

## **Holly Ridge Baptist Church Constitution**

### **Preface**

There are many good reasons why a New Testament church should have Articles of Faith, a Covenant, and a Constitution. Together these can greatly assist in the efforts of biblically organizing and conducting the ministries which have been entrusted to us by our Head, Jesus Christ. It must be readily acknowledged, however, that these documents, despite their usefulness and precision, will avail nothing apart from the presence and power of the Spirit of God in a church. It is with keen awareness of our absolute dependence upon our great God that these articles are set forth.

### **Preamble**

WE, the members of Holly Ridge Baptist Church of Cherokee County, Inc., do ordain and establish the following articles, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

### **Article 1 - Name**

The name of this church shall be Holly Ridge Baptist Church of Cherokee County, Inc.

### **Article 2 - Purpose**

This church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities. This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands by worshiping Him; by equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study, proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture; by encouraging, supporting and participating in missions work, local, domestic, and international; by administering the ordinances of baptism and communion; by encouraging biblical fellowship among believers; by serving other individuals, families, and churches through providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ; and by calling fellow churches to biblical faithfulness and purity through instruction and encouragement about the nature of the local church.

### **Article 3 - Articles of Faith**

The Articles of Faith, Church Constitution, and Church Covenant are accepted by its present members and shall be subscribed to and accepted voluntarily by new members as they offer themselves for membership.

We do hereby adopt as the fullest expression of our faith the **Baptist Faith and Message 2000**. This document is a summary of things most surely believed among us. We accept the same, not as an authoritative rule or code of faith, whereby we are to be fettered, but as an assistance to us in controversy, a confirmation in faith, and a means of edification in righteousness. In this confession, the member of our church will have a body of Divinity in small compass and by means of Scriptural proofs will be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in them (1 Pet 3:15).

## **Article 4 - Church Government**

**Section 1 - Church Authority:** Jesus Christ is Lord and Head of this church. His will, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, is the sole authority in matters of faith and practice.

**Section 2 - Church Polity:** The government is vested in the body of members who compose the church as further defined in this constitution. The church is subject to no other ecclesiastical body, but is associated with churches of the Southern Baptist Convention, South Carolina Baptist Convention, and Broad River Baptist Association, for purposes of fellowship, consultation, and cooperation. This and any other voluntary associations with other bodies shall not infringe on the right of this church.

## **Article 5 - Membership**

**Section 1 - Requirements for Membership:** The membership of this church shall consist of only those who have given a credible profession of faith in Christ Jesus as Lord. Any person, who professes repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, who has been baptized, and who expresses substantial agreement with the doctrines, covenant, aims, and government of this church shall be eligible for membership.

**1. Upon Confession of Faith:** Any person who meets the above-mentioned requirements shall apply for membership to the Elders. A time and place shall be set for a meeting with the applicant, who shall attend and be questioned as to his or her basic Christian experience, doctrinal beliefs, and seriousness of intention to support wholeheartedly the total ministry of this church.

**2. By Letter:** Any person desiring to unite with this church, shall present such letter, or a promise thereof, to officers of the church and shall be examined concerning his or her Christian experience, doctrinal beliefs, and seriousness of intention to support wholeheartedly the total ministry of this church.

### **Section 2 - Forms of Membership**

**1. Regular:** All who are received into the membership of the church on the above mentioned conditions shall be considered members in good standing until such status is changed by one of the conditions set forth in Article 5, Section 4.

**2. Other:** The membership status of invalids, shut-ins, Christian workers, and others, whose relationship to the church involves special consideration and circumstances, shall be determined on a case by case basis.

### **Section 3 - Procedure of Receiving New Members**

When the Elders are satisfied that an applicant gives a credible profession of faith and meets the requirements for membership, they may accept that person as a member, by a majority vote of the members present. The right hand of fellowship will be extended to new members by the church at a regular worship service.

### **Section 4- Termination of Membership**

**1. By Dismissal:** Letters of dismissal shall be granted to members who apply for them, provided they are in good standing and not subject to or under discipline at

the time of the application. When such letters have been granted, the relationship to this church shall be considered terminated. Letters of dismissal shall be forwarded and given only to other evangelical churches. Letters of dismissal will be denied by the Elders for those who are under discipline or who have been disciplined and removed from membership.

