Parker Hill Member,

Our next Member Meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 9, at 7:00 p.m. at the Dickson City Campus. The primary focus of this meeting will be to discuss and affirm several changes to our church constitution.

Our constitution states that the Oversight Team is responsible to “review this constitution at least every three years to determine where changes may need to be made to ensure its effectiveness.” The Oversight Team has been involved in a review process since April and is proposing changes in several areas as highlighted in the attached document.

The sections highlighted in yellow represent changes in our Core Creed. These additions are being made in response to changes in our culture—specifically, the widespread acceptance of same-sex marriage. Because of the growing acceptance of homosexual marriage in our culture, and in some mainline denominations, we believe that we need to provide greater clarity on this issue in our doctrinal statement. The proposed changes were adopted from recommendations given by The Christian Legal Society, Alliance Defending Freedom, and other experts in church law.

The first change in our Core Creed (Constitution, p. 3) clarifies the fact that our Oversight Team will have the final say on how we interpret, apply, and teach the Bible. This statement is important because it declares the authority of our church leadership in matters where people may have varying interpretations of a Bible passage.

The second change in our Core Creed (Constitution, p. 4) provides language regarding the sanctity of life and the biblical definition of marriage.

The sections highlighted in pink represent changes in our staffing and organizational structure. Over the years, we have grown from a Sunday attendance of 50 people to over 2,000 and from one location to three. As our attendance has increased, we have added more staff to meet the spiritual needs of our Members and attendees. This growth has required us to change the organizational structure every few years. Just as our children need different shoes as their feet grow, any organization will need to change as the organization grows. The proposed changes in our structure will ensure effective and efficient leadership in this next season of our ministry. These amendments can be summarized as follows:

Pastoral Titles—Our current constitution uses four different titles for pastors: Lead Pastor, Executive Pastor, Pastor, and Associate Pastor. The proposed amendments will reduce the number of titles to two: Lead Pastor and Pastor. This change will not affect reporting relationships between pastors; it is simply a way to create greater clarity and simplicity for our pastoral staff.
Ministry Leadership—In our current constitution, the day-to-day leadership of the church is the responsibility of the Lead Pastor and Executive Pastors. The proposed amendment employs the phrase “Directional Leadership Team.” The Directional Leadership Team would have exactly the same duties as the current team, but acknowledges that the team is comprised of Pastors (the title “Executive Pastor” is no longer used), along with other staff members as needed.

The sections highlighted in green represent changes in Member responsibilities. Although the Bible never mentions any formal membership structure for churches, we find that it is helpful and wise to involve our Members in certain aspects of church governance. At the same time, we recognize that the function of Members can and must change as churches grow and change. The following changes are being recommended by our Oversight Team:

Member Meetings—Our current constitution requires three Member Meetings per year. The proposed change would require one meeting per year (our annual meeting), and other meetings to be scheduled as needs dictate. In the eleven years since our current constitution was adopted, we have grown from two locations to three locations in two counties. The distance between our three campuses makes it very challenging to bring our Members together in one place. We have also shifted much of our vision casting and communication to our Sunday services, email, and website. Given these realities, we believe that it is better to have flexibility in determining when to schedule Member Meetings.

Affirmation of New Pastors—In our current constitution, Members are required to affirm the selection of some pastoral positions, but not others. In conjunction with reducing the number of pastoral titles (referred to previously) this proposed change would only require our Members to affirm, by vote, the selection of the Lead Pastor. Other Pastors would continue to be selected by the Lead Pastor and affirmed by the Oversight Team. Because of our staff size and the pace of our growth, we find ourselves hiring new Pastors far more frequently than in the past. As our church has grown in size and geographic scope, it has become more and more challenging to include Members in this selection process in a meaningful and efficient way.

Support of Ministry—Each Member is required to sign a statement of support as part of the application process. The proposed statement (Constitution, p. 13) provides updated wording that gives more clarity to the expectations of Membership at Parker Hill.

Affirmation of Deacons—At Parker Hill, Deacons are servants that mobilize other men and women to meet the personal and practical needs of the local church body on the campus they attend. In our current constitution, we ask our Members to affirm someone to the role of Deacon whom they may have never met (because they attend a different campus). The proposed change would require only the Oversight Team to affirm new Deacons that have been recommended by the Lead Pastor. By removing the requirement for Member affirmation, we will also have the ability to move men into this role more quickly.
The sections highlighted in blue represent other changes that are necessary for purposes of clarity, consistency, alignment of duties, or to maintain unity throughout the document.

