

# Howardsville Gospel Chapel

## Bylaws

- Who we are □
- What we believe □
- How we will organize □

Revision: January 28, 2024

## Preamble to these Bylaws

The church that Jesus Christ created is a wonderful organism for carrying out the will of God in our world. Since the Day of Pentecost, God's Holy Spirit has filled believers so they could continue the plan laid out from eternity past. In this age, the church age, believers have been given the privilege to organize in accordance to New Testament commands, precepts, and principles.

This revision of the Bylaws continues the process of maturing as a church according to New Testament standards. Bylaws are, by definition, laws that stand next to Scripture as an expression of purpose and procedures. It allows us, in this time to minister in harmony with God's will.

We also must organize according to the laws of the United States which allows churches to carry out religious work with limited interference. As such, we fulfill the requirements requested of our country, and have been granted legal status as a church, with all the benefits that accrue to a church.

We believe these bylaws put in place the key elements of a church: key doctrine, spiritual leadership, and policies of membership. These elements give the church a strong foundation so as to fulfill God's purposes.

In reality, bylaws are only as effective as the willingness of the members to abide by them. Order and unity prevail when certain procedures are agreed upon, especially when Scripture is silent on some particular.

As a manmade document, it is by no means exhaustive or perfect. When errors are discovered, they can be changed; when policies are outlived, they can be removed; when structures confine the ability to minister, they can be modified—all with a spirit of grace and patience.

Finally, the Bylaws Revision Committee graciously commends this bylaw to you and to those who follow after us. We hope it gives continued wisdom, strength, focus and clarity to Howardsville Gospel Chapel.

## I. NAME & INCORPORATION

- A. The Howardsville Gospel Chapel of Marcellus, Michigan, is a non-profit membership corporation incorporated under the provisions of Act No. 327, P.A. 1931, The State of Michigan, as amended. A membership corporation is composed of and controlled by church members. This incorporation took place on the 17th day of March in the year of our Lord, 1950. Its principal office is at 53441 Bent Road, Marcellus, Michigan 49067.
- B. This church is independent and autonomous, adhering to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith set forth in the Holy Bible. The church will have fellowship with other churches as long as such associations do not compromise the independent, fundamental, doctrinal position of this church.

## II. PURPOSE

- A. Howardsville Gospel Chapel is organized exclusively for religious, charitable and educational purposes, including for such purposes, within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building of churches, Christian day-schools, chapels, daycare centers and camps.
- B. The purpose of this church shall be the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the administration of the ordinances of the New Testament (Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper), the spiritual growth of its members through the study and teaching of the Bible, the winning of the lost, exerting, so far as is possible, a Christian, moral influence in the community and a missionary spirit in the world at large.

## III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

- A. The Scriptural beliefs of this church and its members.
  1. **The Holy Scriptures.** We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenary-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, and the Official Board shall determine all issues of interpretation and meaning. The New American Standard version of the Bible shall be the official translation used for any Biblical disputes (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)
  2. **Dispensationalism.** We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life that define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations—the law, the church, and the kingdom—are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (Gen. 1:28; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6).
  3. **The Godhead.** We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, coequal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Peter 1:1-2; John 14:10, 26).
  4. **God the Father**
    - a. The Head of the Trinity is God the Father, the one who is holy. He is the Lord, great and almighty—in essence, far above humankind and human thought. He is spirit, pure and right--having no taint of sin; and full of lovingkindness. He is unchanging. Merciful, gracious, slow to anger, and forgiving are his revealed character. But He also can pour forth wrath in His anger. He will judge the sinner and has prepared a place called Hell for the Devil and his angels, and the unrepentant. (1 Cor. 14; Isa. 6; John 4; James 1:13; Exodus 34:6-7; Matt. 25:41; Revelation 20).
    - b. God the Father set forth the end of time from the beginning which includes His work in creation, judgment, the future, and the works in salvation. His works in salvation include

- election/calling, predestination, drawing, sending His Son as an atoning sacrifice, foreordaining the crucifixion, providing grace and faith, forgiving the repentant sinner, justifying the sinner, adopting the believer, persevering the sinner until death, resurrecting Christ and resurrecting the human body in a glorified form. (Isaiah 46:9-10; Gen 1:1; Psalm 1:5; Book of Revelation, Book of Daniel; Eph. 1:4; Deut. 10:15; Rom 8:29-30; John 6:44; 1 John 4:14; Acts 3:18; Eph 2:8-9; 1 John 1; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; Gal. 4:5; Romans 8:35-39; Romans 1; 1 Cor 15).
- c. The Father's throne room is heaven and angels do His bidding. The Bible is His word to us to know Him so we can rightly worship Him alone. (Matt. 5:34; 23:22; Matthew 24:31; 26:53; Deut. 6:13-15)
5. **The Person and Work of Christ.**
- a. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8).
- b. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His shed blood and death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; 1 Pet. 2:24; Eph. 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3-5).
- c. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2).
6. **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.**
- a. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14).
- b. We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27).
- c. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12)
- d. We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit, and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing (1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22).
7. **Man.** We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19).
8. **Salvation.**
- a. Provision: We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins for all who would believe (John 3; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10).
- b. Process: We believe that God initiates the work of salvation in a man by first bringing the Gospel message to the hearer, opening the hearer's heart to receive the message, and offering faith to the

hearer to put personal trust in the atoning work and person of Jesus Christ. The believing hearer repents of sin and believes the Gospel message, confessing Jesus Christ as Lord (Romans 10:9-10; Hebrews 12:2; Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 8:30).

