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**Hagans Community Church**

**Constitution and By-Laws**

Revised on May 7, 2023

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**Constitution and By-Laws**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**ARTICLE 1 – THE NAME OF THE CHURCH** 3

**ARTICLE 2 – HCC MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT** 4

**ARTICLE 3 – DENOMINATIONAL ASSOCIATION** 4

**ARTICLE 4 – STATEMENT OF FAITH** 5

**ARTICLE 5 – MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS** 7

**ARTICLE 6 – GENERAL VOTING PRACTICES** 8

**ARTICLE 7 – CONGREGATION MEETING AGENDA AND CONDUCT** 9

**ARTICLE 8 – CHURCH GOVERNMENT – RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERS, APOSTOLIC ELDERS** 10

**Responsibilities of HCC Senior Pastor / Elders** 12

**Responsibilities of HCC Apostolic Elder(s)** 13

**Responsibilities of HCC Deacon(s)** 14

**ARTICLE 9 – PULPIT COMMITTEE GUIDELINES** 14

**ARTICLE 10 – AMENDMENTS** 15

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of HAGANS COMMUNITY CHURCH**

*A church is an organization much like any other social group or club. As such, it has a set of rules and regulations by which it abides. Church constitutions lay groundwork for the organization of the church leadership, church government, election guidelines, missional and visional direction along with other important matters of church business.*

As members of Hagans Community Church (HCC), we shall become familiar with the Constitution and By-Laws and Position Papers. The HCC members will freely and voluntarily come into covenant agreement with the elder group and the church body, by standing by them in the unity of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of growing together until Gods victorious return.

This covenant document revolves around our church vision and mission. This document guides and serves the body of Christ at HCC in a manner that purposely moves its members through a governing process. This process helps HCC members to obey and humbly submit to all Jesus has commanded us to do, say and be.

**Article 1**

**THE NAME OF THE CHURCH**

The name of this organization shall be Hagans Community Church (aka: HCC), formerly known as Hagans Christian Church, and shall be the only name used (from May 7, 2023 and forward) in relation to Deeds, Titles, Billing addresses and bank accounts.

**Article 2**

**HCC MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT**

**Mission Statement**

Matthew 28:16-20 (NIV)

16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

**Vision Statement**

Matthew 22:37, 39-40 (KJV)

37 Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind… 39 the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

HCC exists to Love God, Love Yourself and Love People. We will love God in faith, time and resources, knowing Jesus died for our sins. We will discover our biblical identity, purpose and value as stated in God’s word. We will love people through service, prayer, and grace.

**Article 3**

**DENOMINATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

HCC is a Non-Denominational Church. It is independent of any other church denomination and operates only by God blessings and the support of its membership. HCC is a non-profit organization that exists to love God, love Yourself and love People as stated in Article 2. HCC is currently a non-denominational church; the HCC elder group reserves the right to explore the possibility to move into a denominational environment if it feels by doing so aligns with the spiritual direction God has provided. The HCC elder group may lead HCC into a denominational association for the spiritual health and longevity of HCC.

In any case, where the HCC elder group believes joining a denomination is spiritually appropriate, the HCC elder group will seek out church deacons and the congregation for input/counsel. The elder group will have the sole discretion into directing HCC into or out of a denominational association. The HCC elder group may or may not utilize denominational related educational materials for discipleship classes. The HCC elder group will consistently review and hold accountable, its educational materials to align with HCC position papers (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012.).

**Article 4**

**STATEMENT OF FAITH**

**The Trinity**

It is the testimony of both the Old and New Testaments and of the Christian Church that God is both One and Triune. The biblical revelation testifies that there is only one God and that He is eternally existent in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**God the Father**

God the Father is the creator and sustainer of all things, and He created the universe in love. He created man in His own image for fellowship and called man back to Himself through Christ after the rebellion and fall of man.

**The Son**

Jesus Christ is eternally God. He was together with the Father and the Holy Spirit from the beginning, and through Him all things were made. For man’s redemption, He left heaven and became incarnate by the Holy Spirit through the virgin Mary; henceforth, He is forever one Christ with two natures—God and man—in one person.

