

Constitution of the Highland Vineyard

Preamble: This constitution sets forth the mission, purposes, beliefs, values, priorities, practices, and government of the Highland Vineyard, and the requirements and privileges of those who choose to participate in the life of this church. The Christian life is a journey involving growth and change, and correction. Persons are not required to agree with this constitution as a condition for membership. All preaching and teaching in the Highland Vineyard will be consistent with the understanding of Biblical truth reflected in the Statement of Faith in this document.

Each member is encouraged to seek God in their own devotional study of the Bible, the inerrant Word of God. May we hear what God is saying, see what God is doing, and establish this church upon the truth of His Word and the good news of the Kingdom of God, made available to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

“In matters of faith, unity. In matters of opinion, diversity. In all things, love.”

I. Our Mission and Purposes.

- A. Introduction – This Constitution represents all regulations adopted for the governance of the Highland Vineyard, also referred to hereafter as “the church”.
- B. Our Mission – The mission of the Highland Vineyard is to equip and release all followers of Jesus to share in word, deed, and lifestyle the good news of God's loving plan to redeem the world through Christ, and under the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit to declare and demonstrate the Kingdom of God to the world around us through creative moment-by-moment ministry.
- C. Our Purposes.
 1. To become a caring church committed to the faith, values, priorities, and practices stated hereafter.
 2. To support and strengthen those who attend this local church through:
 - a. Pastoral care
 - b. Authentic relationships
 - c. Corporate worship
 - d. Biblical teaching
 - e. Resources for ministry
 - f. Biblical discipline
 3. To be a healing center where those who come to Christ can be totally free, in body, soul and spirit.
 4. To assist members of this church to discover and become true to the design of God in their lives.
 5. To assist members of this church to discover, develop and practice their natural and spiritual gifts.
 6. To “equip the saints for the work of ministry” (Ephesians 4:12, ESV).
 7. To recognize and act upon creative ideas from God, birthed in the hearts of leaders and members alike, through which God would use this church to relate the love of Christ to Louisville and beyond.
 8. To recognize daily opportunities to share Christ with our community through our deeds and our words.
 9. To plant new local churches when the extension of the Kingdom of God is best served in so doing.
 10. To bring renewal and growth to the larger Church of Christ in Louisville, Kentucky, Indiana and the world through the sharing of the material and human resources of this church with other churches and ministries.

II. Our Statement of faith.

- A. **God the King and the Holy Trinity** - WE BELIEVE that God is the Eternal¹ King². He is an infinite,³ unchangeable⁴ Spirit,⁵ perfect⁶ in holiness,⁷ wisdom,⁸ goodness,⁹ justice,¹⁰ power¹¹ and love.¹² From all eternity¹³ He exists as the One¹⁴ Living¹⁵ and True¹⁶ God in three persons¹⁷ of one substance,¹⁸ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,¹⁹ equal in power and glory.²⁰
1/Deuteronomy 33:27; Romans 1:20; 2Psalm 95:3; Isaiah 43:15; 3Psalm 147:5; Job 11:7-9; 4James1:17; 5John 4:24; 6Matthew 5:48; 7Isaiah 6:3; 1 Peter 115-16; 8Psalm 104:24; Proverbs 2:6; Isaiah 28:29; 9Exodus 33:19; Psalm 63:2; Psalm 31:19; 10Psalm 33:5; Psalm 89:14; Isaiah 30:18; 11Exodus 15:6; 121 John 4:8; 13Isaiah 43:13; 14Isaiah 45:5; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 15Psalm 42:2; Psalm 84:2; 16Jeremiah 10:10; 17John 1:18; John 10:30; John 14:9; John 14:16-17; John 14:26; John 15:26; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 18John 1:1; John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 3:17; 19Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Revelation 1:4; 20Revelation 5:13; Ephesians 3:14-21
- B. **God the King: The Creator and Ruler of All Things** - WE BELIEVE that God's kingdom is everlasting.²¹ From His throne,²² through His Son, His eternal Word,²³ God created,²⁴ upholds²⁵ and governs²⁶ all that exists:²⁷ the heavenly places,²⁸ the angelic hosts,²⁹ the universe,³⁰ the earth,³¹ every living thing³² and mankind.³³ God created all things very good.³⁴
21 Psalm 45:6; Psalm 145:13; Daniel 4:3; 22Psalm 93:1-2; 23John 1:1-3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:15-16; Hebrews 1:1-2; 24Genesis 1:1; Psalm 95:3-5; 25Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3; 26Psalm 103:19; Psalm 104:24-29; 27Psalm 96:4-6; 28Psalm 89:11; 29Psalm 103:20-21; 30Colossians 1:16-17; 31Psalm 104:5; 32Psalm 103:22; 33Psalm 22:28; Psalm 47:8; 34Genesis 1:31

- C. Counterfeit Kingdom: Satan and Demonic Hosts** - WE BELIEVE that Satan, originally a great, good angel, rebelled against God, taking a host of angels with him.³⁵ He was cast out of God's presence and, as a usurper of God's rule, established a counter-kingdom of darkness³⁶ and evil on the earth.³⁷
³⁵Revelation 12:7-9; ³⁶2 Corinthians 11:14; Colossians 1:13-14; Ephesians 6:12; ³⁷Mark 3:22-26; Ephesians 2:1-2; 1 John 5:19
- D. The Kingdom in the Creation of Man, the Fall and the Doctrine of Original Sin** - WE BELIEVE that God created mankind in His own image, male and female,³⁸ for relationship with Himself and to govern the earth.³⁹ Under the temptation of Satan,⁴⁰ our original parents fell from grace,⁴¹ bringing sin,⁴² sickness⁴³ and God's judgment of death to the earth.⁴⁴ Through the fall, Satan and his demonic hosts gained access to God's good creation.⁴⁵ Creation now experiences the consequences and effects of Adam's original sin.⁴⁶ Human beings are born in sin,⁴⁷ subject to God's judgment of death⁴⁸ and captive to Satan's kingdom of darkness.⁴⁹
³⁸Genesis 1:26-27; ³⁹Genesis 1:26; ⁴⁰Genesis 3:1; Revelation 12:9; ⁴¹Genesis 3:8; Romans 1:21; Romans 5:16; ⁴²Romans 5:12; ⁴³John 5:14; ⁴⁴1 Corinthians 15:22; ⁴⁵John 8:44; 1 John 5:19; ⁴⁶Romans 8:20-23; ⁴⁷Psalm 51:5; ⁴⁸Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 2:5; Romans 2:12; Hebrews 9:27; ⁴⁹Galatians 1:3-5; Galatians 4:8-9; Colossians 1:13
- E. God's Providence, Kingdom Law and Covenants** - WE BELIEVE that God did not abandon His rule over the earth⁵⁰ which He continues to uphold by His providence.⁵¹ In order to bring redemption, God established covenants⁵² which revealed His grace to sinful people.⁵³ In the covenant with Abraham, God bound Himself to His people Israel, promising to deliver them from bondage to sin and Satan and to bless all the nations through them.⁵⁴
⁵⁰Psalm 24:1; Psalm 96:10; ⁵¹Isaiah 40:22; Hebrews 1:3; ⁵²Romans 9:4; ⁵³Ephesians 2:12; ⁵⁴Genesis 17:3-8; Genesis 12:2-3; Genesis 15:4-6; Romans 4:3-5; Romans 4:16; Romans 4:20-25; Galatians 3:6-9; Galatians 3:13-14