- c. We believe that the process of salvation whereby saving graces are offered to man through an institution or priesthood of man is heresy. Each believer is recognized as a priest and a saint at the moment of salvation. We reject the process of salvation whereby a man believes he can merit salvation through any other means than repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:9; Romans 1:7; Romans 4; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1-2; Ephesians 2:8).

#### 9. **Perseverance or Eternal Security**

- a. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1; 38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; 1 Peter 1:4-5).
- b. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, fruits of true repentance, and evidences of the Christian life (Matthew 7:13-23; Luke 3:8; Matthew 23; 1 John; Galatians 5; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Titus 2:11-15).

#### 10. **Heaven and Hell**

- a. We believe in a place called heaven which is the dwelling of God, and eternal dwelling place of believers.
- b. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15).

#### 11. **The Church**

- a. We believe that the local church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons (1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27).
- b. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).
- c. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).

12. **Baptism.** We recognize Believer's Baptism as an outward indication of the inward change and identification with Christ that has been effected in those who have made a conscious decision to repent of sin and receive Jesus as Lord. This is in obedience to Christ's command in Matthew 28. We reject the position that any kind of saving grace is conveyed to the recipient of baptism. We also reject the perception of baptism as a sign and seal of the Covenant community. Baptism should be performed in water, by full-body immersion, or in extreme cases such as physical disability, by pouring (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18).

13. **The Lord's Supper.** We recognize the Lord's Supper as a continuing ordinance of the church. The bread represents the body of Christ that was sacrificed on the cross. The cup represents the blood of Christ that was shed on the cross. The two together represent His death. We observe the Lord's Supper in remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ for our sins. We reject the idea that the Lord's Supper conveys saving grace to the participant. We affirm that continued, obedient observance of the ordinance conveys spiritual benefits to the Christian (Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

#### 14. **The End of the Age.**

- a. We believe in the personal, imminent return of Jesus Christ who will Rapture His church in the clouds to begin the seven-year Tribulation period.
- b. We believe in a seven-year Tribulation period in which God judges the unbelieving world.
- c. Jesus Christ personally returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation.

- d. We believe in a literal 1000-year (Millennial Kingdom) reign of Jesus Christ following the 7-year Tribulation period.
  - e. We believe that at the end of 1000 years, all unbelievers of every era will appear before the Great White Throne judgment. Satan and death will be cast into the Lake of Fire. There will also be a new Heaven and a new Earth.
  - f. Scripture: Ps. 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; 9:24-27; Zech. 14:4-11; Matthew 24-25; I Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6.
15. **Satan.** We believe that Satan leads the fallen angels, who are also known as demons, in his work against God. Satan is an angel, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; and he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Genesis 3; Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10).
16. **Creation.** We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11).
17. **Holiness.** God's Word clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations (Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; Galatians 2:19; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11; Lev. 19:28; 1 Cor. 6:19-20).
18. **Governments.** 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 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).
19. **Human Sexuality.**
- a. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of male or female homosexuality, bisexuality, transgenderism, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, prostitution, 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 (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:7-11; Lev. 18:8-18, 20; 19:29; 20:13, 16; Rom. 1:26-32; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:8-11; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4).
20. **Marriage and Family Relationships**
- a. We believe that marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. We believe that God has ordained husband and wife as the foundational institution of human society. The relationship is described as a covenant of companionship (Gen. 2:18, 24; Prov. 2:16-17; Mal. 2:14; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10-11; Eph. 5:22-33).
  - b. 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. The husband is to understand, provide leadership, and 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. She is to love and respect her husband (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:14, 17; Prov. 2:16-17; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-35; Eph. 5:21-33; Gal. 3:26-29; Col. 3:18-19; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7; Titus 2:4-5).
  - c. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Children should honor and obey their parents. 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

(Exodus 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:13-14; Eph. 6:1-4; Col. 3:20-21).

**21. Divorce and Remarriage.**

a. Divorce:

- i. What God has put together, let no man separate. It is His desire to see the marriage bond maintained. His attitude toward divorce is summed up in hatred and disdain, and in calling “adulterers” those who divorce under sinful terms (Mat. 5:31-32; 19:6; Mal. 2:16; Mar 10:2-12; 1Cor. 7:10-11, 27).
- ii. Jesus affirms that divorce is allowed because of the hardness of man’s heart, and only for the case of unchastity. Unchastity, in the scriptures, is sexual sin in general and can include fornication, incest, bestiality, homosexuality, and adultery (Matt. 5:31-32; 19:3-9).
- iii. A believer is commanded to remain married with their unbelieving spouse, even though this represents a spiritually mixed marriage. However, if the unbelieving spouse wants to leave the marriage, the believing spouse is not in bondage to that marriage covenant any longer (1 Cor. 7:12-16).

b. Remarriage:

- i. Remarriage is allowed, and in some cases encouraged, but not commanded for widows (1 Tim. 5:14; Rom 7:2-3).
  - ii. In some cases, remarriage for Christians is discouraged but not forbidden, but must be with another Christian (1 Corinthians 7:7-9, 32-35, 39-40).
- c. Remarriage would be allowed for the two following situations and receive the blessing of the church after full details of the cause of divorce and marital status of the former spouse have been confirmed so that the possibility for reconciliation can be addressed:
- i. Unchastity/immorality was the cause of the divorce (Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9).
  - ii. A spouse is divorced because the unbelieving spouse left them and has remarried (1 Corinthians 7:15). In some rare cases, the spiritual state of a professing believer after church discipline may bring into question whether they are a believer or not.

