
MISSION HILLS CHURCH CONSTITUTION

We, the members, hereby band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, to adopt and implement the following Constitution:

ARTICLE 1 — NAME

This organization shall be known as Mission Hills Baptist Church of Mission Viejo, California, herein referred to as the “Church”.

ARTICLE 2 — AFFILIATION

This Church shall be affiliated with the Conservative Baptist Association of Southern California and the Conservative Baptist Association of America.

ARTICLE 3 — PURPOSE

The purpose of this Church shall be to glorify God. By the grace of God, we exist under the authority of His Word to develop mature, obedient disciples of Jesus Christ who through the power of the Holy Spirit love God and worship Him, instruct from and study His Word, fellowship with believers and care for others in word and deed and evangelize the world by sharing the gospel with all people.

Matthew 28:19-20; John 15:1-27; 17:1-26; Acts 2:42-47

STATEMENT OF FAITH

SECTION 1. We believe that the Bible is God’s infallible Word, written by men who were divinely and uniquely inspired, and that it is our supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice. We affirm our belief in the verbal and full, complete and absolute inspiration of the Scriptures in their original autographs.

II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21; Jude 3

SECTION 2. We believe in God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth, perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, and measureless in power. We rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, granting right of the individual to directly approach Him in prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:1; I Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 1:3-6

SECTION 3. We believe in the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ as our divine Lord and Master, God’s only begotten Son, born of a virgin, sinless in His life, who atoned for the sins of the world by His death on the cross. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His ascension into heaven, His High Priestly intercession for His people, and His personal, visible, premillennial return to the world according to His promise.

Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-33; John 1:1-5, 14; Philippians 2:6-8; Colossians 2:8-9; Acts 1:9-11, 7:56; I Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 1:3; Luke 12:40; Acts 1:10-11; I Thessalonians 4:13-17; Titus 2:13; I John 3:1-3

SECTION 4. We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from God to convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, comfort, empower and seal forever those who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that at the time of salvation, each believer in Christ is baptized by the Holy Spirit and becomes a member of the Body of Christ. Speaking in tongues is not the necessary evidence of baptism by the Holy Spirit.

John 14:16-17; 16:7-11; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9-13; Ephesians 1:13; I Corinthians 12:13; 14:22

SECTION 5. We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice, but that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” We believe, therefore, that those who accept Christ as

Savior and Lord shall be forever in God's presence, and that those who reject Christ as Savior and Lord will be forever separated from God.

John 3:16, 18, 36; Acts 16:31; Romans 3:23, 6:23

SECTION 6. We believe that the local church is to be composed of regenerated believers, voluntarily united together for the purpose of observing the two Scriptural ordinances of Baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper, the worship of God, the fellowship of believers, and the proclamation of the gospel of Christ throughout the world. We believe in the complete independence of the local church and its interdependence in association with other like-minded churches, and the separation of church and state.

Matthew 28:19; Luke 22: 19-20; Acts 8:36-39; I Corinthians 11:23-29

SECTION 7. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers, for which the Lord so earnestly prayed. *John 17:20-21*

ARTICLE 5 — COVENANT

Having been as we trust, brought by divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and to give ourselves wholly to Him, we do now solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other, to walk together in Him, with brotherly love, to His glory, as our common Lord. We do therefore, in His strength, covenant: That we will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully and lovingly warn, exhort, and admonish each other as occasion may require;

That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but will uphold the public worship of God, and the ordinances of His house;

That we will endeavor to conduct personal and family devotions at home, including the great duty of the Christian training of our children, and those under our care, for the service of Christ, and the enjoyment of Heaven;

That, as we are the light of the world, and salt of the earth, we will seek divine aid to enable us to deny ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and to walk circumspectly in the world, that we may be a testimony to men;

That we will cheerfully contribute of our property, according as God has prospered us, for the maintenance of a faithful and evangelistic ministry among us, for the care of the needy, and to spread the Gospel over the earth;

That we will, in all conditions, even till death, strive to live to the glory of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

“And may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work, to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory, forever and ever. Amen.” *Hebrews 13:20, 21*

ARTICLE 6 — ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The leadership of this Church, under Christ as its head, is vested in and by the Board of Elders, responsible to God and elected by the membership to serve Christ and the Church as specified by the Articles and Bylaws herein. The Church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body. The administrative duties of the Church as directed by the Board of Elders may be delegated as appropriate.

