



*Mountain Grove Family Church, Inc.*

*A Missouri Nonprofit Corporation*

# **BYLAWS**

## Section 1: Membership

### 1.01 How to become a Member

The members of this church reserve the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church. A person can become a member of the church upon a majority vote of the church Leadership or Elders by presenting themselves as a candidate for membership in one of the following ways:

- a. By public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord and baptism under authority of this church.
- b. By letter from another Southern Baptist church.
- c. By statement of a prior public profession of faith in Jesus as personal Savior and baptism under authority of a church of the same faith and practice from which it is not possible to obtain a letter.
- d. By statement of a prior public profession of faith in Jesus as personal Savior Lord in a church of a differing faith and practice followed by baptism under authority of this church.

Membership candidates will then be given a membership covenant to sign and return prior to confirmation.

### 1.02 Voting Rights of Members

All members shall have full voting rights on all motions, recommendations, resolutions, or other matters that come before the church in regular annual or special business meeting. Members shall have a vote on the annual budget, the calling of pastoral staff, the purchase or liquidation of property, acquisition of any debt by the church, and any other matter brought to the church by the elders.

### 1.03 Benefits of Membership

Members of the church enjoy voting rights as well as become eligible to serve on official Ministry Teams such as Stewardship or Leadership for example. Elders and Staff must be members

### 1.04 Termination of Membership

A. Persons shall be removed as members of this church in the following cases:

1. death

2. a transfer request of membership to another church
3. the member's request for removal
4. member informs church in writing that they have united with another church and no longer wish to be listed as a member of this church
5. absence from all church related services, functions, and Bible studies for a period of one year.
6. the elders' decision based upon the process of Church Discipline Guidelines for the cause of unrepentant sin.

## Section 2: MEETINGS

### 2.01 Leadership Meetings

The church Leadership shall have regular monthly business meetings on a date they determine.

### 2.02 Special Meetings

Special called business meetings may be called by the Leadership of the church.

### 2.03 Annual Vision Meeting

The annual meeting of the church shall be held on Sunday of the month prior to the beginning of the church year. This meeting will involve the approval of an annual budget, election of officers, and the any other business brought to the church by the Leadership.

## Section 3: Leadership

### 3.01 Elders

#### 3.01.a Definition

The elders are entrusted with the governance of church. Their oversight includes, but is not limited to, teaching, protecting, leading, disciplining, equipping and caring for the corporate church body and her individual members as well as oversight of all ministry, operations and finances of the church. The elders are also responsible for being obedient to the Scripture in the doctrine of the church, establishing the overall vision of the church and appointing new elders or deacons.

#### 3.01.b Qualifications

The minimum qualifications for elders shall not be less than those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1: 6-9. In

addition to the minimum qualifications given in the Scriptures, elders must be male Covenant Members, as described in Section 1, who fully subscribe to the Statement of Faith, and are actively involved in ministry of the church. The elders may at any time create, alter, amend, repeal or restate the resolutions establishing additional qualifications outside of those listed in the above scriptures.

### **3.01.c Powers**

The oversight of the church's ministry, operations and finances shall be vested in the elder body. The elders are designated as the directors of this corporation as the term is defined and used regarding Missouri Nonprofit Corporations. Unless cited as an exception elsewhere in the *Constitution* or *Bylaws*, all corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the direction of the elders.

### **3.01.d Duties**

The duties of the elders shall include, but not be limited to, leading the church to fulfill the purposes of the church. They are empowered to govern the ministries and business of the church subject to the limitations of law, the Articles of Incorporation, the constitution or these bylaws. The elders shall supervise all employees of the church and may delegate to them any and all duties and responsibilities they deem reasonable, subject to the rights, if any, of a person under contract of employment. The elders of the church shall vote on the matters of (a) appointment of any elder; (b) doctrinal issues; (c) removal of an elder; and (d) other actions deemed major and extraordinary by the elders.

All items above will be communicated to the church at the discretion of the elders, except the appointment of any elder which shall be communicated not less than twenty-one (21) days before the elder vote. Comments received from the church will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Article 2.01.e Selection and Term of Office**

The elders shall have the sole authority to appoint new elders. A man shall be appointed as an elder by a passing vote of the elder body after he has been tested and proven to meet the qualifications stated herein.

The members of the church will be allowed to raise concerns, in accordance with 3.01.d herein, before any

prospective elder is confirmed. However, confirmation of the elder will be at the final discretion of the elders. The elders may appoint a committee or group to vet qualified elder candidates to the elders. The elders may also receive recommendations for elder candidates from the Covenant Members.

