

Hillcrest Baptist Church
Pensacola, Florida

Constitution and Bylaws

2016 Edition

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Constitution

Hillcrest Baptist Church

Pensacola, Florida

ARTICLE I – Name

The name of this corporation shall continue to be known as “Hillcrest Baptist Church of Pensacola, Inc.” located in Escambia County, Florida, in or near Pensacola, Florida, and incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida as a non-profit corporation. This corporation shall be referred to in the Constitution and Bylaws as the “Church.” The Church is organized for religious and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and its assets are to be used in performing the Church’s functions.

ARTICLE II – Purpose

The purpose of the Church shall be to serve Christian religious objectives, namely the advancement of the kingdom of Christ and His gospel through worship, evangelism, Christian education, missions, fellowship, and ministry service consistent with the free exercise of religion.

ARTICLE III – Mission Statement

The mission of the Church is to help people in becoming like Christ by worshipping God, connecting with others, and serving the world.

ARTICLE IV – Statement of Faith

The Church recognizes the Bible as the inspired Word of God, as the only basis for our beliefs, and as its sole authority in faith and practice. However, in order to set forth certain principles on which Southern Baptists generally agree, the Church affirms its agreement with *The Baptist Faith and Message* as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention June 14, 2000, as a general statement of our faith and practice.

ARTICLE V – Powers

The Church is an autonomous body, not subject to the direction or control of any outside body, ecclesiastical or otherwise. The government of the Church is composed of the body of believers who compose it, under the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Church shall have and exercise all powers related to its internal affairs, such as but not limited to establishing and enforcing standards of membership, electing officers, selecting and guiding those who function in its organizational structure, acquiring and directing the use of its properties, and adopting such rules and procedures as it deems appropriate to its religious objectives.

ARTICLE VI – Denominational Relationship

Though a self-controlled religious congregation, the Church voluntarily purposes to cooperate with Pensacola Bay Baptist Association, Florida Baptist Convention, and Southern Baptist Convention or any successor thereto in support of religious purposes shared in common with these other organized units of Southern Baptist life. This cooperation does not grant to any of the aforementioned entities any authority over the Church, nor in any way alter or lessen the autonomy and independence of the Church. The Church shall determine the extent of its financial support of these other units of Southern Baptist life.

ARTICLE VII – Membership

The Church shall define its qualifications of membership in the Bylaws (Article I). The Church may admit such persons, as in its judgment, meet these qualifications.

ARTICLE VIII – Membership Covenant

The Church Membership Covenant is stated as follows: “Having received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, having been scripturally baptized, and being in agreement with the mission, vision, and values of Hillcrest Baptist Church, I commit myself to God and to other church family members to do the following:

I will **protect the unity of my church** by acting in love toward other members, by refusing to gossip, and by following church leadership;

I will **share the responsibility of my church** by praying for its health and growth, by inviting unchurched people I know to attend, and by warmly welcoming those who visit;

I will **serve the ministry of my church** by discovering my gifts and talents, by using those gifts and talents to serve Christ and others, and by developing a servant’s heart;

I will **support the testimony of my church** by attending services and activities faithfully, by living a Christ-like, godly life, and by supporting my church financially.”

ARTICLE IX – Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27) Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4) 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 sexual immorality (including adultery, pre-marital sex, homosexual sex,

bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and the use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10)

Therefore, because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, the Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastors and staff of the Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one biological man and one biological woman. Finally, the facilities and property of the Church shall be available only to host weddings between one biological man and one biological woman.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as the local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Church members and community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this statement of marriage, gender, and sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11) We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Church.

ARTICLE X – Officers

The officers of this corporation shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, three (3) at-large trustees, and such others as required by law or defined by the Bylaws (Article III). Only members of the Church shall be eligible to serve as corporation officers. These officers shall have the powers normally associated with these offices, or required by law, and compatible with religious freedom. The officers of the corporation shall serve as the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE XI – Meetings

The Church shall conduct such meetings for worship, business, training, inspiration, or other religious causes as it shall deem necessary or desirable. All business affairs of the corporation shall be decided at regular or special business meetings called for such purposes as specified in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE XII – Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution or discontinuance of the corporation, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provisions for all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all remaining assets of the corporation as the Board of Trustees shall determine, in accordance with section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). Upon dissolution of the Church, no member shall receive, nor have any rights to, any assets of the corporation.