Please take time to download and read through the proposed constitution. If you would like to make a side-by-side comparison, you can also download the current constitution.

Because of the complexity of this process, we want to field all questions and comments in advance of the Member Meeting. To ask a question or give input, you can call or email Tom Gattorna (tom.gattorna@parkerhill.org, 570-341-8383 ext. 33) or attend a special Q & A session on Sunday, November 1, at 2:00 p.m. at the Clarks Summit Campus.

Thank you,

Mark Stuenzi

PS – I look forward to seeing you at the Member Meeting on Monday, November 9, at 7:00 p.m. at the Dickson City Campus.
Instructions: Review this draft copy which includes all of the proposed changes. As a point of reference, we have also made a copy of the current constitution available. The proposed changes are highlighted according to the following color code:

- **Yellow** – Changes in Core Creed
- **Pink** – Changes in staffing and organizational structure
- **Green** – Changes to Member responsibilities
- **Blue** – Other changes that are necessary for purposes of clarity, consistency, alignment of duties or to maintain unity throughout the document

For further clarification or to give input, please attend one of the information meetings prior to the member meeting.

CONSTITUTION

Adopted November 14, 2004
Amended April 9, 2008
Amended March 28, 2012
Proposed Amendments – November ____, 2015
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ARTICLE 1 – PURPOSE, NAME, MISSION

ARTICLE 1, SECTION 1 – PURPOSE OF THIS CONSTITUTION

This constitution is a tool. It declares our understanding of the Bible regarding our church’s Core Creed, Distinctive Beliefs, mission, leadership, governance, and finances. It is designed to promote community of heart and mind within our Body. However, it is not a higher authority than the Word of God. Neither is it a higher authority than God Himself and Jesus Christ as declared in Ephesians 1:22 and 4:12-16. As we are formed spiritually and grow numerically, this document is subject to amendment according to the provisions of Article 6. This document, however, is to be followed according to the spirit in which it is written, following each process as designed without using specifics and details for selfish advantage.

ARTICLE 1, SECTION 2 - NAME

This organization is chartered under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a non-profit religious organization under the corporate name Parker Hill Community Church. Parker Hill Community Church is independent of any denomination but is baptist in history and distinctive beliefs. The church is to be separate from civil government yet bound by its laws as long as they are not in opposition with Scripture.

ARTICLE 1, SECTION 3 – MISSION

Our mission is none other than to fulfill the words of Jesus in Matthew 28: “… go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” It is our desire to implement this mission locally and globally.

The truth of this mission and our commitment to fulfill it will never change. We will, however, seek to implement this charge and communicate Christ in a culturally-perceptive manner that does need to change from generation to generation.

ARTICLE 2 – CORE CREED, DISTINCTIVE BELIEFS

The following Core Creed and Distinctive Beliefs do not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. As the inspired and inerrant revelation of God, the Bible is the complete and final authority in our lives in all matters, including truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind. For purposes of Parker Hill’s faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Oversight Team (Article 3, Section 2) is Parker Hill’s final interpretive authority on the Bible’s meaning and application.

ARTICLE 2, SECTION 1 – CORE CREED

The following statements regarding our Core Creed have been synthesized from what the Bible says in its larger context. These are the foundational truths of the Christian faith that communicate the nucleus of our beliefs.

A. The Bible - The Bible (the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments) is God’s completely true Story about who He is, what He has done, what He is doing, and what He will do. It was given by God to human writers and so reflects God’s pure and perfect heart, as well as the backgrounds, styles, and use of language of the human authors. Paul, the writer of a major portion of the New Testament,
declares that Scripture is the very breath of God. The Bible is the final and complete authority in our lives.

B. God the Father - There is one God, who exists as three persons living in perfect community – Father, Son and Spirit. God created everything and sustains everything by His life. He is holy, all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present, unchanging, and full of love, mercy and grace.

C. Jesus Christ – Jesus Christ, God’s Son, became fully human when He was born to Mary, a virgin. He was fully human and fully God. He lived a perfect life in place of our imperfect lives; died, as our substitute, the death we deserved because of our sin; and physically rose from the dead. He offers us full and eternal life through His own resurrection. He then ascended into heaven and today is our representative, intercessor, and advocate with God the Father. As promised, He will come back for His own and take us to be with Him.

D. Holy Spirit – We experience the presence of God and the fullness of life through our relationship with God the Spirit, who convicts us of sin, points us to Christ, and applies Christ’s work to our lives. He gives gifts and power to the church and He is the One who creates biblical community in the church. He reveals truth and guides our lives, individually and as a community.

