

Constitution

Preamble

Since it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to call certain of His servants to unite in 1964 in Woodville, CA under the name First Baptist Church of Woodville, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ; and in 1981 this body of believers moved the buildings and church location for meeting to Porterville, CA and adopted the name Henderson Avenue Baptist Church, and seeing God sustain and prosper this work to the present day; and,

Whereas we, the members of Henderson Avenue Baptist Church, having searched the Scriptures under the guidance of His Spirit, have recognized the need to reconstitute ourselves to more closely conform to His will for the Church in this age and prepare ourselves for greater efforts in His name;

Now therefore we, the members of Henderson Avenue Baptist Church, do hereby organize ourselves and adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the standards set forth in the Statement of Faith and Covenant of this church.

I. Name

This corporation shall be known as Henderson Avenue Baptist Church.

II. Purposes

This church exists by the grace of God for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities. This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:

- Worshipping Him;
- Equipping the saints through biblical preaching, instruction, and study;
- Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching, personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of the Scriptures;
- Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work, local, domestic, and international;
- Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion;
- Encouraging biblical fellowship among believers; and
- Serving other individuals, families, and organizations by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ.

III. Statement of Faith

This church adopts the following as our statement of faith:

Of The Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction (1); that it has God for its author, salvation for its end (2), and truth without any mixture of error for its matter (3); that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us (4); and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union (5), and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (6).

1. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; Acts 1:16; 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16:29-31; Psa. 119:11; Rom. 3:1-2
2. 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; John 5:38-39
3. Prov. 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 3:4
4. Rom. 2:12; John 12:47-48; Luke 10:10-16;
5. Phil. 3:16; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Pet. 4:11
6. 1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:6; Jude 3-5; Eph. 6:17; Psa. 119:59-60; Phil. 1:9-11

Of the True God

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth (1); inexpressibly glorious in holiness (2), and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love (3); that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (4); equal in every divine perfection (5), and executing distinct and harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (6).

1. John 4:24; Psa. 147:5; 83:18; Heb. 3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer. 10:10
2. Exod. 15:11; Isa. 6:3; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 4:6-8
3. Mark 12:30; Rev. 4:11; Matt. 10:37; Jer. 2:12-13
4. Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6
5. John 10:30; 5:17; 14:23; 17:5, 10; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6
6. Eph. 2:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; Mark 1:9-11

Of the Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker (1); but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state (2); in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners (3), not by constraint, but choice (4); being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin (5), without defense or excuse (6).

1. Gen. 1:27, 31; Eccl. 7:29; Acts 17:26
2. Gen. 3:6-24; Rom. 5:12
3. John 3:6; Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:15-19; 8:7
4. Isa. 53:6; Gen. 6:12; Rom. 3:9-18
5. Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:18, 32; 2:1-16; Gal. 3:10
6. Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom. 1:20; 3:19; Gal. 3:22

Of the Way of Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (1), through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God (2); who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin (3); honored the divine law by his personal obedience (4), and by his death made a full atonement for our sins (5); that having risen from the death, he is now enthroned in heaven (5); and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Saviour (7).

1. Eph. 2:5; Matt. 18:11; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; Acts 15:11
2. John 3:16; 1:1-14; Heb. 4:14; 12:24
3. Phil. 2:6-7; Heb. 2:9, 14; 2 Cor. 5:21
4. Isa. 42:21; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 3:21
5. Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 20:28; Rom. 4:25; 3:21-26; 1 John 4:10; 2:2; 1 Cor. 15:1-3; Heb. 9:13-15
6. Heb. 1:8, 3; 8:1; Col. 3:1-4
7. Heb. 7:25; Col. 2:9; Heb. 2:18; 7:26

Of Justification

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ (1) secures to such as believe in him is Justification (2); that Justification includes the pardon of sin (3), and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness (4); that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood (5); by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God (6); that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity (7).

