



NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN CENTER
BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this church shall be *NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN CENTER* also known as *NEW HOPE*.

ARTICLE II – AFFILIATION

This church is an independent, open, inclusive, and affirming Christian congregation.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSE

Purpose: *New Hope Christian Center* exists for the purpose of making new life and hope available to those seeking a new life with Jesus Christ or to those living in a state of darkness.

Vision Statement: *New Hope Christian Center* strives to offer hope and refresh life for anyone seeking a better way of living.

Mission Statement: *New Hope Christian Center* promotes a true sense of family and community where we make every effort to care for each other by providing help and assistance when needed.

1. We will grow spiritually by living out the liberating gospels of Jesus Christ.

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2. We strongly endorse the fruits of faith, hope, peace, and love with the greatest of compassion.
3. We are to be good stewards of all that God has blessed us with, using our resources wisely, yet generously.
4. It is our intention to be as transparent and non-judgmental in all our relations.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

NOTE: Individuals will have a choice to become a member or friend of New Hope.

A. Member. Any person, who KNOWS and UNDERSTANDS clearly the VISION and MISION of *New Hope*, registers his/her attendance regularly, provides support or service contribution, and demonstrates interest and loyalty.

1. ***Members Directory.*** The list of Members in good standing shall be maintained by the Board of Administrative Servants' (BOAS), Secretary, who shall report changes to the BOAS, including the Pastor.
 - a. It is the responsibility of the BOAS to communicate to all people who come to New Hope about our Vision and Mission.
 - b. It is the responsibility of the BOAS to remind frequently to all Members the Mission and Vision of New Hope
 - c. It is the responsibility of the BOAS to inform all members about changes or modification in the Vision or Mission of New Hope.
2. ***Members Directory Review.*** The BOAS shall review the Member's directory in the month of October each year.
 - a. A Member who does not have registered attendance, identified support or service contribution, and demonstrated interest and loyalty within the preceding period of *six (6) months* without any known reason, may be removed from the directory.
 - b. The BOAS shall notify this Member in writing by certified mail that the Member has been placed on a list of inactive Members and is not eligible to vote at any business meetings of New Hope.
 - c. If the inactive Member has not attended, provided support, and demonstrated further interest or loyalty for a period of two (2) months, immediately following notification, the BOAS shall have the authority, at its discretion, to refer to the person as a former Member.
 - d. An Inactive Member may be restored to the Members Directory

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when he/she demonstrates knowledge and understands clearly the CURRENT vision and mission of New Hope, registers attendance regularly, provides support or service contribution, and shows interest and loyalty again.

- e. The Inactive Member who is not restored during the period of *eight (8) months* shall be considered a former Member.
- f. A former Member may be restored to the list of Members Directory when he/she demonstrates to know and understand clearly the CURRENT vision and mission of New Hope, registers attendance regularly, provides support or service contribution, and show interest and loyalty again.

B. Friends of New Hope. A person who for one reason or another feels unable to be considered a Member and/or wants not to be on the Members Directory; but who knows the Vision and Mission of New Hope, and supports its goals and wants to be involved in the work of New Hope, but wishes to remain anonymous, may be designated as a Friend of New Hope.

1. **List of Friends of New Hope.** The list of the Friends of New Hope shall be maintained by the Secretary of the BOAS.
2. **Limitations on Friends of New Hope.** Friends may serve on appointed teams, have a voice in Church affairs and may participate in all activities of New Hope. Friends *may not* vote at congregational meetings or serve on the BOAS.

C. Conduct of Members and Friends. When a Member or Friend displays a conduct deemed detrimental to New Hope or puts at risk the security of its members:

1. The BOAS shall notify him/her discreetly in writing about his/hers inappropriate behaviour.
2. If after this notification the Member or Friend still is showing that inappropriate behaviour, the BOAS is empowered to remove him/her by *two-thirds* vote or take other appropriate action.

D. Right to Appeal. The action of the BOAS may be appealed at the next regular Congregational meeting or a special congregational meeting called for that specific purpose. The decision of the congregational meeting is final.

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1. Pending the outcome of the appeal the Member shall have the right to vote at regular and special congregational meetings.
2. Pending the outcome of the appeal the Member shall not have the right to vote regarding their own appeal.

C. Appeal Process.

1. The request for an appeal shall be submitted to the BOAS within thirty (30) days following the board's action.
2. The "BOAS" may consider the appeal and reverse its earlier decision without taking the matter to the congregational meeting.
3. Should the BOAS sustain its earlier decision and the Member wishes the appeal to continue, the request shall be included as an agenda item for the next regular congregational meeting or a special congregational meeting called for the purpose of considering the appeal.