E. Humanity – Humans, created by God as male or female and as distinct complementary genders, together reflect, among other traits, His intellect, emotions, and creativity. Because humans are created by God and bear His image, human life is of inestimable value in all its dimensions, from conception to death. The first humans, Adam and Eve, are identified throughout scripture as the pattern for marriage, a covenant relationship between one man and one woman. They chose willingly to betray their relationship with God through direct disobedience which caused this perfect and intimate relationship to become imperfect and distant. Their disobedience not only ruined their relationship with God, but it has affected every human being since that time. But God wanted them back, so He has pursued the human race at all cost with the intent of restoring this relationship and bringing full life once again.

F. Full Life – We are connected to God in only one way that brings full life -- by choosing to accept, through faith, the forgiveness, salvation, and reconciliation God offers to us by Christ’s life, death, and bodily resurrection. God’s gift of grace provides us the unending relationship of being His adopted sons and daughters, giving us a pathway to communicate directly with Him. There is nothing we can do to deserve this life — it is all a gift of God, and our responsibility is simply to receive it. When we do, God begins the process of changing our hearts and minds from the inside out and making our character more and more like Jesus’. And as we have been reconciled to God, we also have hope for being fully reconciled to other people.

Death seals the eternal destiny of each person. At the final judgment, each unbeliever will be separated from God and condemned to the lake of fire. Each believer will be received into God’s loving presence and rewarded for their faithfulness to Him in this life. They will spend eternity with God in the new Heaven and the new Earth.

G. The Church – Believers everywhere compose the church in the universal sense, but the church is always expressed locally. The church is a single worshipping community gathered together in God’s presence and is the visible demonstration of the new community Christ came to create. The church is made up of imperfect people who are responding day by day in all their relationships to God’s stunning
grace. The main responsibility of the church is to offer connection to people outside of a relationship with Christ. The church does this by offering Christ’s full life and by helping those who respond to this offer to become people who follow Christ with their whole heart.

**ARTICLE 2, SECTION 2 – DISTINCTIVE BELIEFS**

The following distinctive beliefs demonstrate our particular interpretation of the Bible in these areas. Our particular interpretation of baptism, communion, the chronology of future events, and supernatural gifts may differ from another church’s interpretation, thus making ours distinctive or unique.

A. **The Sacred Moments** – We believe that the following expressions are symbolic in nature and provide a vivid picture of the love and grace of God, and the difference He can make when we live in relationship with Him.

1. **Baptism** – Baptism is an outward sign of a person’s internal faith in Jesus Christ. This physical demonstration symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, but more importantly, communicates a believer’s loyalty and allegiance to Jesus Christ in a public way. Baptism is commanded in the Scriptures as an initial act of obedience by Christ-followers. We believe in baptism by immersion in water.

2. **Communion** – Communion is a time of worship when believers commune with God together by remembering the death of Jesus, using the physical elements of bread and the fruit of the vine. Jesus created this expression during an intimate moment with his closest followers in Matthew 26. Paul, the writer of I Corinthians, instructed us to continue observing this time of worship.

B. **The Future Story** - In His own time and in His own way, God will bring the world as we know it to an end. We believe the following events will occur: Jesus is coming back at any moment for all who have a personal relationship with His Father and will take His followers to heaven (the rapture). The world will experience a seven-year period of misleading peace and unprecedented distress (the tribulation). Satan will be defeated in a great battle and will be imprisoned for 1,000 years as Christ reigns physically on the earth (the millennium). Satan will seek to deceive the world one final time. He and his followers will ultimately be defeated, judged, and sentenced by God to eternal torment in hell. God will make all things new — heaven and earth — where His followers will live with Him forever in the new era of God’s universal, visible reign.

C. **Supernatural Gifts** – We believe that the Holy Spirit empowers and gifts believers for their ministry. Some of these gifts can be categorized as “supernatural” gifts, because their expression overrides natural laws and ordinary human abilities. These gifts can include speaking in unlearned foreign languages, miraculous healing, and speaking prophetically of future events. It is clear from Scripture that God empowered human beings with these gifts at certain times and in certain places as a way of authenticating His message. (We believe that God is no less capable of working through His people in these same ways today.) We do not believe, however, that the expression of these supernatural gifts was an indicator of greater spiritual maturity in the life of a believer. Nor do we believe that Scripture clearly supports the expression of these gifts in all times and in all cultural contexts. In fact, there is strong evidence from Scripture that these gifts were linked specifically to the birth of the early church as a way of confirming the message. For the sake of unity within this church family, we do not practice or teach these supernatural gifts. Instead, we encourage believers...
to seek the “most excellent way” of love and to be zealous about the gifts that are certain to edify the church (I Corinthians 12:31).

