**Bylaws of Highland Avenue Fellowship Church of Melbourne Inc.**

**ARTICLE I. -Name**

The name of this Church is “Highland Avenue Fellowship Church of Melbourne Inc.”, hereinafter called “HAFC”, or the “Church”. It is a corporation duly created by the Secretary of the State of Florida on January 5, 1964 as a Non-profit Religious Corporation located in Melbourne, Florida.

**ARTICLE II. –Mission Statement**

The mission of Highland Avenue Fellowship Church is to equip every member for ministries which help others find, live, and share the love of Jesus Christ.

**ARTICLE III. - Purpose of the Church**

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) of 1986, for such purposes including, but not limited to, glorify God by conducting religious services, performing community outreach, teaching and training people in truth of God’s Word, the Holy Bible, calling people to repentance from Sin and to faith in Jesus Christ, making disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ as commanded by Him in Matthew 28:19, and Mark 16:15-16 and edifying the body of Christ.

**ARTICLE IV. - Statement of Faith**

**WE BELIEVE IN A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AS DEFINED BELOW:**

**God:**

We believe in one God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinite in love, perfect in judgments and unchanging in mercy. God exists eternally in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit;

**Scripture:**

We believe that in the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both the Old and New Testaments, the only written Word of God, without error in all it affirms. The Scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Holy Spirit preserves God’s Word in the church today and by it speaks God’s truth to peoples of every age;

**Humankind:**

We believe that human beings were created in the image of God. This image was marred in every part through the disobedience of our first parents, and fellowship with God was broken. God, in His prevenient grace, restores moral sensibility to all humankind and enables all to respond to His love and to accept His saving grace, if they will;

**Human sexuality:**

We believe that human sexuality is a gift of God that is to be affirmed as it is exercised within the legal and spiritual covenant of a loving and monogamous marriage between one man and one woman (Exodus 20:14, Matthew 19:3-9, Ephesians 5:22-33).

**Jesus Christ:**

We believe that Jesus Christ is God’s Son incarnate, born of the Virgin Mary. He died for the sins of all, taking on Himself, on behalf of sinful persons, God’s judgment upon sin. In His body he rose from the grave and ascended to the right hand of the Father where He intercedes for us. We believe that it is only through faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross that one can be saved, (Romans 10:9-10);

**Holy Spirit:**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God present and active in the world. The Holy Spirit was given to the church in His fullness at Pentecost. By the Spirit, Christ lives in His church, the gospel is proclaimed and the kingdom of God is manifested in the world;

**Justification:**

We believe that God graciously justifies and regenerates all who trust in Jesus Christ. Believers become children of God and begin to live in holiness through faith in Christ and the sanctifying Spirit;

**Entire Sanctification:**

We believe that God calls all believers to entire sanctification in a moment of full surrender and faith, subsequent to their new birth in Christ. Through sanctifying grace, the Holy Spirit delivers them from all rebellion toward God and makes possible wholehearted love for God and for others. This grace does not make believers faultless nor prevent the possibility of their falling into sin. They must live daily by faith in the forgiveness and cleansing provided for them in Jesus Christ;

**Assurance of Believers:**

We believe that all believers are assured that they are children of God by the inward witness of God’s Spirit with their spirits, by faith in the gracious promises of God’s Word, and by the fruit of the Spirit in their lives;

**Christians in Society:**

We believe that Christians are called to live in daily witness to the grace which comes to us in Jesus Christ, to preach the gospel to every person according to the command of Christ, and to declare God’s insistence upon righteousness and justice in all relationships and structures of human society;

**Sacredness of life:**

We believe that life is a holy gift of God whose beginnings and endings are set by God, and that it is the particular duty of believers to protect those who may be powerless to protect themselves, including the unborn, those with disabilities or serious illness, and the aged (Genesis 2:7, Leviticus 19:32, Jeremiah 1:5, Luke 1:41-44);

**The Church:**

We believe that the Church is the people of God composed of all those who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The Church is Christ’s body; it is visible in the world wherever believers, in obedience of faith, hear the Word, receive the sacraments and live as disciples;

**Sacraments:**

A Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. God gives us the sign as a means whereby we receive this grace and as a tangible assurance that we do in fact receive it. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ are Holy Baptism and Holy Communion (also called the Lord’s Supper or the Eucharist). We receive the Sacraments by faith in Christ, with repentance and thanksgiving. Faith in Christ enables us to receive the grace of God through the Sacraments, and obedience to Christ is necessary for the benefits of the Sacraments to bear fruit in our lives.