Article V – CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Government of New Hope is vested in its congregational meetings, which exerts the right to control its affairs, subject to the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, laws of the State of Florida or the United States of America, or documents of legal organization.

- A. Time and Place.*** An annual congregational meeting shall be held each year in the month of October. The time and place of the annual congregational meeting shall be determined by the BOAS.
- B. Notification.*** The BOAS shall notify Members in writing at least four (4) weeks in advance.
- C. Voting Rights.*** Each Member in good standing has the right to vote. Proxy or any other form of absentee voting shall not be allowed.
- D. Quorum.*** In order to transact business, no less than fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) of the Members in good standing must be present.
- E. Votes Required for Approval.*** Decisions, including elections, requires approval by a vote of two-thirds of those Members present and voting, unless otherwise required by these Bylaws.

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F. Agenda. The agenda for congregational meetings shall be determined by the BOAS.

1. **Content.** The agenda shall include, but not be limited to, election of members to the Board, presentation of financial report, approval of budget, and receiving reports from the BOAS and the Pastor.
2. **Additions to Agenda.** Members and Friends of New Hope may request the BOAS to add agenda items by submitting additional agenda items to the Secretary no later than ten work days prior to the meeting.

G. Elections. All votes for elected positions shall be taken by secret ballot. If there is only one candidate for a position, vote may be taken by a show of hands.

H. Special Congregational Meetings. In addition to the annual congregational meeting, special congregational meetings may also be held. Special congregational meetings are governed by the same rules as those pertaining to the annual congregational meeting.

1. **Calling a Special Congregational Meeting.** A special congregational meeting may be called either by:
 - a. Majority vote of the BOAS
 - b. A petition signed by at least twenty five percent (25%) of New Hope Members and submitted to the Secretary of the BOAS.
2. **Nature and Purpose.** The nature and purpose of the special congregational meeting shall be stated in the petition and in notices and be written into the agenda.
3. **Actions.** All submitted actions must be approved by the BOAS for inclusion in the agenda for the congregational meeting.

Article VI – NEW HOPE ADMINISTRATIVE BODY

A. Name. The administrative body of New Hope Christian Center incorporates elected Members in good standing, and is called the Board of Administrative Servants (BOAS).

B. Authorization. Authorized to provide administrative leadership for *New Hope Christian Center*.

C. BOAS Responsibilities:

1. Responsible for providing a set of Bylaws, which are subject to approval by congregational Members.
2. Responsible for and in charge of all matters pertaining to the documents of legal organization and incorporation.
3. Responsible for New Hope property, leasing, renting or buying.
4. Responsible for Risk-management and physical and financial affairs of New Hope.
5. Responsible for collecting and disbursing funds, and keeping adequate church records.
6. Responsible for communicating and frequently reminding people attending New Hope about the vision and mission of New Hope and keeping all members informed about changes or modifications in both the vision and mission.

D. Conflict of Interest. More than one person from a household, family, or committed relationship; someone who is a church employee, excluding the Pastor; or someone who is a Clergy candidate shall not be eligible to serve on the BOAS.

E. Composition. There shall be six (6) members of the BOAS, including the Pastor. The Chair person or his/her designee, from among the elected board members, shall serve as Moderator.

F. Term of Office. The term of office for members of the BOAS, except the Pastor, shall be *two-year* staggered terms, with a portion being elected at each regular congregational meeting.

G. Meetings. The BOAS shall meet monthly and no fewer than *ten (10)* monthly meetings a year will be held. Except for sensitive issue sessions, meetings shall be open to the congregation and to the public to attend as observers with a voice and no vote; allowing the BOAS to speak to anyone issue first.

H. Minutes.

1. Will not be taken at sensitive issue sessions.
2. Minutes and financial reports shall be available to members of New Hope after approval at the following BOAS meeting. Minutes will be posted at

