

# Hico Baptist Church

## Constitution and By-Laws

### ARTICLE 1 – NAME, PURPOSE and AFFILIATION

#### **SECTION 1.01 - NAME**

This congregation of believers shall be known as Hico Baptist Church located at 4330 S NC Hwy 87, Graham NC 27253

#### **SECTION 1.02 - PURPOSE**

Hico Baptist Church is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of *Section 501(c)(3)* of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, daycare centers, and camps; the evangelizing of the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

#### **SECTION 1.03 – AFFILIATION**

Hico Baptist Church is an Independent, Fundamental Baptist Church, not affiliated with any other Baptist conventions or associations.

### ARTICLE 2 – STATEMENT OF FAITH and COVENANT

#### **SECTION 2.01 – STATEMENT OF FAITH.**

The following comprise the Scriptural beliefs of Hico Baptist Church and its members:

- A. **The Holy Scriptures.** We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenarily inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and, therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official and only translation used by the church. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)
  
- B. **The True God.** We believe that there is one and only one living and true God. He is an infinite and intelligent Spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth. He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love. We believe that in the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of

redemption. (Deut. 6:4-5; 1Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; 1Tim. 1:17; Mat. 28:19)

- C. **Creation and Man.** We believe the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, not allegorically or figuratively; that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness; that man's creation was not a matter of evolution, or evolutionary changes of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms. (Gen. 1:1, 11 & 24; Exo. 20:11; John 1:3; Acts 4:24; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 11:3; Rev. 10:6; Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jer. 10:12; Neh. 9:6;)
- D. **Fall of Man.** We believe that man by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy estate; the consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint, but by choice; and therefore under the just condemnation of God, without defense or excuse. (Gen 3:1-6, 24; Rom. 5:12,19; Rom. 3:10-19; Eph. 2:1, 3; Gal. 3:22)
- E. **Satan.** We believe that Satan was once holy and enjoyed heavenly honors, but through pride and ambition to be the Almighty, fell and drew after him a host of angels; that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air and the unholy god of this world system. We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy. He is the lord of the Antichrist, and the author of all the powers of darkness; destined, however, to final judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for the Devil and his angels. (Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:14-17; Jude 6; I Thess. 3:5; 1 Peter 5:8; II Cor. 11: 13-15; II Thess. 2:3-11; Rev. 19:11, 16, 20)
- F. **Salvation:**
- 1) **Atonement:**  
We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God: that Jesus Christ, by the appointment of the Father, freely took on Himself our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine Law by His personal obedience, and by His substitutionary death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins. (Eph. 2:8; Rom. 3:24-25; John 3:16; I Pet. 3:18-19; Heb.7:24)
  - 2) **Freeness of Salvation:**  
We believe in God's electing grace, which is according to foreknowledge; that the blessing of salvation is made free to all by the Gospel. It is the immediate duty of all to accept, by faith, God's offer of salvation. The only hindrance to salvation of any sinner is his own inherent depravity and present unbelief which, if continued in, merits the just condemnation of a Holy God. (I Thess. 1:4; Col. 3:12; I Pet. 1:2, Titus 1: 1; Rom. 8:29-30; John 3:18, 36).
  - 3) **Justification:**  
We believe that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him, is justification. Justification includes the pardon of sin and the gift of eternal life on the principles of righteousness. We believe 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, His righteousness is imputed unto us. (Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 5:1, 9; Tit. 3:5-7; Rom. 1: 17; Rom. 4:1-8; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8,9).

4) **Sanctification:**

We believe that God sanctifies (sets us apart), at the time of our personal acceptance of Christ as Lord and Saviour from the penalty of our sin. (Rom. 5:8,9; I Cor. 6:1 1; Eph. 4:24). Secondly, we experience sanctification by degree as we yield to God and grow in wisdom, knowledge, experience and grace, therefore having power over sin. (II Cor. 6:7; Ps. 119:9,11; II Cor. 3:17,18). Thirdly, we believe that the believer is finally and gloriously set apart from the very presence of sin. (Phi. 1:6, 3:20, 21; I John 3:2).