ARTICLE 3 – ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The head of Parker Hill Community Church is Jesus Christ. As a spiritual organism, we seek to submit to His priorities in all we do and in how we do it.

On a human level, the mission of Parker Hill Community Church is implemented by the various groups explained in this Article.

ARTICLE 3, SECTION 1 - MEMBERS

The future of Parker Hill Community Church will be shaped by the prayers, involvement, and spiritual discernment of its Members. Some Members will be directly involved in leadership by functioning as Overseers (Article 3, Section 2). All other Members are invited to participate in specific decisions, as outlined in this constitution.

ARTICLE 3, SECTION 2 – OVERSIGHT TEAM

Note: The biblical terms “Elder,” “Overseer,” and “Pastor” refer to complementary aspects of leadership in the church (Acts 20:17, 28; I Peter 5:1-2). For purposes of clarity in this constitution, we will distinguish between paid and non-paid ministry leaders by using the terms “Pastor” for those who serve in a vocational capacity and the term “Overseers” for those who serve in a non-vocational capacity.

A. Composition - The Oversight Team will be comprised of the Lead Pastor (Article 3, Section 3), two or three Pastors (Article 3, Section 4), and five to nine men who meet the qualifications of an Overseer.

B. Qualifications

1. Character - These must be men whose lives are marked by the character qualities described in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

2. Competence - As part of their recognized gifts, abilities, and experience, Overseers must have proven themselves to be men who possess discernment and strategic-thinking capabilities.

3. Commitment - An Overseer must have been a Member of the church for at least one year, and must be in authentic agreement with the Core Creed and Distinctive Beliefs of Parker Hill Community Church.

C. Selection

1. Selection of Pastors to the Oversight Team - The Lead Pastor will be a permanent member of the Oversight Team. The Lead Pastor will choose two or three Pastors to serve on the Oversight Team. His recommendation must be affirmed by the Oversight Team. These Pastors will serve for a one-year, renewable, term.

2. Selection of Overseers to the Oversight Team - Scripture gives evidence of the first leaders being appointed by the founders of the church. By this example it is implied that the existing spiritual leadership of a church be intimately involved in the process of selecting new leaders to ensure selection based on spiritual rather than superficial qualifications.
Beyond this, there are no specific guidelines given regarding the selection process. It would therefore appear that freedom is given to the individual church to develop a process that will best serve its own special needs and situation (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5).

The process for selecting Overseers at Parker Hill Community Church is as follows:

a. **Identification** - Annually, Members of the congregation will be given opportunity to nominate any man from the church Membership as a candidate for an Overseer.

b. **Evaluation** - The current Oversight Team will prayerfully review the nominees. If they unanimously believe a man to be qualified, a member of the Oversight Team will be appointed to approach him to explain the specific nature of the need and to determine his willingness to serve in this capacity (I Timothy 5:22).

c. **Examination** - Examination of the nominee will be accomplished through personal assessment and interviews by the current Oversight Team.

d. **Reflection** - The necessary number of qualified individuals will be presented to the church community for introduction, prayer, and instruction regarding the qualifications of the potential Overseers.

e. **Affirmation** - A period of time determined by the Oversight Team will be set aside for any concerns or affirmation regarding a nominee. Concerns should first be shared with the nominee. If concerns are not resolved privately, they must be shared in the presence of at least two other members of the Oversight Team. If concerns are deemed legitimate, the Oversight Team must seriously reconsider the nominee.

   In the case of no concerns, potential Overseers will be presented for a vote of affirmation at the annual Members’ Meeting (Article 5, Section 1, A). The Members’ decision on nominees will be a vote on the entire slate, rather than individual nominees.

D. **Duties**

1. **Health of the Church** - The Oversight Team is responsible to see that the church remains on a true course biblically, that its Members are appropriately shepherded, that the body is being fed through insightful and accurate biblical teaching, and that the mission of the church is being realized.

2. **Protection of the Church** - The Oversight Team functions as the conscience and guardians of the church. They will protect the church against harmful influences, so that the truth of Christ will remain credible to both the congregation and the surrounding community (I Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28-31; Titus 1:9; James 5:14).

