

# **MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

*In all things, love for God and love for each other shall be our guiding principle.<sup>1</sup>*

## **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this church shall be Mountain Bible Church of Livingston, Montana.

## **ARTICLE II - AFFILIATION**

This church shall maintain its independence from any denominational affiliation. It may, however, associate with organizations for the purposes of accreditation, fellowship, and service.

## **ARTICLE III - PURPOSES**

- I. EXALTATION- The highest calling of the church is to exalt and lift up its Creator and Redeemer, thus to become a worshipping community.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the ultimate purpose of the church is the worship of the One who called it into being.<sup>3</sup> The following two purposes (Edification and Evangelism) flow from the first and are the means of exaltation through obedience to our God.
- II. EDIFICATION- Edification includes (a) teaching the historical and fundamental truths of God's Word, (b) building up the body of Christ until we all come to the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and (c) providing an environment in which Christian fellowship may encourage the saints in their faith.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 John 4:7-12.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 96; John 4:23; 1 Peter 2:9-10.

<sup>3</sup> Ephesians 4:1-6.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 2:42; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 2:1-4; Hebrews 10:19-25.

III. EVANGELISM- The church is called to participate in world missions by training and encouraging believers to have effective local outreach as well as extended outreach.<sup>5</sup> The church is a witnessing community that is God's chosen method for sharing Christ with the lost.<sup>6</sup> Man's greatest need is to be reconciled with God through Christ, and the lost need to hear the truth of the Gospel.<sup>7</sup> This is the responsibility of every believer.

## ARTICLE IV- CHURCH OFFICERS

### Section 1. Church Leadership

#### A. Church Leadership shall be:

1. Elders<sup>8</sup>
2. Deacons<sup>9</sup>

B. The Church Leadership shall be members of this church for at least one year who qualify by the New Testament standard for biblical leadership.<sup>10</sup> They shall embrace the Statement of Faith.

#### C. Elders

1. Elders shall serve as willing shepherds of the church exercising oversight, especially in matters related to the biblical fidelity of the church, and are primarily responsible for the spiritual well-being of the congregation.
2. Elder Candidate Process
  - a. Elder candidates shall be identified by the Church Leadership.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Matthew 24:14, 28:19-20; Acts 1:8.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 5:13-16

<sup>7</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:16-21.

<sup>8</sup> Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Timothy 3:1; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-2. Elders are referred to interchangeably as “overseers,” “shepherds,” “pastors” throughout the New Testament.

<sup>9</sup> Acts 6:1-6; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8. The Greek word *diakonos* (“servant” or “minister”) is used throughout the New Testament as a both a general reference to servants of the church and as a reference to a special office of servant-leaders chosen to assist the elders and care for the congregation.

<sup>10</sup> See 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 for the qualifications of elder leadership. See 1 Timothy 3:8-13 for the qualifications of deacon leadership.

<sup>11</sup> 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 1:5.

- b. Elder candidates shall commit to a period of regular and intentional mentoring with a current elder(s) of the church. These meetings shall be structured to ensure the candidates meet the biblical qualifications for eldership and are trained in needed areas to serve effectively in their role.
- c. After this period of mentoring, elder candidates shall be presented to the church congregation, who shall then have two weeks to express any concerns to the Church Leadership regarding the candidate.
- d. Elder candidates shall then be publicly confirmed as an elder by the Church Leadership.

#### D. Deacons

- 1. Deacons shall primarily assist the elders and serve the church by caring for the congregation and addressing the logistical and practical needs of the church.
- 2. Deacon Nomination Process
  - a. As often as the need arises, the Church Leadership will lead the congregation in a nomination process for installing new deacons.
  - b. The congregation will submit the names of nominees, as well as their reasoning for nominating them.
  - c. Deacon nominees will be evaluated and confirmed by the Church Leadership according to the biblical qualifications for deacons.