**22. 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 mental well-being of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:13-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44).

**23. Love.** God is love, and we love because He first loved us. His love was shown by the sending of Jesus for our salvation. We are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers but also toward both those who are not believers and those who oppose us. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, malicious gossip, 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; Mat. 5:44-48; 22:37-38; Luke 6:31; John 3:16; 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 13:1-8; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18, 4:7-8, 11, 19; Jude 21).

**24. Missions and Evangelism.** We believe that Jesus Christ commanded the believers to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that Christ commanded. Christians are ambassadors of Christ to be ministers of reconciliation to the lost both locally and in foreign lands (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-47; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-20).

**25. Giving (Stewardship).** We believe that every Christian has been given many stewardships: Time, Talent, and Money, to name a few. As a steward of that portion of God’s time entrusted to him, a

Christian should serve for the discipleship of other believers. As a steward of that portion of talent entrusted to him, a Christian should serve in a way so capacitated. As a portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, a Christian is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that free will giving should be proportionate, generous, sacrificial, and from the heart (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:32-37; Acts 20:35; Rom. 12:1-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-31; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17).

**B. Authority of the Statement of Faith**

1. 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 an accurate statement of our members' faith. Those seeking membership will be asked to agree to and uphold the Statement of Faith. All literature and teaching used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

**IV. CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

**A. Authority**

1. The government of this church shall be vested in the Membership and executed through duly elected officers and committees in accord with all the provisions of these Bylaws.

**B. Persons can be received into membership upon confession of faith, re-statement of faith, or a statement of faith with letters, conditional upon examination satisfactory to the Official Board of this church, by a 2/3 vote of quorum of church members present. Each new convert is eligible as a candidate for membership. Upon being received into membership, each new convert will be encouraged to take doctrinal and ethical instruction by the Pastor of this church, or his appointee.**

**C. Privileges and Limitations of Membership.**

1. Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. 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 approve or disapprove the direction of the church as recommended by the Pastor and the Official Board. The Pastor and the Board encourage ideas that would develop new direction and ministry opportunities.
2. Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government.
3. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The Official Board has the authority to remove any disruptive person from church property; and 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 Official Board, be treated as a trespasser.
4. A member, upon five business days prior written request made upon the church, may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church, the minutes of the proceedings of church meetings, and the minutes of the proceedings of board meetings.
  - a. A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church except the Financial Secretary and Auditor.
  - b. A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy the accounting books and financial records of the church except the Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Official Board Member, and Auditor.
  - c. 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.

**D. Membership – Inactive**



1. Members who absent themselves from the regular services of the church for a period of three (3) months, without sufficient reason, upon recommendation of the Official Board, shall be considered “Inactive” and shall be deprived of the right to speak or vote at any business meeting of the church.
2. All members placed on the Inactive List shall be so notified, in writing, by the Church Clerk. The Official Board will be encouraged to counsel inactive members before the letter of notification is sent.
3. If there is no response upon the part of the inactive member within three (3) months of the time of being placed on the Inactive List, they shall be dropped from the church rolls by recommendation of the Official Board, and the membership notified of such action.
4. Inactive members may be reinstated to Membership on appeal to the Official Board and their approval.

**E. Termination of Membership**

1. The membership of any individual member shall be automatically terminated without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding six months. Upon good cause being shown to the Official Board, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the Official Board.
2. No member of this church may hold membership in another church. If any member unites in membership with another church, that person’s membership in this church is automatically terminated with written notice from the Official Board. Missionaries are exempt from this provision.

**F. Church Restoration and Discipline.**

1. The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:1-6), to edify believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 5:19-20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1).
2. There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the Official Board. These men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith. If an Official Board member is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. The Official Board shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
3. Christians are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, it is his or her duty to go alone to the offending party and warn and correct such erring individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. Before the confronting one goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration (Matthew 18:15-18; Gal. 6:1).
4. If the erring individual does not heed this warning, then the warning member shall again go to the erring individual seeking his or her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration. The first and second warnings may occur with no specified time interval.
5. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then it shall be brought to the attention of the Official Board (or a duly appointed committee of the Board). If the Board determines – after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19-20 – that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she has refused to repent, then the Board shall inform the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect

may be given at a regularly scheduled worship service. If however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the church in its collective call to repentance, then he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of the church and the congregation informed thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service. If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the Official Board (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board), then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.

6. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the board in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline, (that is to say, the informing of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance) or to the fourth stage of church discipline, (that is to say, the dismissal from the fellowship and/or membership of the church) when one or more of the following have occurred:
  - a. Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, that is to say, openly and to the offense of the whole church (1 Cor. 5:1-5) or
  - b. When the disciplined party has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the board, then chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the board (Romans 16:17); or
  - c. Where the disciplined party has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10-11).
  - d. The procedures provided in this section are based on Matt. 18:15-18; 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.

