

The **◆NBC** *Way*



Welcome to The HBC Way!

Thank you for making the time to get to know more about Hills Baptist Church. This booklet is the basic introduction to HBC, and we hope that it will serve you in three specific ways:

- To help you understand who we are, how we work, and why we do what we do.
- To provide a pathway for you to find your place to belong in the HBC family.
- To help you grow in your love for God and be empowered for a life of discipleship to Jesus.



A NOTE FROM OUR SENIOR PASTOR

We live in a world that, technologically speaking, is more 'connected' than ever before. However, the statistics show that this 'connection' has only driven us towards a sense of isolation.

We believe that God created people to live in community. We are not supposed to spend our lives hidden behind screens and isolated within our four walls, but we are supposed to share life with others. We are supposed to break bread, laugh, cry, and give worship to God together, not on our own. Belonging to something is important.

This is why at HBC we call ourselves a '**family on mission.**' We understand through the Scriptures that the church is not an elitist social club for people who have their theology right. The church is a group of people on a journey of transformation, with a heart to see the brokenness of the world made whole by the grace of God. No one at HBC is perfect. We are saved by grace through faith, and we long for everyone to know the love of God that is theirs in Christ Jesus.

So, regardless of your background, current circumstances, or even your struggles with faith and belief, you have a home at HBC.

The HBC Way is designed to help make that statement a reality. It will help you find your place in this family on mission. It will examine what it means to belong to this community, teach you what we believe about discipleship, and invite you into a deeper journey of transformation through our Alpha and Kingdom Life courses.

We are excited that you have taken this step to explore what being connected in community might mean for you here at Hills Baptist Church, and we are praying that God will bless you and enrich you, as you take this step in your journey of following Jesus.

God bless,

Dave Shepherd



OUR STORY

Hills Baptist Church (HBC) is a multi-site Baptist church with a heart to establish Christ-centred communities wherever the Lord might lead us.

Our story has two sides. One side of our story begins way back in October of 1873, when the Congregational Baptist Church of Mount Barker was first formed. The community purchased a block of land, laid a foundation stone, built a building, and began holding worship services in that building a year after their formation, in October of 1874.

The other side of our story begins in October of 1968, when a small group of people from Unley Park Baptist Church felt the call of God to establish a regular home church in Aldgate. In November 1972, that small group of people stepped out in faith and purchased the block of land where our Aldgate campus now sits, and commenced regular worship gatherings as Aldgate Baptist Church was formed.

In 2015, the Lord began to stir a church planting vision in the heart of Aldgate Baptist and 70 people were sent to start a worshipping community in Littlehampton. The church soon grew and moved to Verdun to accommodate the growth.

In 2018, the decision was made for Aldgate and Verdun to adopt one governing structure under the name of Hills Baptist Church. By the grace of God, the church continued to grow and in 2022 another group took up the call to plant an HBC community in Lobethal.

In 2023, these two stories became one. The Lord began a new work and Mt Barker Baptist and Hills Baptist amalgamated to become one church. Land on Bollen Road was purchased, a vision for raising leaders and planting churches was affirmed, and a heart to partner missionally with Kings Baptist Grammar School in the greater Mount Barker area was established.

Our Culture

PART ONE



Culture is defined as, “The way of life of a particular group of people, as demonstrated by their attitudes, behaviours and beliefs.” Culture is developed by a community’s vision, mission and values. At HBC, our vision guides us, our mission drives us, and our values define us. Together, they shape who we are and what we do.

OUR VISION

A vision is a future state we are striving towards. A dream of where we want to be in the future. If we consistently carry out our mission as a church, we see our vision being one step closer to becoming a reality.

*Our vision is to see Jesus Glorified, Lives Transformed
and Hope Revealed.*

OUR MISSION

A mission is the outworking of the values in our church. Our mission tells us and others who we are and why we exist. It’s why we get out of bed in the morning. It’s why we go to this church. And why others want to be part of HBC. We all have different gifts, talents and passions, but in the end, we are all united as one body moving in the same direction. That’s what a mission is about.

*Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus by
establishing Christ-centred communities that are
growing in God, loving people, and boldly sharing
the Gospel.*



OUR VALUES

Our values are like our DNA. They describe who we are and become the foundation on which everything else is built. Our values undergird the vision and mission of the church and help to shape our ministry landscape. If you were looking for words to describe the people at HBC, our desire is that these would be the words that you'd use.

Our values are:

Christ Centred

Jesus is the Head of the Church. He is our leader. We are His bride. We exist for His glory. Everything we do is by Him, through Him, and to Him.