- G. **Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers:** We believe that all the redeemed are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. *"Once saved – always saved."* (John 6:37-40; John 10:27- 30; Rom. 8:1, 37-39; I Cor. 1:4-8; I Pet. 1:5; I John 2:19). We also believe that the saved should rejoice in a personal confidence of a present salvation which rests in the manifestation of the indwelling Christ and veracity of the Word of God. (I John 5:11-13).
- H. **The Church.** Hico Baptist Church is a congregation of believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, and governed by His laws. We believe the true mission of the church is to follow the Great Commission, make individual disciples and build the church. (Mat. 28:19-20). As a local Independent Fundamental Baptist church, it is the absolute right of congregational self-government, free from any interference of any hierarchy or individuals or organizations, and that the one and only Head is the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:41-42; I Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23-24).
- I. **Ordinances of the Church.** We believe there are only two ordinances of the local church, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that **Christian baptism** is by water immersion in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit following salvation. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is also a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. (Mat. 28:19; Luke 22:19-20 Acts 2:41-42; 16:31-33; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12).
- The Lord's Supper** is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of our Lord Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming (Luke 22:19-20; I Cor. 10:17; 11:24-26).
- J. **The Lord's Day.** We believe that Sunday, the first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion.
- K. **The Return of Christ.** We believe in the "blessed hope", which is the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation and pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones; and in His subsequent return to earth with His saints, to establish His Millennial Kingdom. (I Thes. 4:13-18; Zech. 14:4-11-; Rev. 3:10, 9:11-16, and 20:1-6;).
- L. **Civil Government.** We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: (1) the home, (2) the church, and (3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by

His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

**M. Human Sexuality.**

1) 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; 19: & 13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thes. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

2) We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

**N. Family Relationships.**

1) We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

2) We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb.13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

**O. Divorce and Remarriage.** We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

**P. Abortion.** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

**Q. Euthanasia.** We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death.

Thus we believe that taking action which causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment. (Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)

- R. **Love.** We believe that we should demonstrate scriptural love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)
  
- S. **Lawsuits between Believers.** We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. This does not preclude that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)
  
- T. **Missions.** We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to spread the Gospel throughout the world. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)
  
- U. **Giving.** We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

## **SECTION 2.02—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

## **SECTION 2.03—COVENANT**

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

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

to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred, acquaintances, and all others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from such worldly amusements as watching ungodly movies, gambling, ungodly music, and dancing; to be free from all oath-bound secret societies and partnerships with unbelievers; to abstain from the use of tobacco in any form, illegal drugs, or intoxicating drink as a beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy of speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, and to secure reconciliation 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.

## **ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP**

### **SECTION 3.01—QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Upon a majority vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, membership shall be extended to all who have had and whose lives evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Saviour; who renounce sin; who endeavor to live a consecrated life wholly unto the Lord; who fully subscribe to the Statement of Faith contained herein; who enter into the church covenant contained herein; who agree to submit to the authority of the church and its leaders as set forth herein; and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- 1) By baptism (immersion) as a true believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;
- 2) By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith;
- 3) By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion;
- 4) By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon majority vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the church membership of the sin or sins involved, and satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant).

### **SECTION 3.02—DUTIES OF A MEMBER**

On becoming a member of this church, in addition to the covenant contained in *Section 2.03*, each member further covenants to love, honor, and esteem the pastor; to pray for him; to recognize his authority in

spiritual affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church; to support the church in prayer, tithes, offerings and with other financial support as the Lord enables; and in accordance with Biblical commands, to support through a lifestyle walk affirming the beliefs and practices of the church.