Once a man is appointed to the elder body as a lay elder, not as a member of the pastoral staff, he is expected to serve in this capacity for a minimum of five years, but no more than eight years per term. Elders may be re-appointed after a one-year absence from the elder body.

If the elder body determines that an elder needs an extended sabbath for a season because of a legitimate need (e.g., illness, tragedy), then that elder can transition to being an inactive and non-voting elder for a set period of time as determined by the elder body.

To resign from the elder body, an elder must notify, in writing, the officers of the church who are also members of the elder body. These officers will determine the most fruitful and edifying way to notify the remaining elders and the church.

A vacancy on the elder body because of death, resignation, removal or any other cause shall be filled only in the manners prescribed in these bylaws. Such vacancies may be filled as they occur.

### **3.01.f Removal**

Any elder may be removed from the office of elder for valid cause. Discipline of elders must be consistent with the standards set forth in Matthew 18:15-20 and I Timothy 5:17-19. The elder body will determine specific procedures for removal. These procedures may be altered, amended, repealed or restated by an elder resolution. The elders shall have the sole authority to remove another elder.

A written notice of proposed removal of any elder shall be given to such elder at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to affect such removal is to be taken to ensure that the elder is given a reasonable opportunity to defend himself. The elder shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of his accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on his removal. Such removal shall take place only upon and after a passing vote of the elders at such meeting. The elder under consideration for removal shall not have voting rights.

### **3.01.g Elder Meetings**

Regular meetings of the elders shall be held in a location that the elders deem from time to time as described in Section 2.

Any meeting may be held by conference telephone or similar communication equipment, as long as all the elders participating in the meeting can hear one another. All such elders shall be deemed present at such meetings.

### **3.01.h Definition of Quorum and Passing Vote**

A proper quorum is defined as seventy-five percent (75%) of the elders. A quorum is required for voting matters. A passing vote must be equal to or greater than seventy-five percent (75%) of the elders present.

## **3.02 Officers**

### **3.02.a Duties of Officers**

The officers shall have such general duties for officers as contained in Robert's Rules of Order except as otherwise enlarged, limited, modified, or altered by these bylaws.

A. Moderator: The moderator shall preside over all church business meetings, except in such cases when the matter before the church relates directly to the moderator. The Lead Pastor will serve as Moderator.

B. Vice-Moderator: The vice-moderator shall preside at business meetings in the absence of the moderator or in those cases when the matter before the church relates directly to the moderator.

C. Secretary: The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of the business meetings, keep other necessary records, and conduct all necessary correspondence for the church in connection with this office. All books and records pertaining to this office shall be turned over immediately to the Secretary's successor.

D. Treasurer: The treasurer shall be custodian of all funds contributed to the church and all its auxiliaries for general and special purposes. All receipts shall be promptly and regularly deposited in a bank account or accounts approved by the church and all disbursements shall be made by check. The treasurer shall make monthly reports to the church of all receipts and disbursements and the exact balance on hand in the bank. The treasurer's books and records shall be presented for audit at the close of the

financial year. All books and records pertaining to this office shall be turned over immediately to the treasurer's successor.

## **3.03 Staff**

The staff shall be composed of those persons employed by the church. Job descriptions for each position setting forth responsibilities, benefits, terms and conditions of employment, manner of calling or hiring, and termination shall be drafted by the Leadership and approved by the church.

## **3.04 Pastor**

### **3.04.a Calling of Pastor**

1. Whenever a vacancy shall occur in the position of pastor, a Pastor Search Committee shall be appointed by the Leadership. The Pastor Search Committee shall continue until dismissed by action of the church or a pastor has been called by vote of the church.

2. The committee may only bring one candidate at a time before the church for action.

3. A special business meeting shall be called when the committee has a candidate to recommend to the church. This business meeting may be held at the same time as a regular business meeting. Notice of the special business meeting shall be given as provided in the constitution. Election shall be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of seventy-five (75%) percent of those present and voting shall be required to call a pastor.

### **3.04.b Termination of Pastor**

1. The pastor may terminate his position by submitting his resignation, orally or in writing, giving at least a two-week notice before the resignation is to take effect.