COLOSSIANS 1:18, COLOSSIANS 3:11

Biblically Based

We love and honour God's Word. God's Word is central to all that we do. We believe it is living and active and has power to transform lives. We will therefore seek to create opportunities for the Word of God to be read, taught and proclaimed.

HEBREWS 4:12, 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

Holy Spirit Empowered

We believe the Holy Spirit is at work in the world today. We believe the Holy Spirit is the one who produces godly character (fruits) in the lives of believers, and we believe the gifts of the Holy Spirit are still active and necessary for the Church to fulfill Her mission. We long to see people growing in the fruits of the Holy Spirit and operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 1:8, JOHN 14:26, GALATIANS 5



Our Best For His Glory

Though we are not perfect, we offer God our best because He is worthy of nothing less. Our utmost for His highest.

EXODUS 23:19; 2 TIMOTHY 2:15; 1 PETER 4:10

Authenticity

We give God our best, but the church is not a show; it's a family. Families come in all shapes and sizes, but everyone is welcome and everyone has a part to play. We believe that all people are created in the image of God, fearfully, wonderfully and uniquely made, and we make space for the diverse expressions of interests, passions and personalities represented in our family.

ROMANS 12:10-13, MATTHEW 25:35

Good Stewards

We acknowledge that everything we have is a gift from God, so we live as stewards of creation, not owners. This means we are generous with our time, talent and treasure, as we seek to see God's kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

MATTHEW 25:14-30

Servant Hearted

Christ's love compels us to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. We desire to be a community that embodies this love, seeking to serve rather than be served.

PHILIPPIANS 2:3-5

Seeking God's Presence

We know that God created us to dwell with Him and to worship Him; He inhabits the praises of His people. Therefore, we prioritise the pursuit of His presence and continuously create space to wait upon Him in prayer and worship.

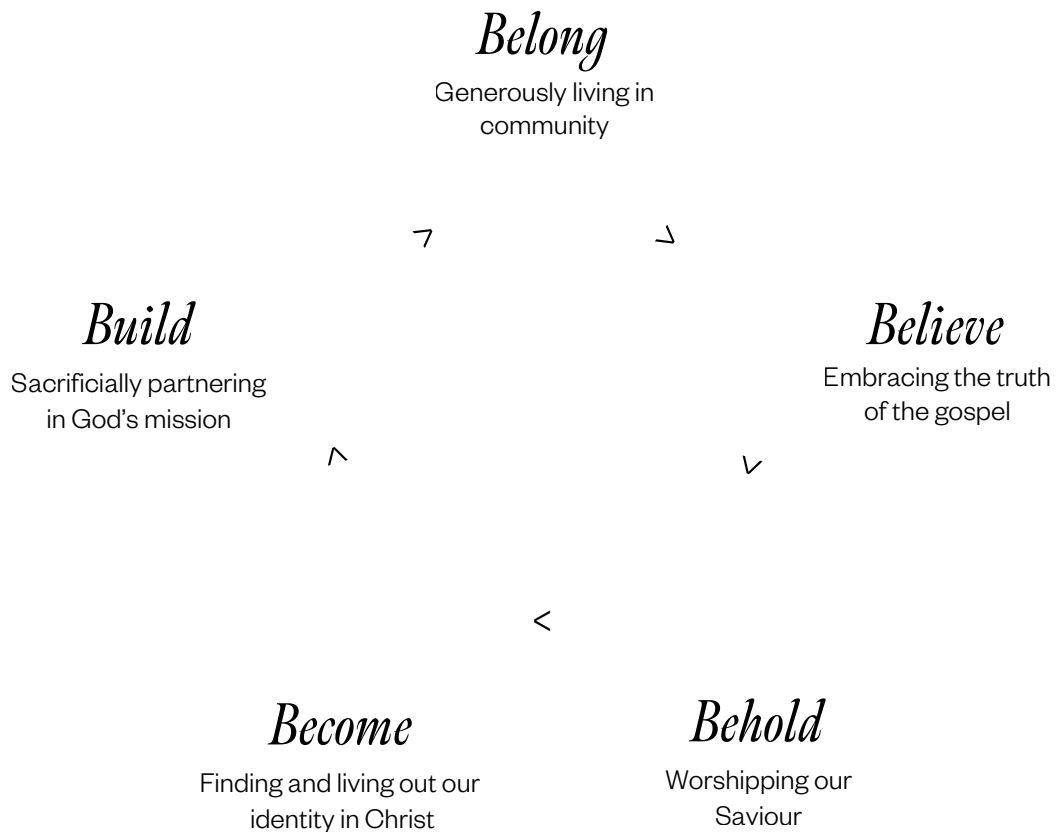
EPHESIANS 2:21-22



THE CYCLE OF DISCIPLESHIP

But we cannot settle there. If we are to truly see a disciple-making culture arise, we must drill down and define more specifically the attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs we long to see permeating the church, and we need to make these things VISIBLE – both in word and action. In short, we need to know what a disciple is if we long to see them made!

