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2 **HOUSE OF PRAISE EVANGELICAL CHURCH**  
3 **CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

4  
5 **CONSTITUTION**  
6

7 **Article I. NAME**  
8

9 The name of this organization shall be **HOUSE OF PRAISE EVANGELICAL CHURCH (H.O.P.E.)**  
10 hereafter referred to as the **H.O.P.E.** Church.  
11

12 **Article II. PURPOSE**  
13

14 The specific purpose of this Church is to unite Christians with Chinese heritage in the San Diego area to  
15 worship God; to pursue Christian life and spiritual growth; to have fellowship with one another through  
16 praise, worship, Bible study and prayer meetings; and to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to the world in  
17 accordance with the Bible teaching.  
18

19 **Article III. AUTHORITY**  
20

21 The following statements of faith are the focus of the Church, and are shared by all its members:  
22

23 We believe the Bible, which contains the 66 books of Old and New Testaments, is the inspired  
24 and infallible Word of God, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men, and the  
25 divine and final authority for Christian faith and life.  
26

27 We believe in the one true and living God, the Creator, the Sustainer and Ruler of Heaven and  
28 Earth, eternally existing in three distinct persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  
29

30 We believe that the first man, Adam, was created by God in His image, but fell from his original  
31 state by sinning against God, and hence incurred upon himself and all his posterity the guilt of  
32 sin, condemnation, and death; therefore, all humans are in need of salvation, and are totally  
33 incapable of saving themselves.  
34

35 We believe that after the Fall, God, in His mercy and love, made provision for human  
36 redemption through the establishment of the covenant of grace with His people by the promise  
37 and the actual giving of the Savior Jesus Christ, whom to believe is justification and life.  
38

39 We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, sent by the Father, begotten by the Holy Spirit,  
40 and born of the virgin Mary; that He lived a sinless and obedient life, suffered and died on the  
41 cross vicariously for the sins of those who believe in Him; that God raised Him from the dead,  
42 exalted Him both as Lord and Christ, and gave Him the Holy Spirit for His church.  
43

44 We believe that humans are saved by grace through faith in Christ in response to the Gospel  
45 preached, or presented in the power of the Holy Spirit, through whom ransomed sinners become

1 the children of God and heirs of eternal life. That Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God  
2 and men; and only through Him the believer has access to the Father.

3  
4 We believe that every believer is a new creature in Christ, and is called to walk in the Spirit, to  
5 die unto sin, and to live unto righteousness, and thereby manifest the fruit of the Spirit,  
6 conforming oneself to the image of Christ; that good works are the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and  
7 are not ways of justification.

8  
9 We believe that God alone is the Lord of our conscience, and that the believers are free from the  
10 commands of men which are contrary to, or in addition to, the Scriptures in matters of faith and  
11 conduct.

12  
13 We believe that the church, consisting of all true believers, being Christ's own and indwelt by the  
14 Holy Spirit, is the Body of Christ. The Church members consisting all who profess to believe in  
15 the Lord Jesus Christ and are baptized; is called to grow unto the stature of the fullness of Christ  
16 and to fulfill her ministry work through the exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in worship,  
17 ordinances, fellowship, discipline, and services.

18  
19 We believe that in the last day, at the consummation of redemption, Christ will come again  
20 personally and visibly to the earth to judge the living and the dead; that there will be a bodily  
21 resurrection of the dead, of the believers through the Holy Spirit unto the inheritance of eternal  
22 life, and the unbelievers unto condemnation; and that a new heaven and a new earth will be  
23 ushered in.

#### 24 25 **Article IV. MEMBERSHIP**

26 Founding Members: Any born-again Christian with previous church membership as well as  
27 Christian without previous church membership but attended the H.O.P.E. Church worship  
28 regularly, who share the vision of North San Diego County ministry, willing to commit to  
29 H.O.P.E. Church and who participated and registered in the January 23, 2005 H.O.P.E. Church  
30 congregation meeting shall be the founding member of the Church.

