

PROPOSAL



**CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS
of
THE MOUNT CHURCH
Stafford, Virginia**

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Version 2.0**

**THE MOUNT CHURCH
CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS**

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THE MOUNT CHURCH CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

We, the members of *The Mount Church*, humbly acknowledging the sovereign grace and infinite wisdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, striving to be obedient to His will as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, recognizing the need for unity, order, discipline, and mutual support within our fellowship, and seeking to glorify God through our worship, service, and witness to the world, do hereby unite in the common purpose of establishing this Constitution and Bylaws. (John 17:20-23; 1 Corinthians 14:40; Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Psalm 29:2; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Matthew 5:14-16)

ARTICLE 1. NAME OF THE CHURCH

As committed disciples of Jesus Christ, this body of believers shall be incorporated as a nonprofit Virginia Church corporation known as *Mount Ararat Baptist Church* and will conduct business under the name *The Mount Church*. The corporation will be referred to in this Constitution and Bylaws as the “Church.” A gathering of Church members who meet for worship at a particular location will be referred to as a “congregation,” and the physical location where they meet will be referred to as a “campus.” Congregations and campuses of *The Mount Church* are commonly referred to as *The Mount* followed by a location name. Congregations that primarily communicate in a language other than English will refer to their campus and congregation using a translated version of *The Mount* (e.g., *El Monte*). While congregations may gather in different locations, they are all united as a single body of believers forming one unified Church.

ARTICLE 2. PURPOSE AND POSTURE OF THE CHURCH

The Church exists to glorify God by loving Him, loving one another, and making his name known among all people. The teachings of Jesus embodied in the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) provide the foundation of our ministry. We seek to glorify God, disciple believers, and reach the lost, thereby building a community where people can grow in their faith and live out the teachings of Christ.

God's deep and abiding love for all people is the cornerstone of Jesus' teaching, shaping our relationships with one another and guiding how we live out our faith. As Scripture teaches, we are called to love our neighbors as ourselves, extending kindness and compassion to everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances (Mark 12:31). In

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keeping with this command, we open our doors and hearts to all who seek to join us in worship and community. We strive to be a welcoming and hospitable Church, reflecting the love of Christ by inviting others into fellowship, just as He welcomed and ate with sinners (Luke 15:1-2).

While we welcome all with open arms, we also recognize that true love involves speaking the Truth and guiding one another toward a life that honors God. Scripture calls us to repentance, urging us to turn away from sin and embrace the transformative power of God through the Gospel (Romans 1:16-17). We believe that part of our responsibility as a Church is to lovingly address beliefs and lifestyles that are not in keeping with the teachings of Jesus and are contrary to God's will. This is done not out of judgment, but out of a desire to see all people experience the fullness of life that comes through repentance and faith in Christ (John 8:11).

In balancing love and truth, we are committed to welcoming everyone into our community while steadfastly upholding the biblical standards that guide our faith. We recognize the need for discernment, as some widely accepted beliefs and lifestyles may contradict the clear teachings of God's Word (1 Corinthians 5:11). Therefore, while we extend a warm welcome to all, we remain unwavering in our commitment to biblical truth and in encouraging one another to live in accordance with Christ's teachings. In doing so, we strive to foster a community where love, truth, and grace coexist, leading us all toward spiritual growth and deeper fellowship with God (Ephesians 4:15).

ARTICLE 3. STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

The Statement of Beliefs affirms and articulates the foundational truths that guide our faith and unify us as a church. The Church provides doctrinal teaching that embraces, extends, and clarifies the tenets of this Statement, and members are expected to affirm these teachings and refrain from promoting contrary doctrine as a condition of membership.

The Bible

We believe the Bible is God's Word to all people (Deuteronomy 4:1-2), revealing the true story of God, humanity, sin, redemption, and reconciliation (2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 1:1-2). Scripture consists of sixty-six books: thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and twenty-seven books of the New Testament. Inspired by God, the Bible is the ultimate source of truth. It is infallible, authoritative, without error in the original writings, and wholly relevant for daily living. (Proverbs 30:5; Psalm 119:11, 89, 105; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

God

We believe in one eternal God who exists as three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is fully God, yet there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Acts 5:3-4; John 1:1-

3; Isaiah 9:6). God is sovereign over all things, seen and unseen, and created all things for His glory (Isaiah 43:7; Jeremiah 10:12; Colossians 1:15-20).