**2. By Exclusion:** If a member is habitually absent from the stated meetings of this church without just cause, or is unwilling to settle differences with others in a Scriptural manner, or requests severance of membership, he or she may be excluded from the membership at the discretion of the Elders, subject to the approval of the members.

**3. Excommunication:** It is the right and in harmony with Scriptures for the members upon recommendation of the Elders, to excommunicate from this fellowship any person who persists in holding false doctrine or heretical doctrine; who obviously and persistently lives inconsistently with his profession; who lives in violation of the law or public morals; who walks disorderly; or who persists in disturbing the unity and peace of this church (Matt 10:15ff; 1 Cor 5:1ff; 2 Thess 3:6, 11, 15; Rom 16:17).

**4. Resignation:** Letters of resignation shall be granted to members who apply for them, provided they are in good standing and not subject to or under discipline at the time of the application. The Elders will consider all letters of resignation and if approved, it will be forwarded to the members at a quarterly Members' meeting. Such letters shall be granted by a majority vote of the members present, and membership to this church shall be considered terminated. Members who are in good standing at the time of resignation will be encouraged to submit themselves quickly to another church by joining for the benefit of their spiritual well-being and obedience to God.

## **Article 6- Conduct**

**Section 1- Means of Grace:** All public and private means of grace, such as keeping the Sabbath, regular attendance at the services of the church, daily systematic reading of the Bible, and private and family prayers shall be urged upon our members.

**Section 2- Government of the Home:** The church expects its members to follow the Scriptures in home government. God has required that godliness in the home have a high priority in every life. The home has central attention in God's Law and is the object of frequent exhortation in the New Testament. Men are expected to rule their homes with gentleness and firmness. They are to love their wives with a Christ-like love. Women must be subject to their husbands. Parents should train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph 6:4) by whole example, by catechizing, by consistent education, and by firm discipline (including the use of the rod of correction-Prov 13:24; 22:15; 23:13; 29:15). Children must reverently obey their parents (Eph 6:1). These primary responsibilities, prayerfully executed, will honor the name of Christ in the community and strengthen the cause of Christ in generations to come.

**Section 3- Missions and Witnessing:** It is the duty of every Christian and of every church of Christ to seek to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Missionary efforts

are the natural consequence of regeneration (Ps 51:10-14). “Preach the gospel” is a frequently repeated command of Christ. It is the duty of every child of God to witness by life and work. Personal efforts at witnessing for Christ are expected of every member. Beyond this, we are committed to common efforts for sending the gospel to the ends of the earth.

**Section 4 - Principles of Giving:** It is clearly taught in Scripture that Christians are to support the work of the Lord by systematic and proportionate offerings made through the local church. This is set forth in both positive command and favorable example (Mal 3:8-11; 2 Cor 8 and 9). Hence, we pledge ourselves to systematic contribution for the support of this church with a portion of our income according to the principle in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.

**Section 5 - Christian Liberty:** We shall require of each other in our daily walk and conversation loyal obedience to all those moral precepts established in the Word of God (Heb 10:24-25). However, where God has not prohibited certain practices in His Word, the Christian has liberty to participate in them. The following principles must always guide the Christian’s exercise of liberty:

- 1. Fear of God:** As the servant of Christ, all actions must be motivated by love to God, and all objects must be used for His glory. The term “liberty” is often used as a cloak of malicious self-indulgence, which is sin (1 Cor 10:31; 1 Tim 4:4-5; 1 Pet 2:15-16).
- 2. Love of Brethren:** Though no man may dictate to the Christian’s conscience, the welfare of fellow saints must always deeply affect his decisions. In a spirit of serving the brethren, he must do that which he judges will edify them and prevent their stumbling (Gal 5:13; 1 Cor 10:23; 1 Cor 8:9).
- 3. Compassion for the Unconverted:** Use of liberty must always be regulated by its effect upon sinners, and that behavior chosen which is likely to win some (1 Cor 9:19-22).
- 4. Watchfulness over the Soul:** Though free in conscience to use all of God’s creation, carefulness in practice is demanded because of remaining lusts. Where the Christian judges himself weak through lust, he must abstain in order to persevere in the faith (1 Cor 9:23-27).

