

**HICKORY ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH
CONSTITUTION
and BYLAWS**

Revised September 2, 1990

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Preamble | 1 |
| I. Name..... | 1 |
| II. Statement of Faith | 1 |
| III. Church Covenant | 1 |
| IV. Character..... | 2 |
| Section 1. Polity | 2 |
| Section 2. Doctrine..... | 2 |
| V. Membership | 3 |
| Section 1. General..... | 3 |
| Section 2. Candidacy | 3 |
| Section 3. Termination of Membership | 3 |
| VI. Church Officers | 4 |
| Section 1. Pastor..... | 4 |
| Section 2. Deacons..... | 4 |
| Section 3. Moderator..... | 6 |
| Section 4. Clerk..... | 6 |
| Section 5. Treasurer | 6 |
| Section 6. Trustees | 6 |
| VII. Committees..... | 7 |
| Section 1. General..... | 7 |
| Section 2. Baptism Committee | 7 |
| Section 3. Flower Committee | 7 |
| Section 4. Lord's Supper Committee | 7 |
| Section 5. Nominating Committee..... | 7 |
| Section 6. Building and Grounds Committee | 7 |
| Section 7. Finance Committee | 8 |
| Section 8. Constitution and Bylaws Committee | 8 |
| Section 9. Church Growth Committee..... | 8 |
| VIII. Program Organizations | 8 |
| Section 1. General..... | 8 |
| Section 2. Sunday School | 8 |
| Section 3. Woman's Missionary Union..... | 9 |
| Section 4. Brotherhood | 9 |
| Section 5. Church Music Program | 9 |
| IX. Church Meetings..... | 9 |
| Section 1. Worship Services | 9 |
| Section 2. Business Meetings | 9 |
| Section 3. Quorum | 10 |
| Section 4. Parliamentary Rules | 10 |
| X. Church Finances..... | 10 |
| XI. Discipline | 10 |
| XII. Amendments..... | 11 |
| RULES FOR THE USE OF THE FELLOWSHIP HALL | 12 |
| USE OF THE CEMETERY..... | 12 |

HICKORY ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH

Constitution

September 2, 1990

Preamble

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and that this body may be governed in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches. This document supersedes the original "Rules of Decorum" of August 1, 1915.¹

I. Name

This body shall be known as the Hickory Rock Baptist Church of Route 4, Louisburg, Franklin County, North Carolina.

II. Statement of Faith

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the "Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost persons. The ordinances of the church are believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper.

III. Church Covenant

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

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

¹ A. B. Insoe, Church **Clerk**, "Minutes of Hickory Rock Baptist Church"; August 1, 1915; Louisburg, NC, Page **3**.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

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

IV. Character

Section 1. Polity

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the church body shall constitute the membership. All church boards and committees of this church shall report to and be accountable only to the church. The church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the association and state convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2. Doctrine

This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of other Southern Baptist churches.

HICKORY ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH BYLAWS

V. Membership

Section 1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

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

- (1) By profession of faith and for believer's baptism by immersion. (Extenuating circumstances for baptism to be decided by the deacons and the pastor.)
- (2) By promise of a letter from another Baptist church.
- (3) By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism when no letter is obtainable.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the pastor and the deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of those members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

Section 3. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1) death, (2) dismissing to another Baptist church, (3) affiliation with a church of another faith or denomination, or (4) exclusion by action of the church.*

* Exclusion by action of the church is explained in this way. Should a member become an offense to the church and its good name by reason of immoral and unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of covenant vows, or non-support of the church, the church may terminate his/her membership by a three-fourths (3/4) vote, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment. Any offense brought by a church member should be directed to the body of deacons for presentation to the church.

VI. Church Officers

All church officers must be members of the church. The officers of this church shall be as follows:

Section 1. Pastor

The pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff in performing their tasks. A major concern of the pastor is to perform pastoral responsibilities. The pastor is the leader of worship, proclamation, education, and pastoral ministries.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. Election of the pastor shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice shall be given.

A pulpit committee shall be recommended by the deacon body and elected by the church to seek a suitable pastor. Their recommendations will constitute a nomination, though any member has the privilege of making other nominations from the floor of the church. The pulpit committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one individual at a time. Election shall be by an affirmative vote of three fourths (3/4) of those present being necessary for a call. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of the church. The pastor shall give at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation before termination of responsibilities as pastor.

The church may also request termination of the pastor in a meeting called for that purpose, notice of which shall be given one week prior to the meeting. The vote for termination shall require a vote of three fourths (3/4) of those present. Such a vote should be by secret ballot. The church shall, unless in cases of gross misconduct, give a thirty-day (30) notice of termination.

In the process of searching for a pastor, the search committee may wish to call an interim pastor. The calling of the interim pastor shall follow the same procedure as the call of the pastor. The interim shall be given clear notice that this is only an interim position. The interim pastor shall not be considered for the position of pastor while serving as the interim pastor.

Section 2. Deacons

(1) There shall be one deacon for every twenty members whose names are on the resident church roll. The number of deacons shall not fall below six.