3. **Evaluation** - The Oversight Team is responsible for the overall direction of Parker Hill Community Church. They do not implement programming, as this is the responsibility of the Lead Pastor, Pastors, and Staff (Article 3, Section 5). However, they are responsible for evaluating programming based on its appropriateness and effectiveness in furthering the overall health of the church.
4. **Other Teams** - The Oversight Team may form other teams to accomplish various facets of the mission. The Oversight Team will determine the purpose, personnel, and tenure of these teams.

5. **Church Membership** - The Oversight Team will approve the membership process, as well as all new Members.

6. **Compensation and Policies** - The Oversight Team will approve compensation and employment policies for the Lead Pastor.

7. **Annual Budget** - The Oversight Team will review and approve the General Fund budget before it is presented to the Members for affirmation. In addition, the Oversight Team will review the financial statements regularly throughout the budget year.

8. **Allocation of Surplus Funds** - The Oversight Team will affirm decisions regarding the disposition of any surplus in operating funds over the General Fund budget.

9. **Debt** - The Oversight Team has the authority to approve the borrowing of funds for unforeseen ministry needs. Debt that is approved by this team, without the affirmation of the Members, will never exceed a cumulative total of 10% of the church’s current General Fund budget. The borrowing of funds in excess of this limit requires the affirmation of the Members.

10. **Financial Records** - The Oversight Team will have the financial records of Parker Hill Community Church audited by an outside agency at least once per year.

11. **Legal Roles** - To accommodate legal relationships outside the church, the following people will serve this non-profit corporation in these legal roles.

   a. **Board of Directors** - The officers of the corporation are as follows:

      i. **President** - The Lead Pastor will serve as the President.

      ii. **Secretary** - One Overseer, appointed annually by the Oversight Team, will serve as Secretary.

      iii. **Treasurer** - The Pastor ultimately responsible for the church finances will serve as Treasurer.

   b. **Trustees** - The Oversight Team, for all legal purposes, shall constitute the “trustees” as stated in the Articles of Incorporation, and will have the authority to direct the execution and delivery of any document required by law. Execution of a document as directed by the Oversight Team is sufficient to bind the church.

   c. **Representatives of Members** - The Oversight Team will act on behalf of the Membership in all matters not specifically reserved to the Membership in this constitution. A list of these matters is found in Article 5, Section 2, D.

12. **Meetings** - The Oversight Team will meet a minimum of eight times each year and at least once in every quarter. At any meeting of the Oversight Team, ¾ of the team members, including two of the pastors who serve on the Oversight Team (any combination of the Lead Pastor and/or Pastors), will constitute a quorum. In the interest of the unity of the body, and in imitation
of the humility of Christ, consensus will be sought in all major decisions of the Oversight Team. In the event of unresolved differences, a \( \frac{3}{4} \) vote of those present will have final authority.

**13. Delegation** - The Oversight Team is permitted to delegate its authority and responsibilities as it may choose, but no such delegation will absolve the Team of its accountability in any matter. Any delegation that the Oversight Team may make is rescindable by the Team.

**E. Tenure and Dismissal**

1. **Term of Service** - With the exception of Pastors (whose tenure on the Oversight Team is addressed in Article 3, Section 2C, 1), members of the Oversight Team will serve three-year terms. Two terms may be served in succession, with a year off before an individual can be reappointed to the Team.

2. **Process for Removal** - If it becomes apparent that a certain individual should no longer serve on the Team, he may resign, or, by a \( \frac{3}{4} \) vote of the other Oversight Team members, be dismissed from the Team. His position will remain vacant until the next regularly-scheduled selection process. Note: It is important to understand the unique biblical step given for reconciling conflict with an Overseer. For an accusation against one of these leaders to be considered, there must be two or more witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19).

**ARTICLE 3, SECTION 3 – LEAD PASTOR**

The New Testament recognizes that there are some pastors who are responsible to “direct the affairs of the church” while also giving their time to “preaching and teaching” (1 Timothy 5:17). In our context, we use the title “Lead Pastor” to describe this role.

**A. Qualifications** – The Lead Pastor is accountable to the Oversight Team in matters of personal character and leadership effectiveness.

1. **Character** – The Lead Pastor will be a man whose life is marked by the character qualities described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

2. **Competence** - As part of his recognized gifts, abilities, and experience, the Lead Pastor must have proven himself to be an effective leader in the realm of ministry for which he is being considered.

3. **Doctrine and Beliefs** – The Lead Pastor must be in authentic agreement with the Core Creed and Distinctive Beliefs of Parker Hill Community Church.

