

Western Hills Church: Leadership

Christ

Head and Shepherd
(Colossians 1:18; 1Peter 5:4)

Pastors/Elders

Making Disciples of Christ
Shepherding/Pastoring/Ruling
(1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Timothy 5:17-18)
Leading/Overseeing
Guarding/Watching
Preaching/Teaching

Deacons

Making Disciples of Christ
Serving
(Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:1-13)
Caring for the material needs of the church

The Congregation

Making Disciples of Christ
Electing Leadership
Equipped for ministry
(Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 13:17)
Submission to God-appointed leadership and ministry to the body of Christ

Constitution and Bylaws:

Preamble

We the members of Western Hills Church do ordain and establish the following articles, which form our Constitution, this 11 of January, 2017.

Article I – Name of Church

The name of the church is:

Western Hills Baptist Church
DBA
Western Hills Church

Article II – Statement of Purpose

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the church at Western Hills is to glorify God and fulfill the great commission given in Matthew 28:19-20. “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (KJV). We do this by practicing New Testament forms of evangelism, by teaching and mentoring each believer to be a disciple of Christ, by strengthening families, and by supporting Christian laborers throughout the world.

Article III – Statement of Faith

Statement of Faith

We believe there is only one true God, existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are coeternal and coequal from all eternity, each with distinct personalities but of one essence. The Bible is verbally inspired by God in its original writings, is truth without any mixture of error, and is the sole rule of faith and practice.

Adam was directly created in innocence and in the image of God and was not evolved from pre-existing forms of life. By voluntary transgression, he fell; and thus, the whole race is now sinful by nature and practice and, therefore, under just condemnation to eternal separation from God.

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God who entered the world through the virgin birth, living among us without sin as perfect man and perfect God. He shed His blood on Calvary as a vicarious substitute for all sinners, was buried and rose again bodily, and ascended to the right hand of the Father, from whence He will personally return. Men are justified by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ without any mixture of works. The Holy Spirit convicts the sinner; regenerates; sanctifies; indwells the believer; and fills the believer for effective service.

We believe in the priesthood of the believer and that God has made provision for each believer to be victorious by being led of the Spirit and not walking after the flesh.

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost – the just unto the resurrection of eternal life and the lost unto the resurrection of eternal damnation. Satan is a person, and hell is a place of eternal, conscious punishment for him, his hosts, and all unbelievers.

We believe in the bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church.

We believe Christians are commanded by Scripture to abstain from all forms of compromise with unbelief. The Bible sets forth principles of Godly living, and we must learn and follow these principles to both avoid and refute the false teachings and false concepts of our day. Christians are commanded to follow Scriptural methods of discerning, exhorting, warning, and reproofing those who violate or reject the principles of Scripture. The Bible is clear that a person who continuously lives an immoral life or brings shame to the name of Jesus Christ is not a follower of Jesus Christ. Therefore, Western Hills cannot hire, employ, or allow its employees to participate or facilitate behavior such as: (1) sexual immorality including, but not limited to, adultery, promiscuity, or homosexuality; (2) physically destructive behavior including, but not limited to, alcoholism or drug addiction; and (3) any other behavior which conflicts with Biblical commands, teachings, and principles as determined by the Pastors/Elders. In addition, Western Hills property and/or facilities cannot be used for any purpose that contributes or facilitates sinful behavior including the performance of marriage ceremonies between persons of the same gender. Any violation of these principles would be a violation of the closely held Biblical and religious beliefs of Western Hills Church and its members and would be in direct contravention to the goals and purposes of Western Hills Church.

Article IV – Purpose of Document

The Purpose of this Document

God has ordained human authority to rule in civil affairs, in the family, and in the church.

Western Hills Church recognizes and honors the divine right of other leaders to govern within their particular jurisdiction. For example, we believe that it is critical in the evil age in which we live that we honor the responsibility of fathers to oversee their families. We will guard against undermining decisions by fathers to protect their families from evil influences and will teach families to honor their father and their mother. We will instruct fathers to teach those under their authority to honor civil authorities and those leading the church and to pray for them.

According to the Scriptures, Jesus Christ is the head of the church. Throughout the history of God's people, beginning with Moses under the old covenant, up through the epistles of the New Testament,

God ordained a human governing structure among His chosen people. In the nation of Israel, it was a system of elders and judges, and then Kings. In the New Testament, in the church, apostles and elders are most frequently mentioned as those having spiritual leadership positions.

It is the intent of this document to define within a single source a summary of the governing structure laid out within the Scriptures and to specifically make those applicable to Western Hills Church.

Article V – Government

Government

Section I: Preamble

"We request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another." (See 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13.)

"Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit and there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good." (See 1 Corinthians 12:4-7.) For the body is not one member, but many." (See 1 Corinthians 12:14.) But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired." (See 1 Corinthians 12:18.)

"The glory which thou has given me, I have given to them that they may be one, just as we are one; I in them, and they in me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that thou didst send me, and didst love them, even as thou dost love me." (See John 17:22-23.)

"Let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner." (See 1 Corinthians 14:40.) "Let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted and humble in spirit." (See 1 Peter 3:8.)

Section II: Main Tenets

A. *Government:*

1. Western Hills Church shall have a congregational form of government. This means the membership determines its term of existence, how it will be governed, its leaders, its annual budget, and the purchase and sale of its buildings and land.
2. The membership shall elect men to serve as the Board of Trustees, the Senior Pastor/Elder, the Council of Pastor/Elders, and the Council of Deacons. Those elected shall have no authority except as given to them by the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church.
3. The voting membership of Western Hills Church shall be determined by the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church
4. The membership of Western Hills Church shall exercise its right to govern in business meetings that are called in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church.

B. Business Meetings: (Membership of Western Hills Church)

1. A minimum of fourteen (14) days' notice of any proposed business meeting of the membership and the purpose thereof shall be given by verbal announcement to the membership at any regularly scheduled worship service. Additional announcements, by mail, phone, email, or other means may be given but are not required.
2. The Chairman of the Trustees shall call an Annual Business Meeting of the members at the end of each year to consider and vote on the budget for the coming year, to vote on the Trustees nominated for the coming year, and any other matters deemed necessary by the Chairman and properly placed on the agenda. The Trustees will provide a copy of the proposed budget to the membership by December 1 of each year.
3. Prior to the annual meeting of the church, those who have not attended at least once during the past three months will be removed from the "active membership" roll and transferred to the "inactive membership" roll.
4. Only those on the active membership roll and are eighteen (18) years of age or older, hereafter called "voting members," are eligible to vote at church meetings.
5. A quorum for all business meetings shall consist of twenty (20) percent of the voting members
6. All decisions will be determined by a vote/consent of the voting members present at the business meeting.
7. The vote may be taken by written ballot, a show of hands, or voice vote. Any voting member may, at any time, request a vote by written ballot.
8. A 60% or more majority vote is required for approval of any decision.
9. A petition to reconsider any vote/consent decision of the congregation may be made by 20% of the voting members of Western Hills Church. The notification of intent to submit a petition to reconsider a motion must be made in writing within 48 hours of the original vote and must include the signature(s) of the person(s) bringing the petition. The petition to reconsider a motion must be made in writing within seven (7) days of the original vote and must include all petitioners' signatures. The Parliamentarian shall make a ruling on the validity of the petition within 24 hours after it is presented. If the petition is valid, implementation of the decision in question shall be delayed until the petition is reconsidered. This time shall be for prayer and further discussion. A second meeting of the congregation shall be scheduled two weeks from the original meeting for the singular purpose of discussing and voting on the motion being reconsidered. The motion can be amended if approved by a vote of the voting members present. If the motion (or amended motion) receives 60% or more majority vote, the motion is deemed approved and shall be implemented. If it receives less than 60%, it shall be deemed to have failed. A second petition to reconsider shall not be considered.
10. Additional Business meetings shall be called by the Chairman of the Trustees for the membership to consider and approve or reject the following:
 - a. the calling of a Trustee,
 - b. the calling of a Pastor/Elder,

- c. the calling of a Deacon,
 - d. the calling or dismissal of the Senior Pastor/Elder,
 - e. the calling of a staff Pastor/Elder,
 - f. amendments or changes that would increase the annual budget by 2% or more,
 - g. in response to a petition for a meeting,
 - h. amendments or changes to the Constitution and/or Bylaws,
 - i. other items, as determined by the Board of Trustees, for decisions or counsel regarding direction of the church.
11. Additional Business Meetings may be called by petition of:
- a. petition of 20% of the members of the Council of Elders,
 - b. petition of 20% the voting members of Western Hills,
 - c. by unanimous consent of the Trustees and the Senior Pastor/Elder,
 - d. by the Trustees or acting trustees in the absence of a Council of Elders.