1. John 1:16; Eph. 3:8
2. Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:1
3. Rom. 5:9; Zech. 13:1; Matt. 9:6; Acts 10:43
4. Rom. 5:17; Titus 3:5-6; 1 John 2:25; Rom. 5:21
5. Rom. 4:4-5; 5:21; Phil. 3:7-9
6. Rom. 5:19; 3:24-26; 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12
7. Rom. 5:1-3, 11; 1 Cor. 1:30-31; Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:8

Of the Freeness of Salvation

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel (1); that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith (2); and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel (3); which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation (4).

1. Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Luke 14:17
2. Rom. 16:26; Mark 1:15; Rom. 1:15-17
3. John 5:40; Matt. 23:37; Rom. 9:32; Prov. 1:24; Acts 13:46
4. John 3:19; Matt. 11:20; Luke 19:27; 2 Thess. 1:8

Of Grace in Regeneration

We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again (1); that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind (2); that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth (3), so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel (4); and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life (5).

1. John 3:3, 6-7; Rev. 21:27
2. 2 Cor. 5:17; Ezek. 36:26; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:28-29; 5:5; 1 John 4:7
3. John 3:8; 1:13; James 1:16-18; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 2:13
4. 1 Pet. 1:22-25; 1 John 5:1; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:9-11
5. Eph. 5:9; Rom. 8:9; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 3:14-21; Matt. 3:8-10; 7:20; 1 John 5:4, 18

Of Repentance and Faith

We believe that Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God (1); whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ (2), we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy (3); at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Saviour (4).

1. Mark 1:15; Acts 11:18; Eph. 2:8; 1 John 5:1
2. John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31
3. Luke 18:13; 15:18-21; James 4:7-10; 2 Cor. 7:11; Rom. 10:12-13; Psa. 51
4. Rom. 10:9-11; Acts 3:22-23; Heb. 4:14; Psa. 2:6; Heb. 1:8; 2 Tim. 1:12

Of God's Purpose of Grace

We believe that Election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners (1); that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end (2); that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable (3); that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy (4); that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree (5); that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel (6); that it is the foundation of Christian assurance (7); and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence (8).

1. 2 Tim. 1:8-9; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 1:1-2; Rom. 11:5-6; John 15:15; 1 John 4:19
2. 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16
3. Exod. 33:18-19; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:23-24; Jer. 31:3; Rom. 11:28-36; James 1:17-18
4. 1 Cor. 4:7; 1:26-31; Rom. 3:27; 4:16; Col. 3:12; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; 15:10; 1 Pet. 5:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:12
5. 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Cor. 9:22; Rom. 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; 2 Pet. 1:10
6. 1 Thess. 1:4-10
7. Rom. 8:28-30; Rom. 11:29
8. 2 Pet. 1:10-11; Phil. 3:12; Heb. 6:11

Of Sanctification

We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness (1); that it is a progressive work (2); that it is begun in regeneration (3); and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means-especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer (4).

1. 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; 13:9; Eph. 1:4
2. Prov. 4:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; Phil. 3:12-16
3. Rom. 8:5; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14
4. Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:5; Luke 11:35; 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:18; 4:30

Of the Perseverance of Saints

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end (1); that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors (2); that a special Providence watches over their welfare (3); and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (4).

1. John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 3:9; 5:18
2. 1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt. 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9
3. Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Psa. 121:3; 91:11-12
4. 1 Peter 1:5; Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; Jude 24-25; Heb. 1:14; 2 Kings 6:16; Heb. 13:5; 1 John 4:4

Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel

We believe that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government (1); that it is holy, just, and good (2); and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin (3); to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy Law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church (4).

