

BY-LAWS OF MOUNTAINVIEW COMMUNITY CHURCH

The government of this body is subject solely to the leadership of Jesus Christ, who purchased us with His blood and is risen today. He is Lord of His Church. Therefore, our decisions are final and cannot be overruled by any outside authority. Mountainview Community Church retains the right of self-government in all aspects of the life of this church and is subject to no other ecclesiastical body. However, we are committed to a voluntary, cooperative, and supportive relationship with the Treasure State Baptist Association, the Montana Southern Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE I - DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Section 1. Statement of Faith

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis of any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of *The Baptist Faith and Message* as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Section 2. Statement of Mission

As a loving fellowship composed of regenerate, baptized believers in Christ, this church exists by the grace of God alone and for the glory of God alone, which shall be the ultimate test and purpose of all our activities. Our chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. We will seek to glorify God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:

- Public and corporate gathered worship;
- The ordinary means of grace;
- Bible teaching and discipleship;
- Evangelism in preaching, personal acts of verbal witness, and acts of mercy;
- Participation in local, domestic, and international missions;
- Administration of the two Ordinances of Baptism and Holy Communion;
- Fellowship within the body;
- Cooperative work with other like-minded churches;
- Service to other individuals, families, and churches to care for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs in the name of Jesus Christ;

In all things, this church shall seek to glorify God by fulfilling the greatest commandments of loving Him with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind, and our neighbor as our self.

Section 3. Position on Marriage

We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning and that marriage is sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexuality conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serves as volunteers, should abide by and agree to the Statement on marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

All candidates for church membership will be presented to the church for acceptance at the time of coming forward. Candidates are presented for membership in any of the following ways:

- 1) By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
- 2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church.
- 3) Upon statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion as a believer in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.

Section 3. Voting Rights to Members

Every active member who is 18 years old or older of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference.

Section 4. Inactive Memberships

Memberships shall be considered inactive in the following ways:

- 1) If they move to another city and do not request transfer to another church within one year.
- 2) If they do not come to church or do not participate in a church ministry opportunity for one year with the following exceptions:
 - a) They are physically incapable of doing so.
 - b) They are a missionary serving elsewhere but still consider this church body their home church.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- 1) Death.
- 2) Transfer to another church.
- 3) Exclusion by action of this church.
- 4) Request in writing from individual involved.

Section 6. Discipline

It shall be the basic purpose of Mountainview Community Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member in accordance with Matthew 18. The Elders are available for counsel and guidance. Christian love rather than punishment should be the guideline, which governs the attitude of one member toward another.

Should some serious condition exist, which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church; every reasonable measure will be taken by the Elders to resolve the problem. All such proceedings shall

be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. But, finding that welfare of the church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the church may take this action by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose; and the church may proceed to declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any condition which has made it necessary for the church to exclude, may upon request, be restored to membership by a vote of the church upon evidence of his repentance and reformation.

The Church is also responsible for protecting itself from any outside influence that would threaten the unity of the fellowship such as non-church members who choose to worship with us. This includes the advocating of doctrine contrary to that stated elsewhere in these by-laws, or conversation and/or loose talk that has a negative impact on the unity of the church, or any other kind of discord or disruption.

In such cases, the Elders shall deal with the individual(s) directly. If the individual(s) cannot agree to desist in such activity, and pledge to work in harmony with the Church, they shall be asked to disassociate themselves from the Church's activities.

The Church as a body shall not take any formal action in such cases since they have no authority over non-members.

For purposes of clarification on the issue of discipline, see Appendix A on page 9.

ARTICLE III - CHURCH OFFICERS

*These sections on elders and deacons are modified from Bethlehem Baptist Church's Constitution and Bylaws.

Offices restricted to members of the church are Elder and Deacon.