### **SECTION 3.03—PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP**

- A. This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the deacons. Only members, at least 16 years of age, who are physically present at a duly-called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. *(After two years on the date this constitution is adopted, this age will be changed to 18 years.)* There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church has certain limited areas to exercise a vote. Members may not vote to initiate any church action, rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and the board of deacons.
- B. Inactive members – Church members will forfeit their right to vote if they have not attended church regularly for the past three months – *averaging 5 services per month*, unless providentially hindered, incur military obligations or involved in church or missionary work.
- C. Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the deacons) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the deacons), be treated as a trespasser.
- D. Voting on Purchase or Sale of Property. A two-thirds affirmative vote of all members present and voting shall be required for the purchase or sale of property. Public notice of such action shall be read from the pulpit on two preceding Sundays before the vote is taken.
- E. A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church meetings and of board meetings, provided he shall have made a written request upon the church and the church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date.
  1. A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church, the list of names and addresses of the church members, or the accounting books and financial records of the church, not to exclude a church prepared directory.
  2. The church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and material, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

### **SECTION 3.04—DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER**

- A. The pastor and deacons shall constitute a standing committee on discipline, to whom all cases and grievous and moral delinquencies shall be referred; and no one shall have the right to accuse any member of the church, at any public meeting, unless this person or group of persons, has first presented the charge to the committee on discipline, and has permission to do so. If the pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. The pastor and deacons shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
- B. Members are expected to demonstrate Biblical character and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware he has offended another member or he has been offended then he should go alone to the other party and seek to reconciliation. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
- C. If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, preferably a deacon or the Pastor, is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
- D. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in Subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, the discipline committee, as the church representatives Biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the discipline committee, the committee shall recommend to the members of the church that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.
- E. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in Subsections (B), (C), and (D) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action.
- F. No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the church unless the steps outlined in Subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.
- G. The procedures provided in this section are based on Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

### **SECTION 3.05—TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**

Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 3.04 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another Baptist Church.

### **SECTION 3.06—TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

- A. No member of this church may hold membership in another church. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.



- B. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member states that he or she is actively involved in any conduct described in Section 2.01(P) or files a lawsuit in violation of Section 2.01(V).10
- C. No provision contained in this section shall be subject to or governed by the procedures regarding discipline of members set forth in Section 3.04.
- D. A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastor.
- E. The church membership role shall be periodically purged of any deceased members and those falling in stated reasons above.

## **ARTICLE 4 – OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 4.01—CHURCH OFFICERS**

The church officers are Pastor (Section 5.01), Deacons (Section 5.02), Church Secretary (Section 5.03), Church Treasurer (Section 5.04), Sunday School Superintendent (Section 5.05), Associate Pastor (Section 5.06), and Trustees (Section 5.07). One person may hold two or more offices, except that of pastor. The church will nominate officers and other church leaders to be voted on at the annual administrative meeting. The pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other church officers to include associate pastors, subject to a confirmation vote of the church membership.

### **SECTION 4.02—DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS**

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the church secretary shall serve as secretary of the corporation; the church treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the corporation; and the chairman of the deacons shall serve as vice president of the corporation.

### **SECTION 4.03—ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE**

- A. The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith. All church officers, upon request of the pastor, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith (as set forth in Article 2).
- B. All church officers must be approved initially and thereafter by the pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their offices.
- C. Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office or position.

### **SECTION 4.04—TERMS OF OFFICE**

- A. The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The calling of a pastor or severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular church administration meeting, provided notice to that effect shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to said regular church administration meeting. A three-

fourths majority of the eligible members present and voting shall be required to call a pastor or to sever the relationship between the pastor and the church. Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Section 3.01(D).

- B. The term of service for all offices and positions in the church, except the pastor, shall be one year, at the expiration of which the officers may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- C. A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the pastor, may be filled at any regular church administration meeting.
- D. All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed.
- E. Deacons may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other board members, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of deacons.