1. Rom. 3:31; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:20; 4:15
2. Rom. 7:12, 7, 14, 22; Gal. 3:21; Psa. 119
3. Rom. 8:7-8; Josh. 24:19; Jer. 13:23; John 6:44; 5:44
4. Rom. 8:2, 4; 10:4; 1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 8:10; Jude 20-21; Heb. 12:14; Matt. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 12:28

Of a Gospel Church

We believe that a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers (1), associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel (2); observing the ordinances of Christ (3); governed by his laws (4), and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his Word (5); that its only scriptural officers are Bishops, or Pastors, and Deacons (6), whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

1. 1 Cor. 1:1-13; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:1; 1 Cor. 4:17; 14:23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3:5
2. Acts 2:41-42, 47; 2 Cor. 8:5; 1 Cor. 5:12-13
3. Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26
4. Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thess. 4.2; 2 John 6; Gal. 6:2; all the Epistles
5. Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 14:12; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 12:14
6. Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; 15:22; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1

Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer (1), into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost (2); to show forth, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life (3); that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a Church relation; and to the Lord's Supper (4), in which the members of the Church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ (5); preceded always by solemn self-examination (6).

1. Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; 4:1-2; Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 16:32-34; 18:8
2. Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Gal. 3:27-28
3. Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; Acts 22:16
4. Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts and Epistles
5. 1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20
6. 1 Cor. 11:28; 5:1, 8; 10:3-32; 11:17-32; John 6:26-71

Of the Lord's Day

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day (1); and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes (2), by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God (3).

1. Acts 20:7; Gen. 2:3; Col. 2:16-17; Mark 2:27; John 20:19
2. Exod. 20:8; Rev. 1:10; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Exod. 16:22-30
3. Heb. 4:3-11

Of Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society (1); and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed (2); except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (3) who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth (4).

1. Rom. 13:1-7; Deut. 16:18; Jer.30:21
2. Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:1-8
3. Acts 5:29; Matt. 10:28; Dan. 3:15-18; 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20
4. Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:4; Rev. 19:16; Psa. 72:11; Psa. 2; Rom. 14:9-13

Of the Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (1); that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem (2); while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse (3); and this distinction holds among men both in and after death (4).

1. Mal. 3:18; Prov. 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Gen. 18:23; Jer. 15:19; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 6:16
2. Rom. 1:17; 7:6; 1 John 2:29; 3:7; Rom. 6:18, 22; 1 Cor. 11:32; Prov. 11:31; 1 Pet. 4:17-18
3. 1 John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; John 3:36; Isa. 57:21; Psa. 10:4; Isa 55:6-7
4. Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; John 8:21-24; Prov. 10:24; Luke 12:4-5; 9:23-26; John 12:25-26; Eccl. 3:17; Matt. 7:13-14

Of the World to Come

We believe that the end of the world is approaching (1); that at the last day Christ will descend from heaven (2), and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution (3); that a solemn separation will then take place (4); that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy (5); and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness (6).

1. 1 Pet. 4:7; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35; 1 John 2:17; Matt. 28:20; 13:39-40; 2 Pet. 3:3-13
2. Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-11
3. Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:12-59; Luke 14:14; Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; 6:40; 11:25-26; 2 Tim. 1:10; Acts 10:42
4. Matt. 13:49, 37-43; 24:30-31; 25:31-33
5. Matt. 25:35-41; Rev. 22:11; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Pet. 2:9; Jude 7; Phil. 3:19; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; John 4:36; 2 Cor. 4:18
6. Rom. 3:5-6; 2 Thess. 1:6-12; Heb. 6:1-2; 1 Cor. 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:2-16; Rev. 20:11-12; 1 John 2:28; 4:17

Based on the New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith (1853)

IV. Church Covenant

Having been brought by the Spirit of God to repent, believe in, and follow the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, and upon the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully covenant with one another to endeavor after the following:

1. We will work and pray for unity of the Spirit within the body, always practicing forgiveness, pursuing reconciliation, and rejecting harmful gossip.
2. We will walk together in brotherly love, exercising an affectionate care and watchfulness over one another, and faithfully admonishing one another when the occasion arises.
3. We will not forsake the assembling together of the saints, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and for one another.
4. We will delight in one another's joy and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear one another's burdens and sorrows.
5. We will seek to disciple those under our care and by a pure and loving example seek to lead others to salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ.
6. We will seek, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, recognizing that we have a special obligation to lead a new and holy life.
7. We will work together for the continuance of the ministry in this church, as we sustain its doctrines, its ordinances, its worship, and its discipline.
8. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of this ministry, the expenses of this church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel throughout the world.
9. We will, if we move from this church body, as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

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

Bylaws

Article 1 Government

Section 1

The government of this church shall be vested in the body of members who compose it, a majority of whose vote on any question of its government, Statement of Faith and order is final, as in each case herein provided. It acknowledges the LORD JESUS CHRIST as its only HEAD, and accepts His Word, the Bible, as its supreme guide, in all matters.

Section 2

It shall be the policy of this church, that while it will fully govern in all matters pertaining to itself and its work, to recognize the obligations and privileges of the fellowship of other churches of the same faith and order; and thus further fulfilling the Great Commission fulfilled by seeking and extending fellowship, counsel and cooperation in Christian work.

Article 2 Membership

Section 1 - Definition

Membership at this church is defined as a formal recognition of an individual's willingness to be identified with this local body and to submit themselves to the pastoral care of its leadership. It also serves as the means by which the leadership identifies those over whom they have charge.

Section 2 - Qualifications

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must have confessed faith in Jesus Christ, repented of sin, and upon their confession of faith have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must endeavor to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence as the elders deem appropriate.

Section 3 - Admission

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by a unanimous affirmation of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members. Upon admission, all applicants shall relinquish their membership in any other churches.

Section 4 – Duties and Privileges

4.1

In accordance with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only members shall be able to serve as officers or ministry team leaders.

4.2

Under Christ, this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend members' meetings and vote on such matters as may be submitted to a vote.

4.3

Members are responsible to abide by the consensus of the church body regarding matters of faith and practice as expressed in the Constitution and Bylaws and agree to submit to the policies and procedures duly developed in support of the Constitution and Bylaws as provided in Article 9.

Section 5 – Church Discipline

5.1

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties as embodied in the Church Covenant or the Constitution and Bylaws, or guilty of unrepentant scandalous conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and the example of other Scripture (e.g., 1 Corinthians 5; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 3:10-11). Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

5.2

If private efforts to bring about the member's repentance and reconciliation are unsuccessful, one or more members or elders shall bring the matter to the attention of the elder board. The elders shall review and investigate the matter, and, if they believe it is warranted, may also conduct a hearing with notice of the charges and process. After prayer and deliberation, the elders may (a) dismiss the matter, (b) take disciplinary action (other than termination of membership, which may only be effected by a vote of the members), or (c) submit the matter (with or without a recommendation for action) to the members at a regular or special meeting for a decision. If the elders fail or refuse to act on the matter, the members may bring it up for consideration and vote at a special members' meeting called in accordance with Article 8, Section 2.

5.3

If the elders or the members vote to discipline the member, it may be announced to the members to carry out the Biblical admonition to bring about repentance and restoration of the disciplined member. Members who have been excommunicated by the church shall be restored to full membership privileges according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 when their conduct is judged by the elders to be in accordance with the Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, and Biblical repentance. The elders will communicate such restoration to the church in a timely manner.

5.4

Church discipline may include the following: admonition by the elders or congregation, removal from office or church ministry, and as a final response to unrepentance, excommunication, which is the removal from membership and expulsion from the church (see Matthew 18:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5).

5.5

The purposes of such discipline should be

For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined;

See Proverbs 15:5; 29:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Hebrews 12:1-11; Psalm 119:115; 141:5; Proverbs 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26-27; 18:15-17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1-5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13-14; James 1:22.

For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them;

See Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14 [NB: this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24-25.

For the purity of the church as a whole;

See 1 Corinthians 5:6-7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2.