ARTICLE XIII – Parliamentary Authority

The Church's parliamentary authority shall be the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* provided that any rule in *Robert's* is not inconsistent with the Constitution, Bylaws, and/or any special rules of order the Church may adopt.

ARTICLE XIV – Amendments

This Constitution may be amended, or repealed and replaced, at any regular or special business meeting by a three-fourths vote of the Church members present at such meeting. Any proposed change to this Constitution must be provided to the Church in writing and made available to the Church not less than four (4) successive Sundays prior to the business meeting at which a vote is to be held.

Bylaws

Hillcrest Baptist Church of Pensacola

Pensacola, Florida

In order to serve its stated purpose and to honor provisions set forth in its Constitution, Hillcrest Baptist Church of Pensacola, Inc., adopts the following Bylaws. We declare and establish these Bylaws to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern the Church body in an orderly manner. Hillcrest Baptist Church of Pensacola, Inc. will be further referred to in these Bylaws as the “Church.” The Church maintains its principle office at 800 East Nine Mile Road, Pensacola, Florida 32514.

ARTICLE I – Membership

The membership of the Church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ; affirm the tenets of the Church Constitution; fulfill the qualifications for membership stated in Section 1 below; and who offer evidence, by their confession and their conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmations and this Constitution and Bylaws, and are actively pursuing and continuing a vital fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 1: Qualifications for Membership

1. The basic qualifications for membership in the Church shall be as follows:
 - a. A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
 - b. Baptism by immersion in water as a testimony of salvation.
 - c. Completion of the Church’s membership class.
 - d. A commitment to abide by the Church’s membership covenant as defined in the Church Constitution (Article VIII).
 - e. Ratification of the membership candidate by vote of the Church at any regular or special business meeting, or by the Deacons acting in the stead of the Church. (Bylaw Article I, Section 3.1.h.)
2. The Church may admit a person to membership by any of the following ways:
 - a. By the candidate’s profession of faith followed by baptism by immersion administered by the Church, completion of the Church’s membership class, and a commitment to abide by the Church’s membership covenant.
 - b. By a letter from another Baptist church of like faith and order affirming that the person was a member in good standing at the time the letter was issued. Candidate must complete Church’s membership class, and affirm the Church’s membership covenant.

- c. By the candidate's statement that he or she has personally professed faith in Jesus Christ, has been baptized by immersion as a testimony of their faith in Christ, and is or has been a member of a church from which a letter is now not available. Candidate must complete Church's membership class, and affirm the Church's membership covenant.
 - d. By restoration of an excluded member who has satisfied the Church that he or she has corrected any condition which led to exclusion, and that the candidate has renewed his or her Christian commitment.
3. Except as provided below, each member shall enjoy the same rights and privileges of membership, but that membership shall not be the sole qualification for any office or position in the Church's ministry or structure.

Section 2: Responsibilities of Membership

The responsibilities of membership are described in the Church Membership Covenant as stated in the Church Constitution, Article VIII.

Section 3: Voting Rights of Membership

1. As an autonomous, self-governing Church, each member shall have the right to vote on the following matters:
 - a. The annual budget of the Church.
 - b. The election of Church officers, deacons, and members of the Administrative Committee.
 - c. The disposition of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church.
 - d. The merger or dissolution of the Church.
 - e. The acquisition of substantial real property and any related indebtedness.
 - f. Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws of the Church.
 - g. The calling or the removal of the Senior Pastor.
 - h. Prospective Church members. The active Deacon Body may act in the stead of the Church to ratify new members between any regular or special Church business meetings. (Bylaw Article I, Section 1.1.e.)
 - i. Additional business related matters at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and Administrative Committee.
2. Each member sixteen (16) years of age and older is entitled to one vote.
3. Voting by proxy is prohibited.
4. Voting by absentee ballot is prohibited.

