



Hampton Park

BAPTIST CHURCH

Contained in this Booklet:

A History of the Membership Requirements of
Hampton Avenue Baptist Church and
Hampton Park Baptist Church from 1940-Today

A Pastoral Statement on Personal Liberty

The Proposed Update to the Membership Section
of the Bylaws and Policy Manual

**Requirements for Membership in the
Hampton Avenue Baptist Church, Voted on and
Passed by the Church when it was Organized in 1940.**
(Grammar and format is original.)

1. Clear Cut Statement as to Ones Experience in The New Birth.
2. One must Believe The Bible to be the Inspired Word of God.
3. The Bodily Resurrection of Jesus.
4. His ascension into Heaven to Sit at the Right Hand of the Father to make Intercession for all Born-Again People.
5. His (Christ's) Premillennial Return to Catch Away the Church into Heaven.
6. We Believe in the Eternal Security of the Believer.
7. We Believe that All Who are Saved Should Follow Jesus in Baptism by Immersion and then Enjoy the Fellowship of the Church.
8. Every Member is expected to Support the Church with His Presence, Prayers and Money.
9. That Every Member Should Live "The Separated Life."
 - a. That no Member shall attend the places of amusement such as, Theaters, Moving Picture Shows, Fairs, Organized Base Ball, Football, Basket Ball, Pool Rooms, Bowling Halls, Dancing in Homes, Halls, or Schools, Card Parties or Gambling Games.
 - b. No Member shall be a wine, beer or whiskey drinker, neither rent buildings to nor sell intoxicants for people who deal in it.
 - c. No woman or girl who smokes can be a member unless she agrees to quit.
 - d. No Man Can be a Deacon Who Uses Tobacco.
10. No one shall be a Member of The Hampton Ave. Baptist Church who is Separated from a Living Mate and Married to Another.
11. No One shall be a Member Who is Separated from Their Husband or Wife Except it be for Fornication. We Believe that Fornication or Adultery is the Only Grounds for Divorce, and That one has no right to Re-marry except that death intervenes. Desertion Does not Bar Membership, in case they have not re-married. We Do Not Contend That One Cannot be Saved if One is Involved in the Divorce Question, but we deem it best for the Church That Such not be admitted into our Membership.
12. We do not Tolerate Feasting, Such as Suppers, Dinners, or any other form of Eating except the Observance of The Lord's Supper in the Church.

I accept these requirements and wish to become a Member of the Hampton Avenue Baptist Church. Signed: _____

Hampton Park Baptist Church Membership Requirements voted on and adopted by the congregation sometime around 1970.

A PERSON WHO DESIRES MEMBERSHIP IN HAMPTON PARK BAPTIST CHURCH MUST:

1. Have a definite testimony as to his own personal salvation by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ which He shed on the Cross of Calvary for the remission of sins for all who believe;
2. Believe that the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God;
3. Believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was raised bodily from the tomb and now sits at the Father's right hand in Heaven making intercession for all born-again people;
4. Believe in the pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ;
5. Believe in the eternal security of the born-again believer;
6. Believe that all who are saved should follow the Lord Jesus in baptism by immersion and then enjoy the fellowship of the local church;
7. Be willing to support the church with his regular attendance at all church meetings, with his prayers, and with his tithes and offerings.
8. Be determined to live a life separated from the world consistent with the teachings of the Bible. If he is doubtful that a thing would be hurtful to himself or to his weaker brother in Christ, he should then abstain from even the appearance of evil;
 - a. No person shall use liquor in any form, neither rent property for the purpose of operating a liquor store or beer parlor, nor be in the employment of such establishments.
 - b. No person who uses tobacco in any form shall be a Deacon, Sunday School officer or teacher, or Training Union officer or teacher.

Hampton Park Baptist Church Membership Requirements voted on and adopted by the congregation in the 1990's. (4.140 of Bylaws)

In order to be eligible for membership and to be received as a member of the congregation of Hampton Park Baptist Church, a person must submit himself to the discipline of the church and meet and uphold the following qualifications:

1. Have a definite testimony as to his own personal salvation by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ which He shed on the cross of Calvary for the remission of sins for all who believe.
2. Subscribe wholeheartedly to the statement of faith included in section 2.000 of these Bylaws.
3. Be baptized by immersion.
4. Be willing to support the church with his regular attendance at all church services, with his prayers, and with his tithes and offerings.
5. Be determined to live a life separated from the world consistent with the teachings of the Bible. If he is doubtful that a thing would be harmful to him or to his weaker brother in Christ, he should then abstain from even the appearance of evil.
6. Refrain from the consumption of alcoholic beverages, neither be in the employment of nor rent property to establishments whose primary business is the sale of alcoholic beverages.

HPBC PASTORAL STATEMENT ON CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

In the last hours before His crucifixion, our Lord prayed that His followers, “may be one even as we are one . . . so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me” (Jn. 17:22b-23). Years later, Paul echoed our Lord’s words when he prayed that the members of the Roman church would “live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together” they might “with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 15:5-6). These words tell us that the mission of our church is inseparably tied to our unity.

In recognition, then, of the vital importance of unity for the fulfillment our mission and in recognition also of the painful fact that church unity is often disrupted by believers who insist that fellow church members adopt practices and positions not addressed in or specifically prohibited in the Word of God, we at Hampton Park Baptist Church agree to joyfully submit to the following principles from Scripture concerning Christian liberty.

