

Mountain View Church Oakdale, California Constitution and By-Laws

We, the people of Mountain View Church, voluntarily submit ourselves to the following Constitution and By-Laws. The authority of this Constitution is organizational and subordinate to that of God's Word.

Article 1 – Name

The name of this church, a California non-profit corporation, shall be Mountain View Church.

Article 2 – Mission

Our love for God leads us to love our world.

Article 3 – Vision

Our vision is to lead people to love God. This will naturally lead them to love their world. We believe that there are 4 types of people, according to Jesus' Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:18-23). Each must be ministered to based on where they are currently on their spiritual journey.

We seek to lead **unbelievers** to belief in Christ. Once they become **believers**, we seek to lead them to involvement within the church and community so that they become **growing believers**. The next step is to train them more deeply in their walk with Christ. Those who continue on to train others become **maturing believers**. They become our church leaders and they continue to train others so that discipleship is multiplied throughout the church and community. (2 Timothy 2:2)

Article 4 – Values

Discipleship: Train each person to mature in the following areas and to use their spiritual gifting to serve the Lord.

Prayer (Worship): Spending time throughout each day singing, praising and praying to God. Celebrating each Sunday as a family reunion and regularly observing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Bible Study: Learning to study the Bible and apply it to our lives through sermons and small groups.

Love for the Church Family: Teaching what we have learned to one another and caring for each person. We function as a family.

Love for the Lost: Always looking for opportunities to be involved in the lives of those without Christ through service, and the sharing of our lives and beliefs.

Marriage: Seek to make conventional biblical marriages (between a man and woman) stronger and deeper, and that they commit to raising their children in a Christ-centered environment.

Article 5 – Affiliation/Stand

The church is independent and not joined to any denomination, synod, or association

Article 6 – Dissolution

The term of existence of this corporation shall be in perpetuity without specific term of existence. The property of the corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious or charitable purposes. And upon the liquidation, dissolution, or abandonment of the corporation, after providing for the debts and obligations thereof, its assets will not incur to the benefit of any private person, but shall be distributed, as the existing leadership decides, to exclusively religious or charitable organizations which are in keeping with the objective of the church, and whose purposes are within those specified in the Internal Revenue Code, section 501 (c)(3).

By-Law 1 – Statement of Faith

We believe:

The entire Bible to be inspired by God and without error in its original writings, the complete revelation of his will for salvation and the final authority for the faith and life of a Christ follower. (2 Pet. 3:15-16; 1 Tim 5:18; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Matt. 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; John 17:17; 1 Pet. 1:23)

God is one God, Creator of all things, holy and infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Dt. 6:4; Mk. 12:29; Gen. 1:1; Ps. 33:6; Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:15-17; Isa. 6: 1-3; 57:15; Ps. 90:2; Matt. 5:48; Dan. 4:34-35; Acts 17:24-25; Jn. 17:11; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14)

Jesus Christ is true God and true man having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life and died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, substituting himself to receive our penalty, according to the Scriptures, rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven and now sits at the right hand of God as our High Priest and Advocate. (Isa. 9:6; Jn. 1:1-5, 14; 20:28; Col. 2:9-10; Heb. 1:3; Matt. 4:2; Lk. 2:40; Heb. 5:7-10; Matt. 1:18; Lk. 1:31-35; Rom. 5; Gal. 4:4-5; Matt. 3:16-17; Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 4:15; John 19:28-37; Matt. 28:1-10; Mk. 16:1-8; Rom. 4:25; Lk. 24:51; Acts 1:6-11; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; 1 Pet. 3:22; Heb. 2:17; 4:14; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 1 Jn. 2:1)

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead and came to glorify Jesus Christ. During this present age, he convicts people of their sin, regenerates the believing sinner, indwells, gifts, guides, instructs and empowers the Christ follower for godly living and service. (Jn. 16:8, 24; 1 Cor. 2:14; Ezek. 36:25-27; Jn. 3:3, 5; 1 Cor. 12:3; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Thess. 1:4-5; 2 Thess. 2:13; Titus 3:5; Jn 14:17; 1 Cor. 6:19; Jn. 16:13; Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:16-18; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:7-11; 1 Pet. 4:10-11; Acts 1:8; 10:38; Rom. 8:4-6, 12-18; Gal. 5:22-23, 25 Phil 2:1-2)