Section 4: Termination of Membership

The Church shall remove from its list of members the name of any deceased member and may dismiss a member on any of the following grounds:

1. The request by the member or another Baptist church for a letter certifying the member's status in this Church in order to transfer membership to another Baptist church.
2. Evidence that the member has united with a different church.
3. A member's written request that his or her name be removed from the Church's membership.
4. Dismissal by the Church according to the following conditions:
 - a. Evidence that the member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the Church Membership Covenant (Constitution Article VIII), and/or the Church Statement of Faith (Constitution Article IV), and/or biblical principles which constitute a godly life, such that the member's belief, practice, or conduct hinders the ministry influence of the Church in the community.
 - b. Procedures for the dismissal of a member shall be according to Matthew 18:15-17, as initiated by the Senior Pastor with the advice and counsel of the Deacons. Redemptive steps should be taken to restore the offending member into proper fellowship with the Church.
 - c. If the offending member persists in the offending behavior without appropriate remorse and repentance, the Active Deacon body is authorized to act on behalf of the Church to exercise appropriate church discipline upon the offending member, which may include removal of membership. A two-thirds majority vote of the deacon body must occur to execute any disciplinary action against an offending member, including the removal of membership. A quorum for any such meeting shall consist of a number not less than 50% of the total number of active deacons.

Section 5: Restoration of Membership

Members dismissed by the Church may be restored by the Church when their lifestyles are judged by the Senior Pastor, with the advice and counsel of the deacons, to be in accordance with the Church Membership Covenant (Constitution Article VIII) and the Church's Statement of Faith (Constitution Article IV). A two-thirds majority vote of the active deacon body is necessary for restoration of membership. A quorum for any such meeting shall consist of a number not less than 50% of the total number of active deacons.

ARTICLE II – Meetings

1. The Church shall schedule general meetings for worship, prayer, instruction, inspiration or other purposes.
2. Business meetings shall be held as needed and at least annually to approve the annual Church ministry budget; elect Church officers, individuals to the deacon ministry, and members of the Administrative Committee; and to act upon other matters needing congregational action or attention. A quorum for any business meeting shall consist of those members present and voting.
3. The Church shall adopt the annual budget at the business meeting preceding the beginning of the new fiscal year. The Administrative Committee shall circulate summaries of the proposed annual budget at least one week prior to the meeting at which it is presented.
4. A Special Business Meeting of the Church may be called as needed in one of the following ways: a) an agreement between the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of Deacons; b) a majority of the Administrative Committee; or c) a majority of the Deacon Body, when the principle item of business pertains to the termination of the Senior Pastor. Special Business Meetings may be scheduled only on a Sunday or Wednesday after at least one week's notice has been given to the Church body, unless the Special Business Meeting is called for the purpose of amending, or repealing and replacing, the Constitution and/or the Bylaws, in which case notice must be given over four (4) successive Sundays. A Special Business Meeting must be for a stated purpose(s) and only that/those purpose(s) may be considered at said meeting.

ARTICLE III - Officers

Section 1: Officers

For legal and financial undertakings and purposes, the officers of the Church shall be:

1. **PRESIDENT.** The Senior Pastor shall serve as President of the Church and shall act as moderator of the Church. He shall preside at regular or special business meetings of the Church and perform other duties normally discharged by a society's presiding officer. If, during the course of a Church business meeting, the pastor finds it necessary to speak directly in support or opposition to an issue, he may appoint a temporary moderator to preside until such issue is decided. During a vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor, the Vice-President will serve as moderator. If, during a vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor, the office of Vice-President is also vacant, the Church may elect another to serve as moderator. All appointive actions made in the absence of a Senior Pastor are subject to Church ratification.

