

# CONSTITUTION OF THE HUDSON COMMUNITY CHAPEL

## INTRODUCTION

The Hudson Community Chapel was founded on April 5, 1981 by members of several home Bible Studies who desired to provide an evangelical witness through the proclamation of the Word of God and of His Son Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Our foundational goal is to bring people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and then to equip and train them to grow and serve Him (Romans 1:14-17, Colossians 1:28, Ephesians 4:11-16).

## CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, we do now in the presence of God in this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, with the aid of the Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to exercise Christian care and prayer for one another, to be thoughtful and courteous to one another, to be slow to take offense, and to be quick to forgive and to seek forgiveness.

We also engage to sustain the spiritual and scriptural purity, peace, and prosperity of the Church and its ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to assist, as the Lord enables, in the work of the Church, and to promote its usefulness as a witness to the saving grace of God through Christ Jesus; to contribute, as the Lord provides, to the financial support of the needy, and to the evangelization of all peoples, and to love and to pray for all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and for those not saved.

We further engage to maintain regular personal Bible reading and prayer, and to establish family devotions where possible, to bring up such children as may be entrusted to our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to follow the standards of God's Word so as to provide an example by word and by prayer to win others to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

"But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin."

I John 1:7

## CORE VALUES

The Hudson Community Chapel adopts the following core values from the acrostic W.O.R.S.H.I.P.

W=Word of God Proclaimed  
O=Outreach Oriented  
R=Relationship Building  
S=Servant Training  
H=Holy Living  
I=International in Scope and Impact  
P=Prayer

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

Doctrine: We accept the Scriptures as our authority in matters of faith and practice, and adopt the following Statement of Faith as our interpretation of Bible Doctrine:

1. "We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority." [2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Thess. 2:13]

2. "We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three in one, co-equal, which is the Trinity." [John 1:1, 14; Acts 5:3,4; 1John 5:7]
3. "We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of God, conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary." [Isa. 7:14; Luke 1:35; Heb. 4:15; 1 Cor. 15:47; 1John 5:20]
4. "We believe in the Holy Spirit, third Person of the Trinity, Who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He is the life of every believer, and He empowers the preaching and teaching of the Gospel." [John 14:16,17; 16:8; Acts 1:8; Acts 5:30-32]
5. "We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, His ascension into Heaven and His present life there as High Priest and Advocate for all believers." [Matt. 28:6,7; Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 2:17; 1John 2:1]
6. "We believe in that blessed hope, the personal, premillennial, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." [1 Thes. 4:16-18; Acts 1:11; Matt. 24:44; Rev. 20:6]
7. "We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin, and the cause of the fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man. Satan is still working in the world to destroy the souls of men and he and all his angels and all who receive not Christ as their Savior will eternally perish in the Lake of Fire. [Job.1:6,7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 1Peter 5:8; Rev. 20:10]
8. "We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned, thereby incurring not only physical, but spiritual death (which is separation from God), and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature which is manifested in thought, word, and deed." [Gen. 1:26-27; 3:1-6; Rom. 3:10,23; 5:12]
9. "We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood." [Rom. 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 1 John 4:10]
10. "We believe that salvation is the gift of God, offered to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. All who receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior are born again of the Holy Spirit and become children of God and heirs of eternal life. This is a relationship in which they are eternally secure. [John 3:16; Acts 20:20-21; Eph. 1:13; 2:8-9; 1John 5:11-12]
11. "We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and unjust, the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost in hell, and the everlasting blessedness of the saved in heaven. [Matt. 28:6-7; Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 2:17; 1John 2:1]
12. "We believe in the Church, the Body of Christ, whose mission it is to preach the Gospel to all the world. We believe that all of its endeavors should be supported by the love-gifts of the members. [Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:41-42, 47; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Col. 1:18]
13. "We believe that the ordinances of the Church, given by our Lord are baptism (by immersion following conversion) and the Lord's Table (Communion)." [Matt. 26:26-30; 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 8:36-39; 1Cor. 11:23-29]

#### **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this church shall be The Hudson Community Chapel. This non-denominational church opened its doors in June 1981 and is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio and approved as tax exempt.