Petitions calling a Business Meeting must be signed by those petitioning for the meeting, must specify the purpose of the meeting, must give at least 14 days' notice, and must give the time and place of the meeting. Notice of the meeting must be given by verbal announcement to the membership at any regularly scheduled worship service. Additional announcements, by mail, phone, email, or other means may be given but are not required. Only the business or purpose for which the meeting was called shall be considered at the meeting.

The parliamentarian of the Trustees shall verify that each petitioner is a member in good standing and eligible to vote. Notice of the meeting shall be given in the same manner as for any business meeting of the membership (see Article V, Section II, Paragraph B, 1). The Chairman of the Trustees shall call and chair the meeting. In his absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Trustees shall chair the meeting.

C. Fiscal Year and Finances

1. The fiscal year of the church shall be January 1st through December 31st.
2. The ministry of the church shall be financed through tithes, offerings, and gifts.
3. The church shall not incur debt.

Article VI – Church Membership

Church Membership

Section I: Purpose of Membership

The Christian church is meant to be a community of believers. We are most effective when surrounded by fellow believers who are committed to encouraging and correcting us. The apostle Paul instructs Christians not to neglect the act of meeting periodically for worship and fellowship. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Church membership provides our pastor/elders with the knowledge of the flock they are responsible to shepherd. In addition, as a body of believers we are to fulfill the great commission as given in Matthew

28:19-20, to strengthen believers and families as disciples of Christ, to practice New Testament forms of evangelism, and to support Christian laborers throughout the world.

Church membership is also important because Western Hills has a congregational form of government. This means that our congregation is autonomous. No one outside of the congregation determines our constitution and bylaws, what our congregation believes and practices, who will lead our congregation, and how proceeds will be spent. Each member has an equal voice in the governance of our congregation.

Section II: Qualifications for Membership

The Christian church is composed of all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in him alone for eternal salvation. The “local church” is a collection of believers who are banded together with a set of common beliefs and a common purpose. To this end, the local church gathered at Western Hills has the following requirements for becoming a member.

1. A personal testimony and commitment of faith in Jesus Christ.
2. The testimony of believer’s baptism.
3. A personal declaration of intent to come under the protection, jurisdiction, and discipleship of the church.
4. Satisfactorily complete a class or classes led by the Senior Pastor/Elder, or his designee, explaining the beliefs and governmental structure of Western Hills Church.
5. Agreement to abide by and support the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church, and to come under the authority of the leaders selected by the membership.
6. Sign the Membership Covenant.
7. Acceptance of membership request by the Board of Trustees.

New members will be presented to the church at a regularly scheduled worship service. Any person, regardless of age, that fulfills the qualifications for membership shall be a member of Western Hills Church.

Section III: Definition of Active Members

An “active member” is a member who attends worship services regularly (unless hindered by illness, work, or other responsibilities) and contributes faithfully (time and resources) to the work of Western Hills Church, as they are able. The Board of Trustees has the sole authority to determine if an individual is an “active member.”

If a member is not attending church and participating on a regular basis, they will be contacted by a pastor/elder and encouraged to remain under the protection of the church and continue to fellowship with the body of believers. If a member does not attend Western Hills Church for three (3) months, they will be moved from active to inactive member status. They are welcome to resume fellowship with the church at any time but cease to be voting members.

The desire is to continue fellowship with inactive members, to support them in their walk with the Lord, to encourage them to become active again in the community of believers, and to protect the voting privileges of the active members.

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to work in cooperation with the Council of Elders to maintain a list of active and inactive members.

Section IV: Reinstatement of Inactive Members to Active Status

We encourage all members to be active and participate in all the duties and privileges of the church. An inactive member can seek active status by completing the process outlined in Article VI, Section II of this document.

The intent of the application process is not to make returning to active status difficult but that a member going from inactive to active status would have the opportunity to become aware of any changes within the church leadership or the Constitution/Bylaws and to be re-introduced to the congregation.

Therefore, at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, a member returning from college, illness, missionary work, (inactive status created by absence, work, or illness) could apply for reinstatement through an abbreviated process by meeting with the Senior Pastor or his designee, receiving/reviewing a current copy of the Constitution/Bylaws, signing the Membership Covenant, receiving approval of the Board of Trustees, and being introduced to the congregation.

Section V: Responsibilities of Membership

Membership in Western Hills Church is a privilege rather than a right and carries certain responsibilities. Each member of Western Hills Church is expected to attend worship services on a regular basis, live a Godly life, and contribute their time and talents to further the ministry of the Word through Western Hills Church.

Members also commit to protect the church by acting in love toward other members by refusing to gossip, slander, or cast doubt on the character of another member.

Members share in the responsibility to love the lost as Jesus does, to share the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to do the work of making disciples.

Members are invited and encouraged to attend and participate in all business meetings of Western Hills Church.

The Board of Trustees has the sole authority to grant membership. A member may withdraw from membership at any time by notifying the Trustees. The Trustees may revoke membership at any time if a member is inactive or if they have been disciplined by the Council of Elders.

Section VI: Discipline of Members

Adult members of Western Hills Church as defined in this Constitution and Bylaws are subject to discipline by the church. While we recognize that all believers are weak in ourselves and that we struggle with sin to some degree, we teach that serious, flagrant, unrepentant sin that negatively affects the body must be dealt with to maintain the witness of the church.

Discipline of members under the age of eighteen (18) shall be the responsibility of their parent(s) or guardian(s) under the direction of the Council of Elders.

The process of church discipline for all members is outlined in Article X.

Section VII: Membership Covenant

Each member of Western Hills Church agrees to sign and abide by the following membership covenant:

Membership Covenant of Western Hills Church

As a believer in Jesus Christ and having accepted Him as my Savior and having followed Him in baptism, I believe that God is calling me to become a member of the body of believers at Western Hills Church. (See Acts 2:42)

As a member of Western Hills Church I agree to abide by the following membership covenant:

1. I will protect the unity of my church by acting in love toward other members, by refusing to gossip, slander, or cast doubt on the character of another member, and I will submit to the authority of the leadership appointed by the church. (See Romans 15:5, 19; I Peter 1:22; Ephesians 4:29; Hebrews 13:17.)
2. I will share in the responsibility of my church to make disciples of Jesus Christ. (Thessalonians 1:2; Luke 14:23; Romans 15:17)
3. I will serve the ministry of my church by using my gifts and talents, by being equipped to serve, and by developing a servant's heart. (I Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:11-12; Philippians 2:3-4,7)
4. I will support the testimony of my church by attending faithfully and living a Godly life. (Hebrews 10:25; Philippians 1:27).
5. I will do my part financially to support the church by giving regularly and sacrificially. (I Corinthians 16:1-2; Leviticus 27:30; 1 Timothy 5:17-18)
6. I accept and agree to follow the discipline process of Western Hills Church as described in Article X. (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 5:19-20)

A complete copy of the Membership Covenant of Western Hills Church is in Appendix A.

Article VII – Definitions & Descriptions

Definitions and Descriptions

Section I: Board of Trustees

A “Board,” is an official body of persons (in this case 3 men selected by the members) who direct or supervise some activity, i.e., the “Board of Trustees.” Their authority to direct or supervise is granted by the members of Western Hills Church.

The term “Board”—as used in this document—means those men that have been selected by the congregation to serve as the Board of Trustees, and have confirmed their ability and desire to serve.

Section II: Senior Pastor

We recognize the Senior Pastor to mean the Elder who has been elected to serve as chief administrator over all the Elders of the church, over the Deacon’s Ministry of the Church, and over all the ministries of the church.

