for HillSong Church's direction rests with the church body. The church decides the following by church-wide vote: call of the Senior Pastor; call of Pastors; call of Ministers; election of Elders, Deacons and Corporate Officers; approval and modification of the budget; the disposition of assets of the church; the acquisition of real property and related indebtedness; amendments to the articles of incorporation; changes to the Constitution and Bylaws of the church; and other matters as specified by the Bylaws.

Section 2. Elders—The Elders give spiritual direction to HillSong Church in order that the church may accomplish and fulfill its stated mission, vision, and values. The Elders are comprised of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, and elected Elders, who are members of HillSong and are elected by the church body (according to Article IV, Section 4). The Elders may choose to create such ministry or task groups as needed to fulfill their purpose.

Section 3. Deacons—The Deacons provide administrative guidance in finance, personnel and other areas as needed by HillSong Church to accomplish its mission. The Deacons serve under the direction of the Elders. The Deacons may choose to create such ministry or task groups as needed to fulfill their purpose.

Section 4. Ministry Team—The Ministry Team assists the church in accomplishing its mission and vision by providing leadership and support for the church's overall ministry. The Ministry Team is comprised of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, and Ministers. The Ministry Team serves under the direction of the Elders. The Senior Pastor serves as leader of the Ministry Team.

Section 5. Corporate Officers—Corporate Officers execute all legal papers as directed by the church through a church-wide vote. The Corporate Officers of the church consist of the Secretary, Treasurer, and Trustee. The Corporate Officers represent the church in all matters of legal responsibility.

Section 6. Support Staff—The Support Staff consists of administrative, maintenance, and other personnel employed in positions designated non-ministry related. The Deacons are responsible for selection and dismissal of the Support Staff, with recommendation of the Senior Pastor, supervising Pastor or Minister.

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ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Members—This church is comprised of persons who have expressed their personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, have been baptized as believers according to the New Testament, and are actively following Jesus Christ in discipleship through involvement in the life of HillSong Church.

Section 2. Applying For Membership—A person will be considered a member upon approval by the Elders. A person may be received for membership by either of the following ways.

- (1) By expression of personal faith in Jesus Christ followed by baptism.
- (2) By statement of a prior expression of personal faith in Jesus Christ followed by baptism.

Section 3. Granting Letters of Recommendation—The Secretary will, upon written request from another church for transfer of membership, be authorized to send a letter of recommendation to the requesting church.

Section 4. Removal From Church Membership—Members may be removed from membership under the following conditions:

- (1) By transferring membership to another church.
- (2) By requesting to be removed from membership.
- (3) Exclusion by church vote upon recommendation of the Elders.

ARTICLE III. MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship—The church will meet each Sunday morning and at other times as determined for services of worship. Decisions to cancel services of worship will be made by the Elders. In emergency situations the Senior Pastor, chair of the elected Elders, and chair of the Deacons will be responsible for making a decision to cancel.

Section 2. Observance of Lord's Supper and Baptism

- (1) **The Lord's Supper.** Communion will be observed a minimum of four times annually as scheduled by the Elders.
- (2) **Baptism.** Baptism will be scheduled by the Elders. Baptism at HillSong Church will be by immersion unless prohibited by a baptismal candidate's special needs.

Section 3. Annual Church Business Meeting—The church will meet annually to review and approve the budget for the upcoming year and to conduct other matters of business as needed. The annual church business meeting will be held no later than the first Sunday in December. The Deacons will, in consultation with the Elders, set the date and agenda for the annual church business meeting. Notice of the subject, date, time and location must be published for the annual business meeting at least two weeks before the meeting and announced in the Sunday morning worship prior.

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Section 4. Called Business Meetings—A called business meeting may be held to consider matters of a significant nature. The Elders will decide when there is a need for a called business meeting unless otherwise specified by the Bylaws. Notice of the subject, date, time and location must be published for the called business meeting at least two weeks before the meeting and announced in the Sunday morning worship prior.

Section 5. Quorum—A quorum consists of those church members who attend the business meeting, provided it has been properly called.

Section 6. Voting—Every member who is 16 years of age or older has the right to vote on all matters listed in Article I, Section 1. Voting by proxy is prohibited. Absentee voting is prohibited. All matters will be decided by majority vote except where otherwise specified in the Bylaws.

Section 7. Parliamentary Procedure—*Robert's Rules of Order* (latest revised edition) will govern all business meetings except where it is inconsistent with the Bylaws of this church.