#### **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Hudson Community Chapel is:

1. To provide opportunities for God's people to assemble together in the name and with the power of our Lord Jesus, of the Holy Spirit, and of God our Father for worship, fellowship, instruction, and preparation for ministry.
2. To make and send forth Disciples of Christ into all the world [Matthew 28:19].
3. To provide an evangelical witness through the proclamation of the Word of God and of His Son Jesus Christ. We believe that God desires all men to be saved through faith in the Savior Jesus Christ [1 Timothy 2:4]. Because God loved the world and gave His Son [John 3:16], we thus place our emphasis on the spiritual in bringing people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and then to provide for growth in Him [Romans 1:14-17; Colossians 1:28; Ephesians 4:11-16].
4. To provide and maintain a place of worship for its members.
5. To own and maintain suitable real estate and buildings for a place of worship.
6. To receive, hold, and disburse gifts, bequests, and funds.
7. To do all and sundry things necessary or incident to carrying on such purposes.

### **ARTICLE III: ORDINANCES**

The Lord Jesus Christ gave the church two ordinances: Baptism (by immersion following conversion) and the Lord's Table (Communion).

### **ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP**

#### **SECTION 1-QUALIFICATIONS**

As a non-denominational church, any person 18 years and older may be received upon professing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Persons presenting themselves for membership in this church shall attend all established instruction sessions provided for prospective members. They shall, during the course of instruction, acknowledge confession of faith in Christ, and acceptance of the Statement of Faith by signing the application for membership provided by the church.

#### **SECTION 2 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS:**

- A. Every member should so walk and conduct him/herself in daily life as to give evidence of being filled and controlled by the Spirit of Christ and in agreement with the Statement of Faith.
- B. Every member should attend the services of the Church and participate regularly in the giving of his means as the Lord may prosper in conformity with sound biblical principles.

#### **SECTION 3 - TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP:**

- A. DEATH.
- B. DEPARTURE - by request. Any member upon presentation of a written request to the Board of Elders or its designee or the Pastor(s) shall be allowed to withdraw from the membership.

- C. DISCIPLINE. The Pastor(s) and Board of Elders shall take prompt action as to any member whose words or actions willfully violate the Statement of Faith, the Church Constitution, or the Church Covenant, seeking first to secure restoration of such, and if unsuccessful then to dismiss the member from the church. [Matthew 18:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; Titus 3:10)
- D. EXTENDED ABSENCE. Inactive members, defined in terms of an absence from the worship service and church gatherings for over a period of one year, shall be removed from the church membership list following written notice by the church. The church membership list shall be evaluated on an annual basis by the Secretary of the Board of Elders or his designee on or before the June meeting.

**ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND BOARDS**

**SECTION 1 - OFFICERS:**

The officers of this church shall consist of the Senior Pastor(s), Elders forming the Board of Elders, and Deacons forming the Board of Deacons.

**SECTION 2 - THE SENIOR PASTOR(S):**

**A. PASTORAL QUALIFICATIONS:**

Qualifications for the Senior Pastor(s) shall be such as are prescribed and set forth in the New Testament. [1 Timothy 3:1-7]

**B. SENIOR PASTOR(S) CALL:**

1. As often as it may become necessary to call Senior Pastor(s), a committee composed of the Board of Elders and those that they choose to add will without unnecessary delay investigate men of good report that accept the doctrinal stand and practice of the church. Upon recommendation by the committee and with the approval of the Board of Elders, a candidate may be invited to come and preach. Only one candidate shall be considered by the congregation at any time.
2. The candidate, before he is called, shall be required to state his acceptance of and adherence to the Constitution and Statement of Faith of this church.
3. The candidate shall be extended a call at a special meeting of the church called for that purpose. Notice of this meeting shall be given the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.
4. The Senior Pastor(s) shall be elected for an indeterminate term. He shall be chosen by a three fourths (3/4) vote of the qualified adult members present; voting will be upon the recommendation of the committee as approved by the Board of Elders.
5. Nothing in this Constitution shall require the Church to maintain two senior pastors.