Section III: Council of Elders

The terms elder or presbuteros, pastor/shepherd or poimen, and overseer/bishop or episkopos refer to the same position of service; they are used interchangeably and the same qualifications are required of each. (See 1 Timothy 4:14; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9; 1 Peter 5:1; Acts 11:27-30; Acts 14:22-23; Phil 1:1; Eph 4:11-12.)

The term “pastor” is actually the same Greek word as shepherd. Sometimes the word is translated as pastor and at other times as shepherd. Paul says to the elders in Ephesus that they are both overseers and shepherds. The term pastor or poimen occurs in the list of gifted men (i.e., evangelists, pastors, and teachers) given to the church. (See Acts 20:28.) Poimen comes from the same Greek word translated “shepherd.” As a result, many see elder and pastor as synonymous in function. Some tie the reference to pastor-teacher using the reference to elders who preach and teach being worthy of double honor (see Eph 4:11), i.e., one who is paid wages for his labor in the ministry. It should be noted that the term “pastor” is used biblically to refer to a gift or a function. We find no scriptural references or examples that portray the pastoral ministry as an office or position separate from the office of elder. Therefore, at Western Hills Church we refer to the office of pastor, shepherd, elder, and overseer as pastor/elder. Pastor/Elder and Deacon are the only offices of Western Hills Church and we do not recognize a separate office of pastor.

At Western Hills Church, all active elders who are members in good standing in Western Hills Church, including all elders that serve as pastoral staff, form the Council of Elders.

The pastoral staff is an extension of the ministry of the Elders. Pastoral staff are Elders who are employees of the church that give oversight to various ministries of the church.

Section IV: Deacons

Deacons serve primarily in areas of physical need. However, nothing precludes elders from serving in areas of physical need, or deacons from serving in areas of spiritual need. (See Acts 8:5.)

- The term deacon has its origins in three Greek words:
- Diakonia- “waiting on tables,” or in a broader sense, “provision for bodily sustenance” or “any discharge of service” (See Acts 6 and 1 Corinthians 12:5.)
- Diakoneo- “to render personal service to another”; commonly translated “to minister” or “to serve.”
- Diakonos-translated as “servant, helper, minister or deacon.”
- The responsibilities of a deacon are focused in areas of service oversight. (See Acts 6:1-7.)
- Their service was designed to allow the pastor/elders to focus their attention more fully on the ministry of prayer and the Word.
- Their service was oriented to the material needs of the church (they were put in charge of the serving of tables).
- Their effective service facilitated the continued health and growth of the church.

The method of appointment in the early church is clear:

- Deacons were selected by the believers.
- Deacons were appointed by the apostles (the leaders of the church).

Using Acts 6 as a model at Western Hills Church:

According to Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:11-12, this position of service primarily refers to men. However, works of service or ministry are not limited to men only. Women have a vital role and function in the church and have been spiritually gifted by God, as have all believers, to benefit the church body.

Section V: Administrative Staff

Administrative staff may be full time or part time, paid or volunteers, that serve the church in an administrative capacity. Some examples would be bookkeepers, receptionists, secretaries, janitors, and maintenance. They are not pastoral staff. A pastor/elder could serve in an administrative capacity.

Article VIII – Guidelines & Responsibilities

Guidelines and Responsibilities Of Elected Leaders

Section I: The Board of Trustees

1. The membership shall elect three men at the end of each year to serve as the Board of Trustees
2. They will begin their service on February 1 for the year they are elected and serve until February 1 of the following year. There is no limit to the number of annual terms a Trustee can serve. If a Trustee cannot fulfill their term, a special election will be held to elect a new Trustee for the remainder of the term.
3. The Chairman of the Council of Elders and the Chairman of The Council of Deacons shall be ex officio members of the Board of Trustees.
4. The Trustees will not be men who are serving as Elders or Deacons in the church.
5. The Trustees will be nominated by a vote of the Council of Elders and the Council of Deacons according to the rules that are set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws.
6. The Trustees shall elect a chairman, a vice-chairman, and a Secretary/Parliamentarian to assist in all official business meetings of the membership and to rule on matters concerning the constitutionality of the meeting and all proceedings.
7. The Board of Trustees shall elect a Chairman who shall be responsible for calling meetings of the Board, setting the agenda, maintaining order and decorum, appointing committees, and conducting/chairing the meetings.
8. The Board of Trustees will select one member as Vice Chairman who will serve as Chairman in absence of the Chairman.
9. The Board of Trustees will select a Secretary/Parliamentarian to take notes, record votes, and prepare minutes of all meetings of the Board. The minutes of the Board meetings and all votes will be made available, if requested, to any member in good standing of Western Hills Church within two weeks of the request. The Secretary/Parliamentarian of the Board of Trustees will also assist in all official business meetings of the membership and will rule on matters concerning the constitutionality of the meeting and all proceedings. The Secretary/Parliamentarian of the Board of Trustees will work with the Secretary/Parliamentarian of the Council of Elders to determine the active voting membership of Western Hills Church.
10. The Board of Trustees will meet at least monthly. The date, time, and location of the monthly meetings of the Board of Trustees will be announced to the church at the beginning of each new

month. The Board of Trustees can meet at any other time besides its regularly scheduled meetings when it is necessary to carry out its responsibilities to the church.

11. The Board of Trustees shall make the final determination of the active membership of Western Hills Church according to the rules set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church.
12. The Board of Trustees shall call and oversee business meetings in accordance with the rules set for in the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church.
13. The Board of Trustees shall cause an annual budget to be drafted and presented at a business meeting at the end of each year for a vote of the membership.
14. The Board of Trustees shall oversee the annual budget approved by the congregation and making any adjustments to the budget under 2% of the total budget.
15. The Board of Trustees shall strategically plan for capital improvements
16. The Board of Trustees shall sign any legal documents required by law
17. The Board of Trustees shall serve as a nominating committee for selection of the Senior Pastor
18. The Board of Trustees shall serve as a nominating committee for the selection of Elders
19. The Board of Trustees shall serve as a nominating committee for Pastoral Staff Positions
20. The Board of Trustees shall serve as a nominating committee for the selection of Deacons
21. The Board of Trustees shall oversee the discipline of Elders and Deacons which includes serving as arbitrators/mediators to judge any grievances brought against a fellow Trustee, an Elder, or a Deacon.
22. The Board of Trustees has the sole authority to terminate a member of the pastoral staff except for the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor can only be terminated by a vote of the active voting members of Western Hills Church.
23. The Board of Trustees has the sole authority to approve administrative staff positions (e.g., secretary, bookkeeper, custodian, etc.).
24. The Board of Trustees may eliminate any administrative staff position for any reason.
25. Any member wishing to add an item to the agenda of the Board of Trustees for any meeting shall contact the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.
26. In addition to its monthly meeting, additional meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called with at least 24 hours' notice by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees or at any time that either all Trustees are present or those Trustees not present waive their right to be present in writing.
27. Two or more Trustees may call a meeting of the Board of Trustees to address a specific issue as stated in the notice calling the meeting if:
 - a. All Trustees are notified and either are present or waive their right to be present in writing, or
 - b. The called meeting is scheduled at least seven days after all Trustees have been verbally notified, or
 - c. Notice has been mailed via USPS to each Trustee giving at least ten days' notice from date of mailing at a U. S. Post Office, or
 - d. Each Trustee is notified via email giving seven days' notice and if no notification is received that the email was undeliverable. Meetings called in this manner may only address the stated reason for which the meeting has been called unless all Trustees agree to address additional issues. Minutes of the meeting, including votes, shall be kept and made available as with all other meetings.
28. Business may be conducted at any properly called meeting of the Board of Trustees at which a simple majority or more of the Board of Trustees are present.
29. Any active member of Western Hills Church is invited and welcome to attend the scheduled meetings of the Board of Trustees. The Chairman of the meeting shall strive to make time

available to receive comments from members as time allows. The Chairman shall have the sole authority regarding who may be recognized to speak and the time allowed. The Board of Trustees may, by unanimous vote, go into Executive Session and meet privately if they deem it appropriate to preserve the dignity or privacy of any individual or family. Only members of the Board of Trustees or others specifically requested by the Board of Trustees can be in attendance of Executive Sessions. No minutes will be taken or made public of any discussions or action taken during Executive Sessions. The Board shall reconvene in an open meeting before they take any formal action and/or votes.