Section 8. Moderator—The Senior Pastor will be moderator of business meetings. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the chair of the elected Elders will preside. Otherwise, the Secretary will call the meeting to order and a moderator pro-tem will be elected.

ARTICLE IV. LEADERSHIP

The Senior Pastor, Pastors, Ministers, elected Elders, Deacons and Corporate Officers must be members of the church. The Senior Pastor, Pastors, and elected Elders will meet the biblical qualifications set out for Elders in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. The primary responsibility of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, Ministers, and elected Elders will be to lead HillSong Church to accomplish and fulfill its stated mission, vision, and values.

Section 1. Senior Pastor—The Senior Pastor serves as the leader of the Ministry Team. The Senior Pastor serves as member and co-chair of the Elders and non-voting member of the Deacons. Duties of the Senior Pastor will be listed in the Church Manual.

Section 2. Pastors—Pastors serve under the direction of the Senior Pastor as called by the church in Article V, Section 2. Pastors serve as Elders. Duties of Pastors will be listed in the Church Manual.

Section 3. Ministers—Ministers serve under the direction of the Senior Pastor, or a Pastor, as called by the church in Article V, Section 3. Duties of Ministers will be listed in the Church Manual.

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Section 4. Elected Elders

- (1) **Role.** Elected Elders work in partnership with the Senior Pastor, Pastors, and Ministers, to lead HillSong Church to accomplish and fulfill its stated mission, vision, and values. Duties of elected Elders will be listed in the Church Manual.
- (2) **Qualifications.** Elected Elders will be at least 21 years of age at the time of taking office and will have been a member of this church for at least one year immediately prior to the time of nomination. Spouses may not serve as Elders or Deacons at the same time. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as elected Elders.
- (3) **Number-Rotation-Tenure.** A minimum of 6 Elders will be elected for a term of three years, with one-third of the number being elected each year to begin serving June 1. This number may be increased or decreased by multiples of three as determined by the Elders. The number of elected Elders will always exceed the number of Pastors, including the Senior Pastor, serving as Elders. A person serving a term of 24 months or more will not be eligible for re-election until after a lapse of one year.
- (4) **Meetings-Quorum.** The Elders will conduct regular meetings. A quorum consists of at least one half of the elected Elders. The Elders will make decisions by consensus unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws.
- (5) **Election.** The manner of electing Elders will be as set forth *as outlined on the page that follows*. The elected Elders rotating off in the current year will constitute the Elder Election Committee. They will be responsible for the accomplishment of the process as outlined. The elected Elders may, if needed, adjust the schedule to accomplish the required steps, provided the election process is completed prior to June 1.
- (6) **Officers.** The elected Elders will choose three of their members to serve respectively as chair, vice-chair, and secretary of the elected Elders. These officers will serve in the same offices on the Elders, with the exception of the chair who will serve as co-chair with the Senior Pastor.
- (7) **Ordination.** For those elected as Elders who have not been ordained, a service of ordination will be scheduled and planned by the Senior Pastor and chair of elected Elders. Previous ordination as a Deacon will be recognized as the equivalent of Elder ordination.
- (8) **Vacancies.** Vacancies will be left unfilled until the next regular election of Elders. Vacancies will be filled to achieve compliance with Article IV, Section 4(3), according to a process defined by the Elders. Election will be by church vote.

Elder Election Process

- STEP 1. A list of all members of the church, 21 years of age and older (at the time of taking office, if elected), will be made available to the church body no later than the last Sunday in February.** Notation will be made on the list of those members ineligible to serve because of current service, spouse's service, or length of church membership.
- STEP 2. No later than the first Sunday of March, members present to vote will be furnished a ballot and may nominate qualified Elder candidates to fill up to but not more than the number of vacancies.** Nominations will cease at the close of the morning worship service when ballots will be collected and tabulated by the Elder Election Committee. A person receiving 5 or more nominations will be considered a prospective nominee unless a serious objection is raised on the basis of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 or Titus 1:5-9 by a member of the Elders. If such an objection is raised and not resolved, the Elders will decide whether to accept an individual as a prospective Elder nominee.
- STEP 3. After the list of those nominated has been compiled, the active elected Elders will contact each nominee.** Each nominee will then be interviewed by the active elected Elders to explain the responsibilities of serving as an Elder and to determine if the nominee is qualified. Qualified nominees will then be given one week from the date of contact to accept the nomination. The names of qualified nominees willing to stand election will then be placed on the ballot.
- STEP 4. No later than the first Sunday in April, a list of Elder nominees will be presented to the church in the morning worship service.** This list will then be published the following week.
- STEP 5. No later than the first Sunday in May, the ballots will be cast by members of the church during the morning worship service.** The Elder Election Committee will issue the ballot to the members present and voting. Members may vote for up to but not more than the number of expected vacancies on the Elders. Those nominees receiving the highest number of ballots cast (up to the number of expected vacancies) will be elected. To be elected, a nominee must also receive a majority vote of ballots cast. In the event of a tie between two or more nominees, the elected Elders will decide which nominee will be elected.
- STEP 6. The list of those elected will be notified by the Elder Election Committee and published.**