The following is a listing of church officers:

Section 1. Elders

- a. *Qualifications.* Elders and nominees for Elder shall be men of demonstrable godly character, above reproach in public and private, and committed to shepherding the flock of God and to teaching and guarding sound doctrine, as expressed in the *The Baptist Faith and Message*. Elders and nominees will exemplify the Biblical characteristics of elder-overseers in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4.
- b. *Responsibilities.* The fundamental responsibility of the Elders is to devote themselves to prayer and the Word. The Elders are responsible for governing the Church as godly servant leaders. They must teach the Word and tend the flock of God in this Church. The responsibilities of the Elders shall include: examining prospective members and candidates for baptism and acquainting them with *The Baptist Faith and Message*, overseeing the process of Church discipline, examining prospective candidates for office, scheduling and providing a moderator for business meetings, providing for reporting and recording of official Church business, overseeing the work of the Deacons and appointed Church agents and committees, conducting worship services, administering the ordinances of the Gospel, equipping the membership of the Church for the work of the ministry, teaching the whole counsel of God both formally and informally, correcting error, overseeing, coordinating and promoting the ministries of the Church, and mobilizing the Church for world mission.
- c. *Composition.* The Elder Council can be comprised of Staff and Non-Staff Elders. Staff Elders are men who receive financial compensation from the Church as they fulfill God's call to the specific ministries of the Word, prayer and shepherding the flock. In addition to the duties of their office as described in Section 'b' above, Staff Elders shall perform the duties determined by the Council of Elders and approved by the congregation. The duties shall be in writing at the time of employment and substantial changes shall be approved by the Church.

Non-Staff Elders are men recommended by the Council of Elders and called by the Church who serve voluntarily without financial support from the Church as they fulfill God's call to the specific ministries of the Word, prayer and shepherding the flock.

- d. *Call by the Church.* The members shall call Staff Elders and Non-Staff Elders (1) by ballot upon recommendation of the Council of Elders or, if there are no current Elders, a committee of three chosen by the church membership, and (2) by at least a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting at the meeting with at least ten percent (10%) of the membership of the Church. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given one week preceding the meeting.
- e. *Organization.* The Council of Elders shall organize itself however it determines to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The Elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function. Meetings of the Council of Elders may be held at any location and may be conducted by means of electronic communication through which the Elders may simultaneously hear each other. Unless the Council provides otherwise, meetings of the Council may be held immediately upon notice.

Section 2. Deacons

- a. *Qualifications.* Deacons and nominees for Deacon shall be members in good standing and demonstrate godly character and possess particular gifts of service. Deacons will exemplify the godly characteristics set forth in I Timothy 3:8-12.
- b. *Responsibilities.* The Deacons shall advise and be ready to assist the Elders in any service that shall support and promote the ministry of the Word, new and existing ministries of the church, and the care for the members of the congregation. Deacons shall assist the Council of Elders by performing services of ministry, advice, administration, implementation, and other such services as the elders deem necessary.
- c. *Composition.* Deacons may or may not be employed by the Church. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of members in the church.
- d. *Call by the Church.* The members shall call deacons (1) by ballot upon recommendation of the Council of Elders and (2) by two-thirds vote of those members present and voting with at least ten percent (10%) of the membership of the Church present at the meeting. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given from the pulpit one week preceding the meeting.
- e. *Organization.* Under the direction of the Elders, the Deacons shall organize themselves however they determine to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The Elders or the Deacons may designate any specific Deacon or group of Deacons to specialize in some particular diaconal function. Meetings of the Deacons, or subcommittees thereof, shall be held as needed to best fulfill the responsibilities of the Deacons.

The Deacon fellowship will seek organization that follows the teaching of 1 Timothy 2:12 and Acts 6:3.

It is recommended that deacons be appointed as treasurer, clerk, and trustees. In the case or season of having no deacons, it is still recommended that these positions be filled by members of the church only.

The clerk is responsible for a register of names of the members with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of transfer voted on by the church, preserve a file of all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary as indicated in these bylaws. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when an office is maintained.

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and payout, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized persons, all money, or things of value paid given to the church keeping at all times

itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding months. The treasurer's report shall be audited annually by elders who can choose to use other means for the audit such as but not limited to deacons or a public accountant. The treasurer shall prepare and make available, if requested, a members' contribution record whenever necessary.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

Trustees shall represent the Church on all legal matters involving the Church and shall have the authority to sign all legal documents relative to Church property or other legal actions involving Church activities.

ARTICLE IV - ORDINANCES

Section 1. Baptism

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith; who professes Him publicly at any worship service; and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.

- 1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- 2) Baptism shall be administered by the Elders or whomever they shall authorize. The Elders may designate the baptism committee or if none, a church member to assist the candidates for baptism.
- 3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship in concurrence with any worship service.
- 4) A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the Elders. If negative interest is indicated, the candidate shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.
- 5) Persons presenting themselves for baptism shall indicate whether or not they desire church membership at this time.