2. VICE PRESIDENT. The Vice President shall be appointed annually by the Senior Pastor, subject to Church ratification, and shall act as moderator of the Church in the absence of the Senior Pastor.
3. SECRETARY. The Secretary shall be appointed annually by the Senior Pastor, subject to Church ratification, and shall act as clerk of the Church, oversee the preparation and maintenance of a faithful record of business meetings, arrange for the safekeeping of these records, and provide any Church member access to these records on the basis of a reasonable request.
4. TREASURER. The Treasurer shall be appointed annually by the Senior Pastor, subject to Church ratification, and shall review financial transactions and prepare financial statements that may be used to report the financial condition of the Church to Church staff, the Administrative Committee, and the Church.
5. AT-LARGE TRUSTEES. The At-Large Trustees shall be nominated from among the Church body by the Administrative Committee. The duty of At-Large Trustees shall be to serve as corporate agents in any and all business and financial matters as required by law or authorized by the Church. The Church shall affirm annually three (3) members to serve as At-Large Trustees. Each will serve a three (3) year term, with one being elected each year to ensure that terms are staggered.

Section 2: Board of Trustees

The Officers of the Church are hereby designated as Trustees of the Church, and thereby Trustees of the Corporation.

Section 3: Removal of Officers

Officers may be removed by the Church at any regular or special business meeting whenever such a removal is deemed by the members as being in the best interests of the Church. Officers who serve concurrently as employees of the Church may be removed according to stipulations for removal in Article IV of the Bylaws.

ARTICLE IV – Senior Pastor and Church Staff

Section 1: Senior Pastor

1. The Senior Pastor shall serve as the spiritual leader and chief administrative officer of the Church. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for all worship and other public services of the Church. He shall have authority over the pastoral and administrative staff of the Church, in cooperation with the Administrative Committee, and shall direct the work and ministry of the Church staff. The basic qualifications for the Senior Pastor are set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Peter 5:1-3.

2. The Church shall elect the Senior Pastor upon the recommendation of the Pastor Search Committee (Article VI, 3.2), and the recommendation by a majority of the active members of the deacon body, at a regular or special business meeting. The Church's call of a Senior Pastor shall require the support of not less than seventy-five (75) percent of members voting at the special business meeting called for such purpose. The Senior Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period.
3. The Senior Pastor serves on the Administrative Committee, Executive Staff Team, and is an *ex officio* member of any *ad hoc* committee, special committee, or ministry team or organization of the Church.
4. When a Senior Pastor resigns, he shall give the Church a notice of at least two weeks, but the Church shall be at liberty to permit a resigning Senior Pastor to adjust the length of notice as circumstances may require, as determined by the Administrative Committee.
5. A decision to review the Senior Pastor's performance with a view toward termination must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - a. The Chairman of Deacons may call a meeting of the active Deacon Body to determine whether the office of Senior Pastor has been impaired or should be vacated. At least five (5) days advance written notice must be given to the Active Deacons and the Senior Pastor before such meeting may be called to order. A quorum of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the active Deacon Body is required to determine if the office of Senior Pastor should be declared vacant. The Senior Pastor shall be afforded the opportunity to hear any and all allegations at said meeting, and shall be given opportunity to rebut such allegations. Deacons may call for a special business meeting of the Church to address this issue by majority vote and in the manner prescribed by the Bylaws for calling special business meetings (Article II, 4). The Vice-President shall preside at this special business meeting with the Chairman of Deacons speaking on behalf of the Deacon Body. Should the office of Vice-President be vacant at the time of the special business meeting, the Chairman of Deacons will preside as moderator, with an appointed designee speaking on behalf of the Deacon Body.
 - b. A majority of those members voting at a special business meeting for the purpose of reviewing a Senior Pastor's performance shall be necessary to withdraw the office from a Senior Pastor.
 - c. If the Church dismisses the Senior Pastor, it shall provide salary, retirement, and insurance, the terms of such aid being determined by the Administrative Committee in light of specific circumstances pertaining to the termination.