**Section 6 - Support of Church Officers:** It is the duty of every member to respect the God-appointed officers of the church. The duties of church members toward their Elders, and Deacons, as well as other ministers and teachers, are as follows:

- 1.** Pray for them, that God would open a door of utterance unto them, to unfold the mysteries of the gospel (Eph 6:18-20).
- 2.** To obey them in the Lord, in whatsoever they admonish them, according to the work of God (Heb 13:17-22).
- 3.** To follow their example and footsteps, as far as warranted by the Word (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:17; Heb 13:7).
- 4.** To stand by them, in all their trials and afflictions, and defending them in all good causes, as far as in them lies. (In 2 Timothy 1:5, those of Asia are blamed for turning away or not standing by the Apostle.)

5. To avoid exposing the infirmities of their person, remembering that the prosperity of the gospel depends much on their good report (Acts 23:5).

## **Article 7- Church Discipline**

**Section 1- Formative:** Formative church discipline is set forth through the teaching of God's Word, the example of Christian living, and the mutual ministry of the several members of the body of Christ. It has as its goal the instruction of disciples, the transformation of their lives, and their edification in love (Eph 4:11-13; Rom 12:1-16; 1 Cor 12:4-27). Formative discipline has a sanctifying influence. Every member should be satisfied with his/her God-given ministry, and thus we shall all grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Pet 4:7-12). Formative discipline utilizes the talents of each member, whether young or old, for the edification of all.

As members of this church, we recognize our obligation to honor, serve, worship, praise, and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in all that we say and do (1 Cor 10:31). Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church and, therefore, its Lord and Lawgiver (Eph 1:22; Isa 33:22) and those who truly love Him will endeavor to keep His commandments (John 14:15). In His Holy Word, our Lord has entreated believers to perform certain duties one toward another. Some of these duties are:

1. To love one another without offence or hypocrisy (John 13:34-35; Rom 12:9; 13:8-10).
2. To labor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 4:3).
3. To endeavor for the edification and spiritual benefit of the whole body that they all may grow up to be a holy temple in and for the Lord (1 Cor 14:12-26; Eph 4:12, 29; 2:21-22).
4. To watch over one another for good (Phil 2:3-4).
5. To pray with and for one another (James 5:16).
6. To not neglect the assembling of ourselves together, for the celebrating of divine worship, and thereby promoting one another's spiritual benefit (Heb 10:25; Acts 2:42).
7. To contend unanimously for the faith and truth once delivered to the saints, in the purity thereof, according to the Holy Scripture (Ps 93:5; Zech 14:2; 1 Cor 14:33-40; 11:2).

The above duties, when faithfully performed by all, will have a positive, formative effect upon the whole assembly, and with the blessing of the Holy Spirit, we will all be enabled to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The following section is provided in the event of the failure of formative discipline as set forth above.

**Section 2 - Corrective Discipline:** Corrective discipline is called for by disorderly conduct or heretical doctrine which is contrary to the church's standard of life and doctrine. Reasonable efforts shall be made through counsel and admonition to resolve difficulties, correct errors, and remove offenses before any further action is taken. No offenses shall be brought before the church until the instructions of Christ have first been

followed (Matt 5:23-24; 18:15-18). Corrective discipline always has for its aim the glory of God, the welfare and purity of the church, and the restoration and spiritual growth of the offender. The following are elements of corrective discipline.

