



CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Mailing Address:

HEARTLAND COMMUNITY CHURCH
3253 N. BRUSH COLLEGE ROAD
DECATUR, ILLINOIS 62521

PREAMBLE

The name shall be Heartland Community Church and its duration is to be perpetual.

The purpose for which the church is formed is Christian, charitable, and educational; to promote, further, and maintain fellowship among all men who believe the full counsel of the Bible. Its further purpose is to assist in the organization, establishment and maintenance of local groups of believers, and to render advice and assistance to such groups; to assist, promote and further the work of the ministries of Heartland Community Church in the United States. To attain its purpose by the publication of Christian literature of any and all kinds, the promotion of evangelism, the promotion and maintenance of specialized organizations for various age groups, the establishment and maintenance of Bible studies, circulation of Christian literature of all kinds, and by any other means, to encourage personal evangelism and tract distribution, to attain its objectives either by the direct efforts of itself and its affiliate local groups or by rendering aid and assistance of all kinds to other organizations or groups, and to assist in the founding and activities of the ministries of Heartland Community Church. To use radio, television or any other means available to lift up the Lord Jesus Christ for the world to see.

Table of Contents

ARTICLE I – PURPOSE	3
ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP	3
<i>Section 1 – Classes of Membership</i>	3
<i>Section 2 – Becoming a Member</i>	3
<i>Section 3 – Membership Expectations</i>	4
<i>Section 4 – Termination of Membership</i>	4
<i>Section 5 – Discipline of Members</i>	4
ARTICLE III – GOVERNANCE	5
<i>Section 1 – Elders</i>	6
<i>Section 2 – Ministry Directors</i>	9
<i>Section 3 – Pastors</i>	9
<i>Section 4 – Pastoral Staff Personnel</i>	10
<i>Section 5 – Staff Personnel</i>	10
ARTICLE IV – MINISTRY CREDENTIALS	10
<i>Section 1 – Christian Ministry Licensing</i>	11
<i>Section 2 – Pastoral Ministry Licensing</i>	11
<i>Section 3 – Ordination</i>	11
<i>Section 4 – Qualified Studies for Licensing.</i>	12
ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY TEAMS	12
<i>Section 1 – Ministry Teams</i>	12
<i>Section 2 – Missions Committee</i>	13
ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS	13
<i>Section 1 – Elders</i>	13
<i>Section 2 – Congregational Meetings</i>	13
<i>Section 3 – Special Congregational Meetings</i>	13
ARTICLE VII – ADVISOR	13
<i>Section 1 – Purpose of Advisor</i>	13
<i>Section 2 – Qualifications of an Advisor</i>	14
<i>Section 3 – Selection of an Advisor</i>	14
<i>Section 4 – Duties of an Advisor</i>	14
ARTICLE VIII – BOOKS AND RECORDS	14
ARTICLE IX – CHURCH PLANTING.	
ARTICLE X – FISCAL YEAR	14
ARTICLE X – SOLICITATION	14
ARTICLE XI – CONFLICT OF INTEREST.	15
<i>Section 1 – Contracts or Transactions</i>	15
<i>Section 2 – Use of Church Property for Personal Gain</i>	15
ARTICLE XII – INDEMNIFICATION	16
ARTICLE XIII – INUREMENT	16
ARTICLE XIV – DISSOLUTION	16
ARTICLE XV – AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS	16
ARTICLE XVI – TENANTS OF FAITH	16
ARTICLE XVII – ORDINANCES	21

ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

Heartland’s purpose is revealed to us in the New Testament. We are Christ’s ambassadors seeking to win people to faith in Jesus Christ and active obedience to His church. We will work towards the unity of all Christians while engaged in the common task of building the Kingdom of God. (2 Corinthians 5:20-21; Ephesians 4:13; Jude 20-23) Heartland reserves the right to use all available means as well as operate in ways that are consistent with its tax-exempt purposes as defined within Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

These bylaws are intended to serve as an operating guideline and principle, in spirit, and will not inclusively address day-to-day operating procedures, which are to be maintained by the church office, specifically as they relate to the pastor, elders, and other impacted parties. As an operating guideline, the bylaws are not intended to describe actions, requirements, nor results in such details that these bylaws require constant updating.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

Heartland Community Church is a fellowship of Christians who proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who have been baptized (Acts 2:38) by immersion, and who have accepted the Great Commission of Christ to “...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 [Jesus] commanded” (Matt. 28:19-20).

The private property of the Elders and members of the congregation may not be assessed nor subject to payment of any corporate debts, nor shall the Elders or members of the congregation become individually or corporately liable or responsible for any debts or liabilities of the church except in circumstances in which a debt or obligation of the church is personally guaranteed or in circumstances where an Elder or member has committed fraud.