30. All decisions will be determined by a vote/consent of the Board of Trustees. It may be by written ballot, a show of hands, or voice vote. A unanimous decision/consent is desired and sought on every decision, but any issue can be approved by a two-thirds or more majority of the members of the Board of Trustees using the following procedure. If a decision is approved by less than a unanimous vote, the Chairman will delay implementation of the decision for a period of one week. This time shall be for prayer and further discussion. At the end of one week, the Chairman shall poll the Board of Trustees for a second vote on the issue in question. If when this period is exhausted, the item is still approved but by less than a unanimous vote, the Chairman of the Board may declare the item approved or delay the decision for one additional week at which time the Chairman shall poll the Board again. If the item in question is still approved, the Chairman must declare the item as passed. If the support for the issue falls below the required percentage for approval during either waiting period, the item in question will be declared to have failed.
31. To remain above reproach, on any personal matter concerning the Trustee or the Trustee's family such as nomination as a Senior/Pastor Elder, nomination of Pastor/Elders, nomination as a Deacon, or decisions on other personal matters involving family (such as removal, discipline, expense reimbursement, salary, budget, hiring, or firing), the Trustee concerned must abstain from voting.
32. The Board of Trustees have only the authority granted to them by the Constitution and the Bylaws of Western Hills Church as they act jointly as a Board of Trustees for and on behalf of the members of Western Hills Church.

Section II: The Senior Pastor

1. The membership shall select one man to serve as the Senior Pastor.
2. The Board of Trustees shall serve as the nominating committee for the Senior Pastor.
3. The Senior Pastor shall serve as an ex officio non-voting member of the Board of Trustees.
4. The Senior Pastor shall determine the jurisdictions of all the other Elders
5. The Senior Pastor shall serve as the Chairman of the Council of Elders.
6. The Senior Pastor shall serve as the Chief Administrator over the Pastoral and Administrative staff, all the ministries of the church including the Deacon's Ministry, and all the programs of the church.
7. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the church. All the staff of the church, pastoral and administrative, report either directly or through an administrative chain of command to the Senior Pastor. Pastoral staff includes but is not limited to: Church Administrator, Associate Pastors, Music Minister, Missions Minister, etc.
8. The Senior Pastor shall provide vision for Western Hills Church to fulfill its mission. This does not preclude others from having a vision for the church. Counsel and advice from any member is always encouraged and welcome. In any case, the direction and vision of the church shall be confirmed by the agreement of the Council of Elders and then implemented by the Senior Pastor.

9. The Senior Pastor is responsible to fill the pulpit for every worship service and determine the order of service.
10. The Senior Pastor shall have the authority to fill administrative staff positions approved by the Board of Trustees.
11. The Senior Pastor shall have the authority to terminate a member of the administrative staff as he deems necessary.
12. The Senior Pastor is responsible for overseeing the training of the Elders.
13. The Senior Pastor shall serve as one of the Elders of the church and shall have no other authority except as given to him by the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church. He shall not act alone in exercising authority belonging to the Board of Trustees, the Council of Elders, or the Council of Deacons.

Section III: The Council of Elders

1. The membership shall elect men to serve as Elders.
2. The Board of Trustees shall serve as the nominating committee for Elders.
3. All Elders shall be members of the Council of Elders
4. The Council of Elders shall assist the Senior Pastor in the formation of the vision of the church and the strategic plan to carry out the vision.
5. Elders shall be required to attend all meetings of the Council of Elders. Any excused absence for any reason should be sought from the Senior Pastor.
6. The Senior Pastor will serve as the Chairman of the Council of Elders. If there is no Senior Pastor, the Council of Elders shall elect a member of the Council of Elders to serve as Chairman of the Council.
7. The Council of Elders will meet in January of each year to select from their member's a Vice Chairman and Secretary/Parliamentarian. Each shall serve until his successor is elected.
8. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary/Parliamentarian shall have no more or no less authority than any of the other Elders, except that which is in accordance with the rules of the Constitution and Bylaws.
9. The Chairman shall be responsible for calling meetings of the Council of Elders, setting the agenda for meetings, maintaining order and decorum, appointing committees, and conducting/chairing the meetings
10. The Vice Chairman will carry out the responsibilities of the Chairman when the Chairman is not available.
11. The Secretary/Parliamentarian of the Council of Elders shall maintain minutes for the Council of Elders and work with the Chairman to follow all proper rules of decorum for meetings. He shall also work with the Secretary/Parliamentarian of the Board of Trustees to maintain a record of active and inactive members of Western Hills Church.
12. The Council of Elders shall meet as necessary to recommend nominations to the Board of Trustees for Elders and Deacons. These recommendations can also be made by any active member of the church.
13. The Council of Elders shall meet with the Council of Deacons at the end of each year to select nominees for the Board of Trustees. A quorum shall consist of 50% of the Elders and Deacons who are members of good standing and of Western Hills Church and eligible to vote. A 60% or more majority vote is required for approval. The Chairman of the Elders is responsible to call this meeting and to chair this meeting. Those men selected by the Council of Elders and the Council of Deacons will then be presented to the congregation for a vote by the active members at a business meeting at the end of each year.

14. The Council of Elders shall meet at other times as necessary to accomplish the function of the Council of the Elders and to promote unity and fellowship among the Elders.
15. The Chairman of the Council of Elders may establish committees and appoint committee members, as deemed necessary, to accomplish the responsibilities and goals of the Council of the Elders.
16. All active members are welcome to attend any regular scheduled meeting of the Council of Elders. The Chairman of the Elders shall strive to make time available to receive comments from members as time allows. The Chairman of the Elders shall have the sole authority regarding who may be recognized to speak and the time allowed. The Council of Elders may, by unanimous vote, go into Executive Session and meet privately if they deem it appropriate to preserve the dignity or privacy of any individual or family. Only members of the Council of Pastor Elders or others specifically requested by the Council of Elders can be in attendance of Executive Sessions. No minutes will be taken or made public of any discussions or action taken during Executive Sessions.
17. All decisions of the Council of Elders shall be determined by a vote/consent of the members who are eligible to vote and are present at the meeting.
18. The vote may be taken by written ballot, a show of hands, or voice vote. Any member may, at any time, request a ballot vote.
19. A 60% or more majority vote is required for approval.
20. A petition to reconsider any vote/consent decision of the Council of Pastor/Elders may be made by 20% of the members of the Council who are voting members. The notification of intent to submit a petition to reconsider a motion must be made in writing within 48 hours of the original vote and must include the signature(s) of the person(s) bringing the petition. The petition to reconsider a motion must be made in writing within seven (7) days of the original vote and must include all petitioners' signatures. The Parliamentarian must make a ruling on the validity of the petition within 24 hours after it is presented. If the petition is valid, implementation of the decision in question shall be delayed until the motion is reconsidered. This time shall be for prayer and further discussion. A second meeting of the Council of Pastor/Elders shall be scheduled two weeks from the original meeting for the singular purpose of discussion and voting on the decision being reconsidered. If the decision receives 60% or more majority vote, the decision is deemed approved and shall be implemented. If it receives less than 60%, it shall be deemed to have failed. A second petition to reconsider shall not be in order.
21. To remain above reproach on any matter concerning an Elder, an Elder's family members, or an Elder's ministry (such as removal, discipline, expense reimbursement, salary, budget, hiring, or firing), the Elder concerned must abstain from voting.
22. The mission of every Elder is to win the lost, to make disciples of those they win, and to equip the church to fulfill this mission. Each Elder will also be accountable to God to help pastor the church by protecting, feeding, leading, and caring for its members. Elders confirmed by Western Hills Church are Elders in the Church of Jesus Christ but may not be recognized as such in other churches. In the same manner, the body of Christ that meets at Western Hills Church only recognizes as Elders in authority over the congregation at Western Hills Church those men that have been elected as Elders at Western Hills Church. Elders are confirmed as Elders for life unless removed for cause, by transfer to another church, or by resignation. Each year, each Elder must confirm to the Council of Elders whether he is able and desires to serve as an elder for the coming year. The Council of Elders must annually reaffirm the Elders that will serve for the following year. An Elder may choose to remove himself from serving for a period, as a sabbatical, if he feels it is best for him, his family, or the church. He shall remain a member of the Council of Elders but without additional responsibilities. When he is ready to serve again, he

shall notify the Chairman of the Council who shall notify the Council of the reinstatement. Elders can resign their position without giving cause. The Board of Trustees can remove an Elder for scriptural cause. If anyone has reason to believe an Elder should be removed, he or she must show scriptural reasons for disqualification and follow 1 Tim. 5:19-25 and Matthew 18:15. If the Board of Trustees finds that the Elder is no longer qualified to serve, the church shall be notified of his removal and the cause. All Elders must agree to mutually submit to each other, to church discipline, and to conflict resolution as outlined in the Church Discipline section of these Bylaws.