31 Founding members, in good standing as of January 23, 2005, shall remain as regular members.

32  
33 Regular Members: Any person who has been baptized into the body of Christ, regardless of race  
34 or church affiliation, who pledge allegiance to His teachings and to His Church and who accepts  
35 Articles II and III in this constitution also, may be accepted as a regular member of this Church.  
36 Regular membership becomes effective only after the person attends the H.O.P.E. Church  
37 worship service regularly for three months.

38  
39 All persons applying for membership shall be examined by the Church Council and upon their  
40 approval shall be admitted to regular membership.

41  
42 All persons joining the Church by profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal  
43 Savior shall be baptized.  
44

1 New members shall attend a class offered by the Church Council to promote his/her  
2 understanding of the history and current situation of the H.O.P.E. Church. New member shall be  
3 introduced into the Church congregation in a formal ceremony.  
4

5 Children under the age of eighteen may be dedicated to God by their parents but shall not be  
6 admitted to membership until they have professed their faith through baptism of their own free  
7 will.  
8

9 Regular members shall be extended all voting rights (ONE vote per person) and privileges of  
10 nominating and holding Church offices from which they are not otherwise precluded by the  
11 Constitution and Bylaws.  
12

13 Regular members are expected to 1) observe the constitution and bylaws of the Church, 2) attend  
14 worship services faithfully, 3) attend the congregation meeting, 4) support the church financially  
15 and 5) participate and assist in the activities of the Church.  
16

17 Inactive Members: Any members who have not attended any of the Church meetings in the last  
18 three months shall be inactive members who should temporarily refrain from voting. Members  
19 who are absent from regular Sunday worship services and/or any other H.O.P.E. Church  
20 meetings for consecutively one year shall be automatically terminated unless pardoned by the  
21 Church Council.  
22

23 Termination of Membership: Membership may be terminated by transfer to another church,  
24 resignation, death or disciplinary action.  
25

26 Any person who wishes to transfer his/her membership to another church or to resign his/her  
27 membership from the Church must inform the senior pastor or the secretary of the Church  
28 Council in writing. The Church Council, after careful consideration, shall forward the said  
29 member's information to the church of transfer by mail. Any person resigns from the Church  
30 will be removed from the membership roster.  
31

32 Any member whose Christian life goes against the teaching of Bible and/or engages in activities  
33 listed below, depending on the severity, may be subject to discipline or termination of  
34 membership. These activities include: public exhibition of anti-Christ or anti-Bible views in  
35 words or in conducts; misrepresentation of Christian life according to the Bible teaching, and the  
36 constitution, bylaws, regulations or guidelines of the Church. The Church Council shall formally  
37 but privately warn this person with facts of the unacceptable activities and demand the person to  
38 repent.  
39

40 If the person under warning remains unrepentant after repeated private visits and warnings by the  
41 Church Council, the Church Council may terminate the said person's membership by a three-  
42 fourth majority vote. The Church Council notifies the said person of this decision in writing.  
43 The said person may make an appeal and refutation within two weeks in writing.  
44 The Church Council, after received the said person's appeal, shall reevaluate the said person's  
45 appeal within two weeks. The decision to uphold the said person's termination requires a three-  
46 fourth majority vote for approval.  
47

1 If the decision of termination is not approved by a three-fourth majority in the Church Council,  
2 the said person's membership shall be reinstated. If the person failed to appeal within the  
3 allotted time, the Church Council shall inform the congregation of the dismissal.  
4

5 Any person under discipline may be restored to full privileges upon giving satisfactory evidence  
6 of his true repentance and return to Christian living.  
7

8 Any regular attendee who has been found to engage in the following activities remains  
9 unrepentant after repeated visits, contacts or warnings by the Church Council shall be asked to  
10 withdraw his presence in the Church by the Church Council in writing. The church council upon  
11 a vote of two-third majority shall write and deliver the written letter by registered mail to the  
12 attendee. The Church Council shall decide how long the attendee should withdraw his presence  
13 from Sunday services, weekday services and fellowships.  
14

15 These activities shall include public exhibition of anti-Christ or anti-Bible views in words or in  
16 conducts; misrepresentation of Christian life according to the Bible teaching, and the constitution,  
17 bylaws, regulations or guidelines of the Church.  
18  
19  
20