**B. Number** – The church will have one Lead Pastor.

**C. Role** - The Lead Pastor is responsible for giving overall leadership and direction to the church. He should be characterized by his spiritual leadership and teaching gifts, and by his ability to effectively cast the vision for Parker Hill Community Church.

**D. Duties**

1. **Teaching** - The Lead Pastor will be responsible for the majority of the teaching in our weekend worship gatherings.
2. **Vision** - The Lead Pastor will work with the Directional Leadership Team (Article 3, Section 6) and Oversight Team in developing and evaluating the long-term vision for the church. The Lead Pastor will be the primary voice in casting vision and promoting the mission of the church.

3. **Evaluation and Accountability** - The Lead Pastor will ensure accountability and proper evaluation for the fulfillment of the responsibilities given to each of the Pastors and Staff. He will determine compensation and employment policies for the Pastors and Staff.

4. **Guidance and Leadership** - The Lead Pastor will provide overall guidance and leadership to the Oversight Team, Directional Leadership Team, Pastors, and Staff.

**E. Tenure and Dismissal** – The Lead Pastor is appointed to an indefinite tenure consistent with his continued desire and ability to serve in this capacity. This being said, evaluation and recognition of qualifications and competency must remain a priority within the leadership and the church body (Romans 12:3-8). The removal of the Lead Pastor will be effected by personal resignation or by dismissal in accordance with the following:

1. **Voluntary Resignation** – The Lead Pastor may step aside at any time he so chooses. The Lead Pastor should prayerfully reflect on his decision and seek counsel from the Oversight Team before making a final decision.

2. **Involuntary Dismissal** – If it becomes apparent that the Lead Pastor is no longer qualified to serve in that role, he may be dismissed by a ¾ vote of the Oversight Team. It is important to understand the unique biblical step given for reconciling conflict with the Lead Pastor. For an accusation against the Lead Pastor to be considered, there must be two or more witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19).

**F. Absence of a Lead Pastor** - In the extended, temporary absence of the Lead Pastor, the Oversight Team will appoint one of the Pastors to fulfill the Lead Pastor responsibility. If the absence of the Lead Pastor is permanent (i.e. resignation or shift to another ministry role within the church), the Oversight Team will appoint a Pastor to serve as Interim Lead Pastor and will begin the process of filling the Lead Pastor role with one of the other Pastors or a new candidate.

The Oversight Team will recommend to the Members a candidate for affirmation (Article 5, Section 2, D, 1). When the focus has been narrowed to one candidate, the Oversight Team will provide the opportunities for Members to interact with the candidate. After this interaction, a Members’ Meeting will be called (according to the requirements of Article 5) to see if there is agreement with the Oversight Team’s recommendation. The vote will be conducted as outlined in Article 5, Section 2. If at least ¾ of the voting Members agree with the Oversight Team’s recommendation, the Oversight Team will offer the position to the candidate.

**ARTICLE 3, SECTION 4 – PASTORS**

**Note:** The biblical terms “Elder,” “Overseer,” and “Pastor” refer to complementary aspects of leadership in the church (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-2). For purposes of clarity in this constitution, we will distinguish between paid and non-paid ministry leaders by using the term “Pastor” for those who serve in a vocational capacity and the term “Overseers” for those who serve in a non-vocational capacity.
A. Qualifications

1. **Character** - Pastors will be men whose lives are marked by the character qualities described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

2. **Competence** – Pastors must possess the spiritual characteristics, abilities, and experiences that would qualify them for their positions.

3. **Doctrine and Beliefs** - A Pastor must be in authentic agreement with the Core Creed and Distinctive Beliefs of Parker Hill Community Church.

B. Selection

1. **Number** - Pastors will be added as ministry needs dictate. The appropriate number of Pastors will be determined by the Lead Pastor and affirmed by the Oversight Team.

2. **Need** - Upon recognition of a need that would require filling a Pastor position, the Lead Pastor will initiate a selection process and recommend a candidate to the Oversight Team for approval.

C. Tenure and Dismissal – Pastors are appointed to an indefinite tenure consistent with their continued desire and ability to serve in this capacity. This being said, evaluation and recognition of qualifications and competency must remain a priority within the leadership and the church body (Romans 12:3-8). The removal of Pastors will be effected by personal resignation or by dismissal in accordance with the following:

1. **Voluntary Resignation** – A Pastor may step aside at any time he so chooses. The Pastor should prayerfully reflect on his decision and seek counsel from the Oversight Team before making a final decision.