For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians; and

See Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13-16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1-14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10.

Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character.

See Deuteronomy 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8, 18:17, 25; Romans 2:24; 15:5-6; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12.

Section 6 – Termination of Membership

Termination of membership in this church occurs:

- (a) When the church, at a regular or special members' meeting, recognizes the voluntary resignation of a member;
- (b) Upon the death of the member; or
- (c) As an act of church discipline, when a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present and voting at a regular or special member's meeting vote to terminate the membership of the member.

Article 3 Officers

Section 1 – Summary

1.1

The Biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons. The elders and deacons, together make up the executive board. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative offices of clerk and treasurer. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities. The officers will organize themselves to meet the laws and standards of the state of California.

1.2

Election

The church should recognize men who are qualified, gifted, and willing to serve in the calling of elders and deacons. The congregation may recommend nominations of the elders and deacons no later than the second regular membership meeting. The seated elders will present elder and deacon nominations to the church not later than eight (8) weeks prior to the third regular membership meeting.

1.3

The candidates and congregation shall then enter into a testing period (1 Timothy 3:10) in which said candidates shall be examined against the requirements for each office listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, of which lists shall be given to the congregation in writing. Should any member have doubts, questions or concerns that a candidate does indeed qualify based on these requirements, they are to take the follow steps:

- (a) Talk to the candidate privately and directly in a loving and serious attempt to resolve the concern to that member's satisfaction.
- (b) If the concern is not resolved, that member must bring it before the elders, who shall then assess the concern and address it with the candidate. If the issue is resolved to the satisfaction of the elders by a unanimous vote, the candidate shall retain his candidacy and finish out the testing period. If, however, the issue is not resolved as stated above, the candidate shall be

removed from consideration for the immediate selection period until such a time as said issue is no longer a concern.

1.4

The voting membership will elect the new elder or deacon with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. Upon their election the new elder or deacon shall be commissioned by the prayer and laying on of hands of the seated elders.

1.5

The congregation may recommend nominations of the clerk and treasurer. The seated elders and deacons will present the clerk and treasurer nominations to the church no later than eight (8) weeks prior to the Fall Quarterly meeting. The voting membership will elect the clerk and treasurer with a majority vote.

1.6

Term of Service

The elders and deacons shall be elected for an indeterminate period of time. The elected elder and deacon shall serve in the office so long he remains qualified and willing. An elder or deacon may take a sabbatical or temporary leave if he or the elders deem a period of respite is necessary. An elder or deacon shall resume his responsibilities at a time mutually agreed upon by the elder or deacon and the rest of the elder board. If a sabbatical or temporary leave shall extend beyond the period of one year, the process of selection as outlined in Article 3, Section 1 shall be followed prior to the said elder being reinstated to office.

1.7

Disciplinary Removal

In the event that a member or members of the congregation believe that an elder or deacon is no longer qualified as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, the following process shall be followed:

- (a) Approach the elder or deacon with the specific concerns in a spirit of gentleness, according to Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1.
- (b) If the matter remains unresolved, take the matter to the elders. Such action will require two or three witnesses to the behavior in question as directed by 1 Timothy 5:19. The elders shall test and examine the one in question to determine the validity of concern. If they determine the said elder or deacon is no longer qualified for office they shall recommend to the congregation that he be removed from office. Such removal shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present and voting at a regular or special members meeting. Reinstatement at a later date would require the process outlined in Article 3, Section 1.

- (c) If the elders conclude that the elder or deacon in question is indeed qualified and should remain in office; and if the aforementioned witnesses still believe the elder or deacon to be unqualified; said witnesses may submit a signed, written request for a special meeting of the congregation in which accusations against and defense of the said elder or deacon will be presented, and a vote of “No Confidence” taken by voting members of the congregation. The elders shall be obligated to schedule such meeting within four weeks time after receiving the letter of request, with two weeks’ notice given from the pulpit.
- (d) If a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members affirm the “No Confidence” charge, the elder or deacon shall be removed from office.
- (e) If a two-thirds (2/3) majority is not achieved, the elder or deacon shall remain in office and all individuals who voted to affirm the “No Confidence” charge shall humbly submit to the leadership of the church according to Hebrews 13:17.