**The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is God, the Lord and giver of life, who was active in the Old Testament and given to the Church in fullness at Pentecost. He empowers the saints for service and witness, cleanses man from the old nature and conforms us to the image of Christ. The baptism in the Holy Spirit, subsequent to conversion, releases the fullness of the Spirit and is evidenced by the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

**The Scripture**

We affirm that the Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, is alone the only infallible, inspired Word of God, and that its authority is ultimate, final and eternal. It cannot be added to, subtracted from or superseded in any regard. The Bible is the source of all doctrine, instruction, correction and reproof. It contains all that is needed for guidance in godliness and practical Christian conduct.

**The Atonement**

Christ’s vicarious death on the cross paid the penalty for the sins of the whole world, but its benefits are only applicable to those who receive Jesus as personal Savior. Healing – body, soul and spirit – and all of God’s provisions for His saints, are provided for in the atonement, but these must be appropriated.

**Salvation**

The Word of God declares clearly that salvation is a gift of God, based on the merits of the death of His Son, and is appropriated by faith. Salvation is affected by personal repentance, belief in the Lord Jesus (justification) and personal acceptance of Him into one’s life as Lord and Savior (regeneration). The new life in Christ includes the privileges of adoption and inheritance in the kingdom of God’s beloved Son. Salvation is an act of free will in response to God’s personal love for mankind. It is predestined only in the sense that God, through His omniscience, foreknew those who would choose Him. It is secure in the eternal, unchanging commitment of God who does not lie and is forever the same. Salvation should produce an active lifestyle of loving obedience and service to Jesus Christ our Savior.

**The Christian Life**

We believe that the Scriptures portray the life of the saint in this world to be one of balance between what is imputed to us as Christians and what is imparted to us according to our faith and maturity. Hence, God’s provision for His children is total, and the promises are final and forever. The shortcomings of the individual and of the Church are because of the still progressing sanctification of the saints. The Christian life is filled with trials, tests and warfare against a spiritual enemy. For those abiding in Christ until their deaths or His return, the promises of eternal blessing in the presence of God are assured. To remain faithful through all circumstances of life requires dependence upon the Holy Spirit and a willingness to die to personal desires and passions.

**The Church**

The goal of the Church is to make disciples of all nations and to present the saints complete in Christ. The five-fold ministry of Ephesians 4 governs the Church, the offices of elder and deacon, as well as other offices mentioned in scripture. Church policy is a balance between congregation and eldership authority, emphasizing the final authority of the Church leadership. It is essential to the life of the Church that scriptural patterns of discipline are practiced and that oversight for Church discipline, individual and corporate, is exercised by the leadership of the Church.

**Baptism & the Lord's Supper**

The Word of God enjoins on the Church two perpetual ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first, baptism, is the outward sign of what God has already done in the individual's life and is a testimony to all that the person now belongs to Jesus. It is identification with Jesus and is affected in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Lord’s Supper is a commemoration of the death of the Lord and is done in remembrance of Him until He comes again; it is a sign of our participation in Him. Both institutions are restricted to those who are believers.

**Eschatology**

We affirm the bodily, personal, second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the saints, the millennium and the final judgment. The final judgment will determine the eternal status of both the saints and the unbelievers, determined by their relationship to Jesus Christ. We affirm with the Bible the final state of the new heavens and the new earth.

*HCC also has “Position Papers” which includes the above articles and additional topics of doctrinal position which are presented to its members.*

**Article 5**

**MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

HCC values its membership and strives to promote unity in the Body of Christ. For that reason, we require all members to review our Constitution and By-Laws and Position Papers and address any questions with the Pastor(s). We welcome all our members to attend church services held at HCC. We require all members to be a believer of Jesus Christ prior to becoming a member. We require all members to fall under the spiritual covering/direction of the Godly appointed at HCC known as HCC Pastors/Elders/Apostolic Elders (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012.).

We encourage members to attend congregation meetings when held by HCC. We encourage you to freely tithe (10%) from your monthly income, to HCC (refer to Morris, Robert. Beyond Blessed: God's Perfect Plan to Overcome All Financial Stress. FaithWords. 2019.).