#### G. Business Meetings

1. There will be four standing meetings
  - a. In January each ministry will present their update and vision.
  - b. In April, the budget will be approved.
  - c. In July, ministries will present their annual ministry plans.
  - d. In October, new officers will be elected.
2. All Business meetings will be governed by parliamentary rules.
3. The church may be called together for any other business by a two-thirds majority vote of the Official Board, with notice of such meetings having been given from the pulpit or published in the church bulletin on each of two Sundays immediately preceding said meetings.
4. A quorum at Congregational Meetings of the church shall be twenty-five percent of Membership.

#### H. Qualifications of Official Board Members

1. All Official Board Members must be active male members of this church who have attained the age of 21.
2. Elders
  - a. The qualifications for elders are set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, as applicable to each office.
  - b. 1 Timothy 3:1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man
    - i. (1) aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires *to do*. (2) An overseer, then, must be above reproach, (3) the husband of one wife, (4) temperate, (5) prudent, (6) respectable, (7) hospitable, (8) able to teach, (9) not addicted to wine, (10) not pugnacious, (11) gentle, (12) peaceable, (13) free from the love of money, (14) *He must be* one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (15) not a new convert, (16) And he must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*,
  - c. Titus 1:5-9 also includes

- i. (17) having children who believe, (18) not self-willed, (19) not quick-tempered, (20) but hospitable, (21) loving what is good, (22) just, (23) devout, (24) self-controlled, (25) holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.
3. Deacons
    - a. 1 Timothy 3:8-10 Deacons likewise *must be*
      - i. (1) men of dignity, (2) not double-tongued, (3) not addicted to much wine, (4) not fond of sordid gain, (5) holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. (6) These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are (7) beyond reproach, (8) husbands of *only* one wife, (9) good managers of *their* children and their own households.
  4. It shall be impossible for the nominating committee to place in nomination any candidate who cannot answer in the affirmative the following questions:
    - a. Have you experienced the new birth set forth in John 3:3 and Titus 3:5 and publicly confessed Christ as personal Savior?
    - b. Are you in hearty agreement with the Statement of Faith and Bylaws of this church?
    - c. Are you endeavoring to live as a surrendered, prayerful Christian, especially regarding loyal obedience to the moral precepts taught in the word of God for the believers?
    - d. Do you aspire to be a contributing part of this church's leadership?
  - I. Every member of the Official Board shall annually sign a statement indicating unreserved agreement with these Bylaws and Statement of Faith.
  - J. The terms of Elders and Deacons shall be for three years, and their election be so arranged by the nominating committee that all shall not terminate at the same time.
  - K. Terms: Any elder or deacon may serve two consecutive terms. After two consecutive terms, they shall have one year off the board before being eligible for reelection.
  - L. When a vacancy occurs in any elected position, the Official Board may appoint a replacement member in an acting position until the next election.
  - M. The Official Board
    1. The Official Board shall be composed of the Pastor(s), Elders, and Deacons.
    2. This Official Board shall consist of at least seven qualified men willing to serve in a given year. There shall be two or more elders and two or more deacons. The number of elders and deacons to be elected shall be determined by the Official Board.
    3. Any three board members shall be designated as Trustees for the purpose of handling legal matters. These Trustees shall continue in office until their successors are in office.
    4. As a practice, the Elder Board shall meet bi-monthly, and the Deacon Board shall meet bi-monthly. The two boards will meet together during the months between. The Official Board shall meet at other times deemed necessary upon the call of the Chairman.
    5. This Official board shall meet within two weeks after the annual election of officers for organizational purposes. The Official Board shall elect, by ballot, from the Elders a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Clerk; and shall elect, by ballot, from the Deacons a Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Assistant Clerk.
      - a. The Deacon Board will elect from among the deacons, a chairman and vice-chairman.
      - b. The Chairman of the Elder Board is the chairman of the Official Board.
    6. Members of the church may come to a meeting of the Official Board providing they have notified the Chairman of the Board ahead of time so that they can have their matter placed on the agenda. After they are given a reasonable time to present their matter, they will be excused.
    7. All Board Meetings will be considered in executive session, with the exception of those under the proceeding paragraph.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Executive session means that the meeting is closed to non-board members except as provided in the preceding paragraph.