Section 1 – Classes of Membership

There will be two classes of members: voting and non-voting. To assure the church of its sovereignty and independence and to perpetually protect the church, all ecclesiastical and legal power and authority relative to the church will be exercised in a manner consistent with the New Testament Church. Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Elders of the church are empowered to conduct all the business of the church and will be the only voting members of the church.

Section 2 – Becoming a Member

Membership in the church family of Heartland Community Church, Decatur, Illinois (hereinafter called the Church) is open to all who are baptized and proclaim Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Those who proclaim their faith and have not been baptized will be baptized by immersion with due diligence and speed. Those who have been previously baptized by immersion are not required to be baptized again before joining our congregation.

Section 3 – Membership Expectations

1. Members are expected to live their lives in a manner that glorifies God. (1 Corinthians 10:23 – 11:1)
2. Members are expected to serve Christ by using their spiritual gifts to

benefit the Church. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

3. Members are expected to contribute financially to the Church as commanded by Scripture and as directed to them by the Holy Spirit. (Acts 11:27-30; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Galatians 6:6)
4. Members are also expected to engage themselves in continuous spiritual growth through small groups, individual Bible studies or devotions, Base classes, or other similar means.

Section 4 – Termination of Membership

Membership in Heartland's church family is intended to reflect a continuing relationship with Jesus Christ and a continuing devotion to worship, giving, and service to the church family. Membership may be terminated for any of the following reasons.

1. Members may voluntarily resign their membership by notifying the church office, in writing.
2. A member who has been unfaithful (not having attended or contributed) for a period of six months, willfully neglecting the privileges and duties of membership will be dropped from the membership after discussion at a formal elder meeting. This action will not affect any member, who because of ill health or conflicting duties, is unable to regularly attend services.
3. Subject to Section 4 of Article II, members whose lifestyles are in open violation of Scripture, who engage in disruptive behavior, or engage in consistent open insubordination to the leadership of the church family, may be terminated by majority vote of the Elders.
4. Membership is neither transferable nor assignable.

Section 5 – Discipline of Members

This section is intended to give full protection to any member who may be accused, and at the same time, protect the church family from interruption of its regular business and its spiritual activities by matters of discipline, the details of which might be wasteful to the time of the church, harmful to the young, and discouraging to the church family.

1. The Elders will serve as the Discipline Committee of the church.
2. Subject to the following criteria, any member of the church family in good and regular standing may refer to the Elders, matters of discipline or dispute against another member deemed guilty of serious violation of Scriptural principles, of immoral conduct, or of serious and continued efforts to obstruct the work or of disturbing the peace of the church family.
 - a. An elder approached by a member of the congregation regarding a dispute with another member will first determine if the offending member had been approached individually by the aggrieved member.
 - b. If the offending member had not previously been approached, the Elder will use the opportunity to teach the aggrieved member regarding the biblical practice for handling disputes within the church and encourage the individual to approach the other.
 - c. Once a one-on-one discussion has occurred between the disputing members and a resolution is not reached, an Elder will select another Elder and together with the aggrieved member approach the offending member to attempt to resolve the matter.

- d. If resolution is still not reached at the conclusion of the steps above, the matter and all appropriate parties may then be brought to the full board of Elders for disposition.
3. It is specifically directed that the Elders, in safeguarding the purity, peace, and unity of the Heartland church family, move promptly in the case of anyone who obstructs the work or disturbs the peace of the church family by slander, falsehood, unseemly gossip, conspiracy, or unfair and unchristian methods and conduct. It is recognized that while any person has the right to private opinion on all questions and the right of addressing those opinions in an orderly, scriptural, and appropriate manner they shall not have the right of engaging in secret or open propaganda; or of deliberately disrupting the peace and unity while interrupting the work of the church; or bringing it into disrepute before the public by wrongful methods in their effort to discourage the faithful and injure the cause of Christ.
4. Elders may, at their discretion, restore membership to those, who in the majority opinion of the Elders, are not at fault and those who, although at fault, have repented of their actions leading to termination.
5. Decisions of the Elders regarding membership are final.

ARTICLE III – GOVERNANCE

Our congregation is a non-profit, self-governing body of Christians. The Senior Pastor and Elders will shoulder the ministry affairs of the church and share the fiduciary responsibility with the financial oversight committee.