**Holy Baptism, as initiation into Christ’s Holy Church, occurs once in a person’s life:**

Through Holy Baptism we are united in Christ’s death in repentance of our sins; raised to new life in Him through the power of the resurrection; incorporated into the Body of Christ; and empowered through the work of the Holy Spirit to go on to perfection. Holy Baptism is God’s gracious gift to us, flowing from the once for all work of Christ Jesus, and our pledge to follow as His disciples.

Holy Baptism is administered among a gathered congregation. Those present vow on behalf of Christ’s Holy Church to receive the baptized into the Church universal, to grow together in grace, and to remember the profession made and benefits received in Holy Baptism. Candidates for Holy Baptism, and those presenting candidates unable to answer for themselves, shall be instructed in the Christian faith and the meaning of Holy Baptism.

Holy Baptism, as initiation into Christ’s Holy Church, occurs once in a person’s life. Holy Baptism may be performed by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. The outward and visible sign of Holy Baptism is water. Candidates are baptized “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). The inward and spiritual grace is death to sin and new birth to righteousness, by faith, through union with Christ in His death and resurrection.

**Holy Communion:**

Holy Communion was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper and he commanded us to partake of the Eucharist until his glorious return. Whether referred to as “communion,” “Lord’s Supper,” or “Eucharist,” this sacrament of bread and “wine” is to be celebrated as often as possible. We believe that Christ is present in the communion elements though they do not literally become the body and blood of Christ;

**Return of Christ:**

We believe in the personal return of Jesus Christ, in the bodily resurrection of all persons, in final judgment and in eternal reward and punishment. In God’s ultimate victory over Satan and all evil and the establishment of His perfect kingdom in a new heaven and a new earth.

**ARTICLE V. – COVENANT FELLOWSHIP**

At Highland Avenue Fellowship Church, Church Membership is defined and understood as Covenant Fellowship. We believe this for the following reasons.

1. Church Membership is not an explicit Biblical concept. In the New Testament there were no membership roles, formal membership requirements or procedures. One of the reasons is simple. If you were present at the local assembly or gathering, your presence indicated the fact that you were a part of that local gathering, or body. In most cities and communities, there was only one congregation you could be a part of if you were a Christian.
2. The concept of fellowship is both implicit and explicit in the New Testament. (See 1 John 1:7, Hebrews 10:24-25, Acts 2:42-47, Matthew 18:20, Colossians 3:12-17, Philippians 2:1-4, 1 John 2:19)
3. Biblical relationships between God and men, as well as relationships between men, are and should be viewed in terms of covenant. There are multiple covenants that God made with men (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, etc) as well as covenants men made with each other (Abraham and Abimelech in Genesis 21, Isaac and Abimlelech in Genesis 26, Jacob and Laban in Genesis 31, the forbidding of covenants with Canaanites in Joshua 2). In Hebrews 9, both the Old and New Covenant are explained in terms that make it clear that covenantal framework was the normal for God’s people.

Since this covenantal framework is so explicit in the Bible, we believe that our understanding of how we relate to God and each other should be seen in terms of a covenant. Biblical covenants are based on oaths and agreements made between God and men. They are more than just promises. They are contracts. They are meaningful and often come with severe penalties when broken. They almost always include shedding blood to not only remind us of their importance when entered upon as well as the severity when terms are violated. This shedding of blood, more than anything else, is a picture of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Since Jesus’ sacrifice has been made, the shedding of blood is no longer necessary. Nevertheless we desire that every person who calls Highland Avenue Fellowship Church home, understands the nature and importance of their covenant with God, as well as the commitment we all willingly make with each other. With this in mind, we set forth the following qualifications and procedures for Covenant Fellowship.

