

# HAYDEN BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

## Constitution

This Constitution sets forth the principles and guidelines by which this church shall be governed.

### Article I – Name

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The name of this church is Hayden Bible Fellowship, a non-profit organization located in Hayden, Kootenai County, Idaho, and organized December 20, 1970.

### Article II – Purpose

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The purpose of Hayden Bible Fellowship is to glorify God by worshipping Him, building up believers in likeness to Jesus Christ and endeavoring to see unbelievers come to repentance and faith in Him.

### Article III – Leadership

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The primary authority of Hayden Bible Fellowship rests in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose instruction is contained in the Bible. The government of this church, under Him, shall consist of its own elders, with deacons and other officers appointed and committees established, as determined by the elders, to carry out specific functions.

#### **Section 1 – Elders**

##### RESPONSIBILITIES

The elders are responsible before the Lord to oversee the affairs of this church and shepherd the members of this body through prayer, Bible teaching and doctrinal instruction, discipleship and ministry training, protection from false teaching, implementation of church discipline, general oversight of all ministry programs, exemplary living and counseling.

The elders shall be the trustees of Hayden Bible Fellowship. They shall be responsible to certify to the bank the names of those authorized to sign checks or access accounts. The chairman of the elders shall represent the elders when necessary and may sign any deeds, mortgages, bonds or contracts authorized by the elders.

## MAKEUP AND INITIATION

The board of elders shall consist of a plurality of men who meet the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, are members of this church and agree wholeheartedly with the Statement of Faith contained within this Constitution. The existing elders may appoint an elder by unanimous consent after carefully examining his qualifications and soliciting appropriate feedback from those who know him. When an elder has been appointed, he shall be presented to the congregation during a regular corporate gathering and prayed for by the other elders.

## MEETINGS AND ORGANIZATION

The elders shall meet together at least once a month to study, pray and discuss the business of the church. All decisions made by the board shall be with unanimity.

The elders shall appoint from among them a chairman, who shall set an agenda and lead their meetings, and a secretary, who shall keep minutes of the meetings and general records.

## REMUNERATION

An elder may or may not receive remuneration for his labor, depending upon his need and the available resources of the church. Remuneration shall be determined by the members of the budget committee and elder board who are not paid staff.

## RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL

An elder may resign from office on his own initiative at any time. An elder may be removed from office by the unanimous decision of the other elders if the elder in question is no longer able or qualified to fulfill his responsibilities. If there are only two elders and they are at an impasse regarding the removal of one of them, mediation may be sought through Peacemaker Ministries [Billings, MT, (406) 256-1583, [www.peacemaker.net](http://www.peacemaker.net)]. In the event of an elder's resignation or removal, the congregation shall be informed within two weeks.

## DISCIPLINE

In accordance with 1 Timothy 5:19-20 and Matthew 18:15-17, if an elder is suspected to be in sin and a private meeting with him confirms his guilt but brings no repentance, the charge should be brought to the elders by at least two witnesses. The other elders shall thoroughly investigate the matter and, if they unanimously determine the elder is guilty and unrepentant, or his sin is deemed severe enough to disqualify him as an elder even if he is repentant, he shall be removed from the board of elders. If he remains unrepentant or if his sin is public, he shall be rebuked publicly before the congregation who should also call him to repentance. If he remains unrepentant, he shall be dismissed from the church.

## **Section 2 – Deacons**

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The elders shall appoint deacons to act on behalf of the church in organizing and distributing various resources to meet the physical needs of the members of the church body. The deacons shall receive funds or other resources allocated by the elders to distribute to those in financial or material need. The

deacons shall present a summary of their work, including the total amount of money distributed and a list of tasks performed, to the elders every quarter and to the congregation at the annual meeting.

#### MAKEUP AND INITIATION

The elders shall periodically evaluate the physical needs of the people in the body and determine whether additional deacons would be useful in meeting those needs. The elders may appoint a man who is a member of Hayden Bible Fellowship as a deacon after carefully examining his qualifications (1 Timothy 3:8-13) and soliciting feedback from the congregation. When a deacon has been appointed, he shall be presented to the congregation during a regular corporate gathering and prayed for by the elders.