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Section 5. Deacons

- (1) **Role.** The purpose of the Deacons is to provide administrative guidance in finance, personnel and other areas as needed by HillSong Church to accomplish its mission. Duties of the Deacons will be listed in the Church Manual.
- (2) **Qualifications.** The role and qualifications of Deacons is similar to the descriptions given of Deacons in Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Additionally, Deacons will be at least 21 years of age at the time of taking office and will have been a member of HillSong Church for at least one year immediately prior to the time of nomination. Spouses may not serve as Elders or Deacons at the same time. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as Deacons.
- (3) **Number-Rotation-Tenure.** The Deacons will be composed of a minimum of 6 at-large members who will be elected for a term of three years, with one-third of the number being elected each year. This number may be increased or decreased as determined by the Elders. The Elders select the Deacons' chair. The Senior Pastor, Chair of elected Elders, and Treasurer serve as non-voting members of the Deacons. Deacon terms of service will begin January 1.
- (4) **Election.** The elected Elders will nominate Deacons equal to the number of vacancies being filled. The list of nominated Deacons will be publicized to the church for no less than 2 weeks prior to the date of the election. Election of individual Deacons will take place at the annual church business meeting. To be elected, a nominee must receive a majority of votes cast.
- (5) **Vacancies.** A vacancy may be filled at any time by the procedure outlined in Section (4), with election during a called business meeting.

Section 6. Secretary

- (1) **Role.** The Secretary serves as the Secretary of the Corporation and will attest the signature of the Trustee and Treasurer on all legal documents and will affix the corporate seal of the Corporation on such documents. The Secretary also has the responsibility of recording all church business decisions and transactions. Other duties of the Secretary are provided for in the Church Manual. If the Secretary of the Corporation is unable to carry out his or her duties at any time, the Secretary of the elected Elders will serve in this capacity until the vacancy has been filled.
- (2) **Qualifications.** The Secretary should be a respected and trusted member of HillSong Church. The Secretary should be able to keep records that are easily understood and be conscientious in preserving and recording these records for church use.

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- (3) **Tenure and Election.** The Secretary will be nominated by the Elders and serves a term of three years. The Secretary may serve multiple and consecutive terms. Election of the Secretary will take place at the annual church business meeting or a called business meeting. A vacancy may be filled at any time. The Secretary's term of service will begin January 1. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as Secretary.

Section 7. Trustee (President of Corporation Designate)

- (1) **Role.** The Trustee, as provided by law and action of the church, represents the church in all matters of legal responsibility and executes all legal papers as directed by the church. The Trustee is designated as the President of the Corporation. The Trustee has no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of or exercise control over the use of church property without a specific vote of the church. If the Trustee is unable to carry out his or her duties at any time, the Chair of the elected Elders will serve in this capacity until the vacancy has been filled.
- (2) **Qualifications.** The Trustee should be a respected and trusted member of HillSong Church.
- (3) **Tenure and Election.** The Trustee will be nominated by the Elders and elected each year at the annual church business meeting. A vacancy may be filled at any time by the same procedure at a called business meeting. The Trustee may serve multiple and consecutive terms. The Trustee's term of service begins January 1. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as Trustee.

Section 8. Treasurer

- (1) **Role.** The Treasurer is responsible for receiving, accounting, disbursing, and reporting all the monies and gifts of the church. The Treasurer also serves as Treasurer of the Corporation. The Treasurer will prepare and distribute quarterly financial statements to the church body. Other duties of the Treasurer will be provided for in the Church Manual.
- (2) **Qualifications.** The Treasurer should be a respected and trusted member of HillSong Church with an acceptable knowledge of standard accounting practices.
- (3) **Tenure and Election.** The treasurer will be nominated by the Elders, elected by the church, and serve a term of three years. The Treasurer may serve multiple and consecutive terms. Election of the Treasurer will take place at the annual church business meeting or a called business meeting. A vacancy may be filled at any time. The term of service will begin January 1. Spouses may not serve as Treasurer, Elder or Deacon at the same time. In addition, the Treasurer may not serve as an Elder or Deacon during his/her term as Treasurer. Spouses of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers may not serve as Treasurer.