The Father

We believe God the Father is the Creator of heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1). He is all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present, unchanging, and entirely worthy of our trust (Jeremiah 10:12). The Father is holy, loving, compassionate, and faithful to His people, keeping every promise. (1 John 4:8; Romans 5:8; Psalm 103:8). He planned redemption and sent His son into the world to accomplish His purpose (John 3:16; Galatians 4:4; Ephesians 1:9-10).

The Son

We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 3:18). In obedience to the Father, He secured redemption for humanity, revealing God's love and upholding divine justice through His sacrificial death (John 6:38; Hebrews 10:10). By removing the guilt of sin, He restored humanity to a right relationship with God (Romans 8:33-39). After His resurrection, He ascended to heaven and will one day return to earth to reign as King (Philippians 2:9-11; Matthew 24:30-31)

The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is present in the world to reveal humanity's need for Jesus (John 15:26; John 16:8-11; 1 Corinthians 12:3). He unites believers to Jesus Christ through faith, dwelling within them from the moment of conversion (Ephesians 4:3). The Holy Spirit empowers Christians for righteous living, grants understanding of spiritual truth, and guides them to live according to God's will (Romans 8:4; Galatians 5:16; John 14:26). He convicts people of sin (John 16:8), provides comfort (John 14:26), bestows spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), intercedes on their behalf (Romans 8:26), and shapes believers to become more like Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Human Beings

We believe God created human beings, male and female, in His image to rule over all things on earth in a perfect relationship with Him (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 8:3-8). Humanity is the pinnacle of God's creation; from conception, each person is made to reflect His character and purpose. The first two human beings, Adam and Eve, were created to complement each other in a one-flesh union, establishing the model for a perfect relationship and the only normative context for marriage, with sexual relations confined to that union (Genesis 2:24). By their own choice, Adam and Eve sinned, bringing the curse upon humanity, resulting in lifelong hardship and eternal separation from God (Genesis 3:14-19; Ephesians 2:1-3). From that time forward, every person has lived with the effects of sin and its consequences (Isaiah 59:2-15; Romans 3:10, 23; Colossians 1:21; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Salvation

We believe that salvation is entirely a work of God's free grace, not based in whole or in part on human works, goodness, religious ceremonies, or status (Ephesians 2:8-9). By acknowledging that we are sinners in need of a Savior, we receive God's gift of grace, confessing with our mouths and believing in our hearts that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He alone atones for our sins. (Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:68-69; John 1:12, 3:16; Acts 2:21; Romans 10:9-10, 13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4). In Christ, we become new creations; we exchange our sins for His righteousness, receive eternal life, a restored relationship with God, and the assurance of being freed from condemnation (Isaiah 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:20).

The Church

We believe that by His Word and by His Spirit, God created the universal Church – the body of all believers – calling sinful people into fellowship with Himself (Ephesians 4:4-6). The Church is not a religious institution or denomination; rather, it is the body of Christ, made up of those who follow Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:12-13). The Church exists to worship and serve God by doing His will and has been called to preach the gospel and make disciples to transform the world (Matthew 28:18-20). The Holy Spirit has equipped the Church to nurture maturity and growth in its people (1 Corinthians 12:7). Every member of the body of Christ is to be a vital, committed part of a local church, equipped for ministry to one another and to the world (Romans 12:1-8).

Last Things

We believe that, as revealed in His Word, God will bring this world to an end at His appointed time. (2 Peter 3:7-10). Jesus Christ will fulfill His promise to return physically to earth in glory (John 14:1-3). At that time, the dead will be raised, and Jesus will judge all people in righteousness (1 Thessalonians 4:16). According to Scripture, each person will receive their due reward for what they have done on Earth: the righteous, based solely on their faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, will dwell forever with the Lord in heaven in resurrected and glorified bodies, while the unrighteous, having rejected God's provision for their sins, will face eternal separation from God in hell, a place of eternal punishment (2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:9).