Section 2. The Lord's Supper

- 1) The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience by believers, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.
- 2) In 1 Corinthians 11, the Apostle Paul stresses the importance of partaking in the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner. Individuals who are unbelievers, unrepentant believers, or oppose baptism by objecting or putting it off shall not partake in the ordinance.
- 3) The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly on a Sunday that best leads the congregation to worship by the means of this ordinance commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 4) The Elders or their designee shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
- 5) The Elders, Deacons, or their designee shall be responsible for the physical preparation of the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE V - MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services

The Church shall meet regularly on Sunday mornings, and at other scheduled times when considered by the leadership to be in the best interest of the congregation.

Section 2. Special Services

Revival services and any other church meetings which will be essential to the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar.

Section 3. Business Meetings

Business meetings shall be held as needed, and shall be held to pass a budget, fill necessary vacancies, and elect required officers.

A Business meeting may be held or called to consider special matters of significant nature. A one week notice of the business meeting, giving the subject, date, time, and location must be given in the church bulletin, by mail, and/or announced from the pulpit during the Sunday morning worship service unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical.

Section 5. Quorum

The quorum shall consist of those members of the church who attend the regular or special called business meeting.

Section 6. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Parliamentary Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for the parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

ARTICLE VI - CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. Budget

The Elders and Church Treasurer shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items, the amount needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses. Non-budgeted expenditures shall be presented to the church for action beforehand.

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and it causes with regular, proportionate gifts.

Section 2. Accounting Procedures

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the stewardship committee or if none, the church treasurer.

Section 3. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church will not run concurrently with the calendar year which begins on January 1 and ends on December 31. Instead, it will concur with the church calendar year, which starts on October 1 and ends on September 30.

ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Changes of Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws

Changes in these Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church provided that each amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments shall be by two-thirds vote of the members of the church present.

Section 2. Adoption of the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws

These Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws shall be in effect upon its adoption by the Church Month/Day/Year and shall supersede all pre-existing constitution and by-laws.

ARTICLE VIII - APPENDICES

Appendix A. - Church Discipline

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her covenant promises, or unrepentantly guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and the examples of Scripture. Church discipline, therefore, should only be contemplated after individual admonition has failed.

Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation; suspension from Holy Communion; inability to vote in church conferences; deposition from office and/or removal from committees; and as a final resort, excommunication.

The purpose of such discipline should be:

- (1) For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined.
 - (a) Pr. 15:5; 29:15; I Cor. 4:14; Eph. 6:4; I Tim. 3:4-5; Heb. 12:1-11; Ps. 119:115; 141:5; Pr. 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecc. 7:5; Mt. 7:26-27; 18:15-17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; I Cor. 5:5; Gal. 6:1-5; II Thess. 3:6, 14-15; I Tim. 1:20; Tit. 1:13-14; Jam. 1:22
- (2) For instruction in righteousness and the good of other Christians, by being an example to them.
 - (a) Pr. 13:20; Rom. 15:14; I Cor. 5:11; 15:33; Col. 3:16; I Thess. 5:14; I Tim. 5:20; Tit. 1:11; Heb. 10:24-25
- (3) For the purity of the Church.
 - (a) I Cor. 5:6-7; II Cor. 13:10; Eph. 5:27; II John 10; Jude 24; Rev. 21:2
- (4) For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians.
 - (a) Pr. 28:7; Mt 5:13-16; Jn. 13:35; Acts 5:1-14; Eph. 5:11; I Tim. 3:7; II Peter 2:2; I Jn 3:10
- (5) Supremely, for the glory of God by reflecting His Holy character.
 - (a) Deut. 5:11; I Kings 11:2; II Chr. 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Neh. 9:2; Isa. 52:11; Ez. 36:20; Matt. 5:16; Jn. 15:8; 18:17, 25; Rom. 2:24; 15:5-6; II Cor. 6:14-7:1; Eph. 1:4; 5:27; I Peter 2:12

The church may restore membership to any person previously excommunicated upon request of the excommunicated person after providing evidence of their repentance and reformation. The elders are to conduct a thorough investigation, and upon their recommendation, present the candidate before the church at any Lord's Day gathering. A majority vote of members present and voting is necessary to restore a person to membership.