## 21 **BYLAWS**

22

23 The Church recognizes the Lord Jesus Christ as its head. The congregation meeting composed of all  
24 members of the Church shall be the organ of this local church with the highest authority.  
25

### 26 **Article I. THE BOARD OF ELDERS**

27

28 The elder's qualification, nomination process, duties and terms are defined as follows:  
29

#### 30 **Qualification:**

31 As stated in Bible, I Peter 5:1-3, I Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:5-9.

32 An active member in H.O.P.E. Church and has one of the following three church serving  
33 experiences:

34 A deacon (or elder) at least served one term in H.O.P.E. Church.

35 An elder in another church, at least two years active member in H.O.P.E. Church.

36 A retired pastor, at least two years active member in H.O.P.E. Church.  
37

#### 38 **Nomination Process:**

39 Form a nominating committee at least three months before congregation meeting.

40 Nominating committee submits preliminary candidates to church council at least two months  
41 before congregation meeting.

42 Church council will consider the preliminary candidates by three-fourth majority affirmation.

43 Church council checks candidates' background and confirms candidates' willingness and calling  
44 from God.

45 Church council upon unanimous vote recommends nominees to the congregation for prayer at  
46 least one month before congregation meeting.

1 The first occurrence to nominate elders is submitted to the Board of Deacons when the Board of  
2 Elders is not existed.  
3 Council invites nominees to teach the words of God during Sunday services at H.O.P.E. Church.  
4 Congregation Confirmation: by two-third majority affirmation.  
5

#### 6 Nominating committee:

7  
8 Nominating committee has five members including senior pastor, two Council members (one  
9 elder and one deacon if possible), and two church members. These members shall be appointed  
10 by Council with two-third majority affirmation. None of the members can be nominated as elder  
11 candidates.  
12

#### 13 Responsibility:

14 Board of Elders provides biblical leadership to the church and is accountable to the congregation.  
15 Their responsibilities include:  
16

17 Creating policy in terms of church belief or biblical interpretation.  
18 Dealing with social issues.  
19 Handling financial concerns.  
20 Conflict resolution, discipline, and restoration.  
21 Counseling staff or members of the congregation.  
22 Working with the Church Council on conference content or speakers.  
23 Reviewing strategic plans created by the other leadership teams.  
24 Providing input to the Church Council on financial or risk management issues.  
25 Offering safe custody and proper maintenance of church property.  
26 Assume all pastoral duties during the absence of the senior pastor.  
27

#### 28 Terms:

29  
30 Three years, with approximately one-third elected each year in rotation and may be re-elected.  
31 At the end of two terms, the elder board members must take a sabbatical year off.  
32

#### 33 The Board of Elders:

34  
35 The Board of Elders includes elders, the senior pastor, and the ordained full time pastors.  
36 Chairperson and Secretary are to be elected among board members.  
37 The Board of Elders shall meet at least once a month.  
38 Decisions shall be made by a unanimous affirmation.  
39

40 Any elder who may be found to infringe the following violations shall be removed from office.  
41 The chairperson of the Church Council shall notify this elder that his/her office has been  
42 terminated. Any elder in the Church Council may initiate the impeachment process by  
43 notification to the Church Council and the removal shall be decided by three-fourth majority vote  
44 of the Church Council. The removed elder shall be replaced by the same procedure as described  
45 above.

Elders who refuse to perform their assigned responsibilities.

Elders who are absent from regular Sunday worship services and/or the monthly council meetings for continuous three months without an acceptable excuse.

Elders who may be found to engage in activities contrary to accepted Biblical standards and the Church Constitution and bylaws.

## **Article II. THE BOARD OF DEACONS**

A board of seven or more deacons is responsible for programs, in pursuance of the purpose of the Church, set forth in the constitution. The exact number of board members is dependent upon the requirement of H.O.P.E. church's ministry. The board may appoint standing and ad hoc committees to carry out specific activities as needed. Deacons are elected to two years term in the biannual congregation meeting. None of the Deacons may serve more than two terms consecutively. The election of deacons should be staggered. One half or close to one half of the board members shall begin their terms after each fall congregation meeting.

