**Why North Harbor Exists**

The team of friends, ministry partners, and financial supporters who started North Harbor did so united by a firm conviction that the local church, being the body of Christ, is the hope of the world. If the church’s mission is to introduce people to Jesus and to teach them how to live the life he lived, then the stakes are high. North Harbor’s leadership sees everything we do in light of this conviction and wants to invite you to partner with us in being this hope for the state, the country, and even the world.

North Harbor’s mission is simple**: To lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ**. Our strategy to accomplish this is to teach people how to draw close to Jesus through the practices of various spiritual disciplines such as worship, prayer, generosity, service, scripture meditation, study, etc. and to give them the opportunity to practice these within the context of community. We believe that when people draw close to Jesus through these various practices that Jesus will reveal himself through the power of the Holy Spirit, in various ways, to his followers. As people gain a greater awareness of Jesus presence in their lives, they also gain a greater desire to love and follow him; to do the will of the Father as Jesus did. The result is a life that increasingly reflects God’s glory, love, and healing to a broken world.

**Statement of Faith**

North Harbor has adopted the Apostle’s Creed as its statement of faith. The Apostle’s Creed is believed to be one of the earliest faith statements of the early church. Partly designed to unite various Christian faith expressions around a set of essential beliefs, it served to give the early church focus and direction in a world that was pulled apart by competing ideologies. North Harbor sees great wisdom in this strategy. While many churches and denominations form the core of their being around particulars of theological systems, we endeavor to hold tightly to the core beliefs of historic Christianity while encouraging ongoing discussion of the particulars.  In doing this we believe we both gain a greater sense of unity as a faith community and enable one another to focus more intently on the life of devotion and service to which God has called us. Harbor has adopted the Apostle’s Creed as its statement of faith. The Apostle’s Creed is believed to be o

**The Apostle’s Creed:**

*I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.*

*And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic\* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting\*\*.*

\* We understand “catholic church” to refer to the Christian church at large, not the Roman Catholic Church specifically.

\*\* We also believe in the divine inspiration of Judeo-Christian scripture. Though not mentioned specifically in the Apostle’s Creed, it was most likely understood by its earliest audiences and is so by our faith community.

**Government**

North Harbor Community Church’s government is built around three teams of women and men:

1. The Board of Directors
2. Staff and ministry leaders
3. Ministry Partners

***Board of Directors***:

The Board of Directors is comprised of at least three but no more than nine women and men, including the senior pastor. The senior pastor is a permanent member of the Board of Directors. Staff members, other than the senior pastor, may also serve on the Board of Directors but may not hold a majority presence.

*Purpose of the Board of Directors*:

The Board of Directors functions primarily as discerners and guardians of the organization. They are not expected to oversee specific projects or ministries in their capacity as board members. They function as overseers for the entire organization. The board members evaluate the effectiveness and direction of the organization according to three criteria:

1. The organization’s mission.
2. The organization’s resources
3. The organization’s doctrinal practice

The Board of Directors does not determine programming. This responsibility falls to the staff and ministry leaders. However, the board is responsible for evaluating programming based on its appropriateness and effectiveness in furthering the overall mission of NHCC.

*The Authority of the Board of Directors*:

For all practical purposes, the Board of Directors has final say in any and all matters concerning the overall direction of the organization. Unless otherwise specified in this document, anything voted on by the Board of Directors requires a two-thirds majority of all in attendance in order to pass. A quorum of two-thirds of the members must be present and voting at the time any vote is taken.

There are four decisions that the Board of Directors may not make without Partnership approval at a business meeting.

1. The Board of Directors may not appoint a new senior pastor.
2. The Board of Directors may not approve an expense in excess of one twelfth of the current year’s operating budget.
3. The Board of Directors cannot change or establish the denominational affiliation of NHCC
4. The Board of Directors may not change the Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, or Constitution.

*The Dismissal of a Board of Directors Member*:

If it becomes apparent that a board member should not serve, that member may resign, or by three-fourths vote of the board, excluding the board member under consideration, be immediately retired from the Board of Directors. The position will remain vacant until the next regularly scheduled annual meeting or until the Board of Directors choose a suitable replacement.

The Board of Directors has the authority to dismiss the senior pastor without organizational approval by a three-fourths vote of all board members, excluding the senior pastor. In addition, any complaints or concerns regarding the senior pastor should be directed to and handled by the Board of Directors.