It is important to note that the Elders have placed themselves and their families under the spiritual leadership of the Senior Pastor, with that in mind, ultimately the elders are assigned the authority and responsibility to see that the church remains on a biblically true course and financially solvent by:

1. **Overseeing (1 Peter 5:1-4)** - One who keeps watch over and directs the work of others, especially laborers. A supervisor or superintendent.
2. **Directing (1 Timothy 5:17-25)** to manage or guide by advice, helpful information, instruction, etc.: to regulate the course of; control: to administer; manage; supervise to give authoritative instructions to; command; order or ordain

Elders oversee the church as a steward of God (Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:2-3); spiritually shepherding and feeding the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2); teaching, exhorting, and correcting the church (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9); leading the church (James 5:14); and representing the church as necessary (Acts 20:17-31).

Special note – With the responsibility and authority assigned to the elders - it is important to keep in mind the Apostle Peter's appeal. **1 Peter 5:1-3** *To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.*

The Senior Pastor is called to offer vision, leadership and ministry to the whole church. He is the spiritual leader responsible for a comprehensive program of ministry

implemented through his own ministry, all staff personnel, and lay leaders. As such, he will have authority in these areas unless limited by the bylaws.

The Senior Pastor is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the church with the authority necessary to fulfill his duties. Specifically, he is responsible for working with other leaders of the Church in fulfilling its purpose.

Working in concert with the Senior Pastor and ministry staff, the elders will speak into setting the overall parameters of the ministry, and capital expenditures that support the overall mission and vision of the church.

The Senior Pastor and Elders will work with the financial oversight committee (FOC) to accomplish agreed upon capital expenditures and projects that reflect the mission and vision of the church.

The Elders will review any expenditures and contracts over \$1000.00 from the General Fund before they occur.

Section 1 – Elders

Part 1 – Duties of the Elders

1. The Elders are given the ultimate authority and responsibility to see that the Church remains on a biblically true course by overseeing the church as a steward of God (Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:2-3); spiritually shepherding and feeding the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2); teaching, exhorting, and correcting the church (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9); leading the church (James 5:14); and representing the church as necessary (Acts 20:17-31). Working in concert with the Pastors, they will set the overall parameters of the ministry of the church.
2. The Elders are responsible for seeing that members are being fed through insightful and accurate biblical teaching and that the life of the Church is being well managed with the assistance of other competent and godly leaders. They are to care about the spiritual and physical well being of members and the Church staff personnel. They are to guard the body against harmful influences, teaching the scriptures and confronting those who contradict biblical truth or who continue patterns of sinful behavior.
3. It is hoped that decisions by the Elders will be reached with complete unity. However, time constraints for timely decisions may not always make this possible, and decisions must move forward through consensus. All Elders must then support decisions reached by the Elders. An individual Elder's authority is only present as part of the Elders as a whole, or by virtue of specific authority granted to an Elder by the body of Elders.
4. A quorum consists of the majority of Elders. No votes may occur at either a regular or special meeting of the Elders without a quorum; however, a majority of Elders present may adjourn a meeting in which a quorum is not present.
5. The Elders also have the authority to appoint Ministry Directors to oversee or operate a particular ministry of the Church.
6. Other specific duties for Elders are described in the "Elders Responsibilities" document that may be modified from time to time as conditions warrant.

Part 2 – Officers

1. The Senior Pastor will serve as Chairman of the Elders. He will assemble the monthly Elder meeting agenda with input from the elders. He will serve as chairman of the elder meetings as long as he serves in the office of lead pastor.
2. A President will be chosen from among the Elders. The president will be responsible for the official signing of legal documents on behalf of the church and serve as the Vice Chairman of the Elders. The President/Vice Chairman's term of office is two years, followed by no more than one successive two-year term. An Elder may not serve more than four consecutive years as President. After serving two consecutive terms, an individual is eligible for reelection as President after a break in service of no less than one complete term.
3. A Vice President will be chosen from among the Elders. The vice president will be responsible for the official signing of legal documents on behalf of the church as needed and will assume the president's responsibilities for the remainder of the elected term in the event the president is no longer in office.
4. A Secretary will be chosen from among the Elders for a two year commitment of service. The Secretary will be responsible for taking minutes of the Elders and congregational meetings. An Elder may not serve more than four consecutive years as Secretary. After serving two consecutive terms, an individual may be reelected by the Elders as Secretary after a break in service of one complete term.
5. A Treasurer will be chosen by the Elders for a two year commitment of service. The Treasurer is specifically responsible for the oversight and regular reporting of the administration of the annual budget. An Elder may not serve more than four consecutive years as Treasurer. After serving two consecutive terms, an individual may be reelected by the Elders as Treasurer after a break in service of one complete term.
6. Elders have the general responsibility for reviewing the annual budget and general oversight of the implementation of the annual budget.