**1. Exclusion:** If a member is habitually absent from the fellowship of this church without just cause, is unwilling to settle differences on Scriptural grounds, or requests severance of membership, he or she may be excluded from the membership at the recommendation of the Elders and a majority vote of the members present. This will be accomplished according to the steps outlined below:

When a member is absent without just cause from one members' meeting to the next, or a period of three months, the member will be admonished by another member to repent of his or her sin by returning to corporate worship. If the offender does not repent and return to corporate worship within two weeks, the offender will be admonished again by the original confronting member accompanied by one or more of the Elders. During the second admonition, the offender will be reminded of his or her right to resign membership with the church. The offender will also be informed that the letter of resignation will still have to be approved by the members accompanied by an explanation of the resignation. Resigning one's membership does not provide an escape from church discipline. If the offender does not desire to resign membership, then he or she will be given two weeks to repent and return to regular attendance of corporate worship. If the offender does not repent and return, then he or she will be notified by a letter stating that he or she will be recommended for exclusion from membership at the next Members' meeting. Exclusion will be enforced until such time the offender repents, returns, and desires to unite in membership again with the church. Whether the offender resigns membership during church discipline or is removed by the congregation, the offender will be told that he or she will have exhibited characteristics of a non-believer for refusal to repent and would be treated as someone in need of the gospel by all members of Holly Ridge Baptist Church. If a church requests a letter from Holly Ridge Baptist Church on behalf of a former member who resigned during above outlined discipline, who was excluded from membership by the members, or who stopped attending during church discipline, the request for a letter will be denied by the Elders. Included with the response will be a letter from the Elders detailing why the request for a letter was denied. The Elders do not need approval from the members to deny the letter from someone in the above stated circumstances.

**2. Suspension:** If a member has publicly sinned, but shows a hopeful sign of repentance, including submission to the admonitions of church officers, then severe discipline, such as excommunication, would be improper. Nevertheless, serious offenses may not be overlooked altogether, lest God's enemies multiply their blasphemies, lest other saints be emboldened to sin, and lest the offender is harmed by a failure to test his own soul and appreciate the gravity of his offense. Therefore, at the discretion of the Elders, less severe terms may be imposed upon a member - such as public rebuke, or suspension of membership. The latter consists of a temporary suspension of the right to attend the Lord's Table, to serve publicly in the church or vote in members' meetings. Those who submit to such

discipline are to be wholly forgiven and received as brethren. All such actions shall be reported to the members.

**3. Excommunication:** When restoration is not secured by the processes required in Matthew 18:15-18, further steps must be taken to correct offenders. Written charges shall be given to the accused offender if he requests a hearing. The Elders shall meet with the accused, unless the person refuses to appear. After a fair and impartial hearing of all the witnesses accessible, and all facts ascertainable, the Elders must form a judgment. If they believe the accused to be guilty and deserving of severe biblical discipline, they shall make a recommendation that the offender be excommunicated at a duly called Members' meeting. The congregation shall have the right to excommunicate a member by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting. Excommunication always has as its end the glory of God, the purity of the body of Christ, and the restoration of the offending party.

**4. Restoration:** It is the duty of the church to forgive and restore to membership those persons who give satisfactory evidence of being repentant (2 Cor 2:6-8). The Elders shall meet with and restore those who have been excluded or suspended when they have judged that the aims of the discipline have been accomplished. Such action is to be reported to the church. Upon recommendation of the Elders the congregation shall have the right to restore an excommunicated person by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called Members' meeting.

### **Section 3- Purposes of Corrective Discipline**

**1. For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined.** (See Prov 15:5; 29:15; 1 Cor 4:14; Eph 6:4; 1 Tim 3:4-5; Heb 12:1-11; Pss 119:115; 141:5; Prov 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Eccl 7:5; Matt 7:26-27; 18:15-17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Cor 5:5; Gal 6:1-5; 2 Thess 6:6, 14-15; 1 Tim 1:20; Titus 1:13-14; James 1:22).

**2. For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them.** (See Prov 13:20; Rom 15:14; 1 Cor 5:11; 15:33; Col 3:16; 1 Thess 5:14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; 1 Tim 5:20; Titus 1:11; Heb 10:24-25).

**3. For the purity of the church as a whole.** (See 1 Cor 5:6-7; 2 Cor 13:10; Eph 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Rev 21:2).

**4. For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians.** (See Prov 28:7; Matt 5:13-16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1-14; Eph 5:11; 1 Tim 3:7; 2 Pet 2:2; 1 John 3:10).