2. **Involuntary Dismissal** – If it becomes apparent that any Pastor is no longer qualified to serve in that role, he may be dismissed by a ¾ vote of the Oversight Team. It is important to understand the unique biblical step given for reconciling conflict with a Pastor. For an accusation against a Pastor to be considered, there must be two or more witnesses (I Timothy 5:19).

**ARTICLE 3, SECTION 5 - STAFF**

As ministry needs dictate and finances allow, Parker Hill Community Church will employ Staff to assist in fulfilling the mission of the church. Staff members should possess the spiritual characteristics, abilities, and experiences that qualify them for their positions. Staff members must be in authentic agreement with the Core Creed and Distinctive Beliefs of Parker Hill Community Church.

**ARTICLE 3, SECTION 6 – DIRECTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM**

A. **Composition** - The Directional Leadership Team will be comprised of the Lead Pastor, a select number of Pastors, and other Staff as deemed necessary. The Lead Pastor will choose the members of this team. The number of individuals comprising this team, as well as the individual members of team, can change as needs dictate. The members of the team will be appointed on the basis of their experience and their giftedness in organizational leadership. The members of the Directional Leadership Team are accountable to the Lead Pastor in matters of personal character and leadership effectiveness.
B. Duties

1. **Set Spiritual Direction** - The Directional Leadership Team will work with the Lead Pastor to determine programming and give vision to the various ministries of the church. The Directional Leadership Team is also responsible for managing the church Staff and overseeing the day-to-day operations. Other Pastors and Staff will be involved in the decision-making process as appropriate.

2. **Staff the Ministry** - The Directional Leadership Team has the authority, with the consent of the Lead Pastor, to hire and dismiss Staff members as they may deem necessary to accomplish the mission of the church. The Directional Leadership Team will ensure accountability and proper evaluation for the fulfillment of the responsibilities given to each Staff member.

3. **Manage Financial Resources** - The Directional Leadership Team is collectively responsible for the day-to-day management of the financial resources of the church, excluding any decisions regarding compensation for themselves or the Lead Pastor.

   The scope of their financial authority is as follows:

   a. **Annual Budget** - The Directional Leadership Team will work together to develop a General Fund budget, to be presented to the Lead Pastor and Oversight Team for approval.

   b. **Allocation of General Funds** - The Directional Leadership Team has authority for the allocation of funds within the total approved General Fund budget.

   c. **Allocation of Designated Funds** - The Directional Leadership Team has the authority to make expenditures from funds that are contributed and designated for a specific purpose.

**ARTICLE 3, SECTION 7 – DEACON TEAM**

In the Jerusalem Church, seven men were chosen to manage a pressing need in the believing community, freeing the leaders to give their “attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word.” (Acts 6:1-4)

A. **Qualifications** - The word “deacon” indicates service. At Parker Hill Community Church, Deacons are men who desire to be servants by mobilizing other men and women to meet the personal and practical needs of the local church body. Deacons must also exhibit all the qualifications of Scripture set forth in I Timothy 3:8-12, and, as Members, must authentically agree with the Core Creed of Parker Hill Community Church and agree to fully support our Distinctive Beliefs.

B. **Selection** - **Deacons will be recommended by the Lead Pastor to Oversight Team for affirmation.** They will serve as long as the Oversight Team determines that they are qualified and willing, and as long as a need for their ministry exists. The number of Deacons will be determined by the needs of the church community. However, only qualified and willing people will be selected.

C. **Duties** - Deacons are the “hands and feet” of the Pastors and Overseers. Theirs is a ministry of service, mercy, and care. They work directly with the church community to meet the needs of individuals, allowing the Pastors and Overseers to focus fully on their spiritual leadership responsibilities.
ARTICLE 4 – MEMBERSHIP

Becoming a Member of Parker Hill Community Church is a choice to take an important step in your journey with other Christ-followers. It communicates your desire to be spiritually formed in the context of a spiritual community, and allows your abilities and talents to be fully utilized as we seek to introduce people to Jesus Christ and to help them become fully committed to Him.

ARTICLE 4, SECTION 1 - REQUIREMENTS

A. **Age** - Each Member must be at least 12 years of age.

B. **Relationship with Jesus Christ** - Each Member must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

C. **Baptism** - Each Member must have been baptized by immersion since becoming a believer, unless physically impossible.

D. **Agreement with Core Creed and Support of Distinctive Beliefs** - Each Member must authentically agree with the Core Creed of Parker Hill Community Church and be willing to fully support our Distinctive Beliefs.