ARTICLE 4. ORDINANCES

Ordinances. The Church observes the ordinances of baptism and communion. An ordinance is a practice established by Jesus that reflects some aspect of our personal relationship with Him and the completeness of His atoning work in our lives. While neither of these ordinances is a requirement for salvation, our participation in them reflects an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual truth. Therefore, both ordinances are reserved for people who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior.

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1. **Baptism.** The term baptism refers to a believer's baptism by immersion. Baptism is a public confession of faith – it presents an opportunity for a believer to confess before others that Jesus is Lord and Savior (Matthew 10:32-33). Jesus ordained baptism as a step of discipleship (Matthew 28:18-20), and through baptism we follow the example Jesus set for us (Matthew 3:13-15). Baptism symbolizes our personal identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (Romans 6:4-5).

2. **Communion.** Jesus instituted the ordinance of communion to remind us how He secured our salvation. Communion is a sacred, symbolic act that demands prayerful, introspective reflection, repentance, and a commitment to a lifestyle of deepening devotion, faith, obedience, gratitude, and service (1 Corinthians 11:27-28). It commemorates the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross. Jesus died for us; the bread symbolizes the body of Christ (Luke 22:19) and the cup symbolizes the New Covenant – our reconciliation with God by His grace, through our faith, and secured by the blood of Jesus (Luke 22:20; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19,21). Communion celebrates the fellowship of a diverse community, redeemed by Christ and unified into one body through His sacrifice (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).

ARTICLE 5. COVENANT COMMUNITY

Humbly acknowledging that we serve a faithful God who makes and keeps His covenants, we joyfully and resolutely enter into a Covenant Community with one another.

We commit by God's grace and through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit to live our lives in keeping with the truth of the Gospel (Galatians 2:14), continually repenting of our sin (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5) and walking by faith in the “newness of life” (Romans 6:1-14; Ephesians 4:23-24; Colossians 3:9-10).

We commit to caring for and promoting both the purpose and unity of the Church through:

- Regular attendance (Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:24-25)
- Community and private prayer (Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17)
- Service to the ministry of the Church (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- Financial giving (Malachi 3:10; 2 Corinthians 8:3-9, 9:6-11)
- Submission to the spiritual authority of the Church Elders (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:17)

We commit to building personal, nurturing relationships with one another, thereby fulfilling the many “one another” commands found throughout the New Testament:

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- Cultivating a deep and sincere love for one another by expressing affection and kindness in our personal interactions (John 13:34, 15:12, 15:17; Romans 13:8, 16:16; 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 4:9; 1 John 3:11, 4:7, 4:11; 1 Peter 1:22, 5:14; 2 John 1:5)
- Humbling ourselves in service to one another by sharing our burdens and providing support in times of need (John 13:14; Galatians 5:13, 6:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:15)
- Building unity and harmony with one another by valuing each other, promoting peace in all our relationships, and forgiving one another as the Lord has forgiven us. (Mark 9:50; John 6:43; Romans 12:10, 12:16, 14:13, 14:19, 15:7; 2 Corinthians 13:12; Galatians 5:15; Ephesians 4:2, 4:32; Colossians 3:13)
- Encouraging and guiding one another in faith by offering wisdom, instruction, and mutual correction as we grow together in Christ (Romans 14:19; Romans 15:5, 15:14; Colossians 3:16)
- Cultivating an environment of trust and transparency by speaking honestly and truthfully with one another (Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9; James 4:11, 5:9, 5:16)
- Engaging in meaningful fellowship with one another by building a strong community through shared experiences and mutual support (1 Corinthians 11:33, 12:25, 16:20; Hebrews 10:24, 13:16; 1 John 1:7; Philippians 2:3)
- Encouraging and uplifting one another by fostering spiritual growth and resilience to deal with life's challenges (2 Corinthians 13:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11; Hebrews 3:13; Ephesians 5:19, 5:21)

We commit to passionately participate in God's kingdom-building mission by serving, influencing, and evangelizing the lost people and communities around us (Matthew 9:36-38, 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 9:19-22).