23. The Council of Elders of the church and shall have no other authority except as given to them by the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church. They shall not act alone in exercising authority belonging to the Board of Trustees, the Senior Pastor, or the Council of Deacons.

Section IV: The Council of Deacons

1. The membership shall elect men to serve as Deacons.
2. The Board of Trustees shall serve as the nominating committee for Deacons.
3. All Deacons in good standing are members of the Council of Deacons
4. Each Deacon is required to attend all meetings of the Council of Deacons. Any excused absence for any reason should be sought from the Chairman of the Council of Deacons.
5. The Council of Deacons shall elect one man at beginning of each new year to serve as the chairman of the Council of Deacons. His jurisdiction includes being the chief administrator of the deacon's ministry, determining the jurisdiction of all the other deacons, and serving as a non-voting member of the Board of Trustees.
6. The Council of Deacons shall meet in January of each year to select a Vice Chairman and Secretary/Parliamentarian.
7. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary/Parliamentarian shall have no more or no less authority than any of the other deacons, except that which is according to the rules of the Constitution and Bylaws.
8. The Chairman shall be responsible for calling meetings, setting the agenda, maintaining order and decorum, appointing committees, and conducting/chairing the meetings.
9. The Vice Chairman shall serve as Chairman in absence of the Chairman.
10. The Secretary/Parliamentarian shall maintain minutes of meetings of the Council of Deacons and assist the Chairman in maintaining order and decorum of the meetings.
11. The Chairman of the Deacons may establish committees and appoint committee members with the consent of the Deacons, as deemed necessary to accomplish the responsibilities and goals of the Deacons.
12. The Council of Deacons shall meet with the Council of Elders in the last quarter of each year to select nominees for the Board of Trustees. Those men selected will then be presented to the congregation for a vote by the active members at the annual business meeting in December. A quorum shall consist of 50% of the Council of Elders and Council of Deacons who are members of good standing and of Western Hills Church and eligible to vote. A 60% or more majority vote is required for approval. The Chairman of the Elders is responsible to call this meeting and to chair this meeting.
13. The Deacons shall meet at other times as necessary to accomplish the function of the Deacons and to promote unity and fellowship among the deacons.
14. The focus of the Deacon ministry is serving the more material and physical needs of the church. Examples of deacon service include overseeing capital improvements, overseeing the benevolence ministry to our members and to the community, overseeing property and grounds maintenance, overseeing security, overseeing offerings. However, this does not preclude the deacons serving ministerial needs. The Deacon's ministry is under the jurisdiction of the Senior

Pastor but the Chairman of the Deacons will determine the responsibilities and functions of each Deacon.

15. All decisions will be determined by a vote/consent of the Deacons present at the meeting. The vote may be taken by written ballot, by a show of hands, or by voice vote. Any issue can be approved/disapproved by a 60% majority vote of those present.
16. A petition to reconsider any vote/consent decision of the Council of Deacons may be made by 20% of the members of the Council of Deacons who are voting members. The notification of intent to submit a petition to reconsider a motion must be made in writing within 48 hours of the original vote and must include the signature(s) of the person(s) bringing the petition. The petition to reconsider a motion must be made in writing within seven (7) days of the original vote and must include all petitioners' signatures. The Parliamentarian must make a ruling on the validity of the petition within 24 hours after it is presented. If the petition is valid, implementation of the decision in question shall be delayed until the motion is reconsidered. This time shall be for prayer and further discussion. A second meeting of the Council of Deacons shall be scheduled two weeks from the original meeting for the singular purpose of discussion and voting on the decision being reconsidered. If the decision receives 60% or more majority vote, the decision is deemed approved and shall be implemented. If it receives less than 60%, it shall be deemed to have failed. A second petition to reconsider shall not be in order.
17. To remain above reproach, on any matter concerning a deacon, a deacon's family members, or a deacon's ministry (such as expense reimbursement, salary, or budget), the deacon concerned must abstain from voting
18. Any active member of Western Hills Church is invited and welcome to attend the scheduled meetings of the Council of Deacons. The Chairman of the meeting shall strive to make time available to receive comments from members as time allows. The Chairman shall have the sole authority regarding who may be recognized to speak and the time allowed. The Council of Deacons may, by unanimous vote, go into Executive Session and meet privately if they deem it appropriate to preserve the dignity or privacy of any individual or family. Only members of the Council of Deacons or others specifically requested by the Council of Deacons can be in attendance of Executive Sessions. No minutes will be taken or made public of any discussions or action taken during Executive Sessions. The Council of Deacons shall reconvene in an open meeting before they take any formal action and/or votes.
19. Fourteen (14) days' notice of a scheduled business meeting of the Deacons must be by verbal announcement to the Deacons at any regularly scheduled worship service. Announcements of meetings may also be given by mail, phone, email, or other means. The primary purpose of the meeting shall also be given.
20. The Council of Deacons shall have no other authority except as given to them by the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church. They shall not act alone in exercising authority belonging to the Board of Trustees, the Senior Pastor, or the Council of Elders.

Article IX – Elders Selection & Confirmation

Selection and Confirmation of Elders

A man being considered as an Elder will most likely have different gifts and abilities than other men who are serving as Elders. It is a healthy condition for a fellowship when there are different spiritual giftings

among the men who serve as Elders. (See Romans 12:6-1 Corinthians 12:3-8, and Ephesians 4:8-12) The overall health of members in a local body will probably be better maintained by having diversity within the team of Elders. (Ephesians 4:8-12)

Pastor/Elders can be selected from among members of the body of believers at Western Hills Church or can be called to serve at Western Hills Church from other churches.

1. A Man Must Aspire To Be An Elder

There are two general ways in which a man may be considered to become a Pastor/elder within the church:

- a. he is noted by the Pastor/Elders who have determined there is a need (see Titus 1:5) for another Pastor/Elder to serve, and he confirms he has a desire to be a Pastor/Elder, and/or
- b. he “aspires” to the position and notifies the Pastor/Elders of his desire to be a Pastor/Elder: “If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.” (See 1 Timothy 3:1)

2. A Man Must Be Called To Be An Elder

A man must be called by God to be a Pastor/Elder and can give a clear testimony of his calling. A calling upon a man’s life to be a Pastor/elder could be identified first by other people, or expressed first by the man himself; but in all cases, it will be confirmed by the peace of God in the heart of the man and others who consider this man to serve. Sometimes a period of time may pass before God’s perfect will is fully known (lay hands suddenly on no man), so people should not move in haste to approve or disapprove a man for this work. (See 1 Timothy 5:22 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7)

If a man has expressed an interest or if the Pastor/Elders see a need for additional Pastor/Elders, they will contact and initiate the process of qualifying the candidate(s) for confirmation.

3. A Man Must Be Qualified To Be An Elder

An Elder is not a man who is perfect. However, he must walk humbly before the Lord recognizing his human limitations. He must rely upon the wisdom, power, and anointing of God upon him to accomplish the work God has called him to do. He also must understand the significance of the part other godly men have in his life to see God’s plans accomplished. He is a man who by example leads and points others to Christ, while being careful not to miss the “narrow way” himself. The responsibilities of an elder are focused in areas of spiritual oversight. The Elder’s central role is shepherding the flock. Their leadership is not to be marked by “lording” over the flock, but by example. The Eldership should always seek the counsel and mind of those they lead, since the Elders are Christ’s under-shepherds. (See 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1: 7-8)

A prospective candidate’s name will be submitted to the Council. If any Pastor/Elder has a reason that the candidate should not be confirmed as a Pastor/Elder, he must follow 1 Tim. 5:19-25 and Matthew 18:15-17 and show scriptural reasons for disqualification within two weeks.