#### MEETINGS AND ORGANIZATION

The board of deacons shall meet regularly, under the general guidance of the elders, to discuss various ways the physical needs of the people in the body might be met. A chairman of the deacons, appointed by the elders, shall set the agenda and lead the meetings. A secretary of the deacons, appointed by the chairman, shall keep minutes of the meetings and general records.

#### RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL

The deacons shall serve under the authority of the elders as long as there is need and they remain willing, able and qualified. A deacon may be removed from office by the unanimous decision of the elders. A deacon may resign his office at any time.

### **Section 3 – Other Officers, Designated Ministry Workers and Committees**

The elders may appoint other officers and ministry workers, as well as organize various committees, as needed, for the effective ministry and orderly operation of the church.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities and duration of these various roles and committees shall be limited to fulfilling their given tasks under the general oversight of the elders.

The church's finances shall be handled by a budget committee made up of financial officers appointed by the elders. These offices and the budget committee are described below:

- The financial secretary, together with at least one other person from a different family who is appointed by the elders, shall count and record all money received in the weekly offerings of the church and deposit these funds in the bank. Each week the financial secretary shall provide the treasurer with a record of the amount received and deposited, specifying any designated funds. At the end of each year the financial secretary shall give a written statement of giving to each donor. In the absence of the financial secretary one of the counters may temporarily assume these duties.
- The treasurer shall pay the bills of the church, including the salaries of the pastors and other staff. The treasurer shall also keep record of the church's financial transactions and prepare annual tax documentation. The treasurer shall submit quarterly reports to the elders and budget

committee. In the temporary absence of the treasurer one appointed by the elders shall assume these duties.

- The budget committee shall, in cooperation with the elders, prepare a budget each fall for the ensuing year, to be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting, and make quarterly budget revisions as necessary. The budget committee, in cooperation with any elders who are not also paid staff, shall be responsible to determine the appropriate salaries for any paid staff.

#### MAKEUP AND INITIATION

Those serving in any designated ministry capacity of the church shall be members in good standing, possessing the character and testimony appropriate for the role, and shall commit to promoting nothing contrary to this Constitution and Statement of Faith. Either a man or woman may be designated to serve in ministry, so long as no woman shall exercise authority over a man.

#### RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL

Anyone who serves in a designated ministry capacity may take the initiative to resign at any time. He may also be removed from position by the unanimous decision of the elders.

## Article IV - Membership

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Under normal circumstances the Christian life is lived in context of a local body of believers who strive together to follow Christ. Membership formalizes this relationship, identifying those for whom the elders are primarily responsible and calling each member to submit to the leadership of the church and commit to the well-being of the body.

### **Section 1 – Membership Requirements**

Membership at Hayden Bible Fellowship shall consist of people who acknowledge the Bible to be God's inerrant revelation to man, confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, give evidence of regeneration by striving to live consistent with their confession, are in basic agreement with the Statement of Faith of this church, subject themselves to the elders for the purposes set forth in this Constitution and desire to be accountable to one another in this church body.

### **Section 2 – Membership Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of every member to pursue a life of personal holiness and encourage others to do the same, to regularly attend the church's worship services, to support and pray for the church's leaders, to promote unity among the body, to strive to live as an outward testimony to the world and to provide personal and financial resources in support of the church's ministry.

### **Section 3 – Membership Process**

Any person who would like to become a member of this church shall attend a membership class and substantially agree with this Constitution, including the Statement of Faith. After completing the class,

the prospective member shall complete an application and meet with an elder to confirm the membership requirements are met. The elder shall then make his recommendation of the applicant to the elder board. If the applicant is approved for membership, he shall subsequently be introduced to the congregation as a member.

#### **Section 4 – Church Discipline**

Jesus instructed His followers to exercise corrective discipline in the church toward anyone who persists in sin, in order to promote unity and purity, deter sin and doctrinal error and restore sinning members to right Christian fellowship. Discipline shall be carried out primarily among the members of the church.