Mission Hills Baptist Church is organized as a not for profit corporation as specified in Section 501(C)(3) of the internal revenue code. The Elders shall comprise the Board of Directors of the Corporation.

ARTICLE 7 — MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING RIGHTS

- A. **The Membership:** The membership of Mission Hills Baptist Church of Mission Viejo, California shall consist of all persons whose names appear on the Church Membership Roll.
- B. **Admission to Membership:** Application for membership shall be affirmed by the Board of Elders of the Church and shall become effective:
1. After a public profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and after baptism by immersion in water;
 2. or upon receipt of a Church letter of recommendation for transfer of membership from some other church of like faith and order;
 3. or by statement of the applicant of previous membership in a church of like faith and order;
 4. and after completion of a membership orientation and a personal interview with a designated Church leader, the applicant shall be presented for affirmation.
- C. **Responsibilities of Members:** Members should:
1. Support the basic doctrines of the Church;
 2. Support the Constitution of the Church;
 3. Work with the leadership of the Church;
 4. Honor each other, pray for each other, and teach each other God's truth, thus advancing the ministry of Jesus Christ here and around the world;
 5. Willingly participate in the activities of the church;
 6. Contribute financially in a consistent and sacrificial manner in support of the Church;
 7. Exercise their responsibility to vote on Church matters; and
 8. Inform the Church of a change of address or membership.
- D. **Termination of Membership:** Membership may be terminated by the Board of Elders in the following manner:
1. Upon the death of the member;
 2. Upon issuance of a letter of recommendation for transfer of membership to another church;
 3. Upon a member's personal request in writing that he or she be removed from the roll;
 4. Upon a member's unjustifiable absence for six months and after due notice and effort to reclaim; or
 5. Upon withdrawal of fellowship by the Church from a member as a matter of Church discipline as prescribed in Matthew 18:15-17, I Corinthians 5:1-13, and Galatians 6:1.
- E. **Voting Rights of Members:** On any matter coming before the Church for its determination, each member eighteen (18) years of age and over shall be entitled to one vote in accordance with these Articles and Bylaws.
- F. **Meeting of the Membership:** Worship services, regular and/or special business meetings shall be held at 24162 Alicia Parkway, Mission Viejo, California 92691. Other public activities may be held elsewhere if authorized by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE 8 — FINANCES, CONVEYANCES, AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

The Board of Elders may sell, convey, mortgage, encumber, or otherwise deal with or dispose of real or personal property owned by the Church up to an amount not to exceed 10% of the annual budget on any single transaction or up to 20% on an annual basis. The sale of real property located at 24162 Alicia Parkway will require a vote of the membership. The Board of Elders may evidence any such transaction by deed, bill of sale, mortgage, deed of trust, contract, or other appropriate instrument when such transaction is authorized by appropriate resolutions of the Board of Elders or the Church membership as adopted in accordance with these Articles and Bylaws.

Finance records and reports shall be reviewed annually by an independent public accountant. A formal report is to be issued not more than 90 days after the fiscal year end to the congregation.

ARTICLE 9 — DISPOSITION OF CHURCH PROPERTY

Members of the Church shall have no individual property rights in the corporation, and upon termination of membership shall be entitled to no interest in the assets. The property of this Corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious purposes as specified in Article 3 of this Constitution and no part of the net income or assets of this organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any Director, Officer, or member thereof, or to the benefit of any private person.

In the case of a division within the Church membership, the Church assets shall remain with those members who uphold this Constitution.

Should conditions arise where a consolidation with another church be advisable, the Board of Elders shall negotiate the terms of such a consolidation. A report of such negotiations shall be made to the Church and approval granted by the Church membership before any legal transactions may take place.

Should conditions arise where for any reason the work of the Church cannot continue and the Corporation dissolves, its assets remaining after payment of or provision for payment of all debts and liabilities of this Corporation shall be distributed to the Conservative Baptist Association of Southern California, of Anaheim, California, a non-profit religious corporation, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes and which has established its tax exempt status under Section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. In the event that organization is unable or unwilling to accept the assets of this Corporation, they shall be equally distributed to the Conservative Baptist Association of America, the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society, and the Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society, all of Wheaton, Illinois, whose purposes also are within those specified in Section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

In case of an unresolvable dispute, the parties will agree to accept binding arbitration as determined by a Christian arbitration agency selected by the Conservative Baptist Association of Southern California.