#### **SECTION 4.05—PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF**

- A. Subject to the approval of the church membership and on the condition that they shall become a member of the church upon assuming their duties, the pastor may hire associates and assistants to assist him in carrying out his God-given responsibilities
- B. All church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the sole authority to dismiss the same. No employee or volunteer shall be hired, appointed, or retained who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith.

### **ARTICLE 5 – DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS**

#### **SECTION 5.01—THE PASTOR**

- A. The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God as the Lord leads him. He shall administer the ordinances of the church, act as moderator at all church meetings for the transaction of church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the membership.
- B. The pastor shall appoint the members of the various committees. He shall serve as the president of the corporation. He shall publicly inform all newly-elected officers of the particular function and the responsibilities of their respective offices. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the church, and perform such other duties as generally appertain to such a position. The pastor shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry that God has given him.
- C. All appointments for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof, including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the church for purposes other than the stated appointments, shall be under the control of the pastor.

## **SECTION 5.02—THE DEACONS**

- A. The deacons shall assist the pastor, in such manner as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual +welfare of the church, in conducting the religious services, and in performing all other work of the church. They shall make provision for the observance of the ordinances of the church. They shall, if requested by the pastor, consider applications for church membership. They shall, in cooperation with the pastor, disburse the benevolence fund. They shall assist the pastor in visitation and all other evangelistic efforts of the church. They shall assist the pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries as requested by the pastor. They shall provide the pulpit supply and choose a moderator for church meetings if the pastor is unavailable or the office of pastor is vacant. Upon the death, resignation, or dismissal of the pastor, the deacons may appoint a pulpit committee. See Section 10.03 – Pulpit Committee
- B. Annually, the deacons shall assemble and elect, from their own number, a chairman who shall be vice president of the corporation, a vice chairman, and a secretary.

## **SECTION 5.03—THE CHURCH SECRETARY**

The Church Secretary shall:

- A. Certify and keep at the office of the church, the original bylaws or a copy, including all amendments or alterations to the bylaws.
- B. Keep at the place where the bylaws or a copy are kept a record of the proceedings of deacon meetings, with the time and place of holding, the notice of meeting given, the names of these present at the meetings.
- C. Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law.
- D. See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these by-laws. (In case of the absence or disability of the secretary, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the pastor or by the chairman of the board of deacons.)
- E. Be custodian of the records of the church, including the membership roll, baptisms, and certificates of ordination, licenses, and commissions.
- F. See that the reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed.
- G. Exhibit at all reasonable times to proper persons on terms provided by law the by-laws and minutes of proceedings of the deacons or the minutes of the meetings of the church members.
- H. Keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical interest and give a report at the annual church administration meeting of the status of the church membership roll in the past year.

- I. Keep all records at the office of the church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office.
- J. Serve as the secretary of the corporation.

#### **SECTION 5.04—THE CHURCH TREASURER**

- A. The Church Treasurer shall be nominated and approved by the church and shall have a reputation of honesty, integrity and diligence. This person should be capable of overseeing the church finances by keeping current and accurate records of the receipt and disbursement of all church funds as well as reporting on a periodic basis the income, expenses and balances of the church accounts. The treasurer must also keep records for the offerings and distribute giving statements to contributors for tax purposes in a timely manner at the end of the year.
- B. Assistant Church Treasurer  
There shall be an Assistant Church Treasurer, nominated and approved by the church, to assist the Church Treasurer as directed. For the purposes of accountability and to preclude unnecessary temptation, the officer that handles the church bank deposits shall not be the keeper of the church checkbook. An exception to this requirement would be for a very brief time if either of these offices is vacant, or while one or the other of these officers is temporarily out of town.
- C. Cash offerings shall be counted and recorded in writing by two designated church members who provide a signed statement of the amount of such offering before delivering it to the officer who makes the deposits
- D. The officer who handles and maintains the checkbook shall not be the initial recipient of the bank statements. Copies of bank statements should be provided in order to maintain the accuracy of the checkbook, but there should always be two copies of all bank statements, maintained by two separate persons.
- E. The Church Treasurer and Assistant Church Treasurer shall not be related one to the other.
- F. Missions Secretary/Treasurer  
The Missions Secretary/Treasurer shall be nominated and approved by the Church and shall have a reputation of honesty, integrity and diligence. This person will be responsible for disbursing funds from the Missionary Account as directed by the Church. This person should be capable of keeping current and accurate records of Church Missionary funds that are paid out as well as keeping a current list of all supported missionaries and their contact information.