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- the New Hope Christian Center and on the website, with the financial report redacted on the website.
3. Minutes shall include a record of those present and decisions made.
 4. A copy of the minutes shall become part of the permanent records of New Hope.
- I. Quorum.** No less than a *majority* [50% plus 1] of the members of the BOAS must be present in order to transact business.
- J. Official Officers.** The official officers of the BOAS are the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Pastor.
1. **Election of Officers.** During the first meeting following elections to the Board, the BOAS shall elect from among its members a person to fill the position of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Those positions are for a one (1) year term, each year the current board members will select from within the current board.
 2. **Duties of Officers.**
 - a. **Chair.** The Chair shall serve as Moderator.
 - b. **Vice Chair.** The Vice Chair shall serve as Moderator in absence of the Chair.
 - c. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall be responsible for ensuring the maintenance of official correspondence and church records, membership list, and for ensuring that accurate records are kept of all meetings of the BOAS and of the Congregation. The Secretary will prepare the agenda for all BOAS meetings with guidance from the Chair and input from the other BOAS members. The Secretary is the officer authorized to receive petitions submitted to the BOAS.
 - d. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring the preparation and maintenance of all financial records. This shall include a monthly financial report to the BOAS and an annual financial report to the Congregation. The monthly and annual financial reports shall reflect receipts, disbursements, and outstanding financial obligations.
The treasurer will Chair a Financial Review Team (FRT) and together they will prepare an annual Church budget to be presented and approved by the BOAS first. The BOAS will present the budget for final approval by the congregation according to Article IX, Section D in these Bylaws.

K. Dereliction of Duties.

1. Meetings.

- a. Attendance.** BOAS members are required to attend as many meetings as possible.
- b. Missed Meetings.** Should a BOAS member miss two consecutive meetings or three meetings in one fiscal year; the BOAS will consider these actions as voluntary resignation as a BOAS member.
- c. Notification.** On a scheduled meeting if a BOAS member finds they are unable to attend they must notify the Chair or/and the Vice Chair no later than two hours prior to the start of the meeting.
- d. Waived.** Any of the above conditions can be waived under extenuating circumstances by consensus of the board.

2. Assigned Duties.

- a.** BOAS member's failure to complete assigned duties or tasks will be subject to review and evaluation of their performance regarding current position and responsibilities.
- b.** The BOAS will consider low evaluation results as justifiable reason for removal from their position.
- c.** On assigned duties or tasks if a BOAS member finds they are unable to accomplish them, they must notify the Chair or/and the Vice Chair no later than 10 work days after the duties or tasks were assigned to them.
- d.** Any of the above conditions can be waived under extenuating circumstances by consensus of the board.

L. Vacancies. In the event of a vacancy on the BOAS, members of the BOAS may appoint a qualified Member [according to Article V, Section C in these BYLAWS] from within the congregation to fill the vacancy until the next congregational meeting, when an election shall be held to fill the remainder of the term.

Those interested in the vacant position must have a sense of service calling.

M. Conduct. New Hope Christian Center cannot condone conduct deemed detrimental to New Hope or put at risk the security of its congregation on the part of any member of the BOAS. Therefore, the BOAS may remove by a *two-thirds* vote of the full BOAS any of its members whom they consider in violation of the above. A petition submitted to the Secretary of the BOAS and

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signed by *majority (50% plus 1)* of the Members in good standing of the congregation may also initiate such a procedure.

N. *Right to appeal.* A member of the BOAS subject to Board action may appeal the action to the congregation at its next regular congregational meeting or at a special congregational meeting which may be called for this purpose. The decision of the congregational meeting is final. Until the congregational meeting considers the appeal, the position held by the member of the BOAS shall be considered vacant.

O. *Limitation of Liability.* No member of the BOAS shall be liable for any act or failure to act by any other member of the BOAS or by any employee of New Hope. No member of the BOAS shall be liable for any loss arising from any fault in the title to any property acquired by New Hope. No member of the BOAS shall be liable for any loss arising from any fault in any security in which New Hope might invest, or from bankruptcy, insolvency, or wrongful act by any person to whom New Hope might entrust any of its property. No member of the BOAS shall be liable for any loss due to error of judgment or oversight on his/her part, or for any other loss whatsoever occurring in the carrying out of the duties of his/her office, unless this loss arises from the member's own willful neglect or fraudulent or criminal actions. No member of the BOAS or any employee of New Hope can be liable for any loss (physical or financial) for personal property left on Church grounds.

P. *Indemnity.* New Hope Christian Center shall protect every member of the BOAS against all costs arising in relation to his/her relations with New Hope, unless those costs are occasioned by his/her own willful neglect or fraudulent or criminal actions.

Article VII – Pastor

A. *Role.* In keeping with the biblical passage of 1 Peter 5:3, “Not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” The pastor is accountable to the congregation, not to the BOAS, for the satisfactory performance of his/hers duties.

B. *Responsibilities.* The pastor or pastoral leader will be responsible for the preaching, teaching, and spiritual guidance of New Hope Christian Center. The Pastor will automatically serve, on the BOAS as Pastor. The pastor will be the

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only person to order a worship service, including its content. The pastor is responsible for all Rites of Blessings, Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals, and/or Memorial Services. The pastor will direct and guide the ministry team leaders within New Hope. The pastor will be a listener and encourager to those who seek advice. The pastor should take time for personal prayer and retreat time. Likewise, continuing education through periodicals, relational books, and conferences should be a priority; and all other duties and responsibilities that seem appropriate by the BOAS.