ARTICLE 6. MEMBERSHIP

1. Purpose of Membership. Membership in the Church is a voluntary expression of a believer's desire to join the Covenant Community (Article 5) and commit to the mission and ministry of the Church. While everyone is welcome to attend the Church and participate in various ministries without the expectation of becoming a member, membership is required for certain leadership positions and participation in the governance of the Church.

2. Qualifications and Procedures for Membership. To become a member of the Church, applicants must:

- a. Be at least 18 years of age, or at least 16 years of age with the consent of a parent or legal guardian.
- b. Publicly profess their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- c. Be baptized as a believer by immersion.

- d. Be living as an active, repentant disciple of Jesus Christ.
- e. Complete new member teaching and any other requirements specified by the Church.
- f. Meet with an Elder or Elder designee to affirm their commitment to the mission, values, and doctrinal statements of the Church.
- g. Sign a covenant card signifying entry into the Covenant Community.

3. Privileges and Expectations of Members. Membership embodies the mutual responsibilities inherent in a covenant relationship – a bond that carries both privileges and expectations. This mutually supportive relationship strengthens the bonds that unite our community and reinforces the core doctrines and biblical truths that define the Church. For members under the age of 18, any matters related to Church discipline, the extent and exercise of membership privileges, or other significant decisions involving the Church will include the active participation and consent of their parent or legal guardian to safeguard the member's well-being and promote parental involvement.

a. Privileges of Members

1) **Serving in Leadership and Volunteer Positions.** Membership is required for certain leadership and volunteer roles to ensure that those in leadership are fully committed to the church's mission and values. The Executive Staff will evaluate volunteer roles and determine which positions are limited to members within their ministry areas.

2) **Participation in Church Governance.** Members may participate in the governance of the Church by nominating other members to serve on the Board of Elders and voting on proposals presented in Members' Meetings.

b. Expectations of Members. Members should actively support the entire Church program, demonstrate a deep commitment to selflessly serving the Church body and embrace the commitments that bind the Covenant Community.

4. Accountability and Discipline of Members. Scripture emphasizes the importance of mutual accountability among believers, details the steps for addressing ongoing sinful behavior, and underscores the necessity of imposing discipline on members who persist in unrepentant sin to maintain the purity and unity of the Church (Matthew 18:15-17).

a. Private Meeting. Members hold each other accountable. If a member becomes aware of another member engaging in persistent, unrepentant sin, they are expected to address the issue privately and discreetly to provide an opportunity to repent in a confidential setting.

b. Meeting with Witnesses. If the initial, private meeting does not lead to repentance, reengage with one or two other members present to provide additional perspective and support. This step can help the sinning member understand the seriousness of their actions through the eyes of others and provide witnesses to the conversation. If repentance occurs, the issue is resolved.

c. Elders' Involvement. If the member continues to resist repentance, the issue is to be brought to the Elders. The Elders will formally address the sin, providing guidance and support, and mobilizing community prayer for the member's restoration. If the member repents, reconciliation can occur. If the member continues to resist, the Elders may implement disciplinary measures, including suspension from certain Church activities or privileges, public notification of the transgression to the Church, or removal from membership. The goal is to foster repentance and restoration while also protecting the integrity and unity of the Church.

5. Resolution of Disputes. The Church is dedicated to fostering unity, peace, and mutual respect among its members. When a dispute arises between members or between members and the Church, they must make every effort to resolve the issue in a manner that honors God, adheres to biblical teaching, and is handled discreetly, protecting the dignity and reputation of all parties involved. Members are called to approach conflicts with humility, forgiveness, and love, following the guidance of Scripture, and are discouraged from pursuing legal action against one another or the Church. Instead, they are encouraged to seek resolution within the Church framework, trusting in the spiritual guidance and wisdom of the Church leadership. If a dispute cannot be resolved through personal conversation, members must involve one or two trusted witnesses to mediate, ensuring the matter is addressed impartially and with a spirit of reconciliation. If further assistance is needed, the matter may be brought before the Elders for counsel and guidance, always seeking a biblical resolution (1 Corinthians 6:1-8).