ARTICLE 10 — EFFECTIVE DATE

These Articles and Bylaws shall become effective as of the first day of the calendar month immediately following adoption by the Church. These Articles and Bylaws shall supersede and take effect in lieu of the Articles and Bylaws in effect prior to said date. Additional Articles and Bylaws shall become effective as of the first day of the calendar month immediately following adoption.

ARTICLE 11 — AMENDMENTS

Articles and Bylaws may be amended or superseded at any time by a vote of the Church membership.

BYLAWS

BYLAW A — NAME

The official name of the Church is Mission Hills Baptist Church of Mission Viejo, California. The functional name is Mission Hills Church (DBA filed).

BYLAW B — MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP

1. **Annual Meeting:** The annual meeting and proposed budget review shall occur prior to the end of the fiscal year.
2. **Semiannual Meeting:** The semiannual meeting of the membership shall occur mid fiscal year. Its purpose shall be to provide a forum for the exchange of information between the Board of Elders and the Church membership.
3. **Special Meetings:** A special meeting of the membership may be called by the Board of Elders two weeks after notification of membership of its purpose by mail.

Members wishing to call a meeting of the membership shall utilize the following procedures:

- a. Obtain the support and signatures of ten members of the church.
- b. Present the signatures and written request for a meeting of the membership which states the purpose of the meeting to a member of the Board of Elders.
- c. Within 30 days of the written request, the Board of Elders shall vote on the request. A minimum of one quarter of the Board of Elders will be required in order to approve the request.
- d. If the support of one quarter of the Board of Elders is not obtained, a meeting of the membership and subsequent vote, if required, can then be called by presenting the signatures of 20% of the Church membership to a member of the Board of Elders.

BYLAW C — VOTING

1. The Board of Elders shall determine which matters shall be brought before the congregation for vote except as required in these Articles and Bylaws.
2. A minimum of two weeks notice shall be given by mail.
3. Voting shall occur either before, during or following the regular worship services.
4. Absentee ballots shall be available to those members unable to attend and must be returned to the church prior to the end of the last voting weekend.
5. The use of the secret ballot shall be customary on all matters.
6. The members present during the regular worship services shall constitute a quorum.
7. Voting percentages are as follows:
 - a. Eighty percent (80%) is required for the approval of Elders, Senior Pastor, annual budget, and constitution.
 - b. Two thirds (2/3) is required for approval of all other regular or special issues.

BYLAW D — BOARD OF ELDERS

1. **Qualifications:** Each Elder shall exemplify the qualities of the following Scriptures: I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; and I Peter 5:1-3.
He shall affirm his agreement with the Constitution of the Church and be a member of the Church.

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2. **Selection:** An Elder Nominating Committee shall thoroughly investigate possible candidates. The Nominating Committee will consist of the Senior Pastor, three Elders, and three members from the congregation selected by the Elder Board. The Nominating Committee will be appointed annually by the Board of Elders and will meet throughout the year as required to consider Elder candidates. The process will consist of the following steps:
 - a. The Committee will solicit prospective candidates from the congregation.
 - b. Prospective candidates will be contacted to determine their willingness to serve.
 - c. Each prospective candidate will be evaluated in light of scriptural qualifications.
 - d. The Committee will review each candidate's qualifications and, after prayerfully seeking the leading of the Holy Spirit, vote upon those candidates that they wish to present to the congregation.
 - e. The membership shall vote on each candidate recommended by the Nominating Committee.
 3. **Members:** The Board of Elders shall consist of a minimum of five members. The Senior Pastor shall be a member of The Board of Elders by virtue of his office, but shall not serve as Chairman except under extreme circumstances which shall be communicated to the congregation.
 4. **Term:** With the exception of the Senior Pastor, a member of the Board of Elders shall be elected to office by the vote of the Church membership for a three-year term. At the conclusion of that three-year term, Elders shall be required to leave the Board of Elders for a minimum of one year at which point they are eligible for renomination to the Board of Elders in accordance with procedures stated herein. At the conclusion of his term, each departing Elder is encouraged to continue his ministries and leadership in other areas of service within the Church.
 5. **Responsibilities:** The Board of Elders shall:
 - a. Oversee, in accordance with Scripture, the spiritual welfare of the Church in organizing and developing its strength for the best possible service. Acts 20:28-35; Ephesians 4:11; Titus 1:6-9; I Peter 5: 1-3.
 - b. Select annually from among their number a Chairman;
 - c. Be responsible for the selection of leaders to carry out specific ministries of the Church;
 - d. Authorize the disbursement of monies and annually present the budget to the membership of the church for approval;
 - e. Annually review their calling and effectiveness in the ministry individually and collectively;
 - f. Comprise the Directors of the Corporation, and shall have no individual rights within the corporation;
 - g. Ensure that an annual financial review is conducted.
 6. **Accusations:** No accusation shall be brought against an Elder except on the testimony of at least two members (I Timothy 5:19-21). The matter shall then be taken to the Board of Elders for investigation and resolution. If disciplinary action is required, the Board of Elders shall present the resolution to the congregation (Matthew 18:15-17).