WE BELIEVE that as King, God later redeemed His people by His mighty acts from bondage in Egypt⁵⁵ and established His covenant through Moses, revealing His perfect will and our obligation to fulfill it.⁵⁶ The law's purpose is to order our fallen race⁵⁷ and to make us conscious of our moral responsibility.⁵⁸ By the work of God's Spirit,⁵⁹ it convicts us of our sin⁶⁰ and God's righteous judgment against us⁶¹ and brings us to Christ alone for salvation.⁶²

⁵⁵Exodus 15:3-18; ⁵⁶Exodus 19:3-6; Exodus 24:3-4; Exodus 24:7; Romans 8:3-4; Romans 8:12-14; ⁵⁷Deuteronomy 5:1-3; Deuteronomy 30:15-18; Galatians 3:23-25; ⁵⁸Psalm 25:8-10; Romans 7:7; ⁵⁹John 15:26; John 16:8-11; 2 Corinthians 3:14-17; ⁶⁰Romans 7:13; Galatians 3:19; Galatians 3:21-22; ⁶¹Romans 2:1-11; ⁶²Galatians 3:24; Philippians 3:8-9

WE BELIEVE that when Israel rejected God's rule over her as King,⁶³ God established the monarchy in Israel⁶⁴ and made an unconditional covenant with David,⁶⁵ promising that his heir would restore God's kingdom reign over His people as Messiah forever.⁶⁶

⁶³1 Samuel 8:6-8; ⁶⁴1 Samuel 8:21-22; 1 Samuel 9:15-16; 1 Samuel 10:1; 1 Samuel 10:24; ⁶⁵1 Samuel 7:11b-16; Psalm 89:34-37; ⁶⁶Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 11:1-5; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Ezekiel 34:23

- F. Christ the Mediator and Eternal King** - WE BELIEVE that in the fullness of time,⁶⁷ God honored His covenants with Israel and His prophetic promises of salvation⁶⁸ by sending His Son,⁶⁹ Jesus, into the world.⁷⁰ Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary,⁷¹ as fully God and fully man in one person,⁷² He is humanity as God intended us to be.⁷³ Jesus was anointed as God's Messiah and empowered by the Holy Spirit,⁷⁴ inaugurating God's kingdom reign on earth,⁷⁵ overpowering the reign of Satan by resisting temptation,⁷⁶ preaching the good news of salvation,⁷⁷ healing the sick,⁷⁸ casting out demons⁷⁹ and raising the dead.⁸⁰ Gathering His disciples,⁸¹ He reconstituted God's people⁸² as His Church⁸³ to be the instrument of His kingdom.⁸⁴ After dying for the sins of the world,⁸⁵ Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day,⁸⁶ fulfilling the covenant of blessing given to Abraham.⁸⁷ In His sinless, perfect life⁸⁸ Jesus met the demands of the law⁸⁹ and in His atoning death on the cross⁹⁰ He took God's judgment for sin⁹¹ which we deserve as law-breakers.⁹² By His death on the cross He also disarmed the demonic powers.⁹³ The covenant with David was fulfilled in Jesus' birth from David's house,⁹⁴ His Messianic ministry,⁹⁵ His glorious resurrection from the dead,⁹⁶ His ascent into heaven and His present rule at the right hand of the Father.⁹⁷ As God's Son and David's heir,⁹⁸ He is the eternal Messiah- King,⁹⁹ advancing God's reign throughout every generation and throughout the whole earth today.¹⁰⁰
⁶⁷Mark 1:15; Galatians 4:4; ⁶⁸Romans 1:2-4; ⁶⁹John 1:14; ⁷⁰John 1:17-18; ⁷¹Luke 1:30-35; ⁷²John 1:14; Philippians 2:5-7; ⁷³Romans 5:19; 1 Corinthians 15:22; 1 Peter 2:22; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 8:29; ⁷⁴Luke 3:21-22; Luke 4:16-21; ⁷⁵Mark 1:14-15; Luke 11:20; Luke 17:20-21; ⁷⁶Luke 4:1-13; ⁷⁷Luke 4:43; ⁷⁸Luke 4:40; ⁷⁹Luke 4:41; ⁸⁰Luke 7:14-17; ⁸¹Mark 1:16-17; ⁸²Mark 3:13-15; ⁸³Matthew 16:18; ⁸⁴Luke 9:1-2; Luke 10:1-17; ⁸⁵John 1:29; John 6:51; John 4:9-10; ⁸⁶Mark 8:31; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5; ⁸⁷Galatians 3:13-14; ⁸⁸Acts 3:14-15; Hebrews 4:15; ⁸⁹Romans 5:18-19; ⁹⁰1 Peter 2:24; ⁹¹Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21; ⁹²Romans 1:18; Romans 1:32; Romans 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; ⁹³Colossians 2:13-15; ⁹⁴Matthew 1:1; ⁹⁵Luke 1:68-72; Luke 2:10-11; Matthew 9:27; ⁹⁶Acts 2:24-28; ⁹⁷Acts 2:29-36; ⁹⁸Romans 1:1-4; ⁹⁹Hebrews 1:1-3; ¹⁰⁰1 Corinthians 15:24-26; Ephesians 1:19-23; Revelation 5:5
- G. The Ministry of the Holy Spirit** - WE BELIEVE that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Church at Pentecost in power,¹⁰¹ baptizing believers into the Body of Christ¹⁰² and releasing the gifts of the Spirit to them.¹⁰³ The Spirit brings the permanent indwelling presence of God to us¹⁰⁴ for spiritual worship,¹⁰⁵ personal sanctification,¹⁰⁶ building up the Church,¹⁰⁷ gifting us for ministry,¹⁰⁸ and driving back the kingdom of Satan

by the evangelization of the world¹⁰⁹ through proclaiming the word of Jesus¹¹⁰ and doing the works of Jesus.¹¹¹

¹⁰¹Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4; ¹⁰²¹ Corinthians 12:13; ¹⁰³¹ Corinthians 12:4-7; ¹⁰⁴John 14:16-17; ¹⁰⁵Romans 12:1; Ephesians 5:18-20; ¹⁰⁶Romans 8:3-4; ¹⁰⁷¹ Corinthians 14:12; 1 Corinthians 14:26; ¹⁰⁸Romans 12:4-6; ¹⁰⁹Luke 11:20; 1 John 3:8b; ¹¹⁰Ephesians 6:10-20; ¹¹¹John 14:12-13; Romans 15:18-19; 1 Corinthians 4:20