**Section 1. Qualifications for Covenant Fellowship:**

 Covenant Fellowship at HAFC shall be open to all persons who:

1. Give clear profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior
2. Have obeyed the Lord in believer’s baptism or be willing to be baptized
3. Consistently participate in the life of the church through regular attendance, serving, giving, and community.

**Section 2. Responsibilities of the Covenant Fellowship:**

Each individual covenant fellow shall pursue the unity of the faith in cooperation with others, and shall purpose to serve in consideration of others as well.

**Section 3. Discipline and Removal from Covenant Fellowship:**

The “Discipline and Removal from Covenant Fellowship.” process is established in Document ID # 2023-06 of the approved policies and procedures manual.

**Section 4. Annual Meeting for Covenant Fellowship:**

The annual meeting of the church’s covenant fellowship shall be held in January of each year. This meeting will include reports of the affairs of the church and transact such other business as the Executive Board shall determine to be brought before the members, including but not limited to the introduction of the appointments made by the Executive Board of those who shall serve as members of the Executive Board for the ensuing year. Meetings may be held in person or by electronic communication as circumstances dictate.

**Section 5. Special Meetings for the Covenant Fellowship:**

Special meetings of the covenant fellowship may be called at any time by the Pastor, the Chairperson of the Executive Board, or by a majority of the members of the Executive Board. Meetings may be held in person or by electronic communication as circumstances dictate.

**Section 6. Notice of Meetings:**

Notice of all regular or special meetings shall be published in the regular church bulletin and announced from the pulpit for two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. At the direction of the Executive Board, staff may be directed to provide additional notice to the church’s covenant fellowship via electronic communication, mail-out, or other resource.

**Section 7. Quorum:**

A quorum will be defined through the approved “Rules for Conducting Regular and Special Church Meetings” (Document ID #2022-02) process as established in the approved Policies and Procedures manual.

**ARTICLE VI. – Executive Board**

**Section 1. Responsibility of Executive Board Members:**

Subject to the limitations of these bylaws, all the activities and affairs of the Church shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Executive Board, who shall have the following responsibilities in addition to the other powers enumerated by these bylaws:

(a) To work as a team with the Pastor(s) to shepherd and oversee the flock, including the administration of the ordinances of Baptism and Communion.

(b) To select and remove all pastors and employees of the Church; prescribe such duties for them consistent with the Scriptures, with law, with the Articles of Incorporation, or with these bylaws; and fix the terms of their offices and their compensation

(c) To establish policies and practices for the church consistent with its purpose.

(d) To make such disbursements from the funds and properties of the Church as are required to fulfill the purposes of this Church and generally to conduct, manage, and control the activities and affairs of the Church.

(e) To meet on a regular basis in order to conduct the routine business of the church.

(f) Except as delegated in the approved Policy and Procedures Manual and Employee Handbook, the Executive Board shall have final authority in all Church matters related to Budget and Finance, Buildings and Grounds, Missions and Worship, and Personnel. The Executive Board shall appoint a member of the Executive Board as a representative for each discipline. The Executive Board Chairperson will be the signing authority for all official documentation.

**Section 2. Number of Executive Board Members:**

There will be a total of nine (9) Executives at all times. In the event of an off-voting cycle vacancy, the Executive Board shall move to fill the vacancy in the most efficient and timely manner.

**Section 3. Nomination, Selection, and Tenure of Office:**

Recommendations to fill the office of Executive Board Member shall be requested annually from all church members. At a minimum, the Pastor(s) will announce the opening of nominations both in the bulletin and during the service(s) on the first two (2) Sunday worship services in October with a closing date for nominations being the last day of October. All accepted nominees will be required to fill out a questionnaire developed and approved by the Executive Board. This questionnaire shall be used as part of the review process. A review committee shall be convened annually in November and will consist of two Executive Board Members, whose terms are not ending, appointed by the Executive Board and the Pastor, who will also serve as chairperson of the committee.