Section 9. Denominational Representatives—The Elders will appoint messengers to represent the church at various denominational meetings as appropriate.

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ARTICLE V. EMPLOYMENT

Section 1. Senior Pastor—When a vacancy occurs in the position of Senior Pastor, a Pastor Search Committee is to be formed of seven (7) persons, including one person designated as chair. The committee will be nominated by the elected Elders and elected by the church. Persons making up the Search Committee should be spiritually mature and representative of the church as a whole. The committee will meet without Pastors or Ministers present and will present only one candidate at a time to the church for consideration. A 75 percent vote for calling the candidate will be necessary for an invitation to serve to be extended.

Section 2. Pastors—Pastors will be recommended by the Senior Pastor and a Search Committee. The Search Committee, with one person being designated to serve as chair, will be elected by the church, upon recommendation of the Elders. The committee will be composed of 5-7 spiritually mature persons who are knowledgeable in the area of ministry for which a Pastor is being sought. Only one candidate at a time will be presented to the church for a vote. A 75 percent vote for calling the candidate will be necessary for an invitation to serve to be extended.

Section 3. Ministers—Ministers will be recommended by the Elders. Ministers are called by the church to serve and give leadership in specific areas of ministry not requiring qualification or service as an Elder. Only one candidate at a time will be presented to the church for a vote. A 75 percent vote for calling the candidate will be necessary for an invitation to serve to be extended.

Section 4. Dismissal of Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers—Dismissal of the Senior Pastor, Pastors or Ministers may occur with a majority vote of church members present at a called business meeting. A majority of active elected Elders may schedule this meeting after attempts at reconciliation have failed. The chair of the elected Elders will be the moderator for business meetings called for the purpose of dismissal of the Senior Pastor, Pastors, or Ministers.

Section 5. Support Staff—The Deacons are responsible for selection and dismissal of the Support Staff, with recommendation of the Senior Pastor, supervising Pastor or Minister. Duties will be listed in the Support Staff section of the Church Manual.

ARTICLE VI. CHURCH MANUAL

Section 1. General Statement—Church policies and procedures will be described in the Church Manual. The Deacons will be charged with maintaining and keeping the manual up-to-date. Additions, deletions or revisions of the Church Manual will be made by and through the Deacons, subject to final approval by the Elders.

Section 2. Contents—The Church Manual will include the following information:

- (1) Senior Pastor, Pastors, and Ministers Section. Consists of job descriptions, personnel policies and other materials related to the Senior Pastor, Pastors and Ministers.
- (2) Elected Elders Section. Gives duties of those who serve as elected Elders.
- (3) Deacons Section. Gives duties of those who serve as Deacons.

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- (4) Corporate Officers Section. Gives duties of all Corporate Officers: Trustee, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- (5) Support Staff Section. Includes job descriptions for all current members of the Support Staff and other materials related to the Support Staff.
- (6) Organizational Section. Lists all ministry or task groups along with their purpose, composition, and responsibilities.
- (7) Policy and Procedure Section. Lists all policies and procedures approved and adopted by the Elders.
- (8) Other. Includes other information, programs and procedures necessary for the efficient operation of the church.

ARTICLE VII. DISSOLUTION

In the event that HillSong Church would be dissolved and no longer exist, the assets belonging to HillSong Church would be turned over to the North Carolina Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws will be made at a called business meeting of the church, provided that:

- (1) Each proposed change has been made available in writing no less than thirty days prior at a Sunday morning worship service.
- (2) A written copy of the amendment has been sent by first class mail to all members prior to being voted on.
- (3) Written copies have been made available in the church office to the church membership.

Two-thirds vote of all members of the church present and voting must ratify amendments to the HillSong Church Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE IX. ADOPTION

The Constitution and Bylaws will be considered adopted and in immediate effect, if and when two thirds of the members present and voting at the business meeting at which the vote is taken vote in favor of the document. This vote will take place not less than 30 days after formal presentation of the Constitution and Bylaws to the church.