Your membership is defined by your active attendance and not by your absence. If you are consecutively absent from our regular weekly church services at HCC for extended periods of time (exceptions; illnesses, job related trips or requirements), then you should consider withholding any votes at the next Congregation Meeting following your absence. Upon returning to church on a consistent basis, you will have the necessary time to familiarize yourself with where the church is and where the church wants to go.

**Membership of HCC**

Shall have had made Jesus Christ their Lord and Savior and have been baptized as directed by God’s Holy word as a confirmation of their Christian faith. As a member of HCC, you should freely and voluntarily submit to HCC Leadership direction and disciplines (Hebrews 13:17). As a member you agree to follow the church doctrine as set forth in this document and “Position Papers". As a member you should freely and voluntarily promote unity in and outside of HCC. As a member, you should freely and voluntarily extinguish discord, divisive, contentious behaviors or any other activity which leads to disunity at HCC.

As an HCC member, you should not give an offense time to fester, but will, always attempt to talk with the offended to work out a resolution so that the offense is dissolved, and forgiveness is promoted as quickly as possible (refer to Bevere, John. *The Bait of Satan: Living Free From the Deadly Trap of Offense*. Charisma House. 2013.). As a member you may be called upon to help vote or fill a certain position at HCC, you should prayerfully consider your support and volunteering ability when such a need arises.

**Article 6**

**GENERAL VOTING PRACTICES**

While HCC grows and operates, there will be times where an election and congregational support and voting is necessary. During times in which support and voting is needed, the following guidelines will need to be followed.

1. The congregation will have two (2) weeks to review the voting topic and provide candidate/suggestions to the church secretary.
2. The congregation will have an additional two (2) weeks to vote on the elected positions via ballots.
3. Who can vote?
	* You must be 18 years of age or older to vote on church matters. If you are unable to vote because of illness, job related absence or vacations that were per-scheduled, contact (email or phone) the church secretary and cast your vote. At least two members of the church, who are not running for any positions up for vote, shall volunteer to count the votes received. When counting votes received from church members, the counters shall first, log the name of the voter, then receive their completed ballot. During the two (2) weeks voting period, the counters will be responsible for securing the votes at all times. The counters shall deliver the final results to the church secretary.
4. The church secretary shall deliver the results to the elder group for review.
5. The elder group will perform interviews with the candidates regarding their experiences, and purpose for wanting to fulfill the specific role up for election and to ensure the candidate(s) understand how the position supports church mission and vision.
6. The elder group will submit the top selected candidate to the church secretary to be placed in the church bulletin for congregation awareness.

**Article 7**

**CONGREGATION MEETING AGENDA AND CONDUCT**

Mandatory attendance to these types of meetings will be by the following: Elders, Deacons, Church Secretary and Church Treasurer. The only exception is illness, or uncontrollable circumstances. The church staff shall commit and model this commitment by their attendance.

HCC will have congregational meetings whenever the elder group feels necessary. The congregation meetings shall be conducted by the following guidelines;

The elder group will announce the annual congregation meeting time and date in advance prior to the meeting date. The elder group will set the agenda for the annual congregational meetings. The elder group will place notice of the agenda in the church bulletin, two (2) weeks prior to the congregation meeting for the congregation to pray over and view. The congregation can inquire and email any questions concerning the agenda to the elder group, prior to the congregation meeting. The agenda will take the following format;

 Call to order

 Opening prayer

 Attendance record

 Topics of discussion (A-Z)

 Closing prayer

However, your opinion is welcomed and encouraged on any matter up for vote. Members are reminded that we all serve one another and our conduct during the meeting should reflect a Christ like attitude. All members must be respectful when other members give their comments and should guard themselves from rash behavior or rudeness which is displayed verbally or through body language. Everyone shall be treated equally and all members opinions are welcomed. Members should be reminded that we all want to contribute to the growth and creativity of the church, and we desire to promote an environment that is conducive to that growth. Lastly, all members should be reminded our ultimate goal at HCC is unity. One body, one spirit, one Lord of us all.

All congregation meetings shall have minutes recorded by the church secretary.

