

CONSTITUTION  
LIVING HOPE CHURCH

PREAMBLE

Living Hope is a communion of people gathered by God, united in Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to obey the great commandment and the great commission. It affirms its companionship in faith with other church bodies and all those who fear God and keep God's commandments.

Living Hope especially cherishes the dual emphasis on new birth and new life in Christ, believing that personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is the foundation of our mission of evangelism and Christian nurture. Our common experience of God's grace and love in Jesus Christ continues to sustain Living Hope as an interdependent body of believers that recognizes but transcends our theological differences.

Living Hope celebrates two divinely ordained sacraments. Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In conscious dependence on the work of the Holy Spirit, we practice believer baptism by immersion, as an act of obedience, following Christ's Instruction and example. We accept the baptism of those who have been immersed into Christ in other settings. Living Hope practices open communion, welcoming all who seek to celebrate the memory of our risen Savior, and the promise of eternal life with him.

Living Hope committed to reaching across boundaries of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, and status in the cultivation of communities of life and service.

This document, which is in harmony with the above preamble, is the Constitution and Bylaws of Living Hope Church, Alpena, MI 49707

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this church shall be Living Hope Church, Alpena, MI

ARTICLE II AFFILIATION

The church is a non-denominational entity not legally bound to any larger religious body. It may at various times and places with approval of the leadership team enter into "associations" with other religious organizations. Entrance into a relationship which would transfer full or partial control from the local church body to another entity whose mission is in harmony with this constitution and the Holy Scriptures may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting in a public meeting advertised not less than four weeks prior, providing the proposed amendment was presented in written form at a previous congregational meeting at least six months previous.

ARTICLE III CONFESSION OF FAITH

There is only one God, creator and designer of heaven and earth. He exists as three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is a personal God who came to live with us in the form of the Son, Jesus. Jesus willingly became a human so He could give His life as a substitute for human sin. Because of His sinless life on earth His death can be exchanged for ours, and pay the price for our sin. The Holy Spirit dwells with Christians here on earth to give them comfort and power in their battle against the kingdom of darkness. The Bible is God’s Word for humankind. It teaches us how to live in peace, joy, and harmony in this world and also gives us Instruction on how to attain life with Jesus in heaven after our time here is over.

#### ARTICLE IV PURPOSE

We covenant to cultivate a community of worship committed to prayer, preaching and study of the Word of God, the celebration of the Lord’s Supper and baptism, and fellowship across gender, race, age, culture, and class. In so doing, we covenant to equip loving, giving, growing Christians to reach out with good news of Jesus Christ – evangelizing the lost, ministering to those in need, and seeking justice for the oppressed.

Living Hope’s mission is to rescue the lost from the powers of darkness and help people become active, growing Christians.

#### ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the church is granted as provided in the bylaws to those who through faith in God’s Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope through the Holy Spirit, have been baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, promise to faithfully support the mission, ministries, leadership, and policies of the church, and to share in its fellowship and obligations.

#### ARTICLE VI GOVERNANCE

The authority of the government of this church is vested in its membership acting through duly called congregational meetings. The management, administration and oversight of business and spiritual affairs are delegated by the congregation to appropriate leadership as outlined in the Bylaws. All elected leadership specified in the bylaws shall be members of the church.

#### ARTICLE VII OFFICERS

The officers of the church shall be a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary, and a financial officer. All officers shall be members of the Leadership Team.

#### ARTICLE VIII CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

An Annual Meeting shall be held as near the first of the fiscal year as feasible. At the Annual Meeting written progress reports shall be submitted by the pastor(s), ministry staff, officers, and ministry teams. Reports on an independent review of financial records shall be submitted by the treasurer for the church and each of its organizations. The church budget shall be submitted for action.

## ARTICLE IX ASSETS OF THE CHURCH

The congregation shall hold title to its own assets

In the event of Schism within the church, in which there are competing claims to the assets by various factions of the membership, the title of church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group which abides by the constitution and bylaws, as determined by a third-party Christian Conciliator. (See bylaws Article VII.)

In the event the congregation votes to cease, the property and all assets of the church shall be transferred as outlined in the bylaws Article VIII: Assets.

## ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS

Amendments in harmony with this constitution and the Holy Scriptures may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting in a public meeting advertised not less than four weeks prior, providing the proposed amendment was presented in written form at a previous congregational meeting. These bylaws will be reviewed by the leadership team at least once every two years.

Reviewed and approved: \_\_\_\_\_