#### **SECTION 5.05 – SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT**

The Sunday School Superintendent shall oversee all the Sunday School Classes. He will ensure teachers are qualified and teaching materials are available and in accordance with the articles of our faith

### **SECTION 5.06—ASSOCIATE PASTORS**

Under the direction and guidance of the pastor, the associate pastor(s) of the church shall assist the pastor in carrying out the ministries of the church. These individuals, including Youth Pastors must meet all qualifications of a Pastor.

### **SECTION 5.07—TRUSTEES**

- A. The board of trustees shall exercise only the following specific powers, upon authorization by a majority vote of the members present at a duly-called church administration meeting:
- B. To purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church.
- C. To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and the use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges.
- D. To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation.

### **SECTION 5.08—DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS**

- A. All officers, at the pastor's direction shall prepare a written report of their work annually and surrender all records in their possession to the church secretary at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record at the church. All records are the property of the church and must be kept in the church office.
- B. Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the bylaws for a period of three months may be removed from his office, at the discretion of the pastor, and another may be appointed by the pastor to serve the un-expired term.

### **SECTION 5.09—INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS**

A dedication service will be held, shortly after the annual church administration meeting, to install any newly elected officers in the church.

## **ARTICLE 6 – MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 6.01—MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP**

Unless otherwise determined by the pastor, the church shall meet each Sunday for public worship, both morning and evening, and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly.

### **SECTION 6.02—MEETINGS FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION**

- A. The annual church administration meeting shall be held in the month of January, so reports and nominations can be considered. A quorum shall consist of the members present.

- B. All church administration meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer for divine guidance and blessing.
- C. The moderator shall be in charge of church meetings. All questions of order, not covered in the church constitution shall be settled by the directives in “Robert’s Rules of Order”, until such time as the church body shall take action governing any matter in question.
- D. For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines, in his sole discretion, that circumstances so warrant. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person’s right to remain on the premises in accordance with Section 3.03(C) and treat the person as a trespasser. If necessary, the moderator has the right to suspend the meeting until a later time.

### **SECTION 6.03—SPECIAL MEETINGS**

The pastor (or deacons if the office of pastor is vacant or the pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the church from the pulpit at least one Sunday and not less than one week prior to said meeting. A meeting for the calling of a pastor or the severance of the relationship between the church and pastor shall be called in accordance with the provision of Section 4.04(A).

Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals may be held as the pastor deems beneficial.

### **SECTION 6.04—FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the church shall begin January 1st and end December 31st.

## **ARTICLE 7 – MINISTRY of EDUCATION**

### **SECTION 7.01—PURPOSE**

The church believes that it is to provide children and adults with an education, which is based upon and consistent with Biblical teachings. The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education.

### **SECTION 7.02—CHURCH PARTICIPATION**

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor may permit non-church members to participate in church educational programs or courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the church.

### **SECTION 7.03—STAFF MEMBERSHIP**

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall be members of this church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis.

#### **SECTION 7.04—STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD**

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of the church. The church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fail to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith.

#### **SECTION 7.05—UNITY**

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church.

#### **SECTION 7.06—TEACHING**

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief which conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

#### **SECTION 7.07—CHRISTIAN WALK**

All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a lifestyle consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom. This shall include but not limited to: faithful attendance, personal devotions, personal appearance, tithing and a Godly testimony in the community.