Section 2 - Elders

2.1

Number and Qualifications

There shall be a plurality of men serving in the office of elder, the specific number of which shall be determined by the need of the congregation and the number of qualified men available. Elders shall be men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

2.2

Duties

In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God’s flock. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders, with the deacons, shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church.

2.3

The duties of an elder/overseer as described in Scripture, to which God will hold them accountable, consist of:

- 1) voluntarily, joyfully, eagerly and selflessly exercising oversight of the church according to the will of God (1 Peter 5:2, Hebrews 13:17)
- 2) serving as an example to the church of godly living (1 Peter 5:3)
- 3) shepherding/pastoring the flock of God by keeping watch over their souls, which includes caring for the church’s spiritual well-being (both collectively and individually) and guarding her and themselves against false teachers (“savage wolves”) who will come to lead the flock astray (Hebrews 13:17, 1 Tim. 3:5, 1 Peter 5:2, Acts 20:28-31)
- 4) prayer and the ministry of the Word - preaching and teaching (Acts 6:4, 1 Tim. 5:17)

- 5) ensuring that sound doctrine is taught (Titus 1:9)
- 6) praying especially for those who are sick, and anointing them with oil (James 5:12)
- 7) equipping the membership for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:12)

Additional duties not specified in Scripture but necessary to the functions of this church body, and which shall also be the responsibility of the elders, shall be to:

- 1) examine and instruct prospective members
- 2) examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions
- 3) oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees
- 4) conduct worship services
- 5) administer the ordinances of baptism and communion
- 6) oversee the process of church discipline
- 7) coordinate and promote the ministries of the church
- 8) mobilize the church for world missions

2.4

Because of the elder's particular responsibility to oversee the teaching ministry of the church all teachers and teaching curriculum used by the church shall be approved by the elders.

Section 3 – Deacons

3.1

Number and Qualifications

There shall be a plurality of men serving in the office of deacon, the specific number of which shall be determined by the need of the congregation and the number of qualified men available. Deacons shall be men who satisfy the qualification for the office of deacon set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7.

3.2

Duties

The Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of those under the church's ministry, attend to the accommodations of public worship, and using their gift of administration encourage and support those able to help. With the elders they shall prepare the annual budget. They shall have charge of and administer the Deacon Fund for relief of such its members as may be in distress, or otherwise see fit. They shall prepare the elements for the Lord's Table and assist the elders in any way needed.

Section 4 – Clerk

The clerk shall be responsible for recording the minutes of all members' meetings of the church, preserving an accurate roll of the membership, and rendering reports as

requested by the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the church. The church clerk also shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent version of the Constitution and Bylaws are available for all members. In the absence or incapacity of the clerk, the elders shall appoint another member to perform the duties of the clerk. The clerk shall be nominated by the elders and deacons and elected by the members to serve a term of one year, or until a successor is elected.

Section 5 – Treasurer

The treasurer shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in the name of the church in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer also shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the church, and implement adequate controls to ensure that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the church at each regular members' meeting; this responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the elders. The treasurer shall render to the elders and deacons an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church as requested by the elders and deacons, but in any event at least annually. The treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and deacons and elected by the members to serve a term of one year, or until a successor is elected.

Article 4 Pastoral Staff

Section 1 – Senior Pastor

The senior pastor shall be an elder. He shall meet the qualifications for elder in Article 3, Section 2. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Article 3, Section 2, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the Constitution. In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor, the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which may be delegated.

Section 2 – Associate Pastors

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor is that of associate. An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall meet the qualifications for elder in Article 3, Section 2. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Article 3, Section 2, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. He shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth in the Constitution, or which may be specifically

assigned to him by the congregation. In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the associate pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the oversight of the elders.