The steps for church discipline, according to Matthew 18:15-17, are as follows:

1. When a member's conduct is sinful, the one who knows about the situation should humbly and prayerfully confront that person in private, seeking his repentance. The one being confronted should listen attentively, repenting when necessary.
2. If the sinning member remains unrepentant, he should be approached again, this time by one or two additional members to serve as witnesses, so that together they may encourage repentance.
3. If the sinning member still refuses to repent, the matter shall be brought to the elders who, upon careful investigation, shall tell it to the church, encouraging the congregation to confront and pray for the one in sin. If he repents at this step, notice to this effect shall also be given to the church.
4. If the one in sin refuses to heed the warnings of the church, he shall be dismissed from the body (Matthew 18:18-20; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15).

Such discipline shall also be carried out toward any professing Christian who regularly attends the church, even if he is not a member, to the extent that these principles apply to non-members.

A member who is under church discipline shall forfeit the right to withdraw his membership from this church. This discipline process shall continue through these steps to its conclusion, even if the erring member has stopped attending the church.

The elders, in the exercise of their discretion, may proceed directly to the third or fourth stage of discipline when the person's sin is public and yet he has refused to repent (1 Corinthians 5:1-5); when he has taught or otherwise disseminated false doctrine within the church and then disregarded the instruction and reproof of the elders (Romans 16:17); or when he has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10-11).

The members of this church, as well as all professing Christians who regularly attend, agree that there shall be no appeal to any civil court and further waive any and all claims relating to dismissal or public statements made to the congregation at the third or fourth stages of church discipline.

If the erring individual, after dismissal, demonstrates repentance and requests reinstatement, he shall be publicly restored to fellowship and/or membership.

## **Section 5 – Termination of Membership**

A member in good standing may terminate or transfer his membership upon request. Furthermore, one's membership shall be terminated by habitual and negligent absence from the regular meetings of the church for more than six months, by dismissal as a final step of church discipline or by death.

## Article V – Meetings of the Congregation

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The gathering of the body for corporate worship or to discuss the business of the church is an important part of the regular operation of the church.

### **Section 1 – Worship Meetings**

Corporate worship services shall be held each Sunday, and may also be held throughout the week, to pray, praise God in song and build up the body through Bible teaching. It shall be the practice of this church to observe the Lord's Supper at least once a month. Any special meeting or presentation shall be subject to the prior approval of the elders.

### **Section 2 – Congregational Meetings**

The congregation shall meet annually, at or near the beginning of each year, to review the previous year's spending, to present the new year's budget, to review the previous year's ministry and to inform the congregation of any future plans.

The elders may also call for a special meeting for a specific purpose. The announcement of any special meeting or of the specific date for the annual meeting shall be made publicly on at least two consecutive regular Sunday services prior to that meeting.

## Article VI – Statement of Faith

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The Statement of Faith is attached to this Constitution and incorporated by reference.

## Article VII – Legal Provisions

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### **DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

Members shall resolve any dispute between them by themselves or with the mediation of the church and shall not pursue civil action in a secular court of law (1 Corinthians 6:1-8).

#### INDIVIDUAL INTEREST IN CHURCH ASSETS

No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any individual person from the assets, holdings or other transactions in which the church may become involved.

#### REORGANIZATION AND DISSOLUTION

In the event the church loses its elders, the remaining members shall seek the guidance of Grace Advance (a ministry of Grace Community Church, 13248 Roscoe Blvd., Sun Valley, CA 91352) to establish new pastoral leadership.

If the church must close, its debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its holdings shall be divided among those attending, but shall be irrevocably designated to a Christian non-profit organization agreed upon by a simple majority of the remaining church members.

### Article VIII – Amendments

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This Constitution, including the Statement of Faith, shall be reviewed periodically by the elders and may be amended by the unanimous decision of the elders when it is found to conflict with the Bible, when it appears to hinder the fulfillment of God's stated purposes or when it has become in some way irrelevant to the particular needs of this church.

#### PROCEDURE FOR AMENDATION

Before any amendment is made, both the text of and the reason for the proposed amendment shall be made public for at least two weeks for the members to review and discuss. Upon final approval by the elders, the revised version of the Constitution shall subsequently be made available to all members.

#### DISSENTION OF A MEMBER

If a member dissents from the change after discussing the situation with an elder, and if the nature of that dissent undermines the membership requirement for basic agreement with the Constitution, his membership may be withdrawn by either the elders or that member.