Section 2: Other Pastoral Staff

1. With the exception of the Senior Pastor, pastoral personnel deemed necessary to the growth, health, and function of the Church shall be nominated and called by recommendation of the Senior Pastor and a vote of the Administrative Committee. The Administrative Committee may, at its discretion, determine to ask the Church to elect any particular pastoral staff candidate.
2. Pastoral Church staff may be dismissed, with or without cause, at the discretion of the Senior Pastor, with the advice and counsel of the Administrative Committee.

Section 3: Non-Pastoral Employees

1. Employees with supervision responsibilities of non-pastoral personnel may employ personnel in their related areas with final approval of either the Senior Pastor and/or Executive Pastor. The Administrative Committee shall approve any newly created employment positions.
2. Non-Pastoral Church staff may be dismissed, with or without cause, at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and/or the Executive Pastor.

Section 4: Executive Staff Team

1. The Senior Pastor will designate an Executive Staff Team consisting of not less than three (3) and not more than (12) staff personnel. The Executive Staff Team shall be responsible for establishing staff and ministry vision, initiatives, policies, and directives. Executive Staff Team members shall keep the Senior Pastor updated and informed as to ministry progress, issues, concerns, and needs regarding the respective ministry constituencies they oversee.
2. The Senior Pastor, or his designate, shall serve as the chairman of the Executive Staff Team.
3. The Executive Staff Team shall meet regularly as directed by the Senior Pastor.
4. The Executive Staff Team shall recommend those from among the Church body to serve on the Administrative Committee subject to Church ratification as stipulated in the Bylaws, Article VI.1.2.e.

ARTICLE V – Deacons

1. The basic scriptural qualifications of are set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and I Timothy 3:8-13. A Deacon shall be worthy of respect and filled with the Holy Spirit; have a reputation for wisdom, sincerity, temperance, and honesty; be a strong Christian witness in the Church and community; and have a redemptive, forgiving nature. The wife of a married deacon

will be expected to have the same spiritual qualifications of a Deacon. A Deacon must be committed to faithful Bible study, attendance and participation in the worship services and ministries of the Church, and generously support the Church with their time, talents, and finances.

2. The primary task of Deacons shall be to serve the Church by assisting the Senior Pastor and Church staff in the work of ministry. Deacons function primarily as servant leaders and have no formal governmental, procedural, or business authority except for those functions explicitly detailed in these Bylaws where ratification by Deacon Body is required. The Senior Pastor may seek counsel from or inform the Deacon Body at his discretion regarding important or sensitive matters facing the Church.
3. Deacons will determine the best organizational structure for their ministry, and are encouraged to participate in serving in other areas of Church ministry.
4. Deacon officers will consist of Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary. Officers will be elected annually by the Deacon body at a meeting prior to the onset of the new Church year, for a term of one-year. Unless otherwise specified, the Deacon elected as Vice-Chairman also serves as Chairman-elect and will automatically rise to the position of Chairman the following year.
5. The Deacons shall meet on a regular basis at a time and schedule of their choosing but not in conflict with the Church's schedule of general meetings. Special meetings of the Deacon Body may be called as needed by either the Deacon Chairman or the Senior Pastor. Reasonable notice shall be given to the Deacon Body for any such special meeting.
6. Deacons will have oversight in the discipline of the Church with the advice and counsel of the Senior Pastor, as stated in Bylaw Article I.4.4.
7. New Deacons are selected annually by the Deacons according to the following procedure:
 - a. Deacons will form a Deacon Selection Team from within the Deacon body to work with the Senior Pastor to review potential candidates according to qualifications and willingness to serve. This process will include inactive deacons eligible to return to active status as well as potential deacon nominees from among the membership of the Church.
 - b. The Church will be notified in advance that a Deacon selection process is underway and may be given an opportunity to submit nominations in writing, provided the Deacon Selection Team and the Senior Pastor agree that a need for new Deacons exists. The Deacon Selection Team and the Senior Pastor shall determine the number of men necessary for nomination to the office of active Deacon.