Part 3 – Qualifications of Elders

1. Individuals meeting the qualifications for Eldership found in 1Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 are eligible for appointment as an Elder. These are the ideal qualifications, and we realize that no one perfectly measures up to these ideals. Yet, scripture remains as our ultimate guide in the selection of Elders.
2. Because Elders agree to take the mantle of leadership, they also agree to be held to a higher degree of accountability. It is essential that they adhere to Scripture as a guide for their daily lives.
3. Elder Candidates must have first been an official Heartland Community Church member for at least one year.
4. Elders should be faithful in their support of the church through regular attendance at worship services, financially supporting the church with their tithes and offerings according to scripture and active involvement in the ministries of the church.
5. The minimum age for elder candidates will be 35 years at the time of nomination.
6. The President of the Elder board and designated business administrator (book keeper) will review the giving practices biannually. If necessary the elder president would take the following steps:
 - a. The President would meet with the person in question to discuss the matter
 - b. After a 90 day grace period the president would once again review the giving record of the elder in question. If after further review satisfactory actions have not been taken, the president and another elder member of his

choosing will decide on the next step including activating part 5 of this section which deals with the removal of an elder.

7. Elders should not have affiliation in Secret Societies – those organizations which welcome only a restricted number into membership, into the secret oaths and ceremonies, and into the activities of the society. Members of secret orders often compare their organization with the fellowship of believers in a local church. But a secret society is quite different from a church in that it is elitist in nature rather than inclusive. Unlike a church it does not extend its fellowship to any and all persons desiring to identify with the organization, its principles and practices.

Elders should not affiliate with any organization that 1) yokes together believers with unbelievers in unholy alliances (2 Cor. 6:14-18); 2) requires a pledge to unscriptural oaths which are sealed by using the name of God improperly or in vain (Ex. 20:7, Lev. 5:4-6, Matt. 5:34-37, James 5:12); 3) represents itself as providing teaching in harmony with the Bible when in fact it does not (2 Peter 3:16); 4) represents itself as being religious and offers a false hope of salvation through works, yet dishonors the only true God and our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:3, 1 Tim. 2:3-6, Col. 2:8-10, Eph. 2:8,9).

Elders should "be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody" (Rom. 12:17). Secretively meeting behind closed doors in a "lodge" where activities are carried on behind a cloak of secrecy, in favor of fellow members, usually for economic, social, or political advantage hardly describes doing what is right in the eyes of everybody. "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord" (2 Cor. 6:17). This is God's advice for Christians and is certainly applicable in regard to secret societies.

Part 4 – Appointment of Elders

Seven individuals from the congregation will serve as Elders.

Individuals will be nominated, considered and appointed for the position of Elder by consensus of the Elders.

Elders will commit to an appointment of three years. At the end of three years, an elder has the option to either commit to three more years or step down. Under normal circumstances, Elders must inform the Elder Board of their intentions to step down at least three months prior to the conclusion of their appointment.

An Elder may not serve more than two consecutive terms. After serving two consecutive terms, an individual is eligible for appointed for the position of Elder, after a break in service of no less than one year.

Part 5 – Removal of Elders

Should an Elder no longer meet the qualifications for Elder, is inactive, or demonstrates insubordination to the governance of the Church, he may be removed by a consensus vote of the Elders. Such a move should not be considered until the Senior Pastor and the Vice Chairman of the Elders meet with that Elder on the basis of accusations from no less than two nor more than three witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19-20), or without deliberate and intense prayer on the matter.

Part 6 – Elder Apprentice

One new elder apprentice will be chosen each year between the ages of 21 and 34 and will serve for one calendar year. The apprentice will participate in discussions, but will not have a vote in decision making for official Elder business. All elder apprentice candidates will be members at least one year and will testify of a spirit-filled experience with the God or be seeking such an infilling and will be selected by the Elders.

Section 2 – Ministry Directors

1. Ministry Directors will be selected by the Elders and will serve under the leadership of the Elders. They will be appointed to oversee or operate a particular ministry in the life of the Church.
2. A Ministry Director is responsible to the Elders and/or the specific Elder that may be assigned to assist or oversee the Ministry Director in the performance of his or her duties.
3. The qualifications for a Ministry Director shall be the same as the described previously for Elders with the exception that women may be appointed to serve as Ministry Directors. Anyone called to that position shall be confirmed through the prayers, blessing and laying on of hands by the Elders during a regular weekend worship service.