WE BELIEVE that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Jesus Christ¹¹² and that He is our abiding Helper,¹¹³ Teacher,¹¹⁴ and Guide.¹¹⁵ We believe in the filling or the empowering of the Holy Spirit,¹¹⁶ often a conscious experience,¹¹⁷ for ministry today.¹¹⁸ We believe in the present ministry of the Spirit¹¹⁹ and in the exercise of all of the biblical gifts of the Spirit.¹²⁰ We practice the laying on of hands for the empowering of the Spirit,¹²¹ for healing,¹²² and for recognition and empowering of those whom God has ordained to lead and serve the Church.¹²³

¹¹²Romans 8:9-10; ¹¹³John 16:7; ¹¹⁴John 14:26; ¹¹⁵John 16:13-15; Romans 8:14; ¹¹⁶Luke 24:49; Acts 4:31; ¹¹⁷Acts 8:18-19; Acts 19:1-2; ¹¹⁸¹Corinthians 2:4-5; 2 Corinthians 4:7; 2 Corinthians 6:4-7; ¹¹⁹Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:15-17; ¹²⁰¹ Corinthians 12:7-11; 1 Corinthians 14:1; 1 Corinthians 14:5; 1Thessalonians 5:19-21; ¹²¹Acts 8:14-17; Acts 19:6; ¹²²Mark 1:41; Luke 6:18b-19; Mark 16:18; ¹²³Acts 13:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6

H. The Sufficiency of Scripture - WE BELIEVE that the Holy Spirit inspired the human authors of Holy Scripture¹²⁴ so that the Bible is without error¹²⁵ in the original manuscripts. We receive the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments¹²⁶ as our final absolute authority, the only infallible rule of faith¹²⁷ and practice.¹²⁸

¹²⁴² Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 Corinthians 2:12-13; John 14:26; ¹²⁵Psalms 19:7-9; Psalm 119:30; Psalm 119:43; Psalm 119:89; Matthew 5:17-18; John 3:34; John 10:35; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Revelation 22:6; ¹²⁶Luke 24:44; 2 Peter 3:15-16; Revelation 22:18-19; ¹²⁷Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 24:35; ¹²⁸Matthew 7:21; Matthew 7:24; Luke 1:38; James 1:22-25

I. The Power of the Gospel Over the Kingdom of Darkness - WE BELIEVE that the whole world is under the domination of Satan¹²⁹ and that all people are sinners by nature¹³⁰ and choice.¹³¹ All people therefore are under God's just judgment.¹³² Through the preaching of the Good News of Jesus and the Kingdom of God¹³³ and the work of the Holy Spirit,¹³⁴ God regenerates,¹³⁵ justifies,¹³⁶ adopts¹³⁷ and sanctifies¹³⁸ through Jesus by the Spirit¹³⁹ all who repent of their sins¹⁴⁰ and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord¹⁴¹ and Saviour.¹⁴² By this they are released from Satan's domain and enter into God's kingdom reign.¹⁴³

¹²⁹Luke 4:5-7; 1 John 5:19; ¹³⁰¹ Corinthians 15:22; Ephesians 2:1-3; ¹³¹Romans 1:21-23; Romans 1:32; ¹³²Romans 1:18; Romans 2:5; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Ephesians 5:6; ¹³³Mark 1:14-15; Acts 8:12; Acts 28:31; Ephesians 5:5; ¹³⁴John 16:7-11; ¹³⁵John 3:5-8; 1 Peter 1:23; ¹³⁶Romans 5:1-2; Romans 5:9; ¹³⁷Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6; ¹³⁸Ephesians 5:25; Hebrews 13:12; ¹³⁹¹ Peter 1:1-2; ¹⁴⁰Acts 2:38; ¹⁴¹Romans 10:9; ¹⁴²¹ John 4:13-15; ¹⁴³Colossians 1:13-14; Philippians 3:20

J. The Church: Instrument of the Kingdom - WE BELIEVE in the one,¹⁴⁴ holy,¹⁴⁵ universal Church.¹⁴⁶ All who repent of their sins and confess Jesus as Lord and Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit¹⁴⁷ and form the living Body of Christ,¹⁴⁸ of which He is the head¹⁴⁹ and of which we are all members.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁴John 17:20-21; Ephesians 4:3-6; ¹⁴⁵¹ Corinthians 3:16-17; ¹⁴⁶Matthew 16:17-18; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 2:18-19; 1 Peter 2:9-10; ¹⁴⁷Titus 3:4-7; ¹⁴⁸Romans 12:4-5; ¹⁴⁹Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 5:23; ¹⁵⁰¹ Corinthians 12:27

K. Baptism and the Lord's Supper - WE BELIEVE that Jesus Christ committed two ordinances to the Church: water baptism¹⁵¹ and the Lord's Supper.¹⁵² Both are available to all believers.

¹⁵¹Matthew 28:19-20; ¹⁵²¹ Corinthians 10:14-17; 11:23-26

L. The Kingdom of God and the Final Judgment - WE BELIEVE that God's kingdom has come in the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ,¹⁵³ that it continues to come in the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the Church,¹⁵⁴ and that it will be consummated in the glorious, visible and triumphant appearing of Christ¹⁵⁵ – His return to the earth as King.¹⁵⁶ After Christ returns to reign,¹⁵⁷ He will bring about the final defeat of Satan and all of his minions and works,¹⁵⁸ the resurrection of the dead,¹⁵⁹ the final judgment¹⁶⁰ and the eternal blessing of the righteous and eternal punishment of the wicked.¹⁶¹ Finally, God will be all in all¹⁶² and His kingdom, His rule and reign,¹⁶³ will be fulfilled in the new heavens and the new earth,¹⁶⁴ recreated by His mighty power, in which righteousness dwells¹⁶⁵ and in which He will forever be worshipped.¹⁶⁶

¹⁵³Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 4:23; Matthew 12:28; ¹⁵⁴Matthew 6:10; Matthew 10:7-8; Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:11; John 15:26-27; Romans 14:17-18; ¹⁵⁵Mark 13:26; Acts 1:9-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; ¹⁵⁶Revelation 19:11-16; ¹⁵⁷Matthew 25:31-32; 1 Corinthians 15:23-25; ¹⁵⁸Revelation 20:10; ¹⁵⁹¹ Corinthians 15:51-52; ¹⁶⁰John 5:28-30; Revelation 20:11-15; ¹⁶¹Matthew 25:31-46; ¹⁶²¹ Corinthians 15:24-28; ¹⁶³¹ Timothy 6:13-16; ¹⁶⁴² Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:5; ¹⁶⁵Revelation 21:27; ¹⁶⁶¹ Timothy 1:17; Revelation 7:9-12