**C. TERMINATION:**

The term of office shall be ended upon 60 days notification on the part of the Senior Pastor(s) or of the church. Termination of the office shall be voted at a specially called business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been given publicly to the Congregation two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting. A 2/3 majority vote of the members present and qualified to vote shall be required to terminate the office.

If it is not deemed wise by the Board of Elders for him to continue his duties for the 60 day period, he may be released anytime therein with the balance of his 60 days' pay due, except in a case of immorality or gross misconduct when he would be dismissed immediately without pay. The Board of Elders may extend the Senior Pastor(s)'s pay past the 60 day period if they feel the situation so warrants.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Senior Pastor(s) shall be in charge of the spiritual welfare of the congregation. He shall act as moderator in the business meetings of the church. He shall be an official voting member of all boards and committees and may call any board or committee together at any time. He may call the church together for special business. The Senior Pastor(s) also administers the day to day affairs of the church. He shall have authority to purchase supplies necessary for his work within his approved annual budget. He shall recommend for approval by the Board of Elders to hire, retain or dismiss all pastoral, ministerial and administrative staff. He shall hire, retain or dismiss all administrative staff with the wage and benefit package approved by the Board of Elders.

SECTION 3 - ELDERS AND DEACONS:

A. QUALIFICATIONS:

Qualifications for Elders and Deacons shall be such as are prescribed and set forth in the New Testament (Acts 6:3, 1 Timothy 3:8-13). An elder or deacon must be a man of at least 21 years of age who has been a member of the church for at least one year. No man shall hold two offices at the same time. All candidates for elder and deacon shall have been baptized by immersion following conversion.

B. NOMINATION AND APPOINTMENT:

A Nominating Committee shall serve to nominate men for the offices of Elder and Deacon. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the Senior Pastor(s), those Elders and Deacons whose terms are expiring, and two members chosen by the Senior Pastor(s) who are not Elders and Deacons. The committee shall serve for a twelve month period. No person other than the Senior Pastor(s) can serve two consecutive years on the committee.

The Nominating Committee shall solicit nominations for Elders and Deacons from the Congregation for two weeks preceding the end of September. The committee shall meet at least four weeks prior to the November Elders' meeting and at such other times as may be necessary to consider the qualifications of the nominees. In order for a candidate to be recommended to the Elder Board by the Nominating Committee, he must receive unanimous approval by committee.

The committee shall submit its list of nominees to the Elder Board for consideration and appointment at least 10 days prior to the November Elder Board meeting. The Nominating Committee shall have the right by majority vote to withdraw from nomination any name at any time prior to the appointment.

At the November Elder Board Meeting, the Elder Board shall take the Nominating Committee's recommendations under advisement. For at least two weeks following the November Elder Board meeting, the Elder Board shall cause to be published to the Congregation the names of those individuals that it intends to appoint as Elder and Deacons. The Congregation shall be directed to make any comments about the biblical qualifications of the nominees to the senior pastor. No Elder or Deacon shall be appointed until 10 days after the second notice has been published.

At the December Elder Board meeting, the Board of Elders shall appoint the Elders and Deacons who are to commence their terms the following year. The names of the candidates shall be published to the congregation.

The term of office shall be for three years for Elders or for Deacons and be so arranged that, where possible, one third (1/3) of the Board of Elders and Board of Deacons are elected each year. After that, an Elder or Deacon shall not be eligible for election to same office until after an interval of one year. An Elder or Deacon's term shall commence and expire at midnight on the day of their respective January meetings.

At present there are 9 Elders and 30 Deacons serving the Hudson Community Chapel. This number may be increased or decreased by simple majority vote of the Board of Elders at a regularly scheduled meeting at which a quorum is present. Any change in the number of Elders and Deacons will take effect in the following term.

C. TERMINATION AND RESIGNATION:

Resignation. The term of office shall be ended upon departure from the church or by resignation.