*The Selection of Board Members*:

Annually, the Board of Directors will select board candidates necessary to meet at least the minimum number of Board of Directors. New board candidate members are selected by the then-current Board of Directors and then presented to the Partners for final vote at the annual meeting. Board of Directors members, other than the senior pastor, serve one three-year term. Board members may serve two consecutive terms but must be approved by Partnership vote for the second term.

*The Qualifications of a Board of Directors Member*:

The Board of Directors candidate must have been actively involved in ministry at NHCC for at least two years, a Partner for at least one year, and fully subscribe to the organization’s mission and values.

Furthermore, all Directors are required to meet the qualifications for elder / overseer as outlined in 1 Timothy 3.1-11, Titus 1.5-9.

**1 Timothy 3:1-11 (NLT)**

*3 This is a trustworthy saying: “If someone aspires to be an elder, he desires an honorable position.” 2So an elder must be a man whose life is above reproach. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exercise self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation. He must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must be able to teach. 3He must not be a heavy drinker or be violent. He must be gentle, not quarrelsome, and not love money. 4He must manage his own family well, having children who respect and obey him. 5For if a man cannot manage his own household, how can he take care of God’s church? 6An elder must not be a new believer, because he might become proud, and the devil would cause him to fall. 7Also, people outside the church must speak well of him so that he will not be disgraced and fall into the devil’s trap.*

*8In the same way, deacons must be well respected and have integrity. They must not be heavy drinkers or dishonest with money. 9They must be committed to the mystery of the faith now revealed and must live with a clear conscience. 10Before they are appointed as deacons, let them be closely examined. If they pass the test, then let them serve as deacons.*

*11In the same way, their wives must be respected and must not slander others. They must exercise self-control and be faithful in everything they do.*

# Titus 1:5-9 (NLT)

*5I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there and appoint elders in each town as I instructed you. 6An elder must live a blameless life. He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who don’t have a reputation for being wild or rebellious. 7An elder is a manager of God’s household, so he must live a blameless life. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered; he must not be a heavy drinker, violent, or dishonest with money. 8Rather, he must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must love what is good. He must live wisely and be just. He must live a devout and disciplined life. 9He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong.*

***Staff and Ministry Team Leaders*:**

The staff’s primary role is to oversee the operations and programming of NHCC. All staff hires must be approved by the Board of Directors. Pastoral hires must also be approved by the Ministry Partners. All pastoral staff members are required to meet the character qualifications as outlined in 1 Timothy 3.1-7 and Titus 1.5-9. Staff may serve on the Board of Directors but may not hold a majority presence.

*Staff reviews*:

The Board of Directors will oversee staff reviews. These reviews will happen 2-4 times per year and is designed to evaluate the employees effectiveness and well-being.

A ministry team leader is an individual chosen from the staff to be a volunteer leader of a ministry team. With staff oversight, a ministry team leader oversees the ministry operation of his or her team and serves as a representative of that team to the staff and Board of Directors. A ministry team leader commits to serve a one-year term and may be appointed to serve for additional terms.

***Partners (Members)***:

North Harbor defines membership as an active partnership with Christ, the church, and the community. Therefore, the term “partnership” reflects the traditional status of “membership” as referred to in North Harbor’s bylaws and constitution.

In the New Testament once a person became a follower of Christ, he or she identified with, and committed to, a particular local body of believers.  In this manner, the first-century Christians held each other accountable and spurred one another on to continued spiritual formation (Hebrews 10.24-25). In keeping with this model, North Harbor Community Church recognizes the value of formally becoming a “ministry partner” and the important role it can play in each of three areas: challenging people to take further steps in their own spiritual journeys with God, protecting the integrity and vitality of the local church family, and catalyzing positive change in the communities around us.

*Pre-requisites for Partnership*:

In order to someone to become a NHCC ministry Partner they must have . . .

1. Made a personal decision to follow Jesus Christ by faith
2. Be at least 18 years of age
3. Regularly attended public services for three months
4. Attended the Discovering North Harbor orientation seminar
5. An understanding of and agreement with North Harbor’s philosophy of ministry and statement of faith

*Partnership Covenant*:

The partnership covenant provides opportunity for prospective partners to express their desire to unite with the North Harbor community in both process and goal by committing to pursue a growing relationship with Jesus personally and within the context of our three ministry environments (Corporate worship, ministry teams, and group life).