Section 3 – Pastors

Part 1 – Senior Pastor

1. The Senior Pastor is called to give leadership and ministry to the whole church. He is responsible for a comprehensive program of ministry that is implemented through his own ministry, all staff personnel, and lay leaders. As such, he will have full authority in these areas unless limited by these bylaws.
2. The Senior Pastor is a perpetual member of the Elders whose term in office is not subject to the same term limits as laymen serving as Elders.
3. In general, he is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the church with the authority necessary to fulfill his duties. Specifically, he is responsible for working with other leaders of the Church in fulfilling its purpose.
4. The Elders may limit the authority granted herein should the Senior Pastor have tenure of less than two years with the Church. In these circumstances, specific attention should be paid to areas such as personnel administration, budgeting, worship, pastoral care, communication skills and human relations skills, with appraisals occurring every six months or less.
5. The Senior Pastor, or his designee, will be an ex officio member of any ministry team or committee as his spiritual gifts allow.

Part 2 – Calling of Senior Pastor

1. The Elders will initiate the calling of any Senior Pastor. The Elders may select a smaller group of Elders or other members of the Church to participate in this search. If the current Senior Pastor is leaving on amicable terms he will be a part of any such group formed. His preference towards any decision should carry additional emphasis given the responsibility he is charged with.
2. Upon the Senior Pastor's approval by the Elders, a contract developed by the Elders may be executed with the new Pastor, assuming a contract is required. Any contract and/or benefits must be developed considering personnel procedures currently in place as developed by the Elders.

3. Once hired, the Elders will install the Senior Pastor before the congregation during normal weekend worship services or at a specially called installation service.

Part 3 – Dismissal of Senior Pastor

1. Dismissal may be for a failure to perform required duties, insubordination, moral failure, or conduct of an illegal nature as established by the testimony of no less than two nor more than three witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19-20).
2. Dismissal of any Pastor is to be avoided wherever possible, and then only after intense prayer and discussions. Dismissals will be recommended by consensus of the Elders present at a regular Elders meeting or a meeting called for such purposes. Dismissal for illegal activities or insubordination requires only the approval of a majority of the Elders present at an Elders meeting and may be immediate without regard to any severance pay, subject to any contractual terms of employment.
3. Such dismissals will take effect at a time determined by the Elders.

Section 4 – Pastoral Staff Personnel

Pastoral staff personnel will serve under the direction of the Senior Pastor or his designee. Their performance is critical to their success in the life of the church. They are, therefore, given broad authority to fulfill their duties as provided by their respective job descriptions or directives from the Senior Pastor. The hiring or dismissal of staff personnel not described elsewhere in these bylaws and under the Senior Pastor's direction shall be at the Senior Pastor's recommendation and approved by the Elders.

Section 5 – Staff Personnel

Staff personnel will serve under the direction of the Senior Pastor or his designee. Their performance is critical to their success in the life of the church. They are, therefore, given broad authority to fulfill their duties as provided by their respective job descriptions or directives from the Senior Pastor. The hiring or dismissal of staff personnel not described elsewhere in these bylaws and under the Senior Pastor's direction shall be at the Senior Pastor's recommendation and approved by the Elders.

ARTICLE IV – MINISTRY CREDENTIALS

To be considered for Ministry licensing under the covering of Heartland Community Church, one must be a member in good standing, complete the academic requirements (see below), complete the credentialing application and interview with the church Elders. Upon approval, the candidate will serve in ministry assignments under the guidance of the senior pastor of Heartland Community church. The three levels of credentialing allow the candidate the opportunity to master basic Bible content (Old and New Testaments), theological principles, and practical ministry skills for service in a church leadership position.

There are three levels of credentialing with Heartland Community Church with graded study requirements. The bylaws regarding this area of ministry are listed below along with proposed changes.

Section 1 – Christian Ministry Licensing

1. When appropriate to the fulfillment of Heartland's ministry, the church may license non-ordained individuals into the ministry. It is the highest credential

for those not qualified for or not aspiring to a pastoral role and is normally granted by the Elders through a Commissioning Service.

2. This license may be granted to persons who are engaged in the leadership of ministries such as evangelism, Christian education, music, chaplaincies, ministries to shut-ins, youth or children's ministries, prison ministries, and many types of missionary roles. Persons granted a Christian Ministry License will function under the guidance of the senior pastor of HCC.
3. Individuals who may be licensed into the ministry will:
 - be knowledgeable of the Scriptures;
 - have fulfilled the characteristics of a Christian justified by faith as described in Galatians 5 and 6; and,
 - be committed to the walk and work of a good minister as characterized in 1 Timothy 4:6 – 1 Timothy 6:20.
 - Continue in the faithful support and mission of the Heartland Community Church
4. Christian Ministry Licensing will be authorized by the Elders and may be revoked by the Elders at any time. An annual review will be provided by the lead pastor each year for the sake of renewal.