6. Termination of Membership. Membership can be terminated by members if they join another church or notify the Church of their desire to end membership for any reason. The Church may also terminate membership as a result of Church discipline, extended periods of inactivity or nonengagement, or failure to comply with the Expectations of Members (Article 6, 3.b.).

ARTICLE 7. CHURCH GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

1. Governance. The Church's leadership framework establishes a system for decision-making, defines roles and responsibilities, upholds the Church's mission and values, and ensures compliance with legal requirements and biblical truths. This framework is

designed to maintain order, foster transparency, and guide the Church toward achieving its goals while ensuring accountability to its members.

2. Plurality of Elders. The Church is governed by a group of Elders who act as both the spiritual leaders and guardians of the Church, as well as corporate officers overseeing the Church's legal and financial matters. This system shares final authority and decision-making responsibilities among a group of godly men nominated by and representing the members.

a. Organization – The Board of Elders and the Board of Directors. The Elders are formally organized as both the Board of Elders and the Board of Directors. Since Church matters often cross between spiritual and corporate issues, distinguishing between the two Boards is generally unnecessary. In this Constitution and Bylaws, both boards are referred to as the “Elders” or the “Board.” Whenever specificity is required, the terms “Board of Elders” and “Board of Directors” will be used. It is in their capacity as the Board of Directors that the Elders make decisions involving the Church's financial, budgetary, and legal matters.

b. Authority, Roles, and Responsibilities of the Elders

1) Authority. With the consent of the members and under the leadership of Christ, who is the head of the Church, the Elders hold final earthly authority on all matters concerning the operation, direction, mission, and vision of the Church (Colossians 1:18, 1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:17).

2) Operational Oversight and Staff Empowerment. While the Elders exercise ultimate authority on all Church matters, their role is not to exert control over the routine operations and programs of the Church. Instead, the Elders empower the Church staff, led by the Lead Pastor, to organize, manage, and direct all activities in support of the Church's ministries. The Elders provide spiritual oversight, guidance, and support to ensure the Church remains focused on its mission and aligned with its core values and theological principles. This model balances the proactive leadership of the staff, who manage the practical aspects of Church operations, with the wise guardianship of the Elders, who uphold its spiritual and doctrinal integrity. Together, they create a structure that combines organizational efficiency with a commitment to the spiritual well-being of the Church's members.

3) Spiritual Guardianship. The Elders have sole authority in addressing doctrinal disputes, issues related to the Church's Statement of Beliefs, the practical application of those beliefs, and administering biblical discipline.

4) **Corporate Officers.** The Elders serve as the corporate officers and voting members of the Church's Board of Directors. The Chairman of the Board may appoint non-Elders to serve as non-voting members of the Board of Directors. As the Church's corporate officers, the Elders focus on the financial, budgetary, and legal aspects of Church operations.

c. **Composition of the Board.** The Board comprises the Lead Pastor and at least four (4) lay Elders who are members of the Church. The Board determines the number of lay Elder positions on the Board and may adjust as needed to address the emerging needs of the Church; however, there must always be at least four (4) lay Elder positions. Lay Elders may not be employed by the Church or directly related to paid staff of the Church or any of its subsidiaries.

d. **Officers of the Board.** The officers include the Chairman of the Board, the President, the Secretary of the Board, and the Church Treasurer. The Board may establish additional officers as needed.

1) **Chairman of the Board.** The Chairman of the Board directs the Board's actions, leads its meetings, and ensures compliance with the Constitution and Bylaws. Additionally, the Chairman collaborates with the President to set the agenda and coordinate efforts to meet the Church's needs. The Chairman also serves as the Vice President, assuming the President's duties and responsibilities in his absence. With input from Board members, the Chairman appoints the Board's Officers. At the beginning of each new term, the Board selects a lay Elder to serve as Chairman.

2) **President of The Board.** The Lead Pastor serves as the President of the Board and acts as the Church's chief administrative and operations officer. In this role, the President is responsible for implementing the Board's decisions and ensuring effective coordination between the Board and the Church staff. As the sole Elder serving an indefinite term, the President provides continuity of vision and effort for the Board.