M. Marriage, family, and fidelity - WE BELIEVE that God instituted the sacrament of marriage, and that the marital relationship between a husband and wife is a physical picture of the mystical union between Christ and His Church. Marriage is the foundation of the family, which is the basis of our society. Sexual relationships outside of marriage violate God's law and are contrary to God's plan. (Genesis 2:24, Exodus 20:14, Leviticus 18:20, Leviticus 18:22-23, Leviticus 20:13, Deuteronomy 5:18, Proverbs 5:3-13, Proverbs 7:6-27, Proverbs 9:13-18, Matthew 19:5-6, Mark 10:7-9, I Cor. 5:9-13, I Cor. 6:15-20, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:3-7, Ephesians 5:30-32, Colossians 3:5-7, Hebrews 13:4)

III. Our Values, Priorities, and Practices.

A. Our Values.

1. We value **THE PURSUIT OF GOD**. We are hungry to know God's presence, hear His voice and follow hard after Him. *Psalms 63:1-3*
2. We value **CHRISTLIKENESS**. We desire that through the power of the Holy Spirit Jesus' love, mercy, grace, truth, purity, power, and integrity would shine through all that we are and do. *Ephesians 5:2*
3. We value **BEING SPIRIT-LED**. We honor Jesus as our Head and the Holy Spirit as our Counselor and the Administrator of our churches. We seek to be actively responsive to the Holy Spirit's daily leading of our personal lives and ministries and of the local church. *Galatians 5:5*
4. We value **PRAYER**. We believe that prayer is essential, because it is our primary means of communion with God, and because of our personal lives and ministries and of the local church. *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Philipians 4:6*.
5. We value **DISCIPLESHIP**. Our intent is to teach all believers to believe Jesus' words, obey His commands and do His works. We aim first to grow as disciples of Christ ourselves and then to make disciples of others. *Matthew 28:18-20*
6. We value **THE KINGDOM OF GOD**. We aim to move in the signs of the present fulfillment of the kingdom, invoking the Spirit's powerful presence, ministering through the Spirit's gifts, and seeing God heal and work wonders. *Mark 1:14, 15*
7. We value the **MERCY OF GOD**. We believe that mercy is fundamental to all that God does in salvation. We, therefore, aim to extend mercy to one another and to all to whom we minister. *Colossians 3:12, 13*
8. We value **INTEGRITY**. It is important for us to speak the truth, deal honestly, and live uprightly. *Ephesians 4:15*.
9. We value **SERVANT LEADERSHIP**. We believe that Christ has put significant leadership authority in the hands of the pastor and associates. We aim to exercise that authority with humility, selflessness, grace, care for the sheep, and a sincere desire to build up the Body of Christ. *Mark 10:37, 44-45*
10. We value **THE INDIVIDUAL**, single or married, and we want to enable and support mature relationships and family growth. *Romans 12:9, 10*
11. We value **UNITY**. We are convinced that all who belong to Christ are one in His Body, the Church. We aim to maintain unity by honoring all who call on Jesus' name and by seeking reconciliation with all parts of the Church. *John 17:21-23*
12. We value **COLLEGIAL RELATIONSHIPS**. We are honored by every person whom God adds to the Vineyard. We aim to work together to build the Church through mutual respect, open communication, determined cooperation, and believing and speaking the best about each other. *1 Corinthians 13:4-7*
13. We value **REALITY**. We desire to walk in the Spirit and see real supernatural works of God, but to also live honestly and naturally on the natural plane of this present world, with God's leading and in conjunction with excellent, relational thinking. We value wisdom as the art of skillful living. *James 1:5*
14. We value **SIMPLICITY**. We wish to do nothing for "religious effect" but rather to operate in natural low-key, non-hype patterns. We desire to do the ministry of Christ with joy. *Philippians 4:4*
15. We value being **CULTURE CURRENT**. We aim to develop an atmosphere of ease, and to speak, act, and dress in ways in which our culture can respond positively. For example, we reflect this value through worship music that is of a popular style. *1 Corinthians 9:19-23*.

B. Our Priorities.

1. **WORSHIP.**

- a. We desire to worship God with our whole being. We want Jesus at the center as our Lord. We hunger for the fullness of the Spirit... His glory resting upon us! *Philippians 3:3, Hebrews 13:15, Psalm 42:1, 2, John 4:24, Psalm 63:1-5, Romans 12:1*
- b. We desire Spirit-enabled worship in a style that is intimate, dynamic, culture current and life changing. *1 Peter 2:4, Ephesians 2:19-22, 1 Corinthians 14:26*

2. **THE WORD.**

- a. We want to hear the Word of God taught in a practical, inspiring way, in conjunction with His current prophetic word. *Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 1 Corinthians 14:26*
- b. We aim to hear and obey God's Word to us... to be "doers of the Word" who are being transformed into the likeness of Christ. *Matthew 7:24-27, James 1:22*

3. **FELLOWSHIP.**

- a. We are the household of God, one Body in Jesus Christ, joined together as brothers and sisters forever. *John 17:20-23, Romans 12:3-5*
- b. We seek to develop real, intimate enabling friendships, built on covenant love, mutual responsibility and faithfulness. *Hebrews 3:12-14, Philippians 2:3-5, Ephesians 4:11-16, Colossians 3:12-15*

4. **MINISTRY.**

- a. We believe that all Christians are called to serve Christ in the power of His Spirit, in ways that build up the local church. *1 Peter 4:10, 11, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Acts 1:8*
- b. We are called to do the ministry of Christ in the world today, for example, to...
 - i. preach the Gospel of the Kingdom *Matthew 10:7*
 - ii. persuade people to repent and believe in Jesus *Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Corinthians 5:11, Colossians 1:28*
 - iii. heal the sick *Matthew 10:8*
 - iv. care for the poor and those in need *Matthew 19:21*
 - v. counsel those in need of God's wisdom *Colossians 3:16*
 - vi. teach believers to follow Christ *1 Corinthians 11:1*
 - vii. give our resources to the work of Christ *Luke 6:38*
 - viii. train Christians to serve the Lord. *Ephesians 4:11-12*

5. TRAINING.

- a. We believe that all Christians should be trained to “do the works of Christ.” *Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:2.*
- b. We are committed to the “show and tell” model of “on the job” training, where trainees are introduced to doing ministry functions with trainers and are taught during and after the training experience. *Luke 11:1-4*
- c. We aim to provide training for all aspects of responsible Christian life and ministry. *Ephesians 4:11-16*

6. SENDING.

- a. We aim to renew, refresh, and enable existing churches by sending trained personnel out on short-term ministry trips. *Matthew 10:5-15, Luke 9:1-6, Luke 10:1*
- b. We aim to build the Church of Jesus Christ by sending trained personnel to plant churches around the world. *Revelation 5:9-10, Romans 15:20*