This committee shall review all nominations and determine each nominee’s qualifications. A recommendation of nominees prepared by the review committee shall then be submitted to the Executive Board who shall approve, disapprove, or add to the list of nominees. The list of approved nominees shall be publicly posted in alphabetical order at the location of the worship services, and also printed in the church bulletin at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting of the church members. At the annual church meeting, the nominees shall be presented to the members. Approved nominees shall assume office immediately after being introduced at the annual church meeting. Executive Board Members so appointed shall serve for a period of three (3) years and may be re-appointed to an additional three (3) year term if circumstances dictate, and there are no other qualified candidates available for appointment.

**\*NOTE\*** In order to ensure continuity for the church leadership, for the initial appointments, three (3) Executives will be appointed to a one (1) year term, three Executive Board Members will be appointed to a two (2) year term, and three (3) Executive Board Members will be appointed to a three (3) year term. In all following appointments the Executive Board Members will be appointed to a three (3) year term.

**Section 4. Qualifications and Eligibility:**

Each Executive Board Member must be an active member of this church and possess the qualifications and eligibility described in the Scriptures (1-Timothy Chapter 3:1-12, and Titus 1:5-9) and below:

Any affirmed church member may be nominated if they meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Must be a member in good standing for at least one (1) consecutive year
2. Must participate in church activities such as: worship services, Bible studies, training classes, ministries, etc.
3. Cannot be an immediate family member of any paid church employee (i.e., Spouse, Parent, Stepparent, Sibling, or Stepsibling)
4. Cannot be an immediate family member of a sitting Executive Board member unless the sitting Board member’s term is expiring (i.e., Spouse, Parent, Stepparent, Sibling, or Stepsibling). In the event there are no other qualified candidates available for appointment this requirement may be waived at the discretion of the sitting Executive Board
5. Cannot have potential conflict of interest as determined by the Executive Board (i.e., renting a home, business relationship, co-members on other Boards, Councils, etc.)

**Section 5. Removal and Replacement of Executive Board Members off Cycle:**

In the event that a sitting Executive Board Member dies, becomes incapacitated, or can no longer fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the appointment, that board position will be filled as follows:

1. If less than six (6) months remain of the incumbent’s term no action will be taken and the position will be filled using the normal procedure outlined in Article VI-Section 3 during the next appointment cycle.
2. If more than six (6) months but less than 12 months the Executive Board may, upon majority vote of the board, appoint a church member to fill the vacancy through the end of the term
3. If more than 12 months remain in the term, the nominating committee will convene by special session and nominees will be considered and affirmed in accordance with Article VI- Section 3. This appointment will be for the completion of the term of the Executive Board Member being replaced.

**Section 6. Regular Meetings:**

Regular meetings of the Executive Board shall be held without call or notice each month at a day and time established by the Executive Board. Meetings may be held in person or by electronic communication as circumstances dictate.

**ARTICLE VII. – Administration**

**Section 1. Election of Executive Board Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer:**

At the first regular Executive Board meeting in January of each year the Executive Board will elect from its members a Chairperson, and Vice-Chairperson. The Secretary and Treasurer will either be elected from the Executive Board or appointed from the church staff. Each position will be responsible for; but not be limited to, the following:

**Chairperson:**

1. Chairing all Executive Board meetings
2. Signing all pertinent and legal documents as required
3. Conducting regular meetings with the Pastor and Church Administrator in regards to the direction of the church, personnel issues, facility issues, and other routine and non-routine church matters
4. The Chairperson will act as the President of the corporation during their term in office

**Vice- Chairperson:**

1. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall assume all of the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson until the Chairperson is able to resume their normal duties
2. The Vice-Chairperson will act as the Vice-President of the Corporation during their term in office

**Secretary:**

1. The Secretary will be responsible for all record keeping for the Executive Board to include; but not be limited to, all agendas, and meeting minutes
2. The Secretary will act as the Secretary of the Corporation during their term in office, or time of employment

**Treasurer:**

1. The Treasurer will be responsible for overseeing and directing all financial matters regarding the church
2. The Treasurer will act as the Treasurer of the Corporation during their term in office, or time of employment