## N. Duties of the Official Board (when Pastors, Elders, and Deacons meet together)

1. The Elders and Deacons shall have charge of all church property, real, personal, and mixed<sup>2</sup>, and shall be the local representatives of the church, but their acts shall be binding only as authorized by the church.<sup>3</sup>
2. The Official Board shall provide a proposed budget to the Church at the April Business Meeting. A committee will be appointed by the Official Board at the February meeting each year to establish a budget for the following year. This budget committee will consist of the Official Board Chairman and at least two board members. A budget is to be submitted to the Official Board by the budget committee at the March Board Meeting each year for the operations of the Church and its ministries. The Official Board will recommend approval of the budget at the Quarterly Business Meeting in April.
3. Only Elders and Deacons shall have the actual care of the property but shall have no power to buy, lease, or transfer any property of the church, or to incur any debt or expense in excess of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000), on non-budgeted items, except by vote of the church membership authorizing such action.
4. The Official Board will appoint three (3) of their members to also be known as Trustees for the ensuing year to meet any legal requirements, such as signing legal documents or papers on behalf of the church.
5. Trustees shall be American citizens, twenty-one (21) years of age or over.
6. Committees
  - a. Standing Committees<sup>4</sup> for the administration of the various phases of the work shall be designated and appointed by the Official Board at the first meeting following the October Business Meeting of the Church.
  - b. The Official Board will appoint the chairman of any standing, ad hoc, steering committee or team created by the board.
  - c. The appointment of all Committees shall be reported to the church on the Sunday following the meeting at which they were appointed.
  - d. Every Committee and organization shall report regularly to the Official Board and annually to the church.

## O. Duties of Elders

1. The Pastor-Teacher is one of the elders. The elders will work together in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church.
2. The Elders develop the spiritual atmosphere and direction of the church.
3. The Elders create programs, procedures, and policies as needed, to support the spiritual atmosphere and direction of the church.
4. The Elders will shepherd the congregation through personal care, devotion to doctrinal accuracy, and ministries as needed.
5. They shall assist the Pastor in visitation of the sick, afflicted, and needy.
6. The Elders are responsible to maintain a financial system that is above reproach. Audits will be authorized periodically, but no less than annually.
7. Give direction and/or approval for budgets.
8. Interview and recommend candidates for admission to membership of this church.
9. Provide for the supply of the pulpit when necessary.

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<sup>2</sup> Mixed property: this would pertain to an investment the church would have such as in a co-operative where we would not own the property or organization but might have a share of stock in it.

<sup>3</sup> This would involve acquiring and disposing of property, or taking out loans such as mortgages and bonds.

<sup>4</sup> The only current Standing Committees is the Missions Committee. Other standing committees may be created as needed.

10. The Elders will hire, or cause to be hired and release all employees, except as pertains to pastors in this bylaw, and will fix the terms of employment, express job responsibilities, and set the amount of their compensation.
11. Act as or appoint a search committee for pastoral staff. (See V.A.2.a below)
12. Assist in the restoration and discipline of the church congregation.
13. May present the Lord's Supper or Baptize within pastoral oversight.
14. Control the use of properties 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 uses.

**P. Duties of Deacons**

1. Disburse the benevolence fund, in cooperation with the Sr. Pastor.
2. Have charge of the ushers.
3. Administrate and distribute all monies that have been appropriated by the church necessary to carry on the work of the church.
4. Oversee the preparation of the Lord's Supper and Baptistry.
5. Supervise and provide for the maintenance, repair, and renovation of the church buildings.
6. Care for the buildings, equipment, grounds, and vehicles.
7. Report on ministries performed, to the church annually, and at other times when called upon to do so.

**Q. The Official Board Chairman shall perform the duties as usually pertain to that office: Chairing Elder Board Meetings, Official Board, and Business Meetings of the congregation.**

**R. Vice Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman in the Chairman's absence.**

**S. The Clerk**

1. It shall be the duties of the clerk to certify and keep at the office of the church, the original bylaws or a copy, including all amendments or alterations to the bylaws.
2. To keep a complete record of the transactions at all business meetings of the church. At the conclusion of all business meetings, the minutes of the motions made at said meeting shall be read back in full for correction or approval.
3. Keep at the place where the bylaws or a copy are kept a record of the proceedings of meetings of the Elder Board and Official Board, with the time and place of holding, the notice of meeting given, the names of those present at the meetings.
4. Keep a record of the members with their names and addresses.
5. Keep a record of all baptisms, certificates of ordination, licenses, and commissions.
6. Issue letters of dismissal and recommendations voted by the church.
7. Preserve on file all communications and written reports.
8. Give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. In case of absence or disability of the clerk, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the Pastor or by the Chairman of the Official Board.
9. Sign, certify or attest documents as may be required by law.
10. Make available for inspection at all reasonable times to proper persons on terms provided by law the bylaws and minutes of proceedings of any of the boards' meetings or of the meetings of the church members.
11. Keep an account of any special events in the life of the church that are of historical interest and give a report at the annual church business meeting of the status of the church membership roll in the past year.
12. Keep all records at the office of the church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office.
13. A clerk may request of the board to appoint a recording secretary.

**T. The Assistant Clerk:**

1. Will assume the responsibilities of the Clerk in his absence.

2. He shall perform the duties of Head Teller at all Business Meetings, validating ballots, and appointing Tellers prior to Business Meetings.

U. The Treasurer

1. Shall be responsible for receiving and disbursing all funds at the direction of the Board.
2. Shall be responsible for the banking of received funds each week to the account of the Church.
3. Oversees the accurate bookkeeping of the church's receipts, disbursements, properties and business transactions including account of its assets, liabilities, and capital.
4. Have custody of the legal papers pertaining to the property and finances of the Church such as deeds, abstracts, insurance policies, bonds, notes, etc., which shall be kept in a depository designated by the Board.
5. When and as requested, render to the Pastor and the Official Board monthly, accounts of all transactions and of the financial condition of the church.
6. Present a written report of the church's balance sheet, income and expenses, and other financial details at regular quarterly church meetings and make a general report for the year at the annual business meeting.
7. Submit the books for an annual audit as may be directed by the Board.
8. Receive and give receipt for all contributions, gifts, and donations to the church.