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7. **Termination:** The relationship between an Elder and the Church can be dissolved by either party with thirty (30) days written notice or less than thirty (30) days by mutual consent. Elders shall be terminated from office as follows:
 - a. By voluntary resignation of the Elder;
 - b. By the Elder's withdrawal of membership from the Church;
 - c. By failure to perform the duties of an Elder; or
 - d. By disciplinary action of the Elders of the Church for failure to demonstrate the qualifications of an Elder as specified in I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; and I Peter 5:1-3.

BYLAW E. — THE SENIOR PASTOR

1. **Qualifications:** The Senior Pastor shall exemplify the qualities of I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3. He shall be one who is convinced of his call to the ministry. He shall agree with this Constitution and shall be made a member of this Church upon accepting the call to this pastorate.
2. **Selection:** The Board of Elders shall be responsible for the selection of candidates for the position of Senior Pastor. A special meeting of the membership shall be called to present a candidate. Only one Senior Pastor candidate shall be presented to the membership at any given time. The membership shall vote on each candidate recommended by the Board of Elders.
3. **Duties:** The Senior Pastor's primary responsibilities shall be the teaching and preaching of God's Word, the supervising of the Pastoral Staff, and overseeing all ministries of the Church. There shall be only one Senior Pastor at any given time. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all ministries and committees of the Church.
4. **Accusations:** No accusations shall be brought against the Senior Pastor except on the testimony of at least two members. (I Timothy 5: 19-21). The matter shall then be taken to the Board of Elders for investigation and resolution. If disciplinary action is required, the Board of Elders shall present the resolution to the congregation.
5. **Termination:** If the Senior Pastor desires to resign, three months' notice shall be given in writing, unless waived by mutual consent in writing. Normal compensation shall be continued during the three months unless waived by written mutual consent, or by the Senior Pastor's acceptance of other employment.

If the Board of Elders recommends termination, a special meeting of the membership shall be called. If the membership votes for his termination, normal compensation shall be continued for at least three months unless waived by mutual consent.

BYLAW F — PASTORAL STAFF

1. **Qualifications:** The Pastoral Staff shall exemplify the qualities of I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3. They shall be those who are convinced of their call to the ministry. They shall agree with this Constitution and shall be made members of this Church upon accepting the call to this position.
2. **Selection:** The Board of Elders shall be responsible for the selection of candidates for Pastoral Staff positions. A special meeting of the membership shall be called to present a candidate. The membership shall vote on each candidate recommended by the Board of Elders.

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3. **Duties:** The terms of the call for Pastoral Staff shall be determined by the Board of Elders. The Pastoral Staff shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor or his designates.
 4. **Accusations:** No accusation shall be brought against a member of the Pastoral Staff except on the testimony of at least two members (I Timothy 5:19-21). The matter shall then be taken to the Board of Elders for investigation and resolution. If disciplinary action is required, the Board of Elders shall present the resolution to the congregation (Matthew 18:15-17).
 5. **Termination:** Termination shall be determined by the Board of Elders. If termination is decided upon, severance shall be based on a minimum of one month's salary for each year of service up to a limit of three (3) months.

BYLAW G — THE MINISTRY STAFF

The Board of Elders may call various ministry staff. The ministry staff shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor or his designates. They shall be in full accord with the statement of faith and shall become Church members upon accepting the call to serve.

The Senior Pastor shall recommend Ministry Staff candidates for approval by the Board of Elders. The term of their call and termination shall be determined by the Board of Elders.

BYLAW H — GENERAL STAFF

In order to accomplish the work of the church, other workers may be employed as necessary. The Senior Pastor shall approve all general staff. Their terms of employment and termination shall be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor or his designates.

BYLAW I — MINISTRIES

The various areas of supporting ministries shall be organized in such a manner as to best serve the needs of the church, as determined by the Board of Elders. Members of the Church shall be called upon and be responsible to serve in various capacities within these ministries, enabling the pastoral staff to assume a more supervisory role.