People were made in the image of God but fell into sin, and, therefore, are lost and only saved through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit based on the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection. When a person surrenders and receives Jesus Christ, they are born again through the Holy Spirit and are adopted into the family and kingdom of God. Simply said, we are saved by grace through faith alone in and because of Christ alone. (Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7; James. 3:9; Gen. 3:1-6; Jn. 8:44; Rom. 5:12-14; 16:20 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:13-14; Acts 4:12; 16:31; 1 Tim. 2:5; Eph. 1:8-9; Titus 3:5; Matt. 4:19; Rom. 8:15-17)

The true Church is composed of those who are truly members of God's family. Water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the Church during the present age, but they are not a means to salvation. (Matt. 16:15-18; Eph. 4:4-6; 5:25; Heb. 12:28; Matt. 18:15-20; Acts 2:41, 47; 14:23; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9; 12:12-13; 14:40; 16:1-2; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 5:9; Heb. 10:25; Matt. 3: 13-17; 26:26-29; 28:16-20; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:15-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

True followers of Christ should live redeemed lives by loving God supremely and others sacrificially. They should care for one another; have compassion on the poor and justice for the oppressed. They are to make disciples among all people and always bear witness of their faith through word and deed. (Dt. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; Mk. 12:30-31; Rom. 12:10; Gal. 5:26; Eph. 4:32, 1 Pet. 4:9; Dt 15:11 Ps. 140:12; Prov. 22:9; Gal. 2:10; James. 1:27; Lev. 19:15; Mic. 6:8; Matt. 23:23; Lk. 4:18; Matt. 5:13-16; 1 Pet. 3: 13-16; Matt. 28:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:2)

In the personal coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, at a time known only to God, and that this “blessed hope” should motivate the Christ follower to godly living and service. (Matt. 24:30, 36, Titus 2:13; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; 2 Pet. 3:10-14)

In the bodily resurrection of the dead; of Christ followers to enjoy everlasting joy with the Lord in Heaven, and of those who reject Him to experience judgment and eternal separation and sorrow in Hell. ((Mat. 25:34, 46; Rev. 21:1-3; Isa. 65:17; 66:22; Rev. 22:3; Matt. 25:46; Lk. 16:26; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 14:11 21:6,8; 22:14-15)

By –Law 2 – Membership

Membership Statement

We believe all true followers of Christ are members of his Body and family (Romans 12:4-6; Ephesians 5:19-20). We do not have formal membership, but expect those true followers to have a clear testimony, agree with our vision, mission, values and Statement of Faith, and live God honoring lives. We also hope they will regularly attend our worship services, join a small group, participate in outreach and give generously. The only ordinances we recognize are water baptism and the Lord’s Supper. We practice full immersion baptism.

Guidelines for Affirmation

1. The Next Year’s proposed budget will be made available to the church each December 10. The team will also be available to answer questions. At least 3 weeks will be given for the church’s feedback. Our leadership team will make a final decision by December 31.
2. When a candidate is considered for the office of pastor or elder, the church will be given information on that person at least a month in advance.
3. If anyone has any concerns, they are encouraged to speak with a pastor or elder. Two or three witnesses may also approach the entire leadership team. (1Timothy 5:19-20)

Church Discipline (Matthew 18:15-20)

1. When sin is observed, a private meeting should be arranged as soon as possible to lovingly confront the person.
2. If the person refuses to listen, then one or two witnesses shall be taken along to attempt to restore the sinning person.
3. If the person refuses to listen to the two or three, a pastor or elder should be informed. The pastors and elders must then call a leadership meeting and request that the troubled person be present along with all the parties involved. The desire is to keep the process of restoration in as limited a circle as possible, and to provide good counsel to the troubled person. (Galatians 6:1-2)
4. If the person is responsive, a plan of reconciliation is developed by the leadership to help assure healing between the involved parties.

5. If the person fails to appear at the meeting, or to heed the counsel of the leadership, the leadership will determine the actions to be taken, which may include removal from the church. (1 Corinthians 5:4-12)
6. A dismissed person may request to return upon repentance and reconciliation.

By-Law 3 – Leadership

Board of Director's – This team will consist of between 3-5 men including the lead pastor. They will be appointed by the lead pastor and serve until our future leadership is developed. They will provide direction and oversight in finances, leadership, and legal compliance. They will approve the compensation of the lead pastor for the fiscal year from January 1st- December 31st. The lead pastor will assist them in determining salaries for other staff positions.