- I. **We must, without contention, receive into our fellowship believers whose conscience standards differ from ours in areas in which the Word of God does not directly address or expressly prohibit.**

As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. One person believes he may eat any thing, while the weak person eats only vegetables.

– Rom. 14:1-2

2. **Those who conscientiously exercise freedom in matters not expressly prohibited in Scripture (strong conscience) must not look down on (despise) those who conscientious ly abstain from such (weak conscience).**

Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains –
Rom. 14:3a (Cf. 1 Cor. 8:10-12).

3. **Those who have more restrictive standards in matters not addressed in Scripture must not be judgmental toward those who do not have restrictive standards in such matters.**
...and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.
– Rom. 14:3b-4 (Cf. Col. 2:16).
4. **Each believer must be fully convinced of his own position in his own conscience.**
One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. – Rom. 14:5
(Cf. Rom. 14:23; 1 Jn. 3:21)
5. **We must assume that other believers are partaking or abstaining for the glory of God. So, receive (embrace) one another as those who are living to honor God by what they do and do not do.**
The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. – Rom. 14:6
6. **We must not judge or belittle each other in these matters because we will all someday stand before the judgment seat of God and give account for our actions.**
Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. – Rom. 14:10-12

7. **Even when a believer has Scriptural justification for freedom in certain matters, he must not allow his freedom to be a means of destroying the faith of a weak brother, be used as an opportunity for the flesh, or become an obstacle to the furtherance of the gospel.**

Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. . . . For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. . . . If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. – Rom. 5:13; Gal. 5:13; I Cor. 9:12

8. **Convictions about such things as eating and drinking are not essential to our ministry in the kingdom of God; building each other up in righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy is essential.**

So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding. Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. – Rom. 14:16-21

9. **A believer who is fully convinced his Christian liberty convictions are scriptural should simply enjoy his faith in fellowship with God. He has no compelling reason to persuade others to adopt his convictions.**

*The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God.
– Rom. 14:22a*

10. **A person who lives according to his conscience is blessed. Therefore, do not violate your own conscience in what you allow for yourself.**

Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

– Rom. 14:22b-23

11. **The spiritually strong in matters of Christian liberty are those who follow the example of Christ, who put others first.**

We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” . . . May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. – Rom. 15:1-3,5-6

12. **We bring glory to God when we receive one another in believer’s fellowship as Christ received us into His family.**

Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. – Rom. 15:7

The above principles can be summarized in the following two commitments. On the basis of our love for God and others:

1. We will receive into our fellowship those with differing standards in areas that God’s Word does not address or expressly prohibit, believing that they are endeavoring to glorify God with their actions.
2. When concerned, we will pursue humble, loving dialogue with one another about areas of conscience while not forcing our own conscience on someone else in areas that God’s Word does not address or expressly prohibit.

Updated Membership Section of Bylaws *(proposed)*
and Policy Manual *(approved by Pastors and Deacons)*

BYLAWS

4.120 General Procedure for Membership *(proposed)*

All actions of membership, either of admission or dismissal, shall be by vote of the congregation upon recommendation of the pastoral body at any regular or special members' meeting.

4.140 Qualifications for Membership *(proposed)*

In order to be eligible for membership and to be received as a member of the congregation of Hampton Park Baptist Church, a person must submit to being accountable to the church (see 4.170) and meet and uphold the following qualifications:

1. Have a definite and personal profession of faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and give evidence of regeneration.
2. Submit to the statement of faith included in section 2.000 of these Bylaws and support the values of this church as expressed in the Church Covenant.
3. Be baptized as a profession of one's faith.
4. Complete the membership process as outlined in the policy manual.

POLICY MANUAL

3.100 New Members

1. Those who desire to become members may apply by contacting a pastor directly or indirectly through the church office, at the information desk, or at the end of a service.
2. Prospective members must attend Membership Matters, fill out a membership application, and sign a statement that they submit to the church covenant and statement of faith.
3. A pastor will meet personally with a prospective member so that he or she may provide basic biographical information, recount God's converting work in his or her life, and discuss how he or she hopes to be involved in connecting with and serving

the congregation at Hampton Park. The interviewing pastor will recommend to the pastoral body whether the prospective member should or should not be presented to the congregation for approval for membership.

4. At regular intervals, those who have completed the necessary steps (in 2-3 above) and been approved by the pastoral body, will be brought before the church for a congregational vote. At these times, the interviewing pastor will briefly introduce the prospective member and describe how he or she was converted to faith in Jesus alone. Admission to membership requires a simple majority vote of the congregation.
5. If someone under the age of 16 desires to become a member, the above process is amended in the following ways:
 - The child will attend Membership Matters the year he or she turns 16 and sign a statement that he or she submits to the church covenant and statement of faith.
 - If a child needs to be baptized, the following steps should be taken:
 - o The parents will be provided with several resources regarding baptism.
 - o The child will complete a baptism worksheet provided.
 - o The child and his or her parents will meet with a pastor to discuss the child's profession of faith and walk with Christ and to answer any questions they may have.
 - o The interviewing pastor will recommend the child to the pastoral body for baptism and membership.
6. Because baptism and membership are connected in the New Testament, ordinarily no one will be baptized until he or she is also ready to become a member.
7. Prospective members who are residing in the Greenville area for part of the year may be allowed to retain membership at another local church to which they belong for other parts of the year.
8. Membership is a prerequisite for service in any official capacity at HPBC (including but not limited to leadership).