If there are no initial objections to the character or conduct of the candidate, a meeting of the Council will be called specifically for questioning the candidate about his character, beliefs, knowledge of the Word, the Statement of Faith, the Purpose, and the Constitution and Bylaws of Western Hills Church. Each candidate shall be notified within twenty-four hours by the Chairman of the Council as to whether he has been approved. If not approved, the candidate will be given the reason(s) for lack of approval. If

approved by the Council, the name(s) of the candidates will be submitted to the congregation for review.

If any congregational member believes a man is not qualified, he or she must follow 1 Timothy 5:19-25 and Matthew 18:15-17 and show scriptural reasons for disqualification within two weeks.

After a candidate is screened by the Council and reviewed by the congregation, and if there is no scriptural reason to disqualify him, he will become a candidate for confirmation as a Pastor/Elder.

4. A Man Must Be Confirmed As An Elder

Even though an elaborate ceremony is not seen in the New Testament church, and Scripture commands no ceremonial rite for appointment, the first Christians were not averse to such a ceremony. In addition, there are references to “laying on of hands.” (See Acts 6:6, Acts 8:14-17, Acts 14:23, 1 Timothy 4:14, 1 Timothy 5:17, and Hebrews 6:2)

Because there was an official, public appointment of Elders and Deacons, the first Christians knew who the Pastor/Elders and Deacons were. (See Acts 6:6, 14:23, and 1 Timothy 5:17) For example, the sick could call for the church Elders, and there was no confusion about who would come. (See James 5:4, Acts 20:17, Acts 21:18, Philippians 1:1, and 1 Peter 1:5) Appointment by the acknowledged leadership was necessary because of the Elders’ and deacons’ highly responsible and delicate work on behalf of the congregation. Appointment had the positive effects of greatly facilitating their effectiveness, helping avoid confusion and infighting, and adding a greater sense of accountability. (See Acts 6:5-6, Acts 14:22-23, Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 5:1, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4)

At Western Hills Church, confirmation shall be accompanied by a “laying on of hands” by members of the Council of Elders who choose to participate.

As a part of the confirmation ceremony, the Council of Elders will lay hands on the candidate, charge him with the duties of an Elder, pray for him, and then confirm him as an Elder.

The Council of Elders has the authority to arrange the confirmation ceremony so that it honors God and properly conveys the responsibilities and requirements being accepted by the candidate(s). (See Acts 8:18, 1 Timothy 2:7, 1 Timothy 4:14, 2 Timothy 1:6, 2 Timothy 4:22, Titus 3:15, and Hebrews 6:1-2)

Article X – Church Discipline

Church Discipline

1. Preamble

All members of Western Hills Church as defined in this Constitution and Bylaws are subject to discipline by the church. While we recognize that all believers are weak in ourselves and struggle with sin to some degree, we teach that serious, flagrant, unrepentant sin that negatively affects the body must be dealt with to maintain the witness of the church.

2. Basic steps of church discipline as outlined in Matthew 18:15-20

Matthew 5:23-24 states, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." This denotes a Biblically mandated sense of urgency in resolving conflict.

The trustees and the Senior Pastor will make every effort to pursue the resolution of any conflict within the church as expeditiously as possible. It is also the responsibility of every church member involved to participate, where applicable, in conflict resolution.

- a. The person with knowledge of the sin is to go to the sinning Christian in private and lovingly confront him or her about the sin, seeking repentance. If the individual repents, there is no need for anyone else to know. To repent means to acknowledge the sin, agree with God that it was sin, purpose to turn from the sin, and seek forgiveness from those that were directly hurt/affected by the sin.
- b. If the individual refuses to respond to this initial contact, the person who initiated contact is to take one or two witnesses for a follow-up meeting. Again, the matter is to be handled in a spirit of love, seeking restoration of the sinning believer. If the individual repents, there is no need for anyone else to know.
- c. If the individual refuses to repent, the Senior Pastor shall be informed. The Senior Pastor or an Elder designated by the Senior Pastor shall set up a meeting with the individual and other Elders where they, too, lovingly call on the person to repent. During this stage, the Elders should be patient and give the person ample opportunity to respond. The goal is repentance and restoration, not retribution.
- d. If there is still no repentance and the Council of Elders determines that the sin is seriously affecting the unity and/or witness of the church, the Senior Pastor or an Elder designated by the Senior Pastor shall make every effort to meet with the individual and explain that at an appointed Sunday service the matter will be reported to the church for mobilizing the entire body towards his or her restoration. If the individual refuses to meet, notification shall be by USPS Certified Mail.
- e. If there is still no repentance, the Senior Pastor or an Elder designated by the Senior Pastor shall make every effort to meet again with the individual notifying them that at an appointed Sunday service, the individual will be dismissed from the fellowship. If he or she refuses to meet, the information shall be conveyed via USPS Certified Mail.

If repentance occurs, the Senior Pastor is to be notified immediately. If there is no report of repentance, the Senior Pastor will read a statement from the Council of Elders at the appointed Sunday service withdrawing fellowship from the individual.

If at any time during this process, up to 3 days before the final report to the church, the sinning Christian withdraws membership in writing or withdraws from regular attendance for over 3 months from Western Hills Church, the Elders will end the discipline process at that point. However, the individual cannot be reinstated as a member or regular attendee without meeting with the Elders and showing evidence of repentance.

Even after the member has been dismissed or has resigned from the congregation, the Council of Elders shall continue to try to restore the individual as the Holy Spirit leads.

3. Repentance and Restoration

With dismissal or resignation from the fellowship, the church should continue to pray for repentance and restoration. If at any time the individual should indicate repentance, the Senior Pastor should be notified; and he should bring the case before the Council of Elders. Upon satisfactory approval by the Elders, the person will be restored to fellowship and membership.

4. Discipline/Removal of Elders

An Elder can resign at any time with or without giving cause, but only the Trustees can remove an Elder. An Elder can be removed if he becomes physically or mentally incapable or spiritually unqualified according to pertinent Scripture, including I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. A decision for removal can occur at any regular or special meeting of the Trustees.

Before a charge is brought against an Elder, Matthew 18:15-20 should be followed. (See Church Discipline.) There may be reasons (youthfulness, physical danger, etc.) where Matthew 18:15-20 cannot be followed by the individual bringing the charge. In those cases, an advocate for the individual will be appointed by the Chairman of the Trustees to follow the process.

No charge shall be brought against an Elder without the testimony of two or three witnesses. (1 Timothy 5:19) When a charge is brought, the Trustees shall review the charge. If there appears to be substantiation for the charge, the trustees shall inform the Council of Elders. Under the leadership of the Trustees, further investigation must be initiated immediately and a report to Council of Elders must be made within two weeks. During the investigation and subsequent consideration of the charges, the Elder in question shall abstain from any votes concerning the charges.

The Trustees may, through the normal vote/consent process of the Trustees, suspend an Elder from his duties during the investigation of the charges if they deem it in the best interest of the church and the Elder.

If the charge is found to be untrue, the Elder will be reinstated without prejudice.

If, after thorough corroborating investigation by the Trustees in accord with principles prescribed in I Timothy 5:19-20, an Elder will be removed if:

- a. he is judged guilty of serious sin by the Trustees(see I Timothy 5:19-20)
- b. if he is found to be unqualified according to Scripture (see I Timothy 3:1-7)
- c. if he disagrees with any aspect of the doctrinal statement, or
- d. if he consistently neglects his duties as an Elder.

If he is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke (as prescribed in I Timothy 5:20) consisting of reading a letter from the Trustees that explains the reason for removal to the congregation at a regularly scheduled worship service.

As in all instances of church discipline, the rebuke and correction of an erring Elder shall be done fairly and lovingly with a view to his spiritual restoration. The restoration of a fallen Elder to the active Eldership may be considered only after sufficient time has passed to establish such a one as unquestionably “above reproach.” Additionally, the restoration of such an individual to the active Eldership, or any other leadership capacity, shall be determined solely by the Trustees on a case by case

basis and with a view to the welfare of the flock, the corporate testimony of the church, and the ability of the individual under consideration to carry out such a leadership role with credibility, integrity, and effectiveness.

