EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 2024

HOPE MINISTRIES

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Hope Ministries, (hereinafter the "Church"), declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This Constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

ARTICLE l: NAME

This church of believers shall be known as the **Hope Ministries** of Virginia Beach, Virginia, located at 5204 Princess Anne Road. The church reserves the right to relocate the church.

ARTICLE ll: OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this ministry are to:

- be a dynamic, spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.
- be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His Person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.
- experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.
- help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.
- be a church which ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus's name.
- Operate exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding section of any future Federal tax code.
- No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, directors, officers or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make

payments and distributions in furtherance of Section 501 (c) (3) purposes. No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.

ARTICLE Ill: CHURCH GOVERNMENT

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership.

All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified by church action.

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Bible believing churches.

ARTICLE IV - DOCTRINE

SECTION 1 STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS.

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basis for our beliefs. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind.

SECTION 2 MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

In accordance with our Statement of Faith, we believe that Marriage unites one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19:4-6). Marriage provides for intimate companionship, pure sexual expression (Genesis 2:25; Ephesians 5:31-33), procreation and reflects the relationship of Christ and the church (Genesis 1:28; Proverbs 5:15-19; 1 Corinthians 7:1-15). A husband is commanded to love his wife as Christ loved the church. A wife is commanded to submit to her husband as the church submits to Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33).

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism,

bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance (Genesis 2:24; Genesis 19:5, Genesis 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4). Such sinful pattern if not repented will be a barrier to membership and leadership in a body of believers.

All parents who are members of the church may, if they do desire, have their children dedicated at a time to be designated. This service will give the parents the opportunity to publicly acknowledge their child as a gift from God and will likewise serve as a pledge on the part of the parents to bring the child up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and biblical standards. The service may only consist of a few words from the Pastor and a prayer of dedication.

SECTION 3 CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our 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 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, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to religiously educate our children; 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 tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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 sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

SECTION 4 CHURCH ORDINANCES

Baptism.

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.

- Baptism shall be by immersion in water.

- The senior pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. The baptismal committee shall assist in the preparation for, and the observance of, baptism.

- Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.

- A person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the senior pastor and/or staff. If negative interest is ascertained on the part of the candidate, he shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism and membership.

The Lord's Supper.

The observance of The Lord's Supper shall be scheduled at a time designated by the senior pastor. The physical preparations of The Lord's Supper shall be the responsibility of the Lord's Table Committee.

ARTICLE V ORDINATIONS

SECTION 1 ORDINATION TO THE GOSPEL MINISTRY

A candidate for the gospel ministry is usually licensed sometime prior to the request for ordination. When one indicates to the Church that he believes that God has called him to the ministry, and if the Church is in agreement with him, it is appropriate for the Church to give him its tentative approval by licensing him to serve until he has proven himself qualified for ordination. The request for ordination may come from the candidate himself, or the Church he is serving may make the request. Only adult men shall be considered for ordination to the gospel ministry.

After the Senior Pastor has received a proper request for ordination of a candidate, the Senior Pastor shall authorize the appointment of an advisory council to examine the candidate in order to advise the Church regarding the candidate's fitness for ordination. The ordination council shall consist of ordained men the Church may wish to invite. The council may recommend to the Church:

- Ordination of the candidate,
- Deferment of the ordination for a stated period, or
- Rejection of the candidate.

If, after the church has received in writing the affirmative recommendation of the advisory council to ordain the candidate and the Church approves the candidate for ordination, the ordination services shall be scheduled and the candidate shall be ordained.

The ordination of a person to the gospel ministry may be revoked by the Church at a meeting called for that purpose. A licensed and ordained man may have his ordination revoked forconduct unbecoming the office of ordination. The conduct unbecoming the office of Ordination is at the sole discretion of the Senior Pastor and the Officers of the church.

SECTION 2 ORDINATION OF OTHER MINISTERS

The Church shall have the right, if it is so disposed, to ordain those called to and serving in ministries other than the gospel ministry such as ministries of education, etc. The ordination of a person to any ministry may be revoked by the Church in a meeting called for that purpose for conduct unbecoming the Office of Ordination. The conduct unbecoming the Office of Ordination is at the sole discretion of the Senior Pastor and Officers of the church.

ARTICLE VI- CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 GENERAL.

This is a sovereign and democratic church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be a member of this church and the conditions of such membership.

SECTION 2 TRANSITIONS.

All present active members of the unincorporated entity known as the Hope Ministrries shall, agree to be bound by the Articles of Faith, Constitution and Bylaws of the new church, become active members of this church.

SECTION 3 CANDIDACY. - Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for membership in any of the following ways:

- By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
- By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Bible believing church.
- By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism, when no letter is obtainable.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the Senior Pastor and/or Trustees for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty 30 days. A

three-fourths vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

SECTION 4 NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION.

New members of this church are expected to participate in the church's new member orientation.

SECTION 5 RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

- Every member of the church sixteen (16) years or older is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting.
- Every member of the church eighteen (18) years or older is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church.
- Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

SECTION 6 TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1) death of the member, (2) dismission to another church, (3) exclusion by action of this church, or (4) erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

SECTION 7 DISCIPLINE AND RESTORATION

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The Senior Pastor and other members of the church staff are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the Senior Pastor will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of a specially appointed hearing committee according to the Church Discipline and Restoration Policy; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.