Pastors – It shall be the duty of the pastors to pray, preach and teach, prepare goals, oversee the spiritual health and direction of ministry and generally equip the people to minister. (Ephesians 4:11-13) Pastors will serve within the area of their gifting and passion. They are entrusted to make the day-to-day decisions of the church and will seek advise from the elders as needed. The lead pastor will serve as the first among equals; leading the others in a collaborative manner. He is responsible for the primary leadership of the church and will make the final decision on matters as needed. He will facilitate meetings and oversee the development of job descriptions.

1. *Qualifications* – Pastors shall be mature godly men who satisfy the character requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3. They shall excel in leadership, and some will be especially gifted in preaching and teaching. (1 Timothy 5:17) All pastors will be ordained after a three-year period of ministry and observation. The church will recognize ordination from transferring pastors.
2. *Duties* – All pastors will review their job descriptions together yearly. The elders will then be updated on the reviews. Pastors will be responsible for job descriptions for paid staff they oversee and will review them with the lead pastor. They will meet at least weekly and represent those serving under their oversight. They will be represented on the elder board by two pastors, but all are welcome to attend. The pastors will consult with the elders regarding elder nominations, or any major decisions.
3. *Selection* – The pastor and elder leadership will identify the need for pastors. They may choose to move them internally. A succession process will be identified for the replacement of a retiring lead pastor. The pastors and elders may also decide on a pastoral search team for a lead pastor with outside assistance. The church shall be given detailed information regarding the proposed new lead pastor. They will have opportunity to hear him speak and interact with him in a variety of ways. Their feedback will be a critical part of the process.

4. *Terms of Office* – Pastors serve for an indefinite period of time. A pastor may be removed from office by the other pastors and elders if there is Biblical cause or if he fails to fulfill his function. The lead pastor is responsible for hiring and termination, but will counsel with the church leadership. Lead pastors can be removed by the consensus of the elders and the pastoral team. (1 Timothy 5:19-22; Galatians 6:1-2; Matthew 18:15-20)

Elders – The elders of the church are to be spiritually mature men who are devoted to prayer for the church, the study of the Bible and the application of it to the challenges the church encounters. They are to hold the pastors and each other accountable through the annual review of job descriptions. They are to grant counsel and assistance during church discipline and any conflicts within the church. They are to lead by example as shepherds of the flock and share in pastoral duties. They are to guard the vision, mission and values of the church. They will join the pastors in making a final decision regarding the budget after the church has been given ample opportunity for feedback. (Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 6:2-4; 13:1-3; 20:28-30; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3)

1. *Qualifications* – They must meet the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-3. They must have gifts that enable them to lead effectively. Before becoming an elder, they must go through discipleship and elder training. Some flexibility will be considered.
2. *Selection* – The church family may make recommendations from among the men who have completed discipleship. The pastors and elders nominate the man they feel is qualified. This man will then proceed through the previously mentioned affirming process by the church.
3. *Terms of Office* – The office of elder is comprised of 2, three - year terms with a mandatory sabbatical of at least 1 year after 2 terms. However, the ministry of an elder is a life-time appointment.
4. *Removal* – An elder may be removed from office by the other elders, by consensus, if there is Biblical cause, or if he fails to fulfill his function, or if he voluntarily removes himself. (1 Timothy 5:19-22; Galatians 6:1-2; Matthew 18:15-20)

By-Law 4 – Leadership Covenant

Truth – We commit to teach the truth of the Bible and not to be swayed by people, or to succumb to gossip, or slander, but to speak only what is useful for building up the Body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:29)

Purity – We commit to seek purity in our motives and not to compromise with the opposite sex, but to avoid even the suspicion of inappropriateness.

Devotions – We commit to seek daily time with the Lord in prayer and the Bible, and to confess all known sin.

Family – We commit to spend quality time with our families and to share responsibilities and ministry with each other.

Faithful to Each Other – We commit to go first to each other with any concerns. We want open communication and accountability.

By-Law 5 – Amendments

These by-laws may be amended providing 30-day notice is given in writing, allowing that time for members to express themselves concerning the proposed amendment. The pastors and elders will give the final approval.