Section 2 - Pastoral Ministry Licensing

1. When appropriate to the fulfillment of Heartland's ministry, the church may license non-ordained individuals into the pastoral ministry. The License for Pastoral Ministry is granted by the Elders through a Commissioning Service to individuals called by God to the Ministry of the Gospel.
2. This license is intended for those qualified for the role of Pastor not meeting the requirements for Ordination. It represents approval for all pastoral duties and ministerial functions as defined by the Elders. Persons granted a Pastoral Ministry License will function under the guidance of a senior pastor.
3. Individuals who may be licensed into the pastoral ministry will:
 - have training or formal education in theology from a formal ministry training center
 - have fulfilled the characteristics of a Christian justified by faith as described in Galatians 5 and 6
 - be committed to the walk and work of a good minister as characterized in 1 Timothy 4:6 – 1 Timothy 6:20.
 - Continue in the faithful support and mission of the Heartland Community Church
4. Pastoral Ministry Licensing will be authorized by the Elders and may be revoked by the Elders at any time. An annual review will be provided by the lead pastor each year for the sake of renewal.

Section 3 – Ordination

1. Heartland Community Church accepts the right of ordination with the respect and seriousness represented by the responsibilities of ministry. When the church desires to set apart one of its members for the work of the ministry, it may do so by inviting pastors and respected Christian individuals from other churches whose confessions of faith are consistent with the faith of Heartland Community Church to provide counsel regarding ordination.

2. Those who may be ordained will:
 - possess formal education or training in theology from a formal ministry training center
 - have pastoral ministry experience of at least one year
 - have fulfilled the characteristics of a Christian justified by faith as described in Galatians 5 and 6; and,
 - be committed to the walk and work of a good minister as characterized in 1 Timothy 4:6 – 1 Timothy 6:20.
 - Continue in the faithful support and mission of the Heartland Community Church
3. At the discretion of the Elders, individuals previously licensed into the pastoral ministry who complete formal education in theology and who have satisfactorily served in the pastoral ministry may be ordained as described above.
4. Ordination will be authorized by the Elders and may be revoked by the Elders at any time. An annual review will be provided by the lead pastor each year for the sake of renewal.
5. **(Recommended that there is a prerequisite of 1-2 years of licensing.)**

Section 4 - Qualified studies for Licensing:

Bible Study Classes

(3 of 5 listed below must be completed – other options must be approved)

- Synoptic Gospels: The Life and Teachings of Christ
- New Testament History
- Prison Epistles: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon
- Study of the Minor Prophets
- The Pentateuch

Life in Ministry Studies

(3 of the 5 listed below must be completed – other options must be pre-approved)

- Introduction to Hermeneutics: How to Interpret the Bible
- The Local Church in Evangelism
- Relationships and Ethics in Ministry
- Understanding Biblical Counseling
- Prayer and Personal Devotions

Church Doctrine and Function

(2 of 3 listed below must be completed – other options must be approved)

- Introduction to Evangelical Doctrine
- Church History, Missions, and Governance
- Eschatology: A Study of Things to Come

Ordination - Additional Studies required

- Conflict Management
- Preaching in the Contemporary World
- Church Administration, Finance & Law
- Relationships and Ethics in Ministry

ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY TEAMS

Section 1 – Ministry Teams

1. The Elders may organize ministry teams as necessary.
2. These teams will be led by an Elder or a Ministry Director and will have authority to perform their duties as specified by the Elders.

Section 2 – Missions Committee

1. The Elders may organize a Missions Committee to be led by an Elder, or a Ministry Director.
2. This committee is intended to focus on researching and recommending support of missions or missionaries whose philosophies of ministry are compatible with the Church's philosophy of ministry.
3. They may, from time-to-time, request mission organization representatives or supported missionaries make a written or on-site report to the church family of their activities and progress as a result of the church family's financial and prayer support.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Section 1 – Elders

The Elders will meet, at a minimum, on a monthly basis to discharge their duties. Since those meetings may involve personal matters that require sensitivity, these meetings in their entirety are generally not open to the church family. Christian love and courtesy will be called upon to maintain orderly discussion.

Section 2 – Congregational Meetings

One congregational meeting will be held no later than the second week of February each year to provide a report of ministry and finances. These annual meetings are open to all members. The Chairman of the Elders will conduct these meetings. Notice of the time and place of these meetings will be announced from the pulpit and published in the worship bulletin at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Christian love and courtesy will be called upon to maintain orderly discussion.