- V. The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in duties pertaining to this office, and perform all duties of the Treasurer in the absence of the Treasurer.

W. Deaconesses

1. Qualification:
  - a. 1 Timothy 3:11 Women *must likewise be* (1) dignified, (2) not malicious gossips, (3) temperate, (4) faithful in all things.
  - b. Deaconesses shall be elected from the Membership of this church. The necessary number of Deaconesses as determined by the Official Board shall be elected at each Annual Meeting to serve for three (3) years, and shall be elected from the Members of this church.
2. Terms: Any deaconess may be reelected to a second term, immediately following the first. After two consecutive terms, they shall have a one-year off before being eligible for reelection.
3. Duties of Deaconesses
  - a. They are to visit the sick and needy, prepare the elements for the Lord's Supper, assist the Deacons in the spiritual work of the church, and assist the Pastor in the performance of his duties, and any other duties assigned them by the Pastor, as Deaconesses.

**V. MINISTRY**

A. Leadership And Duties Of The Pastor

1. Qualifications
  - a. The pastor shall be a man who gives evidence of the call of God to the ministry of the Gospel and of adherence to the scriptural principles governing church leadership (Paragraph IV.I.2)
  - b. Any man to be considered as a candidate for this pastorate shall have read this Bylaws and shall have signified in writing his unreserved agreement with its provisions and with the undenominational position of this Church.
  - c. The candidate's wife shall have read these Bylaws and shall have signified in writing her unreserved agreement with its provisions and with the undenominational position of this Church. She should also be willing to agree with the statement: "I agree to support my husband's call to this ministry". She too shall become a member of the Church.
2. Call
  - a. The Elders shall act as or appoint a Pulpit Committee to investigate possible candidates and arrange for them to speak at Sunday services. Investigation of a candidate shall include a questionnaire regarding training, pastoral experience, and qualifications mentioned in Paragraph

V.A.1 above. A visit by members of the Elders to his present pastorate is advisable where possible.

- b. A vote may be taken by the membership at any time to call a Pastor subject to the following:
  - i. A business meeting be called for that purpose in accord with paragraph IV.G or placed on the Agenda of any Quarterly business meeting.
  - ii. The candidate has spoken twice on Sunday (including, but not limited to, combined adult Sunday School and Sunday Worship Services).
  - iii. He is recommended to the congregation by the Official Board (it is recommended that this be a unanimous recommendation).
  - iv. Fifty percent of the Membership will constitute a quorum and a three-quarter (75%) majority of the Membership present shall be required to extend a call.
  - v. One candidate shall be considered at a time.

3. Duties

- a. He shall arrange for and conduct all public and regular services of the church and shall be responsible for general oversight of the spiritual welfare of the church. In the absence of the Sr. Pastor, the Board of Elders (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board, per Paragraph IV.N.6 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board) shall be responsible to arrange for the public and regular services of the church.

4. Termination

- a. The Sr. Pastor's term shall be indefinite. A notice of 30 days shall be given to terminate, with remuneration and services continuing through this period, unless otherwise mutually agreed.
- b. A vote may be taken by the membership at any time to terminate the Pastor's services subject to the following:
  - i. A special meeting may be called for that purpose in accord with Paragraph IV.G.
  - ii. It shall be placed on the agenda of a business meeting by the Official Board, or after a petition of twenty-five percent of the Membership has been presented to the Official Board.
  - iii. Fifty percent of the Membership will constitute a quorum, and a three-quarter (75%) majority vote of those members present will be required to terminate a Pastor's services.
- c. In the event of doctrinal or moral defection, the Pastor's services may be terminated immediately by action of the Official Board, to be ratified by a vote of the membership within thirty days.

5. Pastoral Staff

- a. When the Official Board recognizes the need and desirability, additional Pastoral staff may be called, subject to the same qualifications, call, and termination of the Sr. Pastor.

B. Qualifications for Ministry Leaders

1. All persons who teach or preach from the pulpit, teach a Sunday School Class or Bible Study, or sit on a committee must be members. If they are not a regular part of this church they must be a professing Christian whose lives are consistent with their profession.
2. All persons who sing, play musical instruments or speak in our public services must be professing Christians whose lives are consistent with Biblical holiness.

C. Personnel Commitments

1. All Official Board members, employees, teachers, and all other persons in places of leadership in the church, shall annually sign the Summary Statement of Faith. (see XII. **Appendix A.**)
2. All Official Board members, employees, teachers, and all other persons in places of leadership in the church must sign annually an agreement with these Bylaws. (See Appendix B)
3. All Official Board members, employees, teachers, and all other persons in places of leadership in the church, shall annually sign an agreement that states that they will not teach any position of doctrine that is in disagreement with the full Statement of Faith. (See Appendix B)

4. Official Board Members and non-school Directors, Teachers, Committee Chairs, and Ministry Leaders, must be Members of this Church, except by permission of the Official Board; all shall be approved by the Board.