(2) Deacons shall be nominated by secret ballot at a church business meeting called for that purpose. At least one week's public notice of this meeting shall be given. Church members will be furnished the names of all inactive deacons eligible for service. New deacons may also be selected who have not been ordained. Twice the number of deacons to be elected

will be nominated (if two are to be elected, four will be nominated). Nominees shall be determined by number of votes received. Each nominee will be notified and given a list of deacon qualifications and tasks during the week after nomination. Should the nominee decline, the nominee with the next highest number of votes will be visited.

On the Sunday after the nomination, deacon nominees will be listed in the church bulletin. This gives church members a week to prayerfully consider their vote. On the second Sunday after nomination, members will receive a ballot listing the names of all final nominees. Voting shall be accomplished by selecting one half of the candidates. Ballots shall be counted by the active deacons.

(3) Deacons and their spouses may not serve on the deacon body at the same time.

(4) Deacons shall serve on a rotational basis. Each year the term of one third (1/3) of the deacons shall expire. In case of death, removal, or incapacity to serve, the deacons may fill the vacancy by recommending a candidate to fill the unexpired term. The candidate must be elected by the church. After serving a term of three years, or the unexpired term of another, no deacon shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of at least one year. There is no obligation to elect or make active a person who comes to the church from another church where he/she was a deacon. The church may however recognize the ordination of persons coming from other Baptist churches after they have been a member of this body for one year. The ordination of deacons shall be administered by those of the church who are ordained.

(5) The deacons shall elect their own chairperson annually and the person shall not succeed him/herself.

(6) To maintain a close fellowship and unity within the church, the deacons should be informed (not for approval) of any action that is to be presented at the church business meeting.

(7) In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to serve with the pastor in performing pastoral ministry duties. It is understood that they are to:

a. Maintain the fellowship and spiritual life of the church. The moral and spiritual welfare of the church is directly chargeable to the deacons. If a member falls into error, or difficulty arises in the fellowship, it shall be the duty of the deacons to strive to restore the fellowship and unity of Spirit.

b. Serve in the church anywhere a need exists. Such service includes: witnessing, visiting, leader training, mission ministries, leading in prayer groups, leading in the worship services, etc.

c. Meet special family needs with special attention to those who are sick, home-bound or limited by age.

d. Contact persons delinquent in attending church and help them develop a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the church.

e. Visit new members, encourage them to build a close fellowship with the church and help find them a place of service.

f. Assist in the observance of the Lord's Supper and Baptism.

g. Reach out to every member and family of the church. A set number of church members shall be assigned to a deacon. The deacon shall function as their point of contact, when physical, emotional, and spiritual needs arise.

(8) Deacons should be selected from those who have proven to be qualified scripturally according to Acts 6:1-3 and I Timothy 3:8-13.

Section 3. Moderator

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the deacon chairman will preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator will be elected.

Section 4. Clerk

The church shall elect annually a clerk to perform the clerical duties and responsibilities of this body. The church clerk shall keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for all records of church membership, minutes of business meetings, transfers of church letters, and the preparation of the church's annual letter to the association. He/she is responsible for keeping a register of the members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. He/she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when one is maintained.

Section 5. Treasurer

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding quarter. The records of the treasurer shall be open to inspection to the membership of the church upon request; however, the receipt of individual tithes and offerings by name shall be a private matter and not made public knowledge. The treasurer's records shall be audited annually by someone selected by the finance committee.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

Section 6. Trustees

Three trustees elected by the church will hold in trust the church property. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of

the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required. Trustees shall serve on a rotation basis, with one new trustee being elected every three (3) years.

VII. Committees

Section 1. General

Committee members shall be recruited by the nominating committee and elected by the church. Committee members shall serve on a three year rotation system with the terms of one third (1/3) of each committee to expire each year. After an expired term of office, one year must lapse before returning to the committee. Committee members and spouses may not serve on the same committee simultaneously. Whenever feasible, persons shall not serve on more than two major committees at one time. (The major committees are: Deacons, Building and Grounds, Finance, and Nominating.) The pastor shall be an *ex officio* member of every committee. The following committees shall be elected.

Section 2. Baptism Committee

The baptism committee shall consist of the deacons and their spouses. The committee will assist in preparing the candidates and the baptistery for the ordinance of baptism. This is a deacon committee.

Section 3. Flower Committee

The flower committee is responsible for securing, arranging, and disposing of floral arrangements for church services, and for providing flowers for sick and bereaved members.

Section 4. Lord's Supper Committee

The Lord's Supper committee prepares the elements and the equipment for the observance of the Lord's Supper. The elements will be prepared on a schedule approved by the church. This is a deacon committee.

Section 5. Nominating Committee

The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all voluntary church leadership positions. This committee recommends persons for all volunteer positions, except the body of deacons, to be elected by the church.

Section 6. Building and Grounds Committee

The building and grounds committee assists the church in matters related to administration of the buildings and grounds. It also makes studies and recommendations

regarding need for additional space and furnishings for church program organizations. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church buildings and grounds for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of all properties, recommending the employment of all maintenance personnel, and assigning responsibility to appropriate personnel for supervision. Church employees shall be supervised by the chairperson of the building and grounds committee.