**5. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His whole character.** (see Duet 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chron 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Neh 9:2; Isa 52:11; Ezek 36:20; Matt 5:16; John 15:8; 18:17,25; Rom 2:24; 15:5-6; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1; Eph 1:4; 5:27; 1 Pet 2:12).

### **Article 8 - Church Officers**

**Section 1 - General Statement:** Jesus Christ alone is the Head of His Church. However, as Head, He has ordained that individual churches should be blessed with the spiritual

rule and ministry of special office bearers. Therefore, it is the duty of the church to seek to discover those to whom Christ the Lord has imparted the necessary gifts for office bearing. The Lord's appointment is recognized by not only the inward conviction of the individual involved, but also by the approval of the church observing the possession of those gifts and graces required, and by Scriptural definition of the office. It should be the desire of the congregation to come to one mind regarding those office bearers to whom they must submit in the Lord, but should such unanimity not be fully realized, no less than two-thirds majority of the members present and voting shall be required for the election or calling of an officer (See Article 3 of By-Laws). Christ has ordained that the administration of local churches is to be by Elders and Deacons (Phil 1:1; Acts 6:1-7; 14:23).

**Section 2 - Eldership:** Elders (Pastors) are set apart for prayer and study of the Word and should, as far as is possible, be adequately maintained in material necessities, so as to be disentangled from the cares of a secular calling. Elders are responsible for the spiritual ministrations of church discipline and watching over the souls of the members as those who give account to God for this responsibility. They shall exercise the oversight of the church in all its ministries and functions.

1. An Elder (Pastor) must evidence the personal, domestic, and ministerial qualifications for this office as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and in Titus 1:5-9.
2. Anyone called to this office must be able to affirm conscientiously his agreement with the Articles of Faith, the adopted Confession, and Constitution of the church. Should he at anytime move from this position, he is under spiritual and moral obligation to make this known to the church.
3. Elders (Pastors) shall seek to discharge all the functions of their offices as set forth in the Scriptures and in keeping with the exercise of their own distinctive gifts of ministry. They together shall have general oversight of all the church and its ministry and functions.
4. While every Elder bears spiritual rule, some will be more engaged in formal teaching and public teaching, while others will be more exclusively engaged in the details of ruling (1 Tim 5:17)
5. Elders shall be men in full communion with the church, of mature judgment, of unquestioned character, loyal to the Word of God, able to teach sound doctrine, and devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ and the spiritual welfare of the church (1 Tim 3, Titus 1:6-9). They shall be ordained as Elders after a calling from the church, as soon as convenient.
6. It shall be the duty of the Elders to be diligent and faithful in attendance at the Elders' meetings and at the regular services of the church. They shall administer the Lord's Supper. They shall make decisions concerning the pulpit ministry, and encourage one another in the work of the Lord. Elders may at their discretion call upon one or more of the Deacons to assist with any of their responsibilities when necessary.
7. If at anytime an Elder (Pastor) shall make application to be released from his office, or if the members shall choose by a two-thirds majority vote to dismiss him, the relationship between Elder (Pastor) and church may be terminated by the members in ninety days from the date of notice of intention, or in a shorter period

of time, if it is mutually agreed upon. If the relations between an Elder (Pastor) and congregation becomes detrimental to the welfare of the church, the remaining Elders shall have authority to consider this matter and make recommendation to the members at a duly called Members' meeting. If an Elder's (Pastor's) life or preaching shall violate the standards of this church, and the Elders so recommend, the services of an Elder (Pastor) may be terminated immediately following a Members' meeting, at which his dismissal has been requested by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting.

### **Section 3 - Deacons**

1. Deacons are responsible for the business and secular affairs of the church, which are to be administered with spiritual grace and in cooperation with and subjection to the Elders.
2. Deacons shall be men in full communion with the church, being sober in life, having a good reputation, and being able to comfort the oppressed (1 Tim 3:8-13).
3. They shall be installed as Deacons after their first election, as soon as convenient. It shall be the duty of the Deacons to be diligent and faithful in attendance at Deacons' meetings and at the regular services of the church. They shall be watchful to assist the Elders at the Lord's Table and in every possible way.