5. Discipline of church members under the age of eighteen (18) years

Discipline of church members under the age of eighteen (18) is the responsibility of their parent(s) or guardian(s). The Senior Pastor or his designee shall guide the parent(s) or guardian(s) through the process of church discipline. If the parent(s) or guardian(s) refuse to cooperate and the child is unrepentant and continues in sin, they shall be subject to discipline for lack of cooperation. If the member (under the age of eighteen) refuses to repent, the church shall proceed with steps 4) and 5) of the Basic steps of church discipline as outlined in Matthew 18:15-20 (Article X, Section V, Paragraph B, 4), and 5).

If the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a member under eighteen (18) is not a member, if he or she declines to participate in the discipline process, or if the member has no parent(s) or guardian(s), the Senior Pastor or his designee will appoint an advocate to guide the member through the discipline process.

6. Unresolved Conflict

In the case of unresolved conflict such as continued disagreement between Elders, between church members, or between Elders and church members, the disputing parties will plead their case before the Trustees which shall judge the conflict and make a ruling as quickly as possible.

When a conflict cannot be resolved by the Trustees, as a condition of continued membership in Western Hill Church, both parties must agree to submit to binding mediation and reconciliation provided by Peacemaker Ministries or a similar Christian organization.

Mediation must be a Holy Spirit directed process, often requiring months or even years to resolve a conflict as the Holy Spirit softens hearts. However, the church should not be a factor in slowing down the process. Therefore, it is desired that conflict resolution/mediation be initiated as soon as possible and that the church be diligent in pursuing conflict resolution through mediation.

The Trustees will initiate and monitor the conflict resolution, insuring that it progresses as expeditiously as possible. They will keep the Senior Pastor informed of the progress.

Article IX – Amendments

Amendments to the Constitution & Bylaws

Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws must first be submitted to and approved by the Trustees. This can be done at any meeting of the Trustees at which notice has been given at the call of the meeting of the intention to consider a change in the Constitution and Bylaws. The exact nature of the change must be submitted to the members of the Trustees no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. After the Trustees have approved a change in the Constitution and Bylaws, it shall be presented for approval to the voting members of the Church at any regularly scheduled business meeting where notice of the intent to consider a change in the Constitution and Bylaws has been given.

The exact nature of the change must be submitted to the members no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. The decision to approve/disapprove a change in the Constitution and Bylaws will be determined by a vote/consent of the voting members of Western Hills Church. The vote shall be by written ballot or a show of hands. A 60% or more majority vote of those member's present is required for approval of changes to the Constitution and Bylaws.

Appendix A – Membership Covenant

Membership Covenant of Western Hills Church

As a believer in Jesus Christ and having accepted Him as my Savior and having followed Him in baptism, I believe that God is calling me to become a member of the body of believers at Western Hills Church. (See Acts 2:42)

As a member of Western Hills Church I agree to abide by the following membership covenant:

1. I will protect the unity of my church by acting in love toward other members, by refusing to gossip, slander, or cast doubt on the character of another member, and I will submit to the authority of the leadership appointed by the church (See Romans 15:5, 19; I Peter 1:22; Ephesians 4:29; Hebrews 13:17).
2. I will share in the responsibility of my church to make disciples of Jesus Christ (Thessalonians 1:2; Luke 14:23; Romans 15:17).
3. I will serve the ministry of my church by using my gifts and talents, by being equipped to serve, and by developing a servant's heart (I Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:11-12; Philippians 2:3-4,7).
4. I will support the testimony of my church by attending faithfully and living a Godly life (Hebrews 10:25; Philippians 1:27).
5. I will do my part financially to support the church by giving regularly and sacrificially (I Corinthians 16:1-2; Leviticus 27:30; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).
6. I accept and agree to follow the discipline process of Western Hills Church as described in Article VII, Section IV (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 5:19-20).

Printed Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Membership Approved by:

Printed Name: _____ *Chairman of the Trustees*

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B – Qualifying for Eldership

Do you qualify to be an elder?

1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9

The qualifications for an Elder are conveyed (listed) in the Bible by very specific and some less specific scriptural passages. The list of qualifications given in the Scripture is not as detailed as we would like for the bylaws of Western Hills Church. In our culture, certain statements beg questions. For example, does the statement “husband of one wife” exclude widowers from holding the office of elder? Or what about the phrase “having children who believe”? Taken literally, this would exclude men with children under the age of about four years. Can there be an exception for a man who came to Christ late in life—after his children were already set on a course in life? Because of questions like these, additional guidance regarding the qualifications for elders is given in this document.

The word Elder means "older." The examples of Elders in the Old and New Testaments convey that a man should be mature, and thus have gained knowledge and insight through his life experiences. No age is mentioned in the New Testament for an Elder, but keeping in harmony with the Old Testament (see Numbers 4) and even the example of when Jesus began his public ministry of teaching and preaching, the age of thirty could be used as a reference. A man should not be summarily disqualified to serve as an Elder just because of his age. Paul, an apostle, told Timothy not to let anyone look down on his youth, but he was to be an example of righteousness and godliness. More emphasis should be placed on spiritual maturity than physical maturity.

A man might be known as an Elder among the people based on how he handles God’s Word and how God works through the man to convey His will for the local body. How does the individual relate to people within the body? Is he genuinely concerned for the people’s spiritual well being? Does he watch over their souls by comforting, encouraging, and urging people to live godly lives? Does his life express God’s hope and encouragement to the people? Is he a man that rightly divides the Word of Truth?

The Scriptures convey that a man who is being considered to serve as an Elder is to be a man whose life expresses God’s seal of approval upon him. This seal of approval is demonstrated by the overall character of the man that is pleasing to both God and man.

A man who is being considered to be an Elder is a man that has:

- Christian maturity and stability,
- A deep abiding conviction about the absolute authoritative truth of the Scriptures and the application of the Scriptures to his everyday life,
- A dependence on the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in his life, so that he may live according to the Scriptures,
- A “calling” by God upon his life to feed and nurture God’s people,
- A shepherd’s heart, and
- The Biblical qualifications.

Appendix C – Qualification of an Elder

Qualifications

1. Above Reproach/Blameless

Character Quality: a clear conscience

Definition: living a transparent life void of offense toward God and others

Violation: guilty conscience

Evidences:

- a. asks for forgiveness when he fails
- b. follows Matthew 5:23-24 in clearing up offenses
- c. obeys authority
- d. does not participate in or practice any activity that offends a weaker brother or puts a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way

2. The husband of one wife

Character Quality: virtue

Definition: the moral excellence and purity of spirit that radiate from my life as I obey God's Word

Evidences:

- a. could be a single man or a widower
- b. if married, meets the needs of his wife
- c. believes in Scriptural terms of marriage which are one man to one woman, one flesh, for one lifetime together
- d. devoted completely to only one woman
- e. if divorced, reconciliation is not possible because either his former spouse has died or has remarried, and his confession is that based on his Scriptural convictions, he would council against divorce.

3. Temperate

Character Quality: wisdom

Definition: seeing and responding to life situations from God's frame of reference

Violation: natural inclinations

Evidences:

- a. teaches his family the fear of the Lord
- b. gives just discernment in church conflicts and disputes
- c. develops a servant's heart

4. Prudent/Self-control

Evidences: wise, discerning, mature, sensible, sound judgment

5. Respectable

Evidences: orderly, lifestyle adorns the teachings of the Bible

6. Hospitable

Character Quality: Sharing

Definition: cheerfully sharing food, shelter, and spiritual refreshment with those God brings into his life

Violation: loneliness

Evidences:

- a. befriends and shares the comforts of his home with other believers and the needy
- b. ministers to the elderly, widows, orphans, and the sick in his church
- c. gives food, shelter, and clothing to the poor

7. Apt to Teach, Exhort, Refute

Character Quality: persuasiveness

Definition: using words that cause the listeners spirit to confirm they are hearing truth. Those who minister in the Word or distribute the Word or handle the Word are to receive double honor. This implies that there are some elders who do not regularly do this (handle the Word—i.e.; teach).