**Term Limits:**

1. The Chairperson is not eligible to fill the Chair for more than one (1) consecutive calendar year
2. The Vice-Chairperson is not eligible to fill the Vice–Chair for more than one (1) consecutive calendar year
3. The Vice- Chairperson is eligible to be elected to the Chairperson position
4. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected from those Executive Board Members with at least one concurrent year’s experience on the Executive Board
5. In the event of a vacancy for either the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson the Executive Board will elect a replacement from the eligible Executive Board Members and will seek nominations to fill the term in accordance with Section 3 of this document
6. If volunteer positions the Secretary and Treasurer will not have time limits and their terms may be extended annually by the Executive Board
7. If paid positions (church staff ),the Secretary and Treasurer positions will not have term limits, but will be subject to the employment practices as established in the HAFC Employee Handbook

**Fiscal Year:**

The fiscal year for the church will begin on January 1, of each calendar year and end on December 31st of each calendar year

**Section 2. Ad-hoc Committees:**

To promote efficient function, the Executive Board may appoint ad-hoc committees from within their membership, and from the church at large. The Executive Board will establish each committee with three (3) or five (5) people, at least one (1) of which will be a sitting member of the Executive Board. The sitting member of the Executive Board will be the Chairperson of the appropriate committee.

These committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Executive Board Members. The general functions of committees are:

1. To bring considered recommendations to concerning ministries to the Executive Board
2. To provide a wider base of counsel to the Executive Board who have the oversight of specific ministries

**ARTICLE VIII. – Pastor(s) and Church Administrator**

**Section 1. Selection of the Pastor(s) and Church Administrator:**

1. The Executive Board shall establish a committee of at least three (3) but no more than five (5) members with at least two (2) being sitting Executive Board Members and one (1) at large church member to act as a Review and Interview Committee for the purpose of evaluating and interviewing perspective Pastors and Church Administrators
2. The Review and Interview Committee will be responsible to screen applications for qualifications and conducting interviews with perspective applicants. Interviews may include requesting a perspective Pastor to conduct one or more worship services in front of the entire congregation, for which they will be compensated at a rate established by the Executive Board. Upon conclusion of the process the Review and Interview committee will make a recommendation to the Executive Board Chairperson who will then call a meeting of the Executive Board for the purpose of conducting a final review and interview. The salary range and benefits to be offered will be established at this meeting in consultation with the budget and finance representative and based upon the financial condition of the church
3. If the Executive Board concur with the recommendation of the Review and Interview Committee, the Chairperson of the Executive Board will commence negotiations with the applicant regarding salary and benefits
4. Upon completion of negotiations the Chairperson will call a meeting of the Executive Board to obtain approval of the negotiated salary and benefits package
5. Upon approval of the salary and benefits package the applicant will be officially offered the position for which they have applied
6. The Pastor(s) and Church Administrator shall be introduced to the church members during a regular worship service
7. All changes in salaries and benefits for the Pastor(s) and Church Administrator will be recommended by and approved by the Executive Board pending a review of the financial condition of the church
8. All other employment positions will be governed in accordance with the approved Employee Handbook as approved by the Executive Board

**Section 2. –Discipline or Removal of a Pastor(s) or Church Administrator for Cause:**

A Pastor or Church Administrator may be suspended immediately by the Executive Board Chairperson for conduct determined to be detrimental or unbecoming to the church as follows:

1. **Suspension:**
2. A Pastor or Church Administrator is accused of, or arrested for the commission of a felony, by an accredited law enforcement agency
3. Upon a substantiated allegation of misconduct by a staff member, church member, or person- at-large
4. Willful violations of societal law, or church rules or policies which endanger the church, its reputation, or its financial security and integrity
5. **Investigation, Review and Outcome:**
6. Upon a suspension as noted above, The Executive Board Chairperson shall call a special meeting of the Executive Board within three (3) business days to discuss the allegations and determine a way forward
7. The Executive Board will open an investigation into the allegations that led to the suspension. Depending on the severity and type of allegation the investigation may be conducted in-house or by use of qualified outside investigators, including law enforcement, as determined by the Executive Board
8. Upon conclusion of the investigation the Executive Board will meet and be made aware of the results of the investigation. Depending on the results the Executive Board may do the following:
	1. Remove the suspension and allow the affected employee to return to their normal duties
	2. Determine a satisfactory discipline by majority vote and direct the Chairperson to administer the discipline, or
	3. Authorize immediate termination of the affected employee
9. If the investigation uncovers evidence that a potential crime has been committed that law enforcement is not aware of, the Executive Board Chairperson will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency and provide that evidence to that agency for their review and follow-up

**ARTICLE IX. - Ordination, Licensing, and Commissioning of the Pastor(s) and Ministry Leaders**

**Section 1. Ordination:**

Ordination refers to the recognition by the Executive Board Members of a person’s call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualification to serve. Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the person continues to manifest the qualifications of the office. The Executive Board will develop and approve the “Ordination” process as outlined in the Policies and Procedures manual.