**Article 8**

**CHURCH GOVERNMENT – RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERS, APOSTOLIC ELDERS**

“Church government is a vital portion of how a church operates. The form of church government matters more than most people ever dream. (HCC) will take the balanced approach the bible prescribes and that God blesses” (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012, pp. 128).

HCC will have two (2) foundational concepts; Theocratic Rule and Plural Leadership with Singular Headship.

**Theocratic rule**

God is in charge and Jesus is king (Psalm 24:1). All leaders must function as representatives of God and kingdom. All leaders should be diligent to advance the interests of God’s kingdom rather than their own. When members obey that authority, they are ultimately obeying God in their acts of obedience (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012, pp. 133).

**Plural Leadership and Singular Headship**

Exodus 18 and Titus 1:5; God uses singular Headship to establish vision, values, and direction of the work, together with plurality, or group of people, to walk out the vision, monitor and report results, and participate in fleshing out the fullness of the vision (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012, pp. 133).

The balance of these two foundational concepts will be our utmost priority in moving forward. HCC will prioritize our ability to maintain a healthy balance, a healthy tension, between the Senior Pastor’s singular headship as pastor and the plurality of leadership of our elders and senior staff.

“Power doesn’t lie in the office of pastor. Nor does it lie in the office of elder. Power in the church lies with Jesus” (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012, pp. 135).

Colossians 1:18 (NLT, MSG)

18 Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything. 18 And when it comes to the church, he organizes and holds it together, like a head does a body.

Ephesians 1:22-23 (NIV)

22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

HCC will view the Senior Pastor as one member of the elder group (other Pastors). In other words, “chief among equals”. We will approach our roles in a spirit of humility and submission. The elders will submit to the Senior Pastor individually as their Pastor but the Senior Pastor will submit to the Elders corporately (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012, pp. 136).

Most churches move in a democracy (majority rules) meeting, not HCC, we will move in unity (all move together in one mind and one spirit). To accomplish this, all leaders are required to be mature believers who treasure the word of God over their own word. They must know how to hear the voice of God. If the elder group is not in full agreement, then we will not move forward until there is a unanimous vote to move forward. In cases where the elder group has prayed, fasted and studied the word of God concerning a topic of discussion and still cannot reach a decision, then the elder group will ask the Apostolic Elder(s) to come to a meeting to provide guidance. The guidance received from the apostolic elder(s) will be followed and submitted to by all HCC elders, including the senior pastor (see Apostolic Elder(s) section below for more definition).

The HCC elder will not act as a representative of a special interest group in the church. Of course, it is natural for an elder to listen to a concern from a congregant but the elder’s primary role is to hear from God regardless of what special interest groups may arise. It is important the elder not act in a secretive or divisive manner outside the elder group.

The elders of HCC “will have governing authority only when they are meeting in a group to conduct church business. In the context of the meeting, individual elders have the opportunity to speak to issues relating to the church and express opinions about the churches methods, results and personnel. But when they walk out the meeting room door, that governing and administrative authority falls dormant. What remains is ministry authority. An elder carries ministry authority at all times in all contexts relating to the church (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012, pp. 151).

**Responsibilities of HCC Senior Pastor / Elders**

1. **To Pray** – representing his people to God. Spending time with God is a vital element of the job description.
2. **To Teach** – to prepare the word of God in a manner to teach and preach messages consistent with the word of God. You are to teach everything Jesus has commanded you do. You must show them (the church) the way they must walk and the work they must do. To equip every member for the work of the ministry.
3. **To Raise Up Leaders** – The role of a Deacon was born in the book of Acts when the believers had a complaint concerning widows being neglected in the daily administration. The Apostles spoke up and had people select seven (7) able men, full of the spirit, to meet this need while the Apostles continued with their ministry responsibilities of prayer and the ministry of the Word. As an elder of the church, we must identify, train and empower leaders to whom they could delegate ministry work.
4. **To Provide Financial Oversite** – The elder group recognizes how mammon (money) has caused divisions and downfalls of many churches. The elder group also recognizes where a person’s treasure is, so their heart will be also. The attitude and heart behind financial stewardship is a spiritual matter and one that needs taught, modeled and preached at HCC. The elder group will provide prayerful and careful financial oversight to the church finances, the church treasurer, the church deacons and church congregation. The elder group will provide adequate resources for each support staff member to effectively do what is expected of them at HCC (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012, pp. 112). The elder group will work with the church treasurer to produce an annual budget and guidelines to support the church mission and vision (refer to Morris, Robert. Beyond Blessed: God's Perfect Plan to Overcome All Financial Stress. FaithWords. 2019.).
5. **To Produce All Job Descriptions** – The elder group will prayerfully and carefully provide job descriptions to all support staff at HCC. Th elder group will ensure all job descriptions will harmonize with the church mission and vision (refer to Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012, pp. 111). The elder group will produce and provide a “Job Description Handbook” to each position.