2. The church may terminate the pastor by the following procedure: (a) A letter (Appendix C, page 62) requesting a special business meeting to take up the matter of termination of the pastor signed by at least twenty-five (25%) percent of the resident church members, shall be given to the pastor, leadership, church secretary, and vice-moderator. (b) Within one

(1) week of receiving said letter, the church secretary shall give notice of a special business meeting as required by the Constitution. If the pastor, secretary, and vice-moderator cannot agree on a time for the special business meeting, it shall be held on the Sunday evening one week after notice is given as herein required, but in no case shall the meeting be delayed longer than one week from the giving of notice. (c) At the special business meeting the vice-moderator shall preside. (d) The question shall be stated upon calling the meeting to order as follows: "Shall \_\_\_\_\_ be terminated in his position as pastor of this church?" The question shall then be open for discussion. After discussion has ended or the previous question has been ordered, the vote shall be taken by ballot. A two thirds majority of those present and voting shall be required to terminate the pastor's position. (e) If the motion carries, additional action may be taken relative to when the termination shall become effective, payment of severance pay, and other matters incident to termination.

### **3.05 Deacons**

#### **3.05.a Qualifications of Deacons**

The qualification of the deacons shall be those set forth in the New Testament in Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13.

#### **3.05.b Election of Deacons**

The Leadership of the church will select or receive names from any member of the church to be placed on a deacons' candidate list. The team shall then interview the persons whose names have been submitted as to their qualifications and willingness to serve. The team shall then recommend such persons as it determines to the church for their action on confirming the Leadership's electing them as a deacon.

#### **3.05.c Number of Deacons**

There is no minimum or maximum number of deacons required.

#### **3.05.d Responsibilities of Deacons**

The responsibility of the deacons is not explicit within the biblical text. The overall responsibility of the diaconate is to assist the elders in their service and equipping functions.

#### **3.05.e Organization of the Deacons**

A Lead deacon shall be elected annually in at the beginning of the church year and shall be organized to assist the pastor and elders with other work and ministry of the church is properly handled in keeping with the spirit of concern and love for needs of others. No Lead Deacon shall succeed his present position until one year has elapsed.

#### **3.05f Removal of Deacons**

Any deacon may be removed from office for valid cause. A written notice of proposed removal of any deacon shall be given to the secretary and chairman of the elders at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to affect such removal is to be taken to ensure that the deacon is given a reasonable opportunity for defense. The deacon shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of his or her accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on his or her removal. Removal of a deacon requires a passing vote of the elders.

## **Section 4: Church Finances and Budget**

### **4.01 Oversight**

The Leadership shall appoint a Stewardship Team comprised of the treasurer and other members of the church. This team shall have the responsibility to keep records, develop monthly and annual reports on the finances of the church, and count and deposit weekly offerings, but will not make financial decisions. All checks will require two (2) signatures, and all receipts and records will be kept by the Stewardship Team.

### **4.02 Budget**

The elders of the church shall have the responsibility of preparing for church action a proposed budget which shall be presented to the church at the regular annual vision meeting the month prior to the beginning of the church fiscal year. Adjustments may be made by action of the church during the church year to meet needs that may arise due to lack of funds or increase in expenses. It is the policy of this church that the work and ministry of the church is to be supported by the tithes and offerings of the membership or those persons who may not be members but who desire to contribute to the Lord's work by contributions to this local church. The fiscal year of the church shall be from August 1 through July 31.

## **Section 5: Church Year and Quorum**

### **5.01 The Church Year**

The church year for programs and terms of office of directors, officers, committee chairmen, members, and other such positions held for yearly terms shall from August 1 through July 31.

### **5.02 Quorum**

The quorum for regular or special business meetings shall be those members in attendance at such meetings.

## **Section 6: Ordinances**

### **6.01 Definition of Ordinances Practiced**

The two ordinances of the church shall be Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

### **6.02 Baptism**

Baptism is the outward expression of an inward decision and change. A potential candidate will discuss their desire to be baptized with the pastoral staff prior to their baptism. While the Lead Pastor will serve as the default, any believer can perform a baptism. Baptisms can happen by emersion at the church or at any sight chosen approved by the pastoral staff.

### **6.03 Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is a visual and spiritual reminder of the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf. The church leadership will schedule the Lord's Supper at times of their choosing throughout the year with a minimum of once per year. All professing believers present at the time of the service may partake of the Supper after a time of self reflection and examination.

## **Section 7: Building Usage and Pastoral Involvement**

### **6.01 Limitation of Services**

The pastoral and elder leadership reserves the right to refuse use of both their professional services and the use of church owned building or property for any reason they deem necessary including, but not limited to, the use of the building or pastor to perform same-sex marriages due whereas the church affirms the definition and establishment of male-female marriage by God in the book of Genesis.

## **Section 7: Amendment to Bylaws**

### **7.01 Amendments**

An amendment to these bylaws must be approved by the elders of the church and then confirmed by a majority vote of members present and voting at a special or regular meeting, pending a minimum notification of two (2) weeks' notice of all changes to the church prior to the meeting.