C. THE PRACTICES WE AIM TO INSTILL

1. PRAYER SKILLS

- a. Prayer of praise and adulation *Psalms 34:1*
- b. Prayer of petition *Philippians 4:6*
- c. Prayer of intercession *Romans 8:26-27, 1 Timothy 2:1*
- d. Prayer of tongues *1 Corinthians 14:14-15*
- e. Prayer of faith, in healing and expulsion of demons *James 5:15, Mark 1:25*

2. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY SKILLS

- a. Intimacy *Song of Solomon 7:10-12*
- b. Communication *Song of Solomon 7:6-9*
- c. Child-rearing *Ephesians 6:4*
- d. Financial planning *Proverbs 13:11*
- e. Life management *Ephesians 4:22-24, Proverbs 15:22*

3. GENERAL MINISTRY SKILLS

- a. Communication skills — the ability to speak
 - i. the ability to witness — sharing your experience with others *Matthew 28:18-20*
 - ii. the ability to counsel — sharing God's Word with others *Ephesians 4:15*
 - iii. the ability to teach — sharing God's Word with others *2 Timothy 2:24-26*
- b. Community skills — the ability to relate
 - i. ministry to the Lord in...
 - ◆ worship *John 4:24*
 - ◆ fellowship *John 15:4*
 - ◆ obedient service of all kinds *Mark 10:45*
 - ◆ giving *John 4:34*
 - ◆ personal Bible study *2 Timothy 2:15*
 - ii. ministry to the Body
 - ◆ giving and receiving forgiveness *Matthew 6:14, Matthew 18:21-35*
 - ◆ laying on hands *1 Timothy 4:14*
 - ◆ exercise of gifts *1 Corinthians 14:26*
 - ◆ fellowship — sharing and relating to one another *Hebrews 3:12-14*
 - ◆ healing the sick — spiritually, socially, emotionally, bodily, demonic *James 5:13-16*
 - iii. ministry to the world
 - ◆ care for the poor
 - ◆ care of the lost
 - ◆ care of the sick and broken-hearted

IV. General qualifications for leadership.

- A. Sincere love for and pursuit of Jesus Christ demonstrated in regular personal worship, meditation on the Word, and prayer. *Psalm 1:1-6, Psalm 18:1-3*
- B. Demonstrated fullness of the Holy Spirit, of faith and of wisdom. *Acts 6:3*
- C. A perception of leadership not as grasping for position, title, power, authority, respect, or privilege, but as a commitment to humble service and self-sacrifice. *Mark 10:37, Mark 10:42-45, John 13:12-16, Philippians 2:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1*
- D. Personal exposure, loyalty and commitment to their pastors, and to those whom they are pastoring. *Mark 3:14-15*
- E. Trustworthiness, with the ability to resist being bribed or bought. *Exodus 18:21*
- F. Commitment to the “Barnabas-style” of open, loving communication, solving relational problems, processing anger constructively, encouraging, building up, maintaining confidences strictly. *Acts 4:36, 37, Ephesians 4:25-32*
- G. Willingness to be a “team player” and to help one’s pastoral associates to succeed. *Philippians 2:3-4*
- H. For those who are married, a strong, loving marriage in which both the husband and wife sense the call to minister. *Acts 18:26*
- I. Capable and respected, mature in the faith, and with proven ministry ability. *1 Timothy 3:2-7*
- J. Willingness to be judged by strict standards and to accept reproof. *James 3:1*
- K. Love for people and for Jesus, without desire to benefit personally at the expense of the sheep. *John 21:17, Ezekiel 34:1, 1 Peter 5:1-5,*
- L. Commitment to equipping others for ministry through active recruiting, training, deploying, monitoring and nurturing. *Mark 3:13-15,*
- M. Commitment to doing excellent work, taking responsibility seriously, being proactive, planning and executing well. *Ezra 5:1-2*
- N. A committed, cheerful giver who tithes regularly to the fellowship. *Malachi 3:8-10*

V. **Membership** – Membership is open to anyone who acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who embraces the beliefs, values, priorities and practices of the church, and who seeks to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of love. Persons desiring to become members of the church should express to a pastor or elder of the church their desire to do so.

A. Membership practices and activities which will be encouraged.

- 1. Walk in a surrendered relationship to Jesus Christ and in a manner consistent with the mission, vision and statement of faith of the Highland Vineyard.
- 2. Attend a class presenting the History and Values of the church.
- 3. Demonstrate a commitment to the church by agreeing to a member’s covenant annually in such form as determined by the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors, and the Board of Elders.
- 4. Unite with other committed members of the church in the following values and practices:
 - a. Love and serve others, in both the Highland Vineyard and our community. *John 13:15-16*
 - b. Regularly attend and participate in a small group. *Acts 2:44-46*
 - c. Maintain an outward focus by seeking to invite and include those who do not know Jesus. *Luke 14:23*
 - d. Practice servant evangelism and kindness outreach through organized events as well as sensitivity to the Holy Spirit in “naturally supernatural” interaction with others throughout the day. *Mark 10:45*
 - e. Worship regularly at weekend celebrations *Hebrews 10:25*
 - f. Cheerfully, generously, and regularly financially support the church *1 Corinthians 16:2, Leviticus 27:30, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7*
 - g. Personally pursue the transforming power of God through:
 - i. Seeking maturity in ones walk with Christ. *Galatians 5:22-23*
 - ii. Through the pursuit of spiritual gifts. *1 Corinthians 14:1*
 - h. Pursuit of a culturally relevant lifestyle by:
 - i. loving people where they are *Philippians 2:5-7*
 - ii. communicating Biblical truth in understandable ways *1 Corinthians 9:20-23*

B. Rights and privileges of membership –

- 1. All members of the church are encouraged to meet with a pastor or elder at least once per year to review:
 - a. How and where God’s leadings and giftings might be changing the role of that individual in the church.
 - b. Vision for new ministry or enhancements to existing ministry venues God may be giving each member.
 - c. How the church might bless, defend and support the God-given design and destiny of each member.
- 2. Private information shared with any person in leadership in the church will be regarded as confidential.
- 3. All members of the church are encouraged to request to meet with one or more pastors or elders of the church to express any concerns or issues which might arise.

C. **Reception of new members into the church** - Formal recognition of new members in a regular Sunday worship service shall occur not less than two times per year and as often as the pastor and elders deem

necessary. In this venue, new members shall publicly and formally be received into this faith community through a covenant ceremony whereby the general membership of the church commits to love and serve these new members in all matters of faith and life.