However, a man must have the ability to judge what is being preached and taught and be able to proclaim God's Word as the Holy Spirit directs him. Let one speak and the others judge; and if another gets something from the Lord, let the first man be silent.

Evidences:

- a. ability to teach the Word, shepherd and lead God's people
- b. teaches his family spiritual convictions, godly attitudes, and Christ-like character
- c. reproofs, rebukes and exhorts the church brotherhood

8. Not Given To Drunkenness

Violation: self-indulgence

Evidences:

- a. views drunkenness and illegal drug usage as defilements against the body and as worldly lusts

9. Not Pugnacious (given to fighting; quarrelsome)

Character Quality: meekness

Definition: yields his personal rights and expectations to God

Violation: anger; physically or verbally abusive

Evidences:

- a. does not abuse his wife or discipline his children in anger
- b. does not unlawfully cause strife and divisions among church members
- c. does not disturb the peace, riot, or cause damage to public property

10. Gentle

11. Not contentious (not argumentative, rebellious or practicing dissipation)

12. Free from the Love of Money

Character Quality: generosity

Definition: realizing that all he has belongs to God and using it for His purposes

Violation: stinginess

Evidences:

- a. gives to the needs of other Christians and to the poor
- b. establishes the tithe as a weekly reminder of giving to God

13. Manages His Own Family Well

Character Quality: responsibility

Definition: knows and does what both God and others are expecting from him

Violation: unreliability

Evidences:

- a. manages his family with love, sacrifice, wisdom and firm leadership
- b. loves, leads, and listens to his wife and teaches, disciplines and loves his children
- c. stays under spiritual authority and care of the local church
- d. started early enough in exercising the skills of being a parent that he has the skills/qualities in his own life that are required to take care of the church. (These skills are not necessarily a part of Christian maturity; they are additional requirements of an elder – much like being “apt to teach” is an additional requirement.)

14. Not A Recent Convert

Definition: Has been saved long enough to demonstrate a level of maturity in his lifestyle. The word for “elder” most literally just means older. Taken in context with the other requirements, we see an emerging theme best described by the phrase “Christian maturity.” Christian maturity embodies much more than the limited lists given in 1 Timothy and in Titus. Christian maturity includes life styles spoken of throughout the New Testament:

- “Be anxious for nothing”
- “Be filled with the Holy Spirit”
- “Never take your own revenge”
- “Flee immorality”
- “Keep yourself from idols”
- “Be devoted to prayer”
as well as many others.

The newest Christian, by the power of the Holy Spirit, can keep all those things. The reality, however, is that most of us “grow” in these things. It takes time for our minds to be renewed and for habits of Christian virtue to become dominant in our lives. Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that starts out very small, but over time becomes larger than all the other garden plants. This is the pattern we expect to see in most men’s lives; it just takes time for the “mustard plant” to become the most preeminent and central part of a man’s life.

15. Has A Good Reputation With Those Outside the Church

Character Quality: a good man

Definition: a title that inspires confidence because the person behind it can be consistently depended upon to do what is legally and morally right whatever the cost

Violation: a bad reputation

Evidences:

- a. gives no cause for gossip or slander
- b. does not use the church as a cover to extort or defraud other members
- c. conducts his business affairs ethically with integrity
- d. no association with community frauds, swindles, scandals, or scams
- e. his lifestyle is of such integrity that his behavior is unquestioned even among the lost. He avoids the appearance of evil.

16. Having Children Who Believe/Having Faithful Children

Evidences: The intent here is that a man first and most importantly be a mature Christian who can pass on his faith. Secondly, he should have certain leadership and pastoral skills that will assist the church in staying on the right track. The most obvious demonstration of these qualities and skills can be seen in a man's family—and especially in his children.

In 1 Corinthians 4:17, the King James version of the Greek word *pistos* is "faithful children." This translation renders the word in a passive sense meaning faithful, loyal, trustworthy, trusted, or dutiful, which better suits the strong contrast with "dissipation or rebellion" that follows. In other words, Paul does not set up a contrast between believing and unbelieving children. Even the best Christian fathers cannot guarantee that all their children will believe. To say that this passage means that an Elder must have believing Christian children places an impossible standard upon a father. Salvation is a supernatural act of God. God, not good parents (although they are used of God), ultimately brings salvation.

The intent of this phrase is to demonstrate a man's Christian maturity and leadership/pastoral skill. If a man has these qualities but has rebellious children, scrutiny must be made of the events of his life leading to the outcome of rebellious children. If it is decided that his children do not adequately reflect the man's present character, then some other long-term indicator should be sought. Long-term is emphasized here since time reveals a man's character.

17. Not Self-willed

Character Quality: love

Definition: gives to others' basic needs without having personal reward as his motive

Violation: selfishness; stubborn; insensitive to other people and their ideas

Evidences:

- a. gives his family what they need, not necessarily what they want
- b. keeps his family in first place by not misplacing his priorities

18. Not Quick-tempered

Evidences:

- a. quick to hear
- b. slow to speak
- c. slow to anger

19. Loves What is Good

Definition: Desire to do good and not evil

20. Sensible

21. Just:

Definition: personal responsibility to God's unchanging laws; decisions based on principle—not prejudices

Violation: favoritism

Evidences:

- a. disciplines his children by instruction, warning, and correction
- b. encourages church discipline when reproofing and restoring a church member
- c. maintains moral and ethical business standards and practices in community
- d. suffers for what is right regardless of the cost rather than doing that which is wrong

22. Devout:

Definition: Stable in his faith

Violation: hypocritical; teaching one thing and living another

23. Dignified

24. Not Double-tongued

25. Holding to the Mystery of the Faith With a Clear Conscience

Evidences: Shows itself even in casual conversation; uniquely gifted in his ability to communicate the Word of God, publicly and privately.

26. Not Malicious Gossips

27. Faithful in All Things

Appendix D

Baptism and Communion

We believe Jesus instituted and prescribed two ordinances for His Church: baptism and communion (or the Lord's Supper).

Baptism

We believe the Scriptures teach believer's baptism by immersion for those who receive Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Baptism was instituted first by Jesus for His Church through His own baptism (Matt. 3:13-17). Through baptism in water Jesus predicted His own death and resurrection. He set an example for all of those who follow Him. Through baptism in water, those who follow Him are predicting their own death and resurrection through Jesus Christ. Jesus commanded His followers to practice baptism in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20). In the New Testament, the pattern set in Acts 2 and following passages is to repent, believe, and be baptized. Baptism is consistently and faithfully the public response of the believer to the gospel message in the New Testament. The word "baptism" is translated from the Greek term *baptizo* which literally means "to immerse, to submerge" (Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*). Immersion is the clearest portrait of Paul's description of our new life in Christ in Romans 6. It is clear in the New Testament that salvation is only possible by trusting in Jesus by grace through faith, with no mixture of works (Eph. 2:8-9). It is also clear that believers in the New Testament who received the free gift of salvation by grace through faith faithfully and publicly demonstrated their new life in Christ through the waters of baptism (Acts. 2:41, 8:12, 8:36-37, 9:18m 10:44-48, 16:14-15, 16:14-15, 16:32-33, 18:8, 19:4-5). The idea of an unbaptized Christian is clearly inconsistent with the practice of the New Testament Church.

Communion

Communion, or the Lord's Supper, is the second ordinance instituted by Jesus for those who receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. Jesus formally instituted this practice at His last meal with His disciples before His crucifixion. On the night of Passover, Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, and broke it. He said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:24). He then took the cup, and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:25). His Church continued this practice of remembrance and thanksgiving through the bread and the cup after His death, resurrection, ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:42, Acts 20:7,11, Acts 27:35, 1 Cor. 11:17-34). The elements of the bread and the cup are a symbol of the sacrifice Christ has made on behalf of His Church through the work on the cross. The practice of communion is a memorial in which His Church calls to remembrance the sacrifice Jesus made so that we could experience communion with God and with one another. Communion is also a physical reminder of the spiritual reality that we are the body of Christ on the earth, and that we are called by God to love one another. As with baptism, partaking in the Lord's Supper is not necessary for one to be saved. Communion is a remembrance by God's family of the price that was paid by Christ for their salvation, and it should be observed with thanksgiving until Jesus returns.