## **Article 9 - Elders**

**Section 1 - Responsibilities of Elders:** The Elders shall have the general oversight of all this church's affairs. The conduct of all church business and the work of all church organizations shall be subject to their supervision and oversight.

**Section 2 - Membership and Discipline:** The Elders give leadership in receiving applicants for church membership. Likewise, they shall lead in the administering of biblical church discipline to offending members in accordance with Article 7. The Elders shall watch over the souls of the flock as "they must give account" (Heb 13:17). They must be persistent in prayer for, visitation of, and instruction of the membership and its families.

**Section 3 - Church Officials and Teachers:** The Elders shall appoint the Superintendent of the Sunday School and the directors of all church groups. These, in turn, upon request, shall be responsible to the Elders for their approval, all proposed teachers and leaders.

**Section 4 - Pulpit Supply:** It shall be the duty of the Elders to supply the pulpit with men whose ministry in our church shall be consistent of the confession of this church.

**Section 5 - Grievances and Suggestion:** The Elders shall receive, consider, and dispose of grievances, suggestions, or recommendations by any member or organization of this church.

**Section 6 - Miscellaneous Duties:** The Elders shall exercise all other powers and duties which properly belong to the sole governing body of an independent, congregation and

corporation, but shall at all times be subject to the majority vote of the congregation unless otherwise stated.

## **Article 10 - Deacons**

The Deacons shall consist of all this church's duly elected Deacons.

**Section 1 - Ministry of Mercy:** The ministry in our church and the community is a special responsibility of the diaconate. The Deacons shall see that the sick, the sorrowing, the aged, and the feeble minded receive spiritual and physical comfort. They shall minister the work of God, administer this church's benevolence funds, and render counsel to those in need of assistance. They shall be vigilant for opportunities to do good, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

**Section 2 - Business Affairs:** The Deacons shall have general executive powers to administer the business affairs of this church. It shall be the Deacons' responsibility to work with the finance committee in preparing the church budget and submitting it to the Elders before submitting it for adoption each year. When the members have approved the budget, it will be the responsibility of the Deacons to oversee the administration of it with the finance committee. The duty of caring for and maintaining the church's properties shall belong to the Deacons.

**Section 3 - Limitation of Power:** The Deacons shall not encumber, transfer, sell, or purchase any real estate for the church except by the express authorization conveyed by a majority vote of the membership present and voting at a duly called Members' meeting. No obligation shall be incurred to spend over \$400.00 on one item without the special vote of the congregation, unless that item already appears in the adopted budget.

**Section 4 - Officers of the Deacons:** A Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected to serve for one year or until their successors are elected.

## **Article 11 - Ordinations**

**Section 1 - Ministers of the Gospel:** It is our hope that Spirit filled men will be called out from among us to proclaim the gospel of the grace of God. The church will commission such men by giving them a license to those whose ministries will be limited in scope or time, or by ordination to the ministry.

When there is a prospective candidate for ordination to the ministry, the Elders shall guide that person in his studies, and preparation. They shall then call a council to examine the qualifications of the candidate. It shall look into the soundness of his conversion, the godliness of his walk, the soundness of his doctrine, the degree of his gifts, the extent of his training, and the blessing of God upon his labors for Christ.

If the council heartily recommends that the candidate be ordained, the church may give the recommended commission by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at a Member's meeting.

The Elders, under the principles set forth in Article 7, shall have the powers to exercise discipline, even to the revocation of this church's ordination or license.

**Section 2 - Installation of Elders:** In a regular worship service of the church, the Pastor shall question newly called Elders as follows:

1. Do you believe that the Scriptures as written in Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and do you accept them to be the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Have you personally adopted and will you cheerfully submit to and defend the Confession (Baptist Faith and Message), Constitution and By-Laws of this church?
3. Do you accept the office of Elder readily, and do you promise to perform it's duties of caring for the flock of God in the fear of His name?

Then the hands of the existing Elders shall be placed on the heads of the New Elders and prayer offered in their behalf. Following this, the people shall be exhorted to esteem and obey the man that God has placed over them.