### **ARTICLE 8 – ORDINATION**

#### **SECTION 8.01—ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS**

Any candidate, who gives evidence of a genuine call of God into the work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, may be ordained as a minister of the Gospel.

#### **SECTION 8.02—ORDINATION PROCEDURE**

- A. Upon a conference with the pastor, and after the pastor has approved the candidate for ordination, the pastor shall call a council to examine and pass on the qualification of the candidate. The ordination council shall consist of ordained ministers of like faith invited to participate in the examination of the candidate.
- B. If the candidate is found worthy of ordination by the council, the church may ordain him as soon as possible.
- C. The pastor and the chairman of the deacons shall arrange for the ordination service.

### **ARTICLE 9 – INDEMNIFICATION**

#### **SECTION 9.01—ACTIONS SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION**

The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the

fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

#### **SECTION 9.02 – EXPENSES SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION**

To the extent that a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

#### **SECTION 9.03—LIMITATIONS OF INDEMNIFICATION**

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 9.01. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the pastor and deacons who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

#### **SECTION 9.04—TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION**

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article, may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the board of deacons in the specific case, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

#### **SECTION 9.05—EXTENT OF INDEMNIFICATION**

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

#### **SECTION 9.06—INSURANCE**

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.



## **ARTICLE 10 – COMMITTEES**

### **SECTION 10.01—STANDING COMMITTEES**

The pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant) shall appoint standing committees and designate a chairperson for each standing committee and, except when otherwise specifically provided in these bylaws, shall determine the membership of each standing committee. In addition to the discipline committee, the pastor may appoint other standing committees as he deems appropriate.

### **SECTION 10.02—SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

The board of deacons, in its discretion, may create special committees to provide the board with advice and information regarding matters submitted to the committee by the board for consideration. The committee shall have no authority to act on behalf of the corporation. The members of the committee shall be chosen by a majority vote of the board of deacons and shall serve solely at the pleasure of the board of deacons. The special committee shall be subject to the control and direction of the board of deacons at all times.

### **SECTION 10.03 – PULPIT COMMITTEE**

In case of a vacancy occurring in the pulpit, the church shall, as soon as possible, elect a Pulpit Committee of 3 or 5 members with one being a deacon. Once elected, the deacon shall act as a temporary chairman until the committee meets at the earliest possible time and selects their permanent chairman.

The committee shall be empowered by the church to receive candidate referrals, investigate their credentials and call one to be considered as a candidate by calling them to preach at a church service. The committee may call a candidate, regardless how many referrals are available. It is important for any candidate to know what we believe and so shall receive a copy of this constitution and by-laws.

**Only one candidate shall be considered by the church at one time.** The Pulpit Committee only recommends a candidate. It is the church's responsibility to vote on a candidate (Section 4.04). During the absence of a Pastor, the deacons will be responsible for pulpit supply; this will not be a responsibility of the pulpit committee.

## **ARTICLE 11 – DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS**

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational and charitable purposes, may collect special offerings or establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributions made to a Hico-established fund or given in a specifically designated collection are to be used for that specific purpose. Contributions designated by the donor for a specific ministry cause or individual not established by the church shall create no fiduciary obligation for the church and shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the pastor and the deacons.

## **ARTICLE 12 – BINDING ARBITRATION**

### **SECTION 12.01—SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION**

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bringing any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

#### **SECTION 12.02—NOTICE OF ARBITRATION**

In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to these bylaws or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution. If they do not reach such solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section 12.01, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section 12.04, below.

#### **SECTION 12.03—LIMITATIONS ON ARBITRATION DECISIONS**

- A. Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline as outlined under Section 3.04, were followed.
- B. Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Sections 4.04 or 5.06 were followed.

#### **SECTION 12.04—ARBITRATION PROCEDURES**

The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the pastor and the board of deacons.

### **ARTICLE 13 – AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular church administration meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken.

### **ADOPTION**

These bylaws were adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present. These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of Hico Baptist Church.