

**HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**MANKATO, MN**  
**CONSTITUTION**

Adopted March 1983  
Amended October 28, 2007

**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 seeks to preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches.

**I. Name**

This body shall be known as **Hope Baptist Church** a religious corporation.

**II. Calling and Purpose**

The existence of Hope Baptist Church as a local church fellowship is owed solely to the gracious purpose of God the Father, the work of salvation by Jesus Christ, and the sovereign empowerment of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:3-14). We as a church are organized, governed and sustained by our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:21-23). He is our sure foundation and our glorious salvation (I Corinthians 1:30; 3:11), and it is because of Him that we have become a “pillar and buttress of truth” for the glory of God (I Timothy 3:14-15). May the LORD be praised by us for generations upon generations until the end of the age when “our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” will appear (Titus 2:11-13)!

Therefore, the purpose of this church is--**“To display the greatness of God, we seek to glory in God through Christ above all and to spread His fame in Christ to all”.**

**III. Statement of Faith**

We are a people who profess a living faith which is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ who is “The same yesterday, and today, and forever.” Our sole authority for faith and practice is Jesus Christ whose will is revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

## **1. The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man and is the final authority for faith and practice.

## **2. God**

There is one and only one living and true God, who reveals himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

## **3. Man**

Man was created by God, in His own image, and by his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God.

## **4. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, sanctification, and glorification.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

B. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

C. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never be plucked from God's hand, but shall persevere to the end.

## **5. The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers voluntarily banded together for worship, nurture and service. The local church is a self-governing body subject only to Christ, its head. Operating through democratic processes, members of the local church are equally responsible under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

## **6. Baptism and Lord's Supper**

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances of the church. Baptism is to be administered by the church under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in the 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.

The Lord's Supper, observed through the symbols of the bread and the cup, is a sober searching of the believer's heart, a thankful remembrance of Christ and his sacrificial death on the cross, a blessed assurance of his return, and a joyous fellowship with the living Christ and his people.

## **7. Last Things**

According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The nonbelievers will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The believers, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. The second coming of Christ is ready to take place, however God will bring the world to its appropriate end in His own time and in His own way.

## **8. Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

## **9. Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions' and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

## **10. Cooperation**

Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000.

## **IV. Government**

The government of this church is vested in its membership under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It is subject to the control of no other body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. This church shall cooperate with the Pioneer Baptist Association, the Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptist Fellowship (state convention when so formed), and with the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **V. Amendment Procedure**

Four weeks before voting of an amendment to this constitution, the proposed amendment will be posted in the church and mailed to every resident family. For the purpose of amending this constitution, a quorum will consist of a majority of the resident membership. Amendments to the constitution shall be made by approval of 2/3 members present.