- D. **Annual Meeting** - The pastors and elders shall prepare an annual meeting, open to all members of the Highland Vineyard. The date and time of this meeting shall be announced not less than four weeks in advance. This meeting shall address but is not limited to the following information:
1. The progress and challenges of the church over the past year.
 - a. Ministry.
 - b. Church finances and budget.
 - c. Major changes affecting the church.
 2. Plans and vision for the coming year.
 - a. Ministry.
 - b. Church finances and budget.
 - c. Major changes affecting the church.
 3. Reception of persons of whom God is making gifts to this local church. While lists in the New Testament demonstrate the diversity of gifts and ministries through which God will bless His Church (Romans 12:3-8, I Corinthians 12, I Corinthians 14, Ephesians 4:11-13, etc.), these lists demonstrate the ongoing creative nature of God and the intent of the Holy Spirit to work through **all** who regularly participate in the life of this church.
 4. Review of any amendments to this Constitution.
- E. **Resignation of membership.** Members are free to resign their membership to the church at any time, but are encouraged to meet with a pastor or elder of the church before doing so. As the Church is the Body of Christ, joined together by Christ, we believe God will confirm to those in leadership His intention to move individuals who have been members of the Highland Vineyard. When such departures occur, where it is peaceable and possible to do so, the church leadership will assist departing members in finding another church family that will best facilitate their Christian faith journey. Members who have not participated in the life of the church for one year will be considered to have resigned.
- F. **Removal from membership.** Members who involve themselves in gross sin (1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Proverbs 6:16-19) and thereby bring a reproach on the name of Christ, shall upon receiving counsel confess their sin, evidence sincere penitence and turn from that sin. Those refusing to receive counsel, or to ask for forgiveness and lead Christ-like lives, as commonly understood from the Scriptures, will forfeit their membership. Those who forfeit their membership can, upon confession and repentance with attending evidence, be reinstated to full fellowship. The Elders will be responsible to insure that all such cases are done according to scriptural pattern and admonition (Matthew 18:15-20). The total Body is responsible to deal with any such situations in the love, mercy, and longsuffering of Christ.

In matters of faith, if a member significantly departs from the mission, purposes, beliefs, values, priorities, and practices of the church (as stated in this document), the leadership of the church may revoke the membership of such an individual. The elders shall determine when such departures are considered matters of faith and when these differences are only matters of opinion. Because matters of faith involve the spiritual wellbeing of the individual, the elders will make every attempt to correct an individual considered to be erring from the Christian faith before revoking their membership in the church.

VI. Church Government.

- A. Jesus Christ is formally recognized as the head of the Highland Vineyard:
“Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body.” Colossians 1:18 (NLT)
All persons to whom authority is delegated in the leadership of the Highland Vineyard must first and foremost acknowledge their obligation to seek with their entire being how Christ through the Holy Spirit would have them to lead this church.
- B. Highland Vineyard church government shall consist of a board of elders (referred to hereafter as “the elders”). Those appointed to serve as senior pastors and associate pastors in the church shall be considered elders. These pastors shall participate as elders except in the review and adjustment of their own salaries or in the event of disciplinary action intended for their good as described in this constitution.
- C. **The board of elders shall consist of not less than three persons.**
- D. Unity among the elders of the Highland Vineyard is a value and a priority. All decisions considered by the elders shall be subject to both earnest discussion and a time of prayer on the matter under consideration.

- E. With the presentation of all new business requiring agreement among the elders, a time of prayer will be designated by the elders in keeping with the weight of each matter under consideration.
- F. When the elders deem it appropriate to do so, others in the congregation may be enlisted to pray as well.
- G. The elders shall announce to the entire church times of prayer regarding major decisions affecting the church, so that the entire church might pray for God's direction in such matters. During such times of prayer, members are encouraged to share with the elders and pastors their sense of God's direction.
The following shall be considered major decisions:
 1. Changes to the statement of faith of the church.
 2. Changes to the constitution of the church.
 3. Changes involving meeting times for worship services.
 4. Changes to the fundamental format and structure of worship services.
 5. Discretionary expenditures in excess of \$5000.
 6. Any expenditures in excess of \$10,000.
 7. To borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose of the furtherance of the mission of the church.
 Except in the case of emergency expenditures involving the repair and maintenance of the church, the designated time of prayer for major decisions affecting the church shall not be less than four weeks.
Should major decisions concerning the church involve inherently confidential matters where the divulging of such matters might harm the church or members of the church, the elders may elect to address such matters confidentially and are not obligated to announce such matters to the church.
- H. Only after designated times of prayer will the elders decide issues involving the church.
 - I. Decisions regarding all matters of the church may be decided through a 2/3 majority vote of the elders, but the elders shall diligently pursue unanimous agreement in all decisions regarding the church.
 - J. Formal meetings of the elders – The elders shall formally meet not less than once per month for the purpose of conducting church business. The senior pastor shall publish the dates and times for all such meetings.
 1. The agenda of formal meetings should be communicated to the elders not less than 1 week in advance.
 2. Elders may attend and participate in formally called meetings telephonically when necessary.
 3. Elders should vote on agenda items only when unanimous agreement is not possible.
 4. In the event that after prayer, the elders are not in unanimous agreement on any matter, any elder present may request a 1 week extension of the time of prayer regarding any decision under consideration.
At the end of this week, if the elders are still not in unanimous agreement, the elders may elect to extend the time of prayer regarding the matter, or may decide the matter by 2/3 majority vote.
 5. Minutes from each formal meeting of the elders shall be archived in the church records, and should include:
 - * Date, time, and location of the meeting
 - * Persons in attendance
 - * Agenda items addressed, with the progress and/or outcome of each recorded
 6. Decisions involving the church which require agreement among the elders shall not be decided when more than one elder is absent.
 - K. Informal meetings of the elders - Elders shall informally meet not less than once a month to discuss matters pertaining to the church and to pray for the church. While formal decision making processes are limited to formal meetings of the elders as described above, the elders are free to meet and discuss matters of the church at any time and in any venue.
 - L. When beneficial to the church to do so, the elders may seek the counsel of others God may use to assist in the leading of this church, including persons recognized to have transcongregational giftings and those who serve in regional or national leadership of Vineyard USA.
 - M. The elders may assemble committees to assist in specific ministry initiatives or projects that the church may undertake, and to designate funds and delegate authority to individuals whom the elders believe God would use to carry out these initiatives on behalf of the church. Committees should be formally disbanded after having accomplished the ministry objectives or projects for which they were convened.
 - N. The elders shall have the right to review and to set the salaries of all paid staff members of the church.
 - O. The elders shall have the right to interview, review, approve and disqualify candidates for paid staff positions in the church.
 - P. When such action is considered by the elders to be in the best interest of individuals and the church, the elders may ask persons to step down temporarily from voluntary participatory roles in the ministry of the church so that these individuals may address other issues which have arisen in their lives.
- Q. **Ministry, qualifications, and appointment of Pastor(s).**