All deacons must meet the qualification outlined in the Scripture, in particular, 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The candidate for deacons must be at least twenty (20) years old and a regular member of this Church for at least one year prior to his/her assumption of office.

The deacons shall be elected by a nominating committee and confirmed by the congregation during the biannual congregation meeting. The Church Council shall appoint a nominating committee two months before the congregation meeting to select suitable candidates. The nomination committee consists of two current church council members, two members from the general congregation who are not current council members and the pastor. The names of nominated candidates should be announced to the congregation two weeks before the meeting and any objection from the congregation shall be submitted to the nominating committee for further reevaluation. An approval decision on this person in question requires three-fourth majority of the congregational affirmative vote. After the confirmation, the Church shall install the newly elected deacons in a formal ceremony.

The board of deacons is an organization which executes instructions conducted by the Church Council.

Any deacon who may be found to infringe the following violations shall be removed from office. The chairperson of the Church Council shall notify this deacon that his/her office has been terminated. Any deacon in the Church Council may initiate the impeachment process by notification to the Church Council and the removal shall be decided by three-fourth majority vote of the Church Council. The removed deacon shall be replaced by the same procedure as described above.

Deacons who refuse to perform their assigned responsibilities.

Deacons who are absent from regular Sunday worship services and/or the monthly council meetings for continuous three months without an acceptable excuse.

Deacons who may be found to engage in activities contrary to accepted Biblical standards and the Church Constitution and bylaws.

### **Article III. CHURCH COUNCIL**

The Church Council shall consist of all members of the Board of Elders, the Board of Deacons, and the pastoral staff.

The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall serve as Chairman of the Council.

#### **Responsibilities:**

The Church Council shall coordinate the activities of, and shall facilitate communication among, the Board of Elders, the Board of Deacons, and the pastoral staff.

The Church Council shall coordinate all motions that need to be approved by the church membership.

The Church Council shall approve the annual budget of the church.

The Church Council meetings shall be called by the Chairman.

The Church Council shall be responsible for the church policies.

#### **The Church Council:**

The members of the Church Council shall elect among themselves a vice chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer.

The Church Council shall meet once a month. Only if more than two-third of the council members attend, may the meeting be held. Decisions of these meetings shall be effected through three-fourth of the deacons present.

In the event that a council member is unable to complete his/hers term of office, the chairperson of the Church Council shall call the nominating committee to select a new candidate and be confirmed by the congregation to serve the unfinished term.

The chairperson shall call and preside over the Church Council and congregation meetings. He/She is the chief executive officer of H.O.P.E. Church Corporation and shall collaborate with the pastor to plan, implement and coordinate the Church ministries, and perform other functions as designated by the Church Council.

The vice chairperson shall act on behalf of chairperson during his/her absence when he/she is unable to perform the duties as chairperson.

The secretary shall be responsible for preparing and making the minutes of the Church Council, and the congregation meetings. He/She shall organize and maintain all legal documents and files of the Church Council, a current membership roster and bylaws of the church. Should both chairperson and vice chairperson be absent, the secretary may assume and perform such duties vested in the chairperson.

1 The treasurer is responsible for the budget, accounting, bookkeeping and finances of the church.  
2 He/She shall administrate the annual distribution of receipts to individuals or parties who have  
3 made monetary or other contributions to the church He/She shall implement policies and  
4 procedures that deal with finances and manage the assets of the church.  
5  
6

#### 7 **Article IV. CONGREGATION MEETING**

8

9 The Church Council should convene a congregation meeting for all members at least twice a  
10 year, during spring and fall. Members shall be notified of the meeting at least two weeks before  
11 the meeting date. One half of the regular membership constitutes a quorum for business  
12 transactions and decisions shall be effected by a simple majority of the members present.  
13

14 Proxy /absentia voting shall be allowed only after prior approval by the Church Council.  
15

16 The congregation meeting shall have the authority to review all actions taken by pastors, elders,  
17 deacons, and all other departments or organizations affiliated with the Church.  
18

19 No real estate of the Church shall be disposed of nor shall any real estate be secured for the  
20 Church without the prior three-fourth majority consent vote of the congregation meeting.  
21