**D. Missions Ministry**

1. To insure the regular activity of the Church in the cause of missions at home and abroad, a Missionary Committee shall be appointed by the Official Board at the first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Church.
2. This Committee is responsible to communicate with all mission fields in which the Church has an interest and to investigate and report to the Church on any matters requiring action.
3. A stated missionary policy shall be adopted by the Church and published, with revisions, from time to time.
4. The Missionary Committee shall make recommendation to the Official Board regarding changes or additions to the Church missionary program. All new commitments shall have Church approval and shall be handled through a reputable mission board or agency that is in agreement with our Missions Policy.

**VI. FINANCES**

- A. The fiscal year of the Howardsville Gospel Chapel will begin July 1 and go through June 30 of the following year. All ministries of the church will conform to this fiscal year.
- B. Support
  1. The budget of this church is supported by free-will offerings.
  2. Ministries of the church that wish to raise funds, not included in the budget, such as the school, may consider other money-raising activities that are of sound moral basis and do not violate established church doctrine. All money-raising activities would need to be approved by the Official Board.
- C. Designated Funds
  1. Any temporary use of funds for purposes other than designated must have the approval of the Official Board.
  2. If the purpose for which funds have been previously designated is to be changed, it must be done with the approval of the membership.
  3. Gifts designated through the church (or its ministries) for approved specific purposes or persons shall be so used unless the donor(s) approves a change.

**VII. ORDINATION, LICENSING AND COMMISSIONING**

- A. Ordination
  1. Ordination refers to the recognition of the Official Board and membership of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualification to serve. Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office. When a man in this membership is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the power of the Board to call and conduct a Council of Ordination after the approval of the membership has been obtained by a 75% (seventy-five percent) majority vote at a Congregational Meeting. This Council shall consist of three (3) or more ordained Christian pastors and, if possible, include one (1) delegate from each of several fundamental churches invited to participate.
  2. The Council of Ordination shall thoroughly examine the applicant regarding his personal Christian experience, call to the ministry, educational training, doctrinal belief, reputation and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service. The applicant shall give evidence of agreement with those provisions of this Bylaw with respect to Bible knowledge, doctrine, independence of the local church, practical pastoral issues, and scriptural qualifications for church leadership. Upon approval of the Council, the church will proceed with an Ordination Service at an appropriate time.
- B. Licensing



1. The license is issued by the Official Board and is given in recognition of a man's call to that ministry. Its aim is to allow a man to perform the ecclesiastical duties<sup>5</sup> and functions of the church. As Spirit-filled men are called out from among us to proclaim the Gospel of the Grace of God, such men may be given a renewable license to preach and administer the ordinances by a 75% (seventy-five percent) majority vote of the membership present at any congregational meeting. This will come as a recommendation from the Official Board after a satisfactory examination of the candidate. Licenses will be evaluated and issued on a yearly basis.

C. Commissioning

1. When local-church certification is required where ordination would be unnecessary or inappropriate, a person is commissioned by the Official Board to minister subject to the following provisions:
  - a. Missionaries must have the approval of the Missions Committee.
  - b. He/She must agree with the Statement of Faith of this Bylaw.
  - c. After a satisfactory examination by the pastor and Elders, he/she shall be accepted by a 75% (seventy-five percent) vote of the Official Church Board.

D. Power of Revocation

1. The Official Board shall have the power to discipline, even to the revoking of the ordination credentials, license, or commission of any minister or missionary ordained, licensed, or commissioned under this Bylaw, if said person is no longer qualified for ministry.
2. Failure on the part of said person to appear before the Official Board as requested will not prevent the Official Board from examining the case and rendering a verdict in accordance with the testimony received.

**VIII. AMENDMENTS**

A. Procedure

1. Changes to the By-Laws may be made at a Quarterly Business Meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Members present. Proposed changes must be communicated in writing, by mail, to the Active & Associate Membership, at least 30 days prior to the Quarterly Business Meeting.

**IX. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION - Howardsville Christian School**

A. Purpose 1

1. In order to assist the church's families with their obligation to Biblically train their children, the church operates a Christian school.
2. Unity: All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church.
3. 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 that conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth that 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.

B. Partnership

1. The Christian School Board acts on behalf of and shall partner with the Official Board. All decisions of the Christian School Board shall be made with the best interest of the church and school in mind, recognizing that both Boards' goal of excellence in education may require the Official Board to improve, revise, overturn, or reject any decision of the School Board.
2. The School shall fully support its operations by generating revenue to cover expenses.
3. The church shall annually approve the school budget at a duly called Business meeting.

C. Christian School

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<sup>5</sup> Preaching and teaching, administering baptism, administering Communion, performing weddings, funerals, missionary and chaplain's work.