Partnership is conferred after the candidate has met the above requirements and signed a Partnership covenant and renewed or retired at the next annual meeting. A covenant, therefore, is good for one year, at most, before it must be renewed. A copy of the covenant must be signed by the partner and returned to the church office at each instance of commitment.

*Partnership Responsibilities*:

A North Harbor Community Church Ministry Partner is a person committed to fulfilling the following responsibilities:

* Voting on expenditures greater than 1/12th of the previous year’s budget
* Voting on hiring of pastoral staff
* Voting on any changes of affiliation
* Voting on changes to articles of incorporation, constitution, or by-laws
* Voting on the confirmation of new members to the Board of Directors
* Ministry Partners will also be notified of any special needs that arise within the North Harbor community (i.e. meals needed, prayer requests, etc.) and will be expected to assist in meeting those needs in accordance with their ability.

A quorum of 10 current partners must vote for it to be an official vote. Votes may be taken by email, but the quorum of 10 current Partners must still be met. The act of a majority of the partners present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors.

*Termination of Partnership*:

A request of transfer to a sister church to NHCC may be granted upon request (where applicable) pending approval from the Board of Directors.

Whenever a ministry partner joins another church, his or her partnership at NHCC shall terminate without further action.  Partners may retain their partnership status when they are temporarily located to another city for job, education, or other temporary extenuating circumstance until the end of the current fiscal year. In such circumstances, it is the partner’s responsibility to inform office personnel of new contact information and of the desire to be kept abreast of issues pertaining to partners.

A partnership with NHCC may be terminated at that partner’s own request. A partner who has been inactive for more than six months may be removed from partnership.  Prior to removal, the church office will attempt to contact the partner.  If that partner fails to respond, the partner will be notified that his or her partnership at North Harbor Community Church shall be terminated by action of the Board of Directors.

A partnership may be revoked and/or that partner removed from fellowship if he or she is both guilty of conduct grossly contrary to Biblical teaching and remains in an unrepentant state.  Prior to the revocation of partnership and/or removal from fellowship, reasonable efforts (consistent with Matthew 18.15-20) will be made to confront sin, bring reconciliation, and restore the partner to Christian fellowship.  If all efforts fail to bring about repentance and restoration, the Board of Directors will remove the individual from active formal partnership and may request that he or she discontinue fellowship at North Harbor.

**Organizational Business Meetings**

Organizational business meetings will be scheduled as determined necessary by the Board of Directors. This will provide a forum for handling the business of NHCC not otherwise reserved for the Board of Directors.

A regular Annual Meeting will be held in July. The Board of Directors will schedule business meetings. Official votes taken in the business meeting require the presence of10 of the total partnership of NHCC through attendance, proxy, or written vote. This will constitute a quorum. All issues voted on in official organizational meetings require a majority vote to pass.

**Electing a New Senior Pastor**

When the position of senior pastor is vacated, the Board of Directors will take appropriate action to secure a qualified candidate to serve as senior pastor. The Board of Directors will recommend the candidate to the partnership. Approval by the partnership requires a minimum participation of 10 members of the total partnership of NHCC. This will constitute a quorum.

**Amending the Constitution, By-Laws, and Articles of Incorporation**

Amendments to the constitution, By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation require a majority vote by the Board of Directors before they can be presented to the partnership. Additionally, amendments require a minimum participation of 10 members of the total partnership of NHCC. This will constitute a quorum. All amendments require a majority vote of those participating to pass.

**Budget**

The Board of Directors oversees all financial matters related to NHCC. The Senior Pastor and staff are accountable to the board in all matters relating to finances. Staff are expected to work with the board on budget and financial matters but are not allowed to vote on any mattes of the budget that relate to their salary package.

In the fourth quarter of each fiscal year the Board will work with the Treasurer to approve a budget for the coming fiscal year. Significant changes to the budget will be presented to the Partners at the annual meeting. Any Partner may obtain a copy of the detailed budget by contacting any Board member or the Treasurer. The Board will review the budget with the Treasurer at least quarterly and has the authority to approve changes to the budget as it deems necessary.

**Ordination, Licensing and Commissioning**

NHCC reserves the right to ordain, license, or commission individuals as ministers of the gospel to perform the ordinances and ceremonies of the church including, but not limited to, marriage, baptism, communion, and funerals.