1. **Ministry of Pastors.** The Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors(s) are selected by the elders of the church. While these pastors are also elders, the title of pastor is reserved for those serving in publicly recognized ministry roles, including:
 - a. Preaching and teaching Christian doctrine, values and conduct through the Bible.
 - b. Consistently publicly articulating the vision and direction of the church.
 - c. “Shepherding the flock” through participation in the spiritual health, growth, and equipping of those who are members of the church. This participation might include but is not limited to: prayer, counsel, encouragement, direction, instruction, and correction.
2. **Biblical Qualifications of Pastors and Elders.**
 - a. **Blameless** (Tit 1:7a; 1 Tim 3:2a)
 - b. Not self-willed (Tit 1:7b)
 - c. Not quick tempered (Tit 1:7c; 1 Tim 3:2b)
 - d. Not addicted to wine (Tit 1:7d; 1 Tim 3:3a)
 - e. **Not violent** (Uncontentious - not pugnacious) (Tit 1:7e; 1Tim 3:3b)
 - f. **Not greedy for money** (Tit 1:7f)
 - g. Hospitable (Tit 1:8a; 1 Tim 3:2f)
 - h. Respectable - loving what is good (Tit 1:8b)
 - i. **Sober minded** (Prudent – sensible) (Tit 1:8c; 1 Tim 3:2d)
 - j. Just (Tit 1:8d)
 - k. **Holy** (Tit 1:8c)
 - l. Self-controlled (Tit 1:8f)
 - m. Holding fast the faithful word **as he has been taught**, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict (Tit 1:9)
 - n. **If married, the husband of one wife** (Tit 1:6b; 1Tim 3:12)
 - o. Able to teach (1 Tim 3:12)
 - p. Gentle (1 Tim 3:3a)
 - q. Free from the love of money (1 Tim 3:3e)
 - r. Managing his own household well (1 Tim 3:4a)
 - s. Keeping his children under control with dignity (1 Tim 3:4b)
 - t. **Having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination** (Tit 1:6c,d)
3. **Appointment of pastors.** The Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors(s) are selected by the elders and affirmed by the congregation through the process described below. While new pastors may be recruited from outside the church to meet the leadership needs of the church, in keeping with the doctrine and history of the Vineyard movement, the elders will also watch for those in the church whom God may be gifting and equipping to serve in pastoral roles as well.
 - a. Candidates considered from outside the church as well as those recognized within this faith community as having pastoral giftings will be formally, carefully and prayerfully considered by the elders.
 - b. Candidates for pastoral positions will be commended by the elders to the congregation via written and verbal announcement not less than six weeks prior to inviting any candidate to serve in a pastoral position in the church.
 - c. If any member of the church takes exception with the candidacy of a person being considered to serve in a pastoral position, this member should promptly (within 4 weeks of the announcement) and candidly express any such reservations to an elder or pastor of the church.
 - d. In the event that an elder or pastor is approached by a member with concerns over the candidacy of a person under consideration for a pastoral role, the elders will convene to discuss such concern(s). In the event that the elders find that such concerns do in fact disqualify a candidate, the candidate’s name shall be removed from consideration. In the event that the elders find that concerns expressed do not disqualify a candidate from consideration, the original elder to whom the concerns were first expressed will meet with the concerned member to explain the decision of the elders.
 - e. At the conclusion of the six week announcement period, if no member has presented concerns that would disqualify a candidate from serving as a pastor in the church, the elders shall present the candidate to the congregation for public affirmation and the appointment of this person to serve as a pastor to the church.
4. **Discipline or removal of a pastor –**
 - a. A pastor may be disciplined or removed from their appointed position in the event that:
 - i. The elder board determines that a pastor is guilty of gross sin. (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Proverbs 6: 16-19).
 - ii. The elder board finds a pastor’s ministry to be ineffective.

- iii. The elder board determines that a pastor's personal beliefs have come to substantially differ from the Statement of Faith of the church.
 - iv. The elder board determines that a pastor's ministry significantly diverges from the mission, purposes, values, priorities, and practices of the church, as described in this constitution.
 - b. In the event that any member of the church believes any of these four conditions to be true of one serving in a pastoral position, this member should communicate their concern in writing to a pastor or an elder, and request a meeting to discuss their concern.
 - c. All such concerns will be carefully investigated and prayerfully considered by the elder board. When a concern is found by the elders to be valid, the elders shall make every reasonable attempt to correct the pastor involved.
 - d. If the pastor is able and willing to address the concern, the elder board may elect to dismiss the concern or to establish a probationary period to verify that the pastor involved satisfactorily addresses the concern. If the elders find that pastor involved does satisfactorily address the concern, within the designated probationary period, the elder board will dismiss the concern.
 - e. In the event that a pastor is not able or willing to address a valid concern, the elders board may convene to discuss disciplinary action towards that pastor, up to and including dismissal.
 - f. All proceedings regarding the processes of pastoral discipline shall be documented in writing and archived.
5. The Elders will be responsible to insure that all such disciplinary action is conducted in accordance with the Biblical pattern of admonition (Matthew 18:15-20). The entire church is responsible to deal with all matters of church discipline in the love, mercy, and longsuffering of Christ.

R. Appointment and ministry of Elders.

- 1. **Ministry of Elders** – Serving with the pastors, elders shall:
 - a. Exercise general spiritual oversight of the congregation.
 - b. Assist in the worship services, word ministry, shepherding and discipleship.
 - c. Provide spiritual counsel for the fellowship by meeting regularly with the pastors to discern, clarify, and implement direction from the Holy Spirit.
 - d. Diversity of gifts among the Elders will be acknowledged and specific application of these gifts in service to the church will be encouraged.
 - e. Individual Elders may be appointed by the board of elders to oversee specific ministries in the church, when God imparts the grace and authority that would allow an elder to serve in this manner.
 - f. Elders are responsible to judge the teaching and the exercising of spiritual gifts. (*1 Corinthians 14:29*)
- 2. **Biblical Qualifications of Pastors and Elders.** (See Article VI-J-2 above)
- 3. **Appointment of elders.** Elders are selected by the board of elders and affirmed by the congregation through the following process:
 - a. When persons in the church are noticed by members and elders alike for exhibiting the gifting and qualifications of an elder, the board of elders shall through prayerful deliberation consider if God would have this individual to serve as an elder in the church.
 - b. Candidates will be commended by the elders to the congregation via written and verbal announcement not less than six weeks prior to inviting any candidate to serve in as an elder in the church.
 - c. If any member of the church takes exception with the candidacy of a person being considered to serve as an elder, this member should promptly (within 4 weeks of the announcement) and candidly express any such reservations to an elder or pastor of the church.
 - d. In the event that an elder or pastor is approached by a member with concerns over the candidacy of a person under consideration to serve as an elder, the elders will convene to discuss such concern(s). In the event that the elders find that such concerns do in fact disqualify a candidate, the candidate's name shall be removed from consideration. In the event that the elders find that concerns expressed do not disqualify a candidate from consideration, the original elder or pastor to whom the concerns were first expressed will meet with the concerned member to explain the decision of the elders.
 - e. At the conclusion of the six week announcement period, if no member has presented concerns that would disqualify a candidate from serving as an elder in the church, the elders shall present the candidate to the congregation for public affirmation and the appointment of this person to serve as an elder in the church.
- S. **Governments/Administrations** - Those with administrative skills will be acknowledged and given oversight of ministries established by the church to meet specific nurturing needs. (*1 Corinthians 12:28*)
- T. **Helps Ministries** - The helps ministry, as recorded in *1 Corinthians 12:27* will be acknowledged and encouraged in our fellowship and as an outreach to the community.