- c. Candidates who fulfill biblical and Church requirements shall be interviewed by members of the Deacon Selection Team and presented with qualifications and expectations. Willing and available candidates shall then be interviewed by the Senior Pastor.
 - d. Any man twenty-one (21) years of age or older may be considered as a candidate for active Deacon if he has been a Church member for at least one (1) year prior to the initiation of the Deacon selection process and did not serve during the preceding calendar year on the Church Deacon Body.
 - e. Candidates are presented to the Deacon body for affirmation and then to the Church for ratification at any regular or special business meeting, and are approved by a majority vote of the Church.
 - f. Deaconship does not automatically transfer to the Church from another church. Ordained Deacons who unite with the Church in membership must participate in the selection process and be elected by the Church in order to serve as an active Deacon.
 - g. All Deacon candidates, regardless of previous ordination, shall be a member of the Church for at least one (1) year prior to being considered as an active Deacon.
 - h. Deacons shall be elected to serve a four (4) year term, after which the Deacon must go on inactive status for a period of one (1) year before becoming eligible to serve again as an active Deacon.
8. The term of a Deacon shall terminate upon: death; resignation; termination of Church membership; or, removal from his office by either the Deacons or the Church. The service of a deacon may be terminated at any time upon a recommendation of a majority of the active Deacon Body. This recommendation shall be based upon a finding by the Deacon body that a given Deacon has failed to substantially perform his duties or no longer meets the scriptural or Church qualifications as presented in Article V of the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI – Church Committees

The Church is to be recognized as a Jesus-ruled, pastor-led, congregationally-accountable church in accordance with biblical principles laid down in the New Testament. As such, the Church may utilize committees, ministry teams, and other organizations to assist in fulfilling its purpose, achieving its mission, and providing service opportunities for gifted members.

Section 1: Administrative Committee

- 1. The Administrative Committee shall be composed of both pastoral and non-pastoral Church leaders and will function as the primary ministry and administrative oversight

body of the Church, working with the Church pastoral staff to provide administrative leadership and accountability for the Church.

2. The Administrative Committee shall be composed of the following members:
 - a. The Senior Pastor.
 - b. The Executive Pastor. Should the office of Executive Pastor be vacant, the Senior Pastor may appoint another pastor to represent the Church staff.
 - c. The Chairman of Deacons. In the event that the Deacon Chairman cannot serve due to a conflict of interest, the Deacon Secretary shall serve in place of the Deacon Chairman so long as the conflict of interest continues to exist. In the event that the Deacon Secretary cannot serve due to a conflict of interest, the Deacon body shall elect a substitute deacon to serve on the Administrative Committee in the place of the Deacon Chairman so long as the conflict of interest continues to exist.
 - d. The Vice-Chairman of Deacons. In the event that the Deacon Vice-Chairman cannot serve due to a conflict of interest, the Deacon Secretary shall serve in place of the Deacon Vice-Chairman so long as the conflict of interest continues to exist. In the event that the Deacon Secretary is currently serving in place of the Deacon Chairman, or cannot serve due to a conflict of interest, the Deacon body shall elect a substitute deacon to serve on the Administrative Committee in the place of the Vice-Chairman so long as the conflict of interest continues to exist.
 - e. Six (6) at-large members of the Church nominated by the Executive Staff Team and elected by the Church. Each at-large member shall serve a three (3) year term, with terms of each member being staggered so that two (2) members' terms expire each year. At-large members may not be eligible for re-election until at least one (1) year has elapsed from the end of their previous term. The Church will be notified in advance that nominations for the Administrative Committee are being accepted, and shall be given an opportunity to submit nominations to the Executive Staff Team in writing.
 - f. Members of the Administrative Committee should be active members of the Church for a minimum of one (1) year before standing for election, and must demonstrate a life of faithful and sincere commitment to Christ, a love and dedication to the Church, and a generous support of the Church with their time, talents, and finances.
3. The Administrative Committee will oversee the following areas of Church operations:
 - a. The financial management of the Church including, but not limited to, setting the annual Church budget; developing and promoting special fund-raising programs for the Church; overseeing Church income and expenses; making periodic financial reports to the Church; and overseeing general financial policies for the Church.