3) **Secretary of the Board.** The Secretary is responsible for performing the primary administrative duties of the Board, including coordinating the agenda for meetings, recording minutes and decisions, documenting special actions or meetings (such as members' meetings), and tracking the status of open issues. At the first meeting of each new term, the Chairman appoints the Secretary of the Board.

4) **Church Treasurer (Board of Directors).** The Treasurer plays a key role in ensuring financial transparency, accountability, and the proper use of church funds by providing quarterly financial reports to the Board, offering guidance on financial planning and strategy, and presenting an annual financial report to the members or at other times as

directed by the Board. Article 9 of this Constitution and Bylaws details the responsibilities of the Treasurer. At the first meeting of each new term, the Chairman appoints the Church Treasurer.

e. **Qualifications of an Elder.** Elders must be men who are members in good standing, and who demonstrate the following qualifications for an Elder (1 Timothy 3:1–7, Titus 1:6–9).

- **Worthy of Respect** – Admirable, held in high esteem, exemplary, and humble.
- **Sincere** – Heartfelt, earnest, honest, and authentic.
- **Not Indulging in Much Wine** – Free from addictions, self-controlled in all aspects of life.
- **Not Pursuing Dishonest Gain** – Not greedy, financially content, upright in all dealings.
- **Theologically Sound** – Holding to sound biblical theology with deep conviction and the ability to defend the faith.
- **Able to Teach** – Competent in instructing biblical truths with clarity and wisdom.
- **Tested** – Proven worthy over time through experience and consistent character, especially in challenging situations.
- **Husband of One Wife** – Sexually pure and faithful.
- **Family Man** – Manages his minor children and household well; a godly husband and father who leads, manages, and provides for his family.
- **Hospitable** – Welcoming, open, and generous to others, especially strangers.
- **Self-Controlled** – Disciplined in emotions, actions, and thoughts.
- **Gentle and Not Quick-Tempered** – Patient, kind, and not prone to anger or violence.

f. **Selection of the Lay Elders.** The Board oversees the Elder selection process.

1) **Elder Nominations to the Board.** Any member who believes another member meets the qualifications to serve as an Elder may nominate him to the Board.

2) **Examination of Candidates and Board Affirmation.** After prayerful consideration and thorough examination of each candidate, the Board presents a single nominee for each open position to the members. The nominee(s) must be announced at least four weeks before the scheduled appointment date, allowing time for members to prayerfully consider and provide feedback to the Board. If the Board determines there are no disqualifying objections to the nominee(s), it will affirm and commission the new Elder(s) before appointment to the Board.

g. Lay Elders' Term of Service

1) **Alignment and Rotation.** Lay Elders' term of service will align with Church's fiscal year and in a way that approximately one-fourth (1/4), not to exceed one-third (1/3) of the Elder terms expire every year.

2) **Duration.** Lay Elders serve as members of the Board for a four-year term which ends with the affirmation and installment of a replacement Elder.

3) **Vacancies and Partial Term Elder Appointments.** If a mid-term vacancy arises on the Board, the Board may unanimously appoint an inactive Elder who has been off the Board for at least one year to fill the vacancy. Elders appointed to fill a mid-term vacancy will serve out the abbreviated term in order to maintain rotational balance on the Board. If an inactive Elder is not available to fill the vacancy through the end of the term, the Board will initiate the Elder selection process within thirty (30) days of the vacancy.

4) **Consecutive Term Prohibition.** Lay Elders may not serve for more than a single four-year term without taking a one-year sabbatical before becoming eligible for nomination and reappointment. Elders appointed to fill a mid-term vacancy must take a one-year sabbatical at the conclusion of the abbreviated term before becoming eligible for reappointment to a full term.

5) **Inactive Elder Status.** When an Elder's term expires, he becomes an inactive Elder and remains in that role as long as he is a member of the Church or removed from Elder status by the Board. Inactive Elders remain available to assist the Board and serve the Church when needed.

h. Resignation or Removal of a Lay Elder

1) **Resignation.** A lay Elder may at any time submit his intent to resign in writing to the Chairman of the Board or the President. The resignation will be effective upon acceptance of the resignation by the Board.