- U. The Highland Vineyard, in keeping with applicable state and local laws as a non-profit Christian organization, exercises its right to acknowledge leadership by ordination and/or licensing, in accordance with the policies of Vineyard USA.
 - V. Because all persons employed by the church represent the church, conditions for employment shall include adherence to the beliefs, values, priorities and practices of the Highland Vineyard.
 - W. In the event that an employee of the church is found to behave in a manner inconsistent with the beliefs, values, priorities and practices of the church, such behavior shall be considered just cause for termination of the employment of that individual.
- VII. Annual review of the ministries of the Highland Vineyard.
- A. In preparation for the annual meeting described in this constitution, an annual review of the ministries of the church shall be conducted by the Pastors, Elders, and others having administrative or ministerial responsibilities in the church.
 - B. The purpose of the annual review of the ministries of this church is to clarify and coordinate the ongoing ministries of the church, towards both the members of the church as well as the community we seek to serve.
 - C. The effectiveness of each existing ministry should be honestly and candidly assessed.
 - D. In keeping with our belief that God is an infinitely creative artist, all participants should come prepared to discuss new ministry possibilities as observed in hearts of church members through whom God may be presenting new ways to express the love of Christ through the life of this church.
 - E. In conjunction with this annual review, the elder board will review salaries for church staff members and adjusted these salaries where such adjustments are deemed appropriate by the elder board.
 - F. In conjunction with this annual review, the participatory roles of all church staff and church leaders should be reviewed by the elders as well as those serving in these roles, and adjusted in a manner in keeping with the best interest of the church.
- VIII. Church finances and fiscal responsibility.
- A. All property of the church shall be held in the name of the church. All funds received by the church shall be held in an account of the church. All records of the church shall be maintained at the principal office of the church and shall be opened to inspection for members of the church at any reasonable time and upon reasonable advance request.
 - B. No member or leader of the church shall be entitled to any funds of the church except for reasonable compensation for services actually rendered or through the benevolence fund as described in Article VIII.K.
 - C. The elders shall be responsible for the management of both the material and monetary assets of the church.
 - D. All contributions will be treated with confidentiality.
 - E. The elders shall value and practice a policy of transparency regarding church finances.
 - F. Quarterly statements summarizing budgeted and actual income and expenses shall be:
 - 1. Printed and made available at a designated physical location in the church for any wishing to review them.
 - 2. Posted in downloadable format on the church website.
 - 3. Made available to any person requesting a quarterly statement at any time upon request.
 - G. Members of the church may also upon request obtain detailed quarterly and annual financial statements.
 - H. The Elders are responsible for establishing the budget of the church and for overseeing the management of the financial affairs of the church.
 - I. **General fund.**
 - 1. Unless otherwise designated, all donations shall be applied to the general fund of the church.
 - 2. The general fund shall be used in the addressing of all routine expenses and financial obligations to other ministries supported by this church.
 - 3. Surpluses from the general fund shall be assigned to other funds, in keeping with the church budget, in the following order:
 - a. Emergency fund.
 - b. Benevolence fund.
 - c. Individual church ministry funds.
 - d. Special purpose funds.
 - 4. In the event of shortfalls in the general fund, monies from other funds may be used in meeting the financial obligations of the church.
 - J. **Emergency fund** - The church shall maintain an emergency fund of not less than \$8,000 and not more than \$20,000.
 - K. **Benevolence fund.**
 - 1. The benevolence fund balance shall not exceed \$10,000.
 - 2. Benevolence support of those in need shall not exceed the amount in the benevolence fund.

3. Elders shall have the authority to disperse financial assistance at their discretion to individuals in need, up to \$250 per occurrence. (Pastors and associate pastors are also elders).
 4. Benevolence needs greater than \$250 but less than \$500 shall be agreed upon by not less than 3 elders.
 5. Benevolence needs greater than \$500 shall require approval of 2/3rds of the elder board.
 6. Chronic benevolence requests from the same individual (more than one request in 3 months) shall be considered and approved or declined by the elder board.
- L. **Individual church ministry funds** - Funds shall be established for the support of individual ministries within the church, in keeping with the budget established for the church.
- M. **Special funds** – Special funds may be established for the purpose of fundraising for special purposes.
1. The church shall be informed each week of the progress and status of all special fundraising initiatives.
 2. Provided that the emergency fund and individual church ministry funds are fully funded, surpluses from the general fund may be applied to special funds.
 3. Church members may designate contributions to special funds, but are not encouraged to do so.
- N. **Designated giving.**
1. Designating donations to specific funds or purposes is not encouraged. Financial circumstances may pose difficulties in honoring the intent of the donors who engage in designated giving.
 2. All designated donations shall be used for their designated purpose. If this is not possible, the donor may either remove the designation, or the donation shall be returned to the donor.
- O. Persons inclined to designate donations to a specific use are encouraged to read the *Church finances and fiscal responsibility* portion of the church constitution and to discuss any concerns they may have with a pastor or elder.
- IX. **Amendment of this Constitution.** With healthy growth and change, amendments to this constitution will from time to time become necessary. This document may be changed through the process outlined below.
- A. The elders shall publish proposed amendments to the constitution for review by the church membership.
 - B. The elders shall present proposed amendments to the constitution to the church membership, with explanation of the reasons such amendments are being recommended by the elders at this time.
 - C. A period of not less than eight weeks shall be designated for the purpose of prayer and dialogue among the membership and leadership of the church concerning proposed amendments.
 1. During this time, any member having concerns and reservations with proposed changes should address these concerns verbally and in writing to a pastor or elder of the church.
 2. All such concerns must be formally addressed and prayerfully considered by the board of elders.
 3. In the event that concerns expressed by one or more individuals result in the revisions to or the withdrawal of proposed amendments to this constitution, the membership will promptly be informed of any such change in the status of a proposed amendment.
 - D. Following this period designated for prayer and dialogue, the elders will convene and vote upon the proposed amendments to the constitution.
 - E. Approved amendments to the constitution will be promptly announced to the congregation.
- X. **Dissolution.** In the event of the dissolution of the church, no part of the net assets of the church shall be used to the benefit of any donor, member, or private individual. After full payment of all debts and obligations of the church, the elders shall serve as trustees in the disbursement of all remaining assets of the church among those Christian ministries regularly supported by the church and other Christian ministries recommended by any member of the church and approved by the elders. The process of dissolution shall be regarded and treated as a “major decision” as defined in Article VI.F. of this constitution.