- b. The personnel management of the Church, including, but not limited to, establishing personnel policy; determining salary guidelines for paid staff; assisting the Senior Pastor and the Executive Pastor in filling vacant positions where appropriate; and terminating the employment of staff personnel as stipulated in the Bylaws, Article IV.
 - c. The properties management of the Church, including, but not limited to, overseeing the operation, maintenance and use of Church facilities; recommending the expansion or acquisition of facilities; working with Church staff to ensure that all properties whether buildings, grounds, equipment, furnishings, or vehicles are properly serviced, insured, and maintained.
 - d. Administering the preaching schedule for Church worship services during a vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Executive Staff Team.
4. Unless otherwise specified, a majority shall constitute a quorum for Administrative Committee business, and a majority of all committee members shall be necessary to approve any action.

Section 2: Ministry Committees (Teams)

1. A Ministry Committee is one that relates to a single ministry assignment. The committees are typically appointed to serve in a specific ministry area and work under the appropriate ministry department head responsible for that ministry. The assignment of a ministry committee may be time specific or ongoing, depending on the need and nature of the assignment.
2. Membership on Ministry Committees shall be recommended by Church staff, approved by the Executive Staff Team, and supervised by the appropriate ministry staff head. Ministry Committees shall consist of not less than three (3) and not more than twelve (12) members, though others may be employed to carry out the specific ministry functions of each Committee.
3. A Ministry Committee is subject to change and reorganization as deemed necessary by a respective ministry department and the Executive Staff Team.
4. The Senior Pastor shall be considered an *ex officio* member of every Ministry Committee of the Church.

Section 3: Special Committees (Teams)

1. As the need arises, Special Committees may be created to address issues or needs which may be of a temporary purpose or duration. A Special Committee will have a specific assignment, and, once that assignment has been completed, the Special Committee will

disband. Special Committees may be appointed, and a Chairman designated, by the Senior Pastor with ratification by the Administrative Committee. Should the task of the Special Committee be deemed significant enough, the Administrative Committee may recommend the Special Committee be presented to the Church for election. The Senior Pastor shall be considered an *ex officio* member of any Special Committee formed by the Church.

2. PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE. Whenever a vacancy shall occur in the office of Senior Pastor the following procedure shall guide in the selection of a Senior Pastor.
 - a. The Deacons shall present three (3) at-large nominees for the Church to approve to join with three (3) members of the Administrative Committee, selected by the Administrative Committee, to serve as one Pastor Search Committee composed of six (6) members. Nominees for the three (3) at-large positions may be submitted by Church members in writing to the Deacons during a set period of not less than one (1) week prior to presentation of proposed Search Committee members to the Church. The three (3) recommendations from the Deacons combined with the three (3) representatives of the Administrative Committee, will be presented as a recommendation to the Church from the Deacons. The Church will approve all six (6) nominees as a slate by majority vote at any regular or special business meeting as stipulated in the Bylaws, Article II, 4.
 - b. The duty of the Pastor Search Committee shall be to screen candidates for Senior Pastor and recommend only one candidate at a time until the Church shall extend a call (Article IV, Section 1.2) and the candidate accepts. The Pastor Search Committee shall establish its own procedures which shall specify how Church members and others may recommend prospective candidates.
 - c. The Pastor Search Committee shall make regular progress reports to the Church, and shall not recommend the call of anyone who has not preached in the primary worship services of the Church. Prior notice of at least one (1) week must be given to the Church before a candidate may be presented in view of a call as Senior Pastor.
 - d. The Church shall vote by ballot on the recommendation no later than the Sunday following the prospective candidate's visit.
 - e. In discussing compensation, the Pastor Search Committee shall confer with the Administrative Committee to arrive at an appropriate compensation package for the Senior Pastor.
 - f. The vote on the call of a Senior Pastor shall be on this proposition: "*Shall the Church call (name of recommended candidate) to be Senior Pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church of Pensacola?*" The Church's call of a Senior Pastor shall require the support of not less than seventy-five (75) percent of members voting at a regular or special business meeting.