Section 3 – Special Congregational Meetings

Notice of the time and place of these meetings will be announced from the pulpit and published in the worship bulletin at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The Chairman of the Elders will conduct these meetings. Christian love and courtesy will be called upon to maintain orderly discussion.

ARTICLE VII – ADVISOR

Section 1 – Purpose of Advisor

We are a self-governed church and acknowledge that no outside organization or person has authority in the life of our church. However, we realize there may be a need, from time to time, for someone outside of our church family to bring spiritual wisdom, insight, teaching, support, or intervention in ministering to the overall health of the church. The intention is not to provide outside governance, but rather to help maintain a healthy church with a focus on God's Word and plans for the Church.

Section 2 – Qualifications of an Advisor

The Advisor must be an active senior pastor of a respected congregation, faculty member of a respected Christian college or university, leader of a Christian association, or other qualified individual who knows and loves Heartland Community Church.

Section 3 – Selection of an Advisor

The Elders may select one or more individuals to fill this role. They may enter into a contract or agreement with these individuals specifying the nature and terms of the relationship. The Elders may terminate this relationship, or select a different Advisor at any time except when a requested intervention is in progress.

Section 4 – Duties of an Advisor

1. The Advisor will bring his gifts to offer outside accountability and relationship to our church.
2. The Advisor shall have no authority to make decisions for the congregation, but will have authority when called to speak into the life of the Church. He will maintain regular contact with our Senior Pastor or Elders so as to maintain his understanding and relationship with Heartland Community Church.
3. The Advisor will be called by a majority vote of the Elders.

ARTICLE VIII – BOOKS AND RECORDS

The Church will keep correct and complete books and records, and shall also keep minutes of congregational meetings. We will also keep a record of names and addresses of Elders. Any Elder may inspect all books and records at any reasonable time for any reasonable purpose. However, individual records of giving to the Church, or the Church giving to individual congregation members under the appropriate Church budget item cannot be disclosed or reviewed and, as such, are considered confidential. A financial audit will be conducted annually by an independent qualified Certified Public Accountant.

ARTICLE IX – CHURCH PLANTING

It is the desire of the leadership of Heartland Community Church (HCC) in Decatur, Illinois to continue to advance the Gospel using the means of Church Plants in areas determined to need additional Churches with the ministry vision and mission of Heartland. The following steps are to serve as a guide in the formulation of such a venture.

Section 1 - Location

The location of a future church will be determined by a subcommittee of the HCC Elder board. Areas of consideration should include but not be limited to:

1. Churches per capita of a city
2. The presence or lack of full gospel churches in that area.
3. The leading of the Holy Spirit.

Section 2 – Constitution and Bylaws

All church plants will exist and operate under full authority of Heartland Community Church, Inc. and are subject to its Bylaws, Elders and ministry direction of its Lead Pastor.

Section 3 – Leadership

1. Elders – The HCC Elders will serve as the oversight body of all church plants of Heartland Community Church.
2. Pastoral – A pastor will be pursued, interviewed and nominated by the lead pastor of HCC to the Elder board for ratification. Each pastor will serve under the supervision and advisement of the lead pastor of Heartland Community Church.
3. Trustees – A group of three individuals will be nominated by the church plant Pastor and will be asked to complete a Trustee application. A trustee will be selected by a majority vote by the HCC Elders upon completion of the application. All trustees must first be official members of Heartland Community Church.
 - Responsibilities – The responsibilities will include but not be limited to oversight of the collection of all offerings; the security of all monies, assets, equipment, property and buildings owned or entrusted to the church in accordance to adopted policy and procedure; providing prayer ministry during the worship services and when called upon; serving as council and support for the church plant pastor.
 - Term – A trustee will serve a term of 2 years with a subsequent 2 year term to be decided by the Church pastor and ratified by the Elders of Heartland Community Church. There will need to be offsetting terms developed initially where two individuals will serve 2 years and one 3 years – each with an optional subsequent 2 years after their first term.

Section 4 – Finances

A budget will be prepared by the Lead Pastor initially and presented to the HCC Finance Committee for review followed by a final approval by the HCC Elders. All expenses will be approved within the limits of authority given by the Elders. Subsequent operational expenses will be approved through the purchase order process of Heartland and by the designated Business Administrator.

Section 5 – Dissolution

In the event a church plant ceases to continue under the preceding bylaws or dissolves, all assets, equipment, buildings and land will remain property of Heartland Community Church, Inc.

ARTICLE X – FISCAL YEAR

The Church's fiscal year is the calendar year.