C. *Pastoral Covenant.* The BOAS and Pastor shall develop a covenant between the Pastor and New Hope Christian Center. The covenant shall include a job description and address such matters as compensation that is consistent with equitable local standards, benefits, allowances, and leave.

D. *Pastoral Vacancy.* In the event of a vacancy in the position of Pastor, a Pastoral Search Committee shall be responsible for presenting a qualified candidate for election at a Congregational meeting. The Pastoral Search Committee shall develop and implement the pastoral search process.

1. *Composition of Pastoral Search Committee.* The Pastoral Search Committee shall consist of all BOAS members and an additional four (4) members in good standing selected by the BOAS.

2. *Election of Pastor.* The candidate is to be first called by the Pastoral Search Committee, and then presented to the congregation of New Hope. The candidate will be confirmed (or not) by a percentage of the votes cast during a Congregational meeting. The candidate will determine this percentage.

E. *Termination of Relationship.* The Pastor and congregation may choose at any time to terminate their relationship through mutual agreement. Unilateral failure to renew the Pastor's contract [writing or verbal] shall not constitute removal of the Pastor from office. No petition for removal of the Pastor based on irreconcilable differences is valid unless preceded by the process of conflict resolution, as referred to in Article VIII.

Article VIII – Conflict Resolution

A. *Conflicts.* When there are conflicts or difficulties within New Hope that cannot be resolved, including conflicts between the Pastor and congregation, the BOAS, the Pastor, or a petition signed by New Hope Members in good standing may invite intervention by an outside mediation party to resolve the conflict.

B. Removing the Pastor from Office – New Hope Christian Center may remove the Pastor from office for disloyalty, unbecoming conduct, dereliction of duty, or when irreconcilable conditions occur between the pastor and the congregation and cannot be resolved through mutual agreement.

1. Petition. Any petition to initiate the process of removing the Pastor from office must be submitted to the Secretary of the BOAS and be signed by at least fifty percent plus one (50% + 1) of the members in good standing.

a. The BOAS will advise the pastor by written letter and verbally in a special called Board Meeting of the congregation proposal regarding his role.

b. The Chair of the BOAS will then call a special Congregational meeting at the earliest possible date. This will be the only agenda item for this meeting.

2. Removal Process. The removal process should be effective by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of New Hope Members in good standing. This decision is final and the pastor should be removed immediately.

a. The BOAS will advise the pastor by written letter and verbally in a special called Board Meeting of the congregation of the final decision.

b. The Pastor shall remain fully compensated until the final action of the congregation.

Article IX – Financial

A. Authorized Signatures. Any church bank or other financial accounts shall require two (2) signatures for withdrawals, one must be the treasure and the second a BOAS member. Members of the BOAS shall be designated for signature authority.

B. Limit on Expenditures.

1. Pastor Authority. The Pastor shall have the authority to commit church funds within the approved budget in any amount not to exceed five percent (5%) of the annual budget for any given line item in the budget; any expenditure greater than that amount requires the approval of the BOAS.

2. BOAS Authority. The BOAS shall have the authority to commit church funds within the approved budget in any amount not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the annual budget for any given line item in the budget; any expenditure greater than that amount requires congregational approval.

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3. Church Member. No church member in good standing can purchase or spend any amount of money unless they don't wish to be reimbursed on any single item without approval of the BOAS.

C. Fiscal Year/ Budget Year. For the purpose of reporting, the fiscal year and the annual budget of New Hope Christian Center shall be the calendar year January 1st through December 31st.

D. Church Budget. The BOAS shall be responsible for the presentation of an annual operating budget reflecting anticipated receipts and disbursements to the Congregational meeting for approval. The approved budget may be amended, as needed, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the BOAS, which shall immediately notify the Members of New Hope Christian Center that such amendment, has been made.

Article X – Adoption and Amendments

A. Adoption. These BYLAWS were unanimously approved by the Congregation at the congregational meeting on September 9th of 2007 and becoming effective immediately.

B. Amendments – These BYLAWS may be amended or repealed at any duly convened Congregational meeting. Proposed amendments or repeals shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the BOAS no later than thirty (30) workdays prior to the Congregational meeting. Adoption of the amendment or the repeal shall require approval by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Members in good standing.

Article XI – Dissolution of Organization

Upon the dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.