**Responsibilities of HCC Apostolic Elder(s)**

An Apostolic Elder (AE) is a Non-Staff Elder who does not attend HCC. The AE main priority is to provide guidance, minimize organizational tensions, and to provide oversight to the senior pastor in times of moral and ethical failure. Think of the AE as a spiritual covering and a leadership layer to the already established layers of leadership. As the church grows, the elder group may feel it necessary to add Apostolic Elder(s).

1. **Guide** – The AE will provide guidance to the elder group when the team has reached an impasse. The AE will be asked to step into the meeting and render a decision. The decision from the AE will be final and the elder group, including the senior pastor, will submit to the decision without question or opposition. There will be no further discussions on the matter in or outside the meeting room.
2. **Minimize Organizational Tensions** – The AE is to insure unity among the elder group. The AE will be available to counsel individual elders only, privately and without disclosure to the senior pastor. No deacon may use the AE as a means of filing complaints concerning the elder(s)/senior pastor.
3. **Provide Oversight** – The AE will provide oversight of HCC when the senior pastor is caught up in moral failure unbecoming of a senior pastor. The AE will assist in the counsel and restoration process of the senior pastor for healing and forgiveness, regardless if the senior pastor is re-instated or not. In times when the senior pastor has been removed from his roles at HCC, the AE will provide counsel and guidance to the elder group in the search for a senior pastor as set forth in the “Pulpit Committee” guidelines.

*(The idea and implementation of an AE has been received from* Morris, Robert. *The Blessed Church.* WaterBrook. 2012*.)*

**Responsibilities of HCC Deacon(s)**

1. **Participate** - The deacon is to be an energetic and enthusiastic supporter of the entire church program at HCC, attending and participating in all services of the church where time and energy will permit. Should be regular in attendance of all worship services and should participate actively in the full program of the church. Should attend required meetings as often as possible to address in physical church facility/property needs.
2. **Be a Good Steward** - A deacon is to be a leader and set the example for other members of the church in the matter of stewardship. They should be most liberal with time, energy and abilities as well as money for the support of the Kingdom work at HCC. At a minimum, the tithe should be the individual’s goal.
3. **Be Loyal** - The deacon must be loyal to the HCC and the elder group. Must be firm in faith, stable in convictions, and sound in belief. Must be grounded in the Scriptures and conversant with HCC doctrine. As a deacon your loyalty is to God, your family and the church family. All else falls into place as we continue our journey with the Lord on a daily basis.

**Article 9**

**PULPIT COMMITTEE GUIDELINES**

In cases where the Senior Pastor has reassigned, leaves the church, or is removed by sinful factious behavior, the current church elders, coupled with the Apostolic Elder, shall establish a pulpit committee. The pulpit committee should comprise of an Apostolic Elder, the elder group, and the deacon group. Once the pulpit committee has been established, they shall seek out pastoral candidates, conduct interviews, invite the candidates for speaking, and speak to their references. The pulpit committee will select the new senior pastor for HCC. Once the senior pastor has been selected, the senior pastor shall have the same spiritual authority as was given to the previous senior pastor as stated in this Constitution and By-laws.

**Article 10**

**Amendments to the Hagans Community Church Constitution and By-Laws**

As the church grows, so will our Constitution and By-Laws. In cases of any amendments, the following rules shall apply; Amendments shall be made by the elder group and new copies of the amended By-Laws will be announced and provided through the church members upon request.

**END of By-Laws**