**Section 3 - Installation of Deacons:** In a regular worship service of the church, the Pastor shall question newly elected Deacons as follows:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures as written in the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God, and do you accept them as the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Have you personally adopted and will you cheerfully submit to and defend the Confession (Baptist Faith and Message), Constitution and By-Laws of this church?
3. Do you accept the office of Deacon and do you promise to care for the poor and needy and to manage the business of this church in the fear of God?

Then the hands of the Officers shall be placed on the heads of the new Deacons and prayer offered in their behalf. Following this, the people shall be exhorted to esteem and obey those whom God has placed over them.

## **Article 12 - Finances**

The work of this church is financially dependent upon the voluntary gifts of God's people. Before the annual Members' meeting, the Elders shall obtain from the Deacons and the finance committee of the needs of the several divisions of the work, and a prepared budget, detailing the proposed expenditures for the coming year. When this budget is approved by a vote of the members, it shall be considered the basis for the current liabilities. No committee or board is authorized to make changes in the provisions, or to make unauthorized disbursements without the consent of the members.

The fiscal year shall begin January 1<sup>st</sup> and end December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Article 13 - Association of Churches**

When it is thought desirable to have fellowship, consultation, and cooperation with local churches of like faith and order, this church may join itself to an association of churches. Upon recommendation of the Elders, such affiliations may be entered by a majority vote of the members. Withdrawal from associations may be affected by the same procedure.

**Article 14 - Amendments**

Amendments to the Constitution may be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a Member's meeting, provided that such amendments have been distributed by the Elders at least two weeks prior to the Members' meeting.

## **By-Laws**

### **Article 1 - Members' Meetings**

**Section 1 - Notice of Meetings:** Notice of all Members' meetings shall be given at regular worship services on the two successive Sundays prior to the meetings. In an emergency, a meeting may be called on short notice by notifying each local member by mail, phone, or email of the time, place, and purpose of the Members' meeting.

**Section 2 - Number of Meetings:** Members' meetings shall be held the second Sunday of each quarter or at other times as necessary for the reception of the reports and the transaction of such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting. There will be a special Members' meeting held on the first Sunday in December to elect Deacons and adopt the budget for the following year.

**Section 3 - Method of Calling Meetings:** It shall be the right and responsibility of the Elders to call all Members' meetings. When a special Members' meeting is called, there must be notice given to the members as to the purpose.

**Section 4 - Responsibility for Meetings:** The Elders shall arrange the details of all Members' meetings and see that all possible preparation has been made for successful conduct, following the principles outlined in Roberts' Rules of Order, Revised.

**Section 5 - Quorum for Transaction of Business:** The voting members present at all congregationally called Members' meetings shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business. All church officers shall be voted upon by written ballot.

**Section 6 - Voting Standards:** All members of the church, thirteen years of age and older in good and regular standing, shall have all the right to vote on any question properly brought before the members. (Any member not having attended or contributed to the church for a period of one year forfeits his/her privileges. Except for extenuating circumstances determined on a case by case basis.) An accurate count will be taken of members before any vote is taken.

### **Article 2 - Membership**

In order to keep an accurate membership roll, there shall be a continuous review of the membership roll by the Elders. All who have been inactive members, for whatever cause, will be excluded from membership per Article 7, Section 2, Paragraph 1 of the Constitution and will be notified of this action in writing.

### **Article 3 - Church Officers**

#### **Section 1 - The Method and Requirements for Election of Deacons**

1. All Deacons shall have been a member of the church for a period of at least one year before being placed in nomination.
2. Consent must be secured from the nominees before their names are placed before the members.

3. The term of Deacons shall begin the first Sunday of the new year. The normal term of office for Deacons shall be 3 years. Upon the completion of a full term, each officer shall be required to wait one year before being eligible for reelection. This requirement may, however, be set aside if the members deem it beneficial to do so. Terms shall be so arranged that not all are completed at the same time.