1. The Christian School Board shall consist of up to ten (10) members, and the Sr. Pastor is the eleventh member with a vote. The Administrator of the Christian School is a non-voting participant of the school board. At least four (4) members are to be elected from the Membership of Howardsville Gospel Chapel. Of these four (4) members, a minimum of one (1) shall be a member of the Official Board. Up to six (6) members may be elected from the membership of other churches of like faith and practice.
  2. School Board Nomination
    - a. The school board will recommend to the Official Board the names of qualified nominees.
  3. Christian School Board members shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for a three (3) year term.
  4. Organization:
    - a. The Christian School Board shall be organized as follows: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. Election of officers shall take place at the first regular meeting of the Christian School Board following the Church's Quarterly Business Meeting in which new School board members are elected.
- D. Staff Membership
1. All non-secretarial administrative personnel must be or become a member of HGC.
  2. Though strongly encouraged, it is not necessary that a teacher be a member of HGC.
- E. Christian Walk
1. All administrators, instructors, teachers, and other staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall continue or adopt and maintain a lifestyle consistent with the precepts taught by the church, whether in or out of the classroom.
- F. School Board, Teacher, and Personnel Commitments
1. All School Board members, teachers, (and employees and volunteers at the discretion of the School Administrator) of the school shall annually sign the Summary Statement of Faith (see XII. **Appendix A.**)
  2. All School Board members, teachers, (and employees and volunteers at the discretion of the School Administrator) of the school shall annually sign a statement certifying that they have read and understood the church Bylaws relating to the school and the Full Statement of Faith of Howardsville Gospel Chapel and shall agree to lead in compliance with these Bylaws and the Full Statement of Faith. (see Appendix C)
  3. All school teachers will annually sign an agreement that states that they will not advocate for or promote in their teaching any position of doctrine that is in disagreement with the full Statement of Faith. (see Appendix C)

## X. PROPERTIES

- A. Title
1. The title to all property of this church, both real and personal and mixed shall be and remain vested in that portion of the Membership that shall remain faithful to the original purpose stated in Articles II and III of this Bylaw.
- B. Acquisition and Sale of Property
1. The church shall have power to acquire and hold property real, personal, and mixed, for the general purpose of the Church. All property so acquired shall be in the name of the Church.
- C. Use of Property
1. All properties belonging to the Church shall be available to the Membership for purposes consistent with the ministry of the Church, subject to regulation by the Official Board.
- D. Disbanding and Dissolution
1. No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, director or officer of the corporation, or to any private individual; and no donor, member, director or

officer of the corporation, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporation assets

2. In the event that Howardsville Gospel Chapel would disband, or for any reason cease to function as a church, all of its property, real, personal, and mixed, must be distributed in the following order:
  - a. AMF (formerly American Sunday School Union), or their successors, providing at that time AMF, or their successors, are subscribing to the doctrines as contained in the Articles of Faith of Howardsville Gospel Chapel. If not, it shall be given to some other missionary organization or evangelical organization that does so subscribe.
  - b. Howardsville Christian School.
3. Any organization receiving assets must be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as an exempt organization, or organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or any corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

## **XI. POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

1. The Official Board will oversee the creation and administration of the Policy and Procedures Manuals.

## **XII. ARBITRATION**

### **A. Disputes Between Believers.**

1. We believe that professing Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes recognizing that personal disputes taken before non-Christian authorities tarnishes the reputation of Jesus Christ. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32). We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander.

### **B. Notice of Arbitration**

1. 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 a 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 per sections C below and D below.

### **C. Limitations on Arbitration Decisions**

1. 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 IV.F above, were followed.
2. Should any dispute involve the removal of any church or school employee or church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in IV.O.10 and V.A.4 above were heeded.

### **D. Arbitration Procedures**

1. The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the Official Board.

XIII. Appendix A

Howardsville Gospel Chapel  
Summary Statement Faith

1. We believe the Scriptures of the Old Testament and New Testament are verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writing, and that they are of supreme, sufficient, and final authority in faith and life.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is true God and true man.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned and thereby, incurred not only physical death, but also that spiritual death which is eternal separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and manifest themselves as sinners in thought, word, and deed.
5. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as a substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified by grace alone, through faith alone on the grounds of His shed blood alone.
6. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into heaven, and in His present life there for us, as High Priest and Advocate.
7. We believe in “that blessed hope,” the personal, premillennial, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
8. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become the children of God.
9. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost, and eternal fellowship with the Father by believers.
10. We believe that Biblical growth is a process whereby the believer through the power of the Holy Spirit, using His Scriptures, puts off old habits and grows in the likeness of Christ.
11. We believe that sexual activity and intimacy are constrained by God to the marriage relationship of one man and one woman. Any sexual activity outside of this relationship, including LGBTQ+ sexuality or transgender identification, is sinful.

I confess that Jesus Christ is my Lord, and I agree with the above Statement of Faith.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

### Howardsville Gospel Chapel Leadership

As an Official Board member, employee, teacher, or person in leadership in the church, I certify that

1. I have read and understood the Howardsville Gospel Chapel Bylaws and Full Statement of Faith and agree to lead in compliance with these Bylaws and Full Statement of Faith.
2. I will not teach any position of doctrine that is in disagreement with the Full Statement of Faith.
3. I have signed the Summary Statement of Faith (Appendix A).

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C

Howardsville Christian School Leadership

As a School Board member, teacher, or employee of Howardsville Christian School, I certify that

1. I have read and understood the church Bylaws relating to Howardsville Christian School (IX – Ministry of Education) and the Full Statement of Faith of Howardsville Gospel Chapel, and I agree to lead in compliance with these Bylaws and the Full Statement of Faith.
2. I will not advocate for or promote in my teaching or leadership any position of doctrine that is in disagreement with the Full Statement of Faith.
3. I have signed the Summary Statement of Faith (Appendix A).

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Renew Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_