**Section 2. Licensing:**

The license is issued by the Executive Board and is given in recognition of a person’s call to that ministry. Its purpose is to allow a person to perform ecclesiastical duties and functions of the church. Licenses will be evaluated and issued on a yearly basis. The Executive Board will develop and approve the “Licensing” process as outlined in the Policies and Procedures manual.

**Section 3. Commissioning:**

When local-church certification is required for ministry where ordination would be unnecessary or inappropriate, a person may be commissioned to ministry by the Executive Board. This authorization continues as long as the opportunity to minister remains and the person maintains the qualifications for ministry. The Executive Board will develop and approve the “Commissioning” process as outlined in the Policies and Procedures manual.

**ARTICLE X. – Pastor(s)**

**Section 1. Call and Tenure:**

The Pastor(s) shall be selected by the Executive Board and introduced to the members of the church at a regular or special business meeting. The Pastor shall remain in office an indefinite period subject to the following reservations: The Executive Board reserve the right to dismiss the Pastor(s) upon giving them one month’s written notice of their intention to dismiss. The Pastor(s) must give one month’s notice if they intend to resign.

The time limit of a Pastor’s resignation or dismissal may be shorter if both the Pastor and the Executive Board agree. The Pastor may be suspended from their duties immediately, with pay, for a serious breach of ethical, moral, or other conduct determined to be detrimental to the church and/or its members.

**Section 2. Duties:**

The Pastor shall be the chief shepherd and teacher of the church and shall be accountable to the Executive Board for the fulfillment of their ministry. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, and shall, as representing the Executive Board, oversee the ministry and function of the committees. The Pastor shall arrange for and conduct all public and regular services of the church. In the absence of the Pastor, the Executive Board shall be responsible to arrange for the public services of the church.

**ARTICLE XI – Tax Exemption Provisions**

**Section 1. Private Inurement:**

No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article III hereof.

**Section 2. Political Involvement:**

No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. To the extent prohibited by law, the church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

**Section 3. Dissolution:**

Upon the dissolution of the church, the Executive Board shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all assets of the church to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as the Executive Board shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to tax-exempt organizations that agree with the church’s statement of faith.

**Section 4. Nondiscrimination Policy:**

The church shall not discriminate against members, applicants for membership, students, or others on the basis of race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin; however, as a religious institution it reserves the right to deny or terminate employment or to deny or terminate any other status of persons whose lifestyle, words, actions or otherwise do not align with the church’s statement of faith, standard of conduct or other policies of the church. This policy statement is not intended to waive the ministerial exception or any other exception or exemption to federal, state, or local anti-discrimination laws or regulations.

**Section 5. Limitation of Activities:**

Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the church shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes stated in Article III.

**ARTICLE XII – Amendments:**

These bylaws may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the Executive Board and voting at any regular Executive Board meeting, provided that said revision or amendment is announced from the pulpit for at least two consecutive Sundays, and at least fourteen days before the vote is taken. Proposed amendments or changes must be made available to the entire Executive Board for review at least one week prior to the meeting at which the vote to amend the bylaws will be taken. Amendments become effective immediately upon a majority vote approving the same.

These bylaws were adopted by a majority vote of the Executive Board and voting at a duly called meeting of the Executive Board in which a quorum was present.

These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of Highland Avenue Fellowship Church.

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 Date Executive Board Chairperson

**Notice of Change**

* 3/26/2023- Change “Elder to “Executive” in entire document
* 7/24/2023-changes made from Membership to Covenant Fellowship
* 3/04/2024 – modified language regarding ad-hoc committees in according with Executive Board action