E. **Support of Ministry** - Each Member must sign the following statement:

   "As a Member of Parker Hill Community Church, I agree to partner in fulfilling our mission by attending regularly, serving on a ministry team, financially supporting the church, connecting with others in a group, and placing my relationship with God and others under the care and guidance of the church leadership."

F. **Approval** - Each Member must be approved by the Lead Pastor, Pastors, and the Oversight Team.

ARTICLE 4, SECTION 2 - PROCESS

The Oversight Team will approve the Membership process, which will include an application and an interview.

ARTICLE 4, SECTION 3 - REMOVAL

Persons may be removed from Membership by the Oversight Team for the following reasons:

A. **Death**

B. **Personal Request** – A Member in good standing may ask, in writing, to be removed.

C. **Affiliation with Another Church** - A Member in good standing, who formally affiliates with another church without resigning as a Member of this church, will be removed from Membership.

D. **Failure to Participate in or Support the Ministry** - A Member who has failed to participate in or support the ministry of the church for a period of 12 consecutive months may be removed. Before removal, due notification will be made.
**E. Violation of Biblical Commands and Prohibitions** – When a Member’s continued conduct is in clear violation of biblical commands and prohibitions, or when a Member’s conduct indicates an intent to hinder the mission of the church as a whole, the Member will be removed. This will take place only after reconciliation is attempted, as directed in Matthew 18:15-17, and found unattainable. If a Member requests removal during the restoration process, the principles of Matthew 18:15-17 will continue to be followed. Any such action and the factual basis thereof will be noted in the minutes of the Oversight Team.

**ARTICLE 4, SECTION 4 - RESTORATION**

Members dismissed for violation of biblical commands and prohibitions may be restored by the Oversight Team according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8, when they determine there is evidence of genuine repentance.

**ARTICLE 5 – MEMBER MEETINGS**

**ARTICLE 5, SECTION 1 - STRUCTURE**

A. **Schedule** - The church year, for fiscal purposes, will be April 1 through March 31. In preparation for the fiscal year, the Members will have an annual Member Meeting. Additional Member Meetings may be scheduled at any time by the Oversight Team. Notification of Member Meetings, including an agenda, will be sent to the Members by postal or electronic mail at least 14 days in advance.

B. **Moderator** - The Oversight Team will designate a person to preside at Member Meetings. The moderator will determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and his common sense. The moderator is the final authority on matters of procedure.

C. **Clerk** - A person designated by the Oversight Team will keep minutes of each Member Meeting, recording the approximate number of Members present, whether a quorum was present, and what actions were taken by the Membership.

**ARTICLE 5, SECTION 2 - VOTING**

A. **Purpose** - The purpose of voting is not to simply obtain a “majority-rules” decision. Rather, all voting at Parker Hill Community Church is designed to determine God’s leading within the community on a particular item.

B. **Process** - All proposals will come from the Oversight Team. A 2/3 vote is needed to affirm all decisions, except for the selection of Lead Pastor, which needs a 3/4 vote of affirmation (Article 3, Section 3, F). If a 2/3 affirmation is not achieved, the Oversight Team will reevaluate the proposal. There will be no proxy or absentee voting. Voting will normally be by written ballot. This may vary, however, at the discretion of the Oversight Team. Ten percent of the members constitute a quorum.

C. **Eligibility** - Any Member who is present at the meeting and is at least 18 years of age may participate in a vote.

D. **Decisions** - The Oversight Team will act on the following decisions subsequent to the affirmation of the Members:

1. **Appointing the Lead Pastor**
2. Approving Overseers
3. Amending the church constitution
4. Approving the General Fund budget
5. Incurring indebtedness beyond the limits of the Oversight Team’s authority (Article 3, Section 2, D, 9)
6. Selling church property purchased with general donations from the congregation
7. Dissolution of the church ministry (Article 7)

The Members entrust the Oversight Team to act on their behalf in all matters not specifically listed above. The Oversight Team may, however, choose to bring other matters to the Members for affirmation.

ARTICLE 6 – AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended or replaced using the voting process in Article 5, Section 2. The Oversight Team will review this constitution at least every three years to determine where changes may need to be made to ensure its effectiveness.

ARTICLE 7 – DISSOLUTION

In the event that the ministry of Parker Hill Community Church cannot continue, the Membership may vote to dissolve the church using the voting process in Article 5, Section 2. All assets of the church will be distributed by the Oversight Team to one or more “not-for-profit” organizations which qualify under the guidelines of Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or corresponding section of any future federal code, and whose mission is consistent with that of Parker Hill Community Church.