22 No person shall assume the office of pastor nor shall the pastor be removed from office without  
23 the prior three-fourth majority consent vote of the congregation meeting.  
24

25 No member shall be deprived of his/her privileges and/or membership without informing the  
26 congregation.  
27

28 Any special or emergency session of the congregation meeting may be convened by the Church  
29 Council after the members have been duly notified of its convocation.  
30

31 Any member of the Church, upon submission of a petition endorsed by one-third of the regular  
32 Church members to the Church Council, is authorized to convene the congregation meeting  
33 thirty (30) days after copies of the petition have been sent to all the Church members by mail.  
34

35 The chairperson of the Church Council shall serve as the moderator of the congregational  
36 meetings.  
37  
38

#### 39 **Article V. PASTOR**

40

41 The pastor of this Church is a servant of God duly called by God and properly installed by the  
42 congregation in a formal ceremony. The pastor (s) shall oversee the spiritual welfare of the  
43 membership of the Church, preach the Word of God and administer the Sacraments of Baptism  
44 and the Lord's supper.  
45

46 The search process of the pastor(s) shall be initiated by the Church Council. The council shall  
47 appoint a pastoral searching committee consisting of three current council members, three



1 regular members from the general congregation and the pastor to evaluate the background,  
2 education and calling of all applicants. Any assistant pastor or associate pastor candidates may  
3 be recommended by the senior pastor. The pastoral searching committee shall select several  
4 candidates by unanimous vote for recommendation to the Church Council for nomination. The  
5 nomination shall require an affirmative vote of three-fourth majority of the Church Council  
6 present to extend a call. The nominee shall be recommended to the congregation for  
7 confirmation.

8  
9 The first term of the pastoral contract shall be two years and the second term shall be three years.  
10 Upon completing two terms of service, each term thereafter shall be five years. The renewal of  
11 the pastoral contract shall be approved by a simple majority affirmative vote of the Church  
12 Council followed by a simple majority affirmative vote of the congregation meeting. In the  
13 event of disagreement, the Church leaders shall seek the spiritual guidance of the Lord by  
14 prayers and communications. The termination of relation between the pastor and the Church can  
15 only be effective sixty (60) days after formal notice between the parties.

16  
17 The Church Council shall appoint a pastoral relation committee consisting of two council  
18 members and two members selected from the general congregation to nurture the best  
19 relationship between pastor and congregation to establish an honest and constructive  
20 communication channel. This committee shall also serve in the same capacity when disputes or  
21 conflicts incurred between two congregation members. Members of the committee shall be  
22 approved by a two-third majority vote of the Church Council.

23  
24 The pastor shall be an *ex-officio* member of all boards and committees of the Church.

## 25 26 **Article VI. Church Committees**

27  
28 In addition to the pastoral relation committee, HOPE Church may form certain committees based on the  
29 need of church ministry. For instance:

### 30 31 Mission committee

32 Under the supervision of the Church Council, it shall be in charge of the missionary  
33 program of HOPE Church and the allocation of the Missions Fund in accordance with the  
34 Mission Statement of the church.

### 35 36 Planning committee

37 Under the supervision of the Church Council, it shall be in charge of the operations and  
38 maintenance of all church properties.

### 39 40 Finance committee

41 Under the supervision of the Church Council, it shall oversee the financial matters of the  
42 Church and shall ensure compliance with IRS rules in all matters, such as all bank  
43 accounts using the name of HOPE Church. The Committee shall also monitor, and has  
44 authority to audit, any church accounts at any time.

### 45 46 Pastoral relationship committee

1 Under the supervision of the Church Council, it nurtures the best relationship between  
2 pastor and congregation.  
3

4 Nominating committee

5 Under the supervision of the Church Council, it shall be in charge of all the nomination  
6 of all members of elders and deacons.  
7  
8

9 **Article VII. AMENDMENT**

10  
11 Amendment of this constitution and bylaws may be initiated by a petition endorsed by thirty percent of  
12 its regular members. The council shall investigate and approve the proposal by a simple majority before  
13 putting the proposal to a mail ballot or vote in a congregation meeting. Approval is by three-fourth of  
14 the eligible voters.  
15  
16