Section 3 – Accountability and Compensation

The pastor(s) shall be directly accountable to the elders and deacons regarding the performance of his duties. Pastoral compensation shall be determined by the elders and deacons and affirmed by the membership in the annual budget.

Section 4 – Removal

Removal of a pastor is done according to Article 3, Section 2.

Article 5 Non-Pastoral Staff

Contractual relationships and terms of employment of non-pastoral staff, and contractors shall be arranged by the elders and deacons.

Article 6 Ministry Teams

Section 1 – Ministry Teams

Various ministries of the church shall be organized in teams of willing servants. The elders shall be responsible for an annual evaluation of the needs of the congregation and formulating a plan for ministering to such needs by the use of ministry teams.

Section 2 – Ministry Team Leaders

The ministry teams shall be led by ministry team leaders. The ministry team leaders shall be members in good standing. They will be nominated by the elders and presented to the church membership for a vote of affirmation. The nominations shall be posted for the membership no less than two (2) weeks prior the election at a regular or special membership meeting. A majority of those present and voting are required to affirm the team leaders.

Article 7 Elections and Voting

Section 1 – Selection of Officers

According to Article 3, Section 1 the elders shall solicit from the membership nominations for officers. The elders and deacons shall present to the membership the nominations for officers no later than eight (8) weeks prior to the members meeting in which the congregation will vote to affirm the nominations. Elder and deacon nominees shall receive a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by those present and voting for

affirmation. The clerk and treasurer shall receive a majority vote by those present and voting for affirmation.

Section 2 - Calling of a Pastor

In the event of a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor, the elders may appoint, under their direction, a search committee to aid in advertising the position and providing initial screening of applicants. All further screening and interviews shall be conducted by the elders. When the elders have determined which single candidate they can, through prayer, examination, and in good conscience, put forward to the congregation, the following opportunities shall be provided: (1) guest preaching/teaching on a regular Sunday morning service by the candidate; (2) a gathering organized to facilitate the members meeting and getting to know the candidate; (3) a congregational meeting with the candidate for a question and answer time; (4) a congregational meeting with the elders in which the elders shall dialogue with the church members, sharing with them their process with, experiences of and thoughts on the candidate, and fielding questions from the congregation, as well as hearing and considering any member's concerns about the candidate; and following 1-4 above, (5) a final deliberation by the elders on the qualifications and suitability of the candidate, prayerfully taking into consideration the input of the congregation and their own observations of the candidate's interaction with the church in the preceding opportunities. Should the elders unanimously determine that the candidate is both qualified and suitable, notice of his nomination to be elected to membership and called as a pastor must be given at least two Sundays prior to the vote at the members' meeting. The candidate shall be called to be senior pastor upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present and voting. Should the candidate accept, he shall be brought before the congregation and commissioned by the prayer and laying on of hands of the elders, and shall serve for an indefinite period.

Section 3 - Time of Elections

Elections shall be held at any regular or special members' meeting.

Section 4 - Manner of Elections

4.1

Manner of Voting

When voting for the election of officers, or to amend the church documents a secret ballot shall be used. The ballots shall be collected and counted by two or three seated officers with the results being made available to the membership as soon as possible. Other matters decided upon by the congregation shall be made according to parliamentary procedure which may include a vote by secret ballot, show of hands, or a voice vote.

4.2

Use of Absentee Ballots

Absentee ballots may be made available to members who due to unavoidable circumstances cannot be present at the time of the vote. Request for such ballots from the elders and deacons must be made at least one week prior to the vote. Care should be taken that this privilege is not abused.

Section 5 – Voting Items

5.1

Calling of a pastor requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

5.2

Election of elders and deacons requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

5.3

Election of the treasurer and clerk requires a majority vote.

5.4

Election of ministry team leaders requires a majority vote.