This is where our understanding of what we call ‘The Cycle of Discipleship’ becomes incredibly helpful, as it gives specific language to what we want to see here at HBC.



Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”



OUR KINGDOM PRIORITIES

While we long to see someone thriving in The Cycle of Discipleship and growing in God, we recognise that only He can build His church. The Bible tells us that no one can confess Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3) so we recognise that the Holy Spirit is the one who draws people to faith in Christ. However, we also know that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17) and that Jesus calls us to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). This means Jesus wants us to participate in His work of building His church!

Sure, we can't make someone feel like they belong, but we can create environments that feel like home. We can't make someone believe, but we can teach the Word of God and invite the Spirit to do His work. We can't make someone worship (behold Jesus), but we can create spaces where prayer and worship are present and paramount. We can't transform anyone's heart, but we can faithfully journey with people as God does His work. And, we can't force anyone to use their God-given time, talent or treasure to serve God's kingdom, but we can create opportunities for them to do so. We have a role to play, and this is why we have our Kingdom Priorities.

Our Kingdom Priorities are the areas of our church's effort and attention that we believe will help each member to participate and grow in The Cycle of Discipleship.

Our Kingdom Priorities are:

Leadership Development

We want to intentionally invest in the next and use the Leadership Square to constantly give people an opportunity to grow in God through service.



Spiritual Formation

We will teach God's Word... the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help us God! But seriously, we are passionate about the Bible, so we want to be a church that takes it seriously because the Bible is God's Living Word, our Daily Bread, the Sword of the Spirit... you get the point. So whether that be from behind a pulpit, or around a coffee table, we are going to study God's Word.

We also want to be a church marked by prayer and worship. We believe that God is a relational, living God who has spoken through His Word, and still speaks in accordance with His Word. We believe as we lean into prayer and worship and seek God's face, He answers. You're going to hear a lot about prayer and see lots of opportunities to pray and worship around here.

Community Outreach

We are passionate about being a church that our neighbours know and love, regardless of their faith journey. We want to be a people who bless our community, serve our community, and engage our community in meaningful ways, so that our community would know that they have a home here at HBC. We love to say that we are a 'family on mission', which means you don't have to believe and behave in order to belong. There is a seat at the table for you and we would love for you to know that regardless of where you've come from and what you've been through, you are welcome in the family. Come and see Jesus with us, your life will never be the same!

Place & Space

This is simply our way of saying we want to create spaces and places that facilitate the previous three priorities. We believe in a creative God who does all things well. He made places and spaces for people to dwell and co-create, and that mandate hasn't finished. As His image bearers on the earth, we are co-creators, so we want to be wise stewards of what He's given us, taking leaps of faith to create spaces that in some way, shape, or form glorify God and make room for His work.

PLACES & SPACES AT HBC



Sunday Services

A weekly gathering to worship God, hear His Word, and grow together as one church family.

Home Groups

Mid-week gatherings where people of all ages and life stages connect, pray, study Scripture, and do life together.

Serve

Opportunities to use your gifts to bless others within HBC, local mission and cross-cultural mission.

Alpha

A welcoming space to explore life, faith, and Jesus through honest conversation.

Kingdom Life

A discipleship course for meaningful connection, biblical teaching, and Holy Spirit-led transformation.

Internship

A year-long pathway for leaders to grow in faith, ministry skills, and discern their calling.

Kids & Creche

A fun, safe environment where children discover God's love and learn the Bible.

JNR YTH

A space for Year 5-6 students all about fun, food, community and most importantly Christ Jesus.

Youth

A Friday-night community for Year 7-12 students to grow in faith, friendships and their identity in Christ.

Young Adults

A community for post-school adults to grow in faith, connection, and everyday discipleship.

Seniors

A welcoming space for older adults to connect, encourage one another, and grow in faith.

Dwelling Place

A reflective gathering centred on prayer, worship, and making space to behold Jesus and hear from Him.

HBC Care

Practical care and support for individuals and families, both within the church and beyond.

Community Groups

Interest/demographic based groups that help people connect through shared activities and life experience.

Membership

An invitation to belong, commit, and partner together in the life and mission of the church.

Our Structure

PART TWO



The leadership of Hills Baptist Church is best described in this way...
We are 'pastor-led, elder-protected and congregationally governed.'