Termination. The term of office shall be ended for lack of attendance of the services of the church for a continuous one-month period unless satisfactory explanation of such absence has been given to and accepted by the Pastor(s) and Board of Elders. The term of office shall also be ended for reasons of misconduct. Misconduct shall include words or actions that intentionally violate the Statement of Faith, the church Constitution, the Church Covenant or cases of gross misconduct in the performance of his responsibilities. The termination of an Elder or Deacon shall be voted on by the Elders and shall require a two-thirds majority of those Elders present at any regularly scheduled meeting at which a quorum is present.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. If the Pastor(s) is incapacitated, the Chairman of the Board of Elders or another elder appointed by the Board of Elders may act as moderator of a business meeting of the church.
2. It is the duty of the Deacons to visit the sick, to prepare and distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper, and to assist the Pastor(s) when needed in the performance of his duties. The Board of Deacons shall have in charge a fund known as the Deacon's Fund to be used in alleviating actual need, as deemed appropriate. This fund shall be supplied by special offerings or by funding from the general budget or both. The Board of Deacons shall elect a Secretary or appoint a designee to keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements. All instances of assistance shall be held in strictest confidence. They shall report annually and shall elect their own Chairman every year.
3. The Elders shall have care of all church property. They are the guardians of the ministries of the Church and the governing board of the Church. The Elders shall direct all disbursements, except those authorized by the church in its special business meetings. The Board of Elders shall have the power to create committees and appoint advisors so as to carry out the work of the church. The employees, committees, and advisors shall have such powers as shall be delegated to them by the Board of Elders. All committees and advisors are to be approved annually. The Board of Elders shall have the right of approval regarding the Senior Pastor(s)'s recommendation to hire, retain or dismiss all ministerial, pastoral, and administrative staff.

The Board of Elders shall elect from their own a Chairman, Secretary, and Church Treasurer. A Chairman is to be elected each year. He exercises supervision of the Board of Elders and is guardian of all legal documents pertaining to the church property.

The Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the church, the minutes of meetings of the Board of Elders, and shall have charge of the church's membership register.

The Treasurer shall have the custody of all funds and securities of the church subject to the regulations as may be imposed by the Elders and the church, and shall be responsible to receive and disburse funds according to the direction of the Board of Elders and the church. He shall report at such time as the Board of Elders may require.

E. VACANCY OF OFFICE:

If less than one year remains in the term when a vacancy occurs for an Elder or Deacon, the Elder Board shall have the discretion of whether to replace that person. If more than one year is left in the term, the Board of Elders shall fill that vacancy on the Board of Elders or Board of Deacons by appointment from a list of eligible men presented to the Board of Elders by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall present that list within 30 days from the date of the vacancy. The new Elder or Deacon shall serve out the remainder of the term of the person being

replaced. When less than half the term remains, the replacement Elder or Deacon is eligible for appointment to the same office for an additional term.

F. CONDUCT OF ELDER MEETINGS

1. Regularly scheduled meetings. Currently, Elders meetings are regularly scheduled for the third Saturday of every month. Meetings may be rescheduled at any time for the convenience of the Board. At least seven days written notice must be given before any regularly scheduled meeting. Special meetings of the Board of Elders may be called with less notice to deal with emergency situations.
2. Quorum. The Board of Elders may not conduct any business unless a majority of the non-pastoral Elders are present at a meeting. Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution, any matter requiring a vote by the Board of Elders shall be by a majority of the Elders present at a meeting at which a quorum exists. An elder is considered present for the purposes of establishing a quorum if he participates by telephone, videophone or any other technological means that allows similar active participation.
3. Action Taken Without A Meeting. The Board of Elders is authorized to vote on matters affecting the Church outside of regularly scheduled or special meetings. The Vote shall be conducted in writing and each Elder shall register his vote for, against or abstain from the resolution either in writing or by email or other similar mode of communication. The Elders shall be given a minimum of three days to register their votes. The recording secretary shall record the results of the vote in the minutes of the next regularly scheduled meeting. The affirmative vote of a majority of the Elders is necessary for the passage of any matter voted on using this method unless the Constitution otherwise requires a super-majority.
4. Conflicts of Interest. All Elders and Deacons are duty bound to disclose all conflicts of interest when he becomes aware of it. No Elder may vote on any action in which he has an interest but he may be counted for the purposes of establishing or maintaining a quorum. The fact that an Elder or Deacon may have an interest in a particular action taken by the Board of Elders does not render that action void or voidable.

**ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES**

The Board of Elders may from time to time appoint standing special committees such as Christian education, missions, music, etc. The chairman of any committee shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, and the membership of the committee shall be chosen by the chairman with the authority remaining in the Board of Elders to disapprove of any selection and remove any member. Church membership is required to serve as a member of any committee. All committees, including the chairmanship, are to be approved annually by the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall retain ultimate authority over actions and decisions of any committee. The chairman of each committee shall be responsible for a report at the annual business meeting of the church.

**ARTICLE VII: FINANCES OF THE CHURCH**

SECTION 1 - FISCAL YEAR:

The fiscal year shall begin July 1 and end on the last day of June. (Revised 5-89)

SECTION 2 - FINANCES:

- A. The systematic giving of money for the support of the work of the Lord is worship as well as duty. It must be kept on the plane of voluntary, free-will offering, untarnished by any hope of material gain. All members of the church are expected to give regular financial support to the church and to the advancement of the projects it shall sponsor. No

monies shall be raised for the support of the church and its various activities but by the biblical plan of offerings and gifts and sacrificial love considerations for Christ's work.

B. The finances of the Church shall be audited on an annual basis by an independent auditor retained by the Church and the audit shall be submitted to the Board of Elders for review.

C. The Elders shall first have the approval of the church before:

1. Borrowing money or encumbering church property.
2. Selling, leasing, disposing of, or buying any real estate.
3. Making any expenditure that exceeds 2% of the annual budget unless it is specifically included as a line item in the annual budget, or unless it is of an emergency nature. Expenditures of an emergency nature must be reported to the congregation as soon as possible.

### **ARTICLE VIII: MISSIONS**

It shall be the policy of this church to support only missions of a conservative evangelical nature. Such missions shall be known to be in agreement with our Statement of Faith.

### **ARTICLE IX: MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH**

#### **SECTION 1 - MEETINGS OF PUBLIC WORSHIP:**

A. Public worship services shall be held regularly on the Lord's Day. These services shall not normally be given over to anything but the preaching of the Word of God. Any special presentation of the Gospel shall be approved by the Pastor(s) and Elders.

B. It shall be the practice of the church to observe the Lord's Supper at least once a month.

#### **SECTION 2 - BUSINESS MEETINGS:**

A. THE MEETINGS:

Special business meetings may be called at any time by the Senior Pastor(s) or the Board of Elders provided notice is given to the congregation for at least two weekends prior to the meeting. The notice shall set forth the time, place and purpose of the meeting. No other business shall be transacted in such a meeting.

B. THE MODERATOR:

The Senior Pastor(s) or his designee shall act as moderator for all business sessions of the church. In his absence, or on matters directly related to the Senior Pastor(s) or his family, the Chairman of the Board of Elders, or another elder appointed by the Board of Elders, shall act as moderator.

C. MANNER OF CHURCH BUSINESS:

On matters on which a vote of the Congregation is necessary, only members may vote. Twenty percent of the members are necessary to establish a quorum. An affirmative vote of a majority of the members at a meeting at which a quorum is present is necessary for the passage of any resolution proposed at a special business meeting. A quorum shall be measured by counting the number of ballots cast or by any other method deemed convenient or desirable by the Board of Elders.

#### **ARTICLE X: ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS**

This constitution may be amended by a two thirds (2/3) vote of eligible voting members present at any special business meeting providing that notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given public announcement for the two (2) weekends prior to the meeting at which action is desired.

#### **ARTICLE XI: DISSOLUTION**

This church shall have the right to own, buy or sell tangible properties, both real and personal, in its own name and through properly elected and authorized officers. No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any member from the assets, holdings or other transactions as a result of dissolution.