5.5

Admission into membership requires a unanimous vote.

5.6

Termination of membership requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

5.7

Affirmation or changes made to the annual budget require a majority vote.

5.8

Acquisition or sale of real property, building projects, or indebtedness secured by the real property of the church require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

5.9

Amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

5.10

Dissolution of the church corporation or the disposition of all, or substantially all, or the church assets require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

5.11

Any other decision brought before a regular or special members' meeting for vote require a majority vote unless otherwise provided in the Constitution or Bylaws.

Section 6 - Eligibility to Vote

Any member who is eighteen (18) years of age or older, in good standing with the church (i.e., - not under church discipline) is eligible to vote.

Section 7 - A Quorum to Vote

A quorum shall be constituted by twenty percent (20%) of the voting membership.

Article 8

Membership Meetings

Section 1 - Regular Membership Meetings

Regular members' meetings shall be held quarterly. All business shall be conducted in a spiritual, God-honoring manner, in an orderly fashion.

Section 2 - Special Membership Meetings

Special members' meetings may be convened at any time, provided the time and purpose for which the meeting is called is announced to the church on at least one Sunday morning preceding the time of meeting. Any member may request the elders and deacons to call for a meeting. The elders and deacons may then call for the special meeting. The special meeting shall deal only with the cause for which it was called for.

Section 3 - Location of Membership Meetings

Regular and special membership meetings shall normally meet on the church property.

Section 4 - Moderator of Membership Meetings

One of the elders as selected by the elders shall serve as the moderator for the regular and special membership meetings.

Article 9

Positions, Policies and Procedures

The elders and any of their designees shall be responsible for overseeing the development, maintenance and periodic review of policies and procedures for the day-to-day functions of the church, and specific doctrinal positions for the teaching ministry of the church. Such policies and procedures shall be maintained in a *Positions, Policies and Procedures Manual*, which shall be available at the church office for members to review. The positions, policies, and procedures added to the manual shall be submitted by the elders and affirmed by a majority vote from the congregation.

Article 10 Financial Support

Section 1 - Regular Offerings

This church shall be supported by voluntary contributions. The responsibility of the support for this work shall rest on the membership of the church as the Lord prospers and directs. The needs of the church may be made known as necessary.

Section 2 - Special Offerings

This church may take special offerings under the discretion of the elders for visiting speakers, special occasions, mission endeavors, or for any purpose deemed necessary for the work of the ministry.

Section 3 - Financial Budget and Reports

3.1

An annual financial budget for the church shall be presented to the membership by the elders and deacons for approval at the fall regular members' meeting for the coming calendar year. The budget shall be approved by a majority vote of members present and voting. The elders and deacons are authorized to spend up to and including One Thousand (\$1,000) dollars for any immediate need of the church upon the unanimous vote of the elders and deacons. All other expenditures shall be approved by the membership in the annual budget.

3.2

The treasurer shall prepare for the elders and deacons monthly financial reports of monies spent in relation to the church budget.

3.3

The treasurer shall prepare for the members' quarterly financial reports of the monies spent in relation to the church budget.

Article 11 Amendments

These bylaws and constitution may be amended at any regular or special meeting of this church, by at least two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present and voting, providing such notice shall have been given public announcement on at least two Sundays preceding the time of the meeting, stating the time and place of the meeting, and the proposed changes posted.

Article 12
Dissolution

In the event a decision is made to dissolve this corporation known as Henderson Avenue Baptist Church, provision shall be made by vote of the church membership, previous to the dissolution of the corporation, to assign all of the assets of the church to one or more evangelical, non-profit organization, such as might include churches, missions, schools or associations. None of the assets shall be given to any individual.

Article 13
Repeal

This instrument shall serve as the Constitution and Bylaws of this church corporation and any Constitution and Bylaws previously adopted by this church are hereby repealed. Adopted by the Henderson Avenue Baptist Church on January 27, 2013.