Section 7. Finance Committee

The finance committee develops and recommends an overall annual budget, and administers the church finances, using sound principles of financial management. This committee will recommend adjustments to the church expenditures as necessary. The church treasurer shall be a voting member of this committee.

Section 8. Constitution and Bylaws Committee

The constitution and bylaws committee is an ad hoc committee to be dissolved on church approval of the constitution and bylaws. The deacon body will assume the function of this committee by preparing recommended amendments to the constitution in the future.

Section 9. Church Growth Committee

The church growth committee will lead the church to pattern themselves after the New Testament church and the Lord Jesus Christ by loving and caring for members and striving to fulfill the Great Commission by reaching out into the community and bringing others into the fellowship. We intend to allow every member to minister by helping each one discover his/her spiritual gifts. This committee will lead the church to periodically update its growth goals.

VIII. Program Organizations

Section 1. General

All organizations of the church shall be under church control. Organization officers shall be elected by the church and will report regularly to the church during business meetings. All organization officers (Sunday School Director, Women's Missionary Union Director, Brotherhood Director, and Music Director) must be members of the church. The pastor is an *ex officio* officer of all the organizations named, and his/her leadership is to be recognized in them.

Section 2. Sunday School

There shall be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the leadership of a director, for the study of God's Word. Sunday School is to be conducted each Sunday morning. The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the biblical revelation; lead in reaching all prospects for the church; lead all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; provide information regarding the work of the church and the denomination. All Sunday School teachers must be members of the church.

Section 3. Woman's Missionary Union

There shall be a Woman's Missionary Union with such officers and forms of organization as needed. The tasks of the Woman's Missionary Union shall be to teach missions; lead persons to participate in missions; provide organization and leadership for special mission projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 4. Brotherhood

There shall be a Brotherhood, made up of such standard organizations as needed including Royal Ambassadors. The program director shall be elected by the church. The tasks of the Brotherhood are to teach missions; lead all men, young men, and boys to participate in mission activities; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 5. Church Music Program

There shall be a Church Music program under the direction of the music director. Such officers and organizations shall be included as needed. The music tasks shall be to teach music and hymnody; provide music and musicians for the congregational services and the organizations of the church; lead persons to participate in hymn singing; train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

IX. Church Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God, and on Wednesday evening for prayer and Bible study. These meetings will be under the direction of the pastor and open for all people.

Section 2. Business Meetings

Regular business meetings shall be held on the second Sunday of each quarter after the worship service. Special business meetings may be held between regular business meetings to consider matters of unusual interest. A one-week notice shall be given for special business meetings unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. Only church members are eligible to vote in the business meetings.

Section 3. Quorum

The quorum consists of church members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a regular meeting or a properly called special business meeting. There shall be three-fourths (3/4) of the average worship service attendance present to constitute a quorum.

Section 4. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

X. Church Finances

Section 1

The finance committee shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses.

Section 2

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

Section 3

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts. It is recommended that designated gifts be over and above the weekly pledge to the church.

XI. Discipline

Section 1

Should any unhappy differences arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew.

Section 2

Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the deacons and the pastor shall endeavor to remove the offense; and if this effort fails, the deacons or the pastor shall report the case to the church.

Section 3

All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

Section 4

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the church, upon evidence of his/her repentance and reformation; or, if on account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation.

XII. Amendments

Changes in this constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided such amendments have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution shall be by three-fourths (3/4) vote of all members of the church present entitled to vote; amendments to the bylaws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting.

Constitution and Bylaws approved on _____, 1990.

RULES FOR THE USE OF THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

1. The Fellowship Hall and furnishings are for church activities and community activities sanctioned by the church. The building and furnishings are for the use of those who are members of Hickory Rock Baptist Church or organizations within the church.
2. The Fellowship Hall and furnishings may be used in connection with weddings, showers, etc., if church members are directly involved. It shall not be used by someone outside the church just by contacting someone in the church and using his/her name to sponsor community affairs.
3. The Fellowship Hall and furnishings may be used for recreational activities by the church provided it for wholesome Christian activity, and properly chaperoned by church leaders.
4. The Fellowship Hall and kitchen shall not be left dirty. All remaining perishable foods shall be removed from the kitchen and refrigerator. Appliances and cabinets shall be cleaned after each use. The Fellowship Hall and kitchen shall be left in the same condition as it was found. All dishes, glasses, silverware, and pots shall be washed and returned to proper places.
5. Kitchen equipment and other church property shall not be taken from the building, moved or rearranged so as to cause possible damage without permission of the deacon chairperson. All expenses for cleaning or repairs shall be the responsibility of the party reserving the building.
6. All garbage and trash shall be removed from the building during cleanup.

Reservations for the building or furnishings shall be made with the deacon chairperson prior to use. Any debatable request shall be referred to the deacon body.

USE OF THE CEMETERY

There shall be no further burials in the Hickory Rock Baptist Church cemetery except for those persons whose spouse is already buried there.

Rules for Fellowship Hall and Cemetery approved _____, 1990.