Here's what this means:

LED BY THE PASTORS

The term 'pastors' here refers to the pastoral staff team, which is overseen by our Senior Pastor, David Shepherd. Dave leads our team. He is responsible for overseeing the ministry and mission of the church (under Christ of course), but he does not do this alone. Each of our campuses has a Campus Pastor, who in turn oversee ministry teams that include both paid staff and volunteer leaders. Our teams work collaboratively to discern the will of God for HBC and to humbly lead us towards it. You can learn more about our staff team through our website.

Fundamentally, the job of our pastors is to make sure we are grounded on our values, focusing on our Kingdom Priorities, and running towards our vision. It is not their job to do the work of ministry, but to "equip the saints for the work of ministry." (Ephesians 4:12) This means that here at HBC, you are going to be encouraged to not only attend a gathering, but to grow in your faith and walk in the ministry gifting God has uniquely placed upon your life.

PROTECTED BY THE ELDERS

Elders are wise and spiritually mature people as outlined in 1 Timothy 3 and 5, 1 Peter 5, Titus 1, and James 5. The elders of HBC are members of our church family, and they are voted into these positions by our church family. At HBC we have both Governing Elders and Pastoral Elders. Our Governing Elders work with our Senior Pastor to provide support structures and frameworks for our ministry leaders. This group oversees things such as budgets, building projects, policies, and risk. They work collaboratively with our Pastoral Elders, who exist to provide spiritual guidance to our pastoral team and care for our congregations.



GOVERNED BY THE CONGREGATION

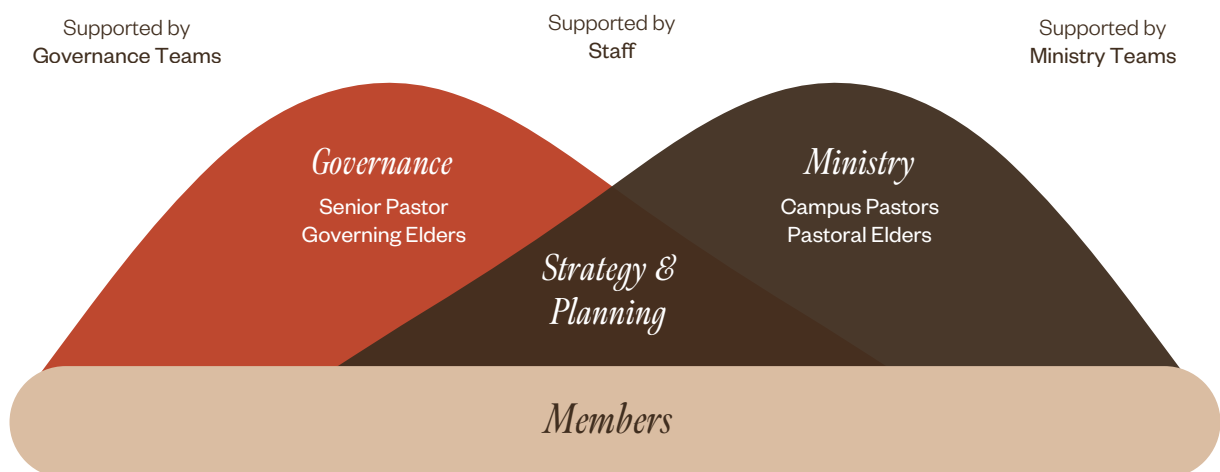
Pastors and Elders are accountable to the congregation as Christ-like servant leaders. The congregation is called to 'serve one another in love' as the leadership leads with love and humility before God and towards God's mission. Members of the congregation enact this responsibility by voting on significant proposals brought to them by the Pastors and Elders. Members will vote on the appointment of Elders, the appointment of Campus Pastors, and the appointment of a new Senior Pastor when the day comes that God calls Dave out of this role.

MEMBER CHURCH OF BCSANT

It's also important to know that Hills Baptist Church is a member church of the Baptist Churches of South Australia and Northern Territory (BCSANT). BCSANT is a family of more than 70 churches and over 18,000 people. Each individual church is autonomously governed and led, but chooses to be joined by association for accountability, resourcing and equipping. This relationship ensures accountability for both the Pastors and the church as a whole.

THE MODEL

The information above can be represented in the following way:





All of this of course, is under Christ Jesus, who is the Head of the Church. He is the leader and the one to whom we submit. This model simply shows how we structure the trellis to support the vine that only God can grow.