- g. The Administrative Committee shall make arrangements to move the new Senior Pastor to the Church's ministry location.

ARTICLE VII – Christian Education

1. The Church shall provide from its membership leaders to assist in the training, nurturing, and equipping of church members through Bible study and discipleship classes, and related ministries and activities.
2. Bible study and discipleship teachers and leaders shall be recruited and trained by the Church staff and/or other designated education leadership.
3. Any such leader serving in a teaching capacity must be a member of the Church in good standing for a minimum of at least one (1) year, and demonstrate evidence of Christian maturity (James 3:1). All volunteer leaders who work with minors must submit to a voluntary criminal history investigation.

ARTICLE VIII – Mom's Day Out

Mom's Day Out (MDO) is a Christian preschool program provided as a service to our community and members. Its task is to provide a biblically based, age-appropriate, pre-academic education for each child in order to support the need for preschoolers to grow spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, and socially. It also serves as an open door for our community to become involved in the Church. The program shall be administered and managed by the Church's Director of Preschool Ministries.

ARTICLE IX – Records, Reports, and Policies

Section 1: Maintenance of Records, Reports, and Policies

The Church will maintain the following records, reports, and policies:

1. Adequate and correct financial records, to be audited annually by a Certified Public Accountant;
2. Written minutes of Administrative Committee meetings; Deacons meetings; Church business meetings; and Board of Trustees meetings.
3. A record of the members of the Church, setting forth their names and addresses;
4. Contribution statements for financial supporters;

5. A Church Wedding Policy;
6. A Church Facilities Use Policy; and
7. An Employee Handbook detailing Church employment and personnel policy.

Section 2: Member Requests for Records, Reports, and Policies

The Church will follow current Florida law regarding member requests for records.

ARTICLE X – Use of Church Facilities, Assets, and Resources

The Church staff and other appropriate leadership shall oversee implementation of a policy regarding the use of Church facilities, assets and all other resources. Such policy will ensure that all facilities, assets and resources of the Church are used in a manner which is not inconsistent with the Holy Scriptures and the Baptist Faith & Message, 2000 edition. The policy shall be drafted to ensure that any use of all or part of the Church grounds or facilities (whether by members or by outside interests or entities) will be done in a manner which is not inconsistent with our beliefs as a Church. Moreover, any and all use of Church property shall be sufficiently documented and memorialized so as to protect the Church from unnecessary exposure to liability.

ARTICLE XI – Indemnification

Should any member(s) of the Church staff or lay-leadership be faced with actual or threatened litigation as a result of the performance of their proper and normal duties, the Church will provide a sufficient and appropriate legal defense and/or indemnify such staff member(s) or lay-leader(s) for costs and expenses relating to such actual or threatened litigation. This obligation to indemnify and/or provide a defense shall cease if at any time it is discovered that the staff member(s) or lay-leader(s) in question acted contrary to Holy Scripture, in violation of law, or otherwise acted in any way that was dishonest or lacking complete candor.

ARTICLE XII – Designated Gifts

The Church recognizes the wish of some members to designate the way in which contributions are used. However, the Church also recognizes that all that we have comes from God, and should be used to further His Kingdom. Therefore, the Church will accept gifts and contributions that are intended for a designated purpose. However, unless the designation on the gift or contribution is to an existing account and/or ministry of the Church, the designation shall be deemed advisory only (versus mandatory). In such an instance, the Church may choose to use the gift in accordance with the designation, or it may choose to use the gift elsewhere. All donors to the Church recognize the necessity and propriety of this discretion. The Church's discretionary authority includes the right to refuse to accept any gift at any time, for any reason.

ARTICLE XIII – Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended, or repealed and replaced, at any regular or special business meeting by a two-thirds vote of the Church members present at such meeting. Any proposed change to these bylaws must be provided to the Church in writing and made available to the Church not less than four (4) successive Sundays prior to the business meeting at which a vote is to be held.