ARTICLE XI – SOLICITATION

Neither solicitation on the premises nor use of any directories of the membership of the congregation for solicitation purposes is permitted. This policy does not apply to;

- fundraising activities approved by the staff or Elders where the purpose is to provide funds for the operation of one or more of our church ministries or
- fundraising resulting from the rental of church property.

ARTICLE XII – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Section 1 – Contracts or Transactions

Any Elder, Pastor, or employee of the church who has a financial interest in a contract or other transaction presented to the church shall make a prompt and full disclosure of such interest before the contract or transaction is voted on or approved. If a conflict is deemed to exist, such person will not be entitled to vote on or individually approve the matter at hand, nor exert his personal influence in the matter.

Section 2 – Use of Church Property for Personal Gain

All property, real or otherwise, belonging to Heartland Community Church, will not be used in the conduct of a business enterprise for the personal enrichment of any member, church officer, pastor, staff member, or non-member or organization without reimbursement or appropriate compensation for its use.

ARTICLE XIII – INDEMNIFICATION

The Church will, to the maximum extent permitted by law, indemnify our agents against expense, judgments, fines, settlements and other amounts actually and reasonably incurred in connection with any proceeding arising by reason of the fact any such person is or was acting as our agent. For the purposes of this article, an “agent” includes any person who is or was an Elder, employee, member, or volunteer serving at the Church’s request.

ARTICLE XIV – INUREMENT

No part of the net income of our church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to its members, Elders, or any person except we will be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered. Notwithstanding, any other provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws of Heartland Community Church, the Church will not carry on any activity not permitted to be carried on by (a) a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended (or by the corresponding section of any future Revenue Code of the United States of America), or (b) a corporation contributions of which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended (or corresponding section of any future United States Revenue Law).

ARTICLE XV – DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the Church, the Elders shall, after the payment of all liabilities of the Church, dispose of all of the assets of the Church exclusively for the purposes of the Church in such a manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for the purposes of the Church, or to approved Christian organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious purposes as shall qualify as an exempt corporation or organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended (or its corresponding provisions of any future United States Revenue Law), as the Elders shall determine.

ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by a majority vote of the Elders. Any change or amendment to these bylaws will be announced from the pulpit and/or distributed to the church family in a manner consistent with the nature of the change or amendment.

ARTICLE XVII. TENETS OF FAITH

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17, 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10, 11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

The Adorable Godhead

(a) Terms Defined

The terms trinity and persons, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from "gods many and lords many." We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 25:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).

(b) Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead

Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, (as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:39; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4).

(c) Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes that the Holy Spirit is not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the One proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and his name one (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11,21; Zechariah 14:9).

(d) Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person, nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence no person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30, 32, 37; 8:17,18).

(e) The Title, Lord Jesus Christ

The appellation Lord Jesus Christ is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Romans 1:1-3,7; 2 John 3).

(f) The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us

The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is "Immanuel," God with us (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2, 10,14; Revelation 1:13,17).

(g) The Title, Son of God

Since the name Immanuel embraces both God and man, in the one person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title Son of God describes His proper deity, and the title Son of Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title Son of God belongs to the order of eternity, and the title Son of Man to the order of time (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 3:3-13).

(h) Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ

Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title Son of God solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14,18,29,49; 1 John 2:22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2).

(f) Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all (Hebrews 1:34; Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

(j) Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son

Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d). and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8, Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2:8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- (a) His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).
- (b) His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
- (c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- (d) His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 3:21).
- (e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- (f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

(a) Conditions to Salvation

Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal Life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7)

(b) The Evidences of Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. The Ordinances of the Church

(a) Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the

world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 48; Romans 6:4).

(b) Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements - bread and the fruit of the vine - is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

8. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed primarily by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10, 28), but different in purpose and use. Jesus also taught the signs of being filled with the spirit is manifest in a greater thrust of evangelism and spiritual walk (Acts 1:8)

9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1, 2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command; "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15,16).

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:3-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, and to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, the priority reason-for-being of Heartland Community Church as part of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- c. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).

Heartland Community Church exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4).
- b. Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).
- c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying Of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

11. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23,24), and (3) building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16).

12. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16,17; James 5:14-16).

13. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13, 1Corinthians 15:51,52).

14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21, 22; Zephaniah 3:19, 20; Romans 11:26, 27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together

with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8)

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21 and 22).

ARTICLE XVIII. ORDINANCES

Section 1. Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) shall be administered to all who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ for the saving of their souls, and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Romans 6:35; Colossians 2:12).

Section 2. Holy Communion

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

*****Revised and approved January 16, 2017 by the Elders of Heartland Community Church of Decatur, Illinois and supersedes and cancels all other by-laws and amendments prior to the effective date of this document.***