MEMBERSHIP

Given that we are a congregationally governed family of faith, we need a mechanism by which the HBC congregation can speak into the life of the church. This is where 'membership' comes into play. For those who aren't familiar with this concept, this isn't like signing up to be a member at a gym or golf course. There are no joining fees or legally binding contracts. It's simply our way of giving our family a voice in the outcome of significant decisions in the church.

What are the requirements of our members?

- That they submit to the vision, mission, values, and core beliefs of the church

What are the expectations of our members?

- That they are a baptised believer in Jesus
- That they are praying for the church
- That they are committed to personal and interpersonal discipleship, which means:
 - Regular attendance at worship services
 - Financial giving
 - Practically serving on an HBC ministry team
 - Connected to an H group (huddle, home group, or hobby group)
 - Seeking to invest in the lives of others
 - Attend membership meetings and contribute to the discernment of important decisions being made within the church

If you'd like to consider being a member, it's important that you understand our view on some 'hot topics' facing the Church. You don't have to agree with everything we believe in these areas to be a member, but we do ask that you submit to our position, and do not actively teach against or cause division around them.



HOT TOPIC POSITIONAL STANDPOINT

Along with our core beliefs, which are outlined in our constitution, there are a few hot topic issues that are worth covering here just so you know where we stand. As we said before, you don't have to agree with us on all of these to belong to our community, but you do need to know our position, because it shapes the way we operate as a family.

At HBC we believe that there is only one Truth and that truth has been revealed to humanity in the person of Jesus and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit through the Holy Scriptures.

We also recognise that when it comes to doctrine and theology, there are some things that are very clear and universally accepted as orthodoxy, and other things that are less clear, often becoming points of tension amongst believers, as well-meaning people seek to live out the truth of the Gospel.

We summarise this by saying that some doctrines are 'closed-handed,' and others are 'open-handed.' Some things we hold onto tightly, as they form the basis of our unity in Christ, while other things we hold onto lightly, recognising that we can have different opinions about these things and still maintain unity in the closed-handed beliefs of the Gospel. You can find the closed-handed beliefs in our faith statement, which is based on the Nicene Creed, and accessible through our website or our constitution.

As for the open-handed issues, you can see a short summary of where we sit on some of these topics below. If you'd like to discuss these more, our Pastoral Team would be happy to meet and walk you through more detailed position positions outlining the Biblical precedent for these views.



Women in Ministry

We have both men and women using their God-given gifts in the life and ministry of the church. This means women serve in a variety of leadership roles within the church including pastor, elder, preacher and teacher.

Spiritual Gifts

We believe the gifts of the Holy Spirit are still active today, given to build up the Church and equip her for ministry and mission.

Baptism

We believe baptism is commanded by God as the response to faith in Jesus for those who believe. We therefore do not baptise infants, but we do encourage parents to dedicate their children to the Lord, entrusting them to His care.

Gender & Marriage

At creation God made two genders, male and female, who together represent His image on the earth. We believe that marriage is God's design, exclusively for a man and a woman, given to humanity as a picture of the marriage between Jesus and His Church.

Eschatology

We believe that Jesus is coming back for His Church, and we are to live in hopeful expectation of His return. We are open-handed with the millennial views around this event.

Politics

We are called to be a counter-cultural, kingdom-minded people. We are not left or right, but up! We do not align with one political party, but we seek the good of our nation by advocating for kingdom-minded policy making within all levels of government.

Creation

We believe that all things were created by God and for God. We believe that human beings are uniquely made in God's image and have a mandate to be godly stewards over all creation.



NEXT STEPS...

ALPHA

Alpha is a free, 10-week series of conversations exploring the Christian faith in a welcoming, no-pressure environment.

If you're looking for a safe, judgment-free space to ask hard questions about faith, life and meaning, there's a place at Alpha for you.

Everyone is welcome!

HOME GROUPS

One of the key ways we grow as disciples at HBC is through Home Groups. These are smaller gatherings where we connect, support one another, pray together, and open God's Word. Groups meet weekly, fortnightly, or monthly in various locations across the hills.

KINGDOM LIFE

This 16-week intentional discipleship course provides a space for meaningful connection, biblical teaching, and Holy Spirit-led transformation. The first 8 weeks explore the nature of faith and the overarching biblical narrative, while the second 8 weeks focus on living out that faith in today's world.

Each session begins with fellowship and worship, followed by a 30-minute teaching, followed by small group discussion in huddles of 3-4, led by a dedicated mentor. Together, you'll reflect, pray, and commit to living out what God is speaking with encouragement and accountability throughout the week.

Scan the QR Code to express your interest in joining a Home Group or Ministry Team, being baptised, becoming a member or attending an upcoming discipleship course.

For more information visit: www.hillsbaptist.com