## **Section 2 - Nomination of Deacons**

1. Each year, two months prior to the December Members' meeting, a nominating committee shall be constituted. This committee shall consist of the existing Elders and three other members to be selected by the Elders. It shall be the function of this committee to review the biblical requirements for Deacons, and then to go over the list of male members in good standing to consider whether or not new names should be presented to the members for election as Deacons. Recommendations may be made to this committee from any member of the church provided it is done in writing and with prior approval of the individual being recommended.
2. If there are those in the congregation who have Scriptural grounds for objecting to any of the nominees, they shall personally bring these to the attention of the committee one week prior to the December Members' meeting.
3. The nominating committee shall present all nominees for Deacons to the members during the December Members' meeting.
4. The number of Deacons elected will be determined according to need. The number of Deacons needed, receiving votes of members present will be elected.

## **Article 4 - Church Boards**

**Section 1 - Quarterly Meetings:** The Deacons shall hold their respective meetings quarterly or as needed on the first Monday of each quarter.

**Section 2 - Quorum and Call for Meetings:** The quorum of the Elders or of the Deacons shall be two-thirds of their total number.

**Section 3 - Duties of the Church Clerk:** The Clerk shall keep a record of all business transacted at the Members' meetings, keep an accurate record of membership, and carry on all necessary and related correspondence for the members.

**Section 4 - Duties of the Church Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall keep records of all financial transactions, make quarterly reports to the members, and disburse funds at the discretion of members or Deacons. Funds will be counted by two appointed members and deposited by an appointed Deacon.

**Section 5 - Monthly Meetings:** The Elders shall hold their meeting monthly or as needed. The day of the week and time will be determined by the Elders so as to accommodate all the Elders.

## **Article 5 - Committees**

**Section 1 - Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee shall be comprised of the Deacons, the Treasurer, and up to 3 additional members who are elected by the members. Their duties include preparing and recommending to the members an annual budget. After the budget has been approved by the members, this committee is to oversee its administration.

## **Article 6 - Church Corporation**

In compliance with the laws of the State of South Carolina for Corporations Not for Profit, the church shall from its members in good standing elect at least 3 members to serve as trustees of the corporation. They shall serve for a term of one year, and perform such services as required by law. This election shall take place at the December Members' meeting. Those elected shall select a President, one or more Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, and a Treasurer (as outlined in our Articles of Incorporation) for purpose of carrying out their required services.

## **Article 7 - Amendments**

Amendments to the By-Laws may be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a Members' meeting, provided that such amendments have been distributed by the Elders in written form at least two weeks prior to the Member's Meeting.

## **Holly Ridge Baptist Church Church Covenant**

By the grace of God we have been led to repent of our sin and believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We have confessed our faith and been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Now, therefore, in the presence of God and by His grace, we joyfully and solemnly enter into a holy covenant with the members of Holly Ridge Baptist Church.

We engage, therefore, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love.

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but faithfully attend the church's meetings for worship, prayer, study, and fellowship, and will use our spiritual gifts for the common good.

We pledge to support the ordinances and doctrines of this church. When practical, in accordance with Scripture, we will submit to the church's discipline upon ourselves and lovingly assume our responsibility to participate in the discipline of other members.

We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to this church for its general ministry and expenses, the relief of the poor, the cause of reformation and revival, and the spread of the Gospel throughout the nations.

We will strive by God's grace and power to live as Christ in the world; denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we will seek to fulfill our calling to lead a holy life and to be salt and light. We will abstain from the excessive use of intoxicating drinks, the abuse of drugs, and the use or distribution of any pornographic material.

We will be just and honest in our dealings and faithful in our responsibilities and commitments.

We will abide by the standards of sexual purity, ethical integrity, and spiritual fidelity as taught in the Bible.

We will reject all heretical beliefs and practices, using Scripture as our final authority.

We purpose to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember one another in prayer, to help one another in sickness and distress, and to cultivate Christian compassion and courtesy.

Believing that the pursuit of peace with others and personal holiness accompanies true faith in Christ, we will be slow to take offense, always eager to seek the reconciliation Christ commands, and will work to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We resolve to practice personal and family worship, to train our children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, and to seek the salvation of our family, friends, coworkers, acquaintances, and of all the world.

We promise that if we leave this church we will diligently seek to unite with another church where we can continue to carry out the spirit and principles of God's Word.