- E. When the need arises that a new pastor should be called to serve the church, the elders shall be and/or form the pastor search committee to decide on a suitable candidate.<sup>12</sup> The pastor(s) shall serve as an elder of the church and shall qualify by the New Testament standard for biblical eldership and embrace the Statement of Faith.
- F. Church Leadership shall be expected to continue to exhibit their faithfulness to the biblical qualifications for their role. As servant-leaders who follow the model of Christ and exemplify Christlikeness for the congregation, elders and deacons are responsible to God and the congregation for the faithful fulfillment of their roles and will work together in prayerful dependency on the Spirit to equip the congregation for the work of ministry.

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<sup>12</sup> 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 1:5.

## Section 2. Other Church Officers and Ministry Teams

- A. Other Church Officers and Ministry Teams shall be appointed by the Church Leadership.
- B. All Bible teachers, Officers, and Ministry Team participants shall be selected from among the members of the church.

## **ARTICLE V- CHURCH LEADERSHIP PLAN**

### Section 1. Church Leadership Meetings

The Church Leadership shall meet once a month to discern the Lord's will for the church and to pray for the body. The Church Leadership shall seek to be sensitive to the congregation's needs, concerns, and ideas on a continual basis and together pray for God's leading and will for the church.

### Section 2. Decision-Making

- A. While most decisions related to the day-to-day operation and effective ministry of the church shall be made by the Church Leadership with the recommendations of the Church Officers and/or Ministry Teams, the Church Leadership may determine that certain issues (e.g., major financial decisions, changes to the constitution, addition of church staff, etc.) need to be brought before the entire church to ensure the congregation is on board with the decision under discussion.
- B. After the issue is presented to the church, the congregation shall have two weeks to provide feedback to the Church Leadership.
- C. This feedback shall then be prayerfully considered and discussed by the Church Leadership.
- D. If the elders are in unanimous agreement, a decision shall be made. Otherwise, the elders and other Church Leadership, Officers, and/or Ministry Teams involved in the issue shall commit to a season of continued prayer and discussion about the issue until a consensus among the elders can be reached.

### Section 3. Guiding Principle

The body shall pray for the Church Leadership as they lead the church in God's will. IN ALL THINGS LOVE FOR GOD AND LOVE FOR EACH OTHER SHALL BE OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLE. As we submit to one another in the Lord, clothed in humility, and with a servant's heart, we desire to do all things to the glory of God.<sup>13</sup> So, truly and in practice, Jesus Christ is our Head and leads us by His Word, through His Spirit, and always in love.<sup>14</sup>

## ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP

*“Every Member is a Minister.”<sup>15</sup>*

### Section 1. Purpose

According to scripture a member of a local church is actually a minister. Each of us is a priest and a servant of Jesus Christ and, as such, we are to minister to one another in love to advance the Kingdom of God. Therefore, Membership is a commitment of love to serve God and others through this local church.<sup>16</sup>

### Section 2. Requirements

Members of Mountain Bible Church shall be persons who:

- A. are born-again believers who publicly profess personal faith in Jesus Christ alone as Savior,<sup>17</sup>
- B. give evidence of a regenerate life,<sup>18</sup>
- C. do not want to merely be spectators but who desire to actively minister to further the Kingdom of God until He returns,
- D. embrace the Statement of Faith of Mountain Bible Church,
- E. attend a membership class of Mountain Bible Church and meet with an elder, and

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<sup>13</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:23-33.

<sup>14</sup> Ephesians 4:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Galatians 5:16-26; 1 John 4:7-21.

<sup>15</sup> Ephesians 4:12.

<sup>16</sup> Matthew 20:28; Hebrews 6:10; 1 Peter 2:5; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, 9:10-15; Ephesians 4:12; Galatians 5:13; Philippians 2:4-5.

<sup>17</sup> Romans 10:9-10.

<sup>18</sup> Galatians 5:22-26.

F. are recommended for membership by the elders.

#### **ARTICLE VII- DISSOLUTION**

In the event of the dissolution of Mountain Bible Church, the assets of the church shall be distributed by the Church Leadership to another non-profit organization(s) of similar doctrine and purpose.

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