2) **Removal.** Any circumstance that renders an Elder unable to meet the qualifications of an Elder or fulfill his responsibilities to the Church may warrant removal. If the other members of the Board determine that an Elder is no longer qualified or able to serve, they may remove the Elder by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote.

i. **Compensation for Lay Board Members.** No salary or compensation shall be paid to any lay Board member in his capacity as a Board member. However, this does not preclude a Board member from performing a service for the Church in another capacity

and receiving reasonable compensation for that service. Additionally, Board members may be reimbursed for travel, meals, and other approved expenses upon providing a request with written documentation.

3. **Lead Pastor.** The Church shall have a Lead Pastor who serves as the primary spiritual and administrative leader of the Church.

a. **Responsibilities of the Lead Pastor**

1) **Spiritual Leadership.** Provide spiritual leadership to the Elders, the Church staff, and the people of the Church. Oversee the administration of the ordinances of baptism and communion.

2) **Teaching and Preaching.** Proclaim the Gospel and teach the Word of God so that the people of the Church grow in their understanding of Scripture and deepen their relationship with God.

3) **Discipleship.** Foster a culture of discipleship by developing and implementing programs that encourage spiritual growth, mentorship, and accountability among members, equipping them to live out their faith in practical ways.

4) **Evangelizing.** Inspire and mobilize the Church to share the Gospel with others, providing training and resources for effective outreach and engagement with the community, thereby fulfilling the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations.

5) **Spiritual Care.** Oversee the pastoral care ministry to ensure the people of the Church receive appropriate spiritual support and guidance.

6) **Vision Casting.** Articulate the Church's vision and collaborate with Church leaders to set strategic goals that align with the Church's mission and values.

7) **Administrative Leadership.** Serve as the administrative head of the Church by directing, supporting, and mentoring Church staff, and providing oversight of all Church ministries.

8) **Financial Management.** Oversee the management and execution of the Church's finances, ensuring that funds are utilized in alignment with the Church's mission, values, and budgetary guidelines.

b. Lead Pastor Vacancy and Selection Process. The Board oversees the selection process for the Lead Pastor. The Church staff will announce the vacancy and engage in a search process at the direction of the Board.

1) Appointment of an Interim Lead Pastor. Within thirty days of a Lead Pastor vacancy, the Board will appoint an Interim Lead Pastor who meets the qualifications of an Elder and will serve as the President of the Board. During the period before the appointment of the Interim Lead Pastor, the Chairman of the Board will perform the duties of the President of the Board and serve as the primary spiritual and administrative leader of the Church. Upon appointment, the Interim Lead Pastor will focus on stewarding the Church by coordinating the efforts of the Board and the staff during the search for a Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor Search Committee will not consider the Interim Lead Pastor as a candidate for Lead Pastor. The Interim Lead Pastor will continue in the role until a new Lead Pastor is appointed or until he is released by the Board.

2) Lead Pastor Search Committee. When the Lead Pastor position becomes vacant, the Board will select and appoint members of the Church to serve on a Lead Pastor Search Committee. The committee may include both staff and non-staff members; however, only non-staff members have voting rights in advancing nominees. The committee will include a diverse representation of the Church community, with no fewer than seven (7) and no more than nine (9) voting members. If the number of voting members falls below seven (7) for any reason, the Board will appoint additional members to restore the committee to its required size. The Board will designate either an Active or Inactive Elder to serve as the Committee Chairman. The committee will remain active until either disbanded by the Board or the installation of a new Lead Pastor.

3) Search Committee Duties. The Search Committee will evaluate candidates based on the guidelines set by the Board. The Search Committee Chairman will oversee the vetting process within the committee and present nominees to the Board for further consideration. The Chairman will appoint a secretary to perform administrative tasks and keep records of the committee's actions.

4) Search Committee Nomination and Board Approval. The committee will nominate one candidate at a time to the Board for consideration. Once the Board approves a candidate for nomination to the members of the Church, the Chairman of the Board will schedule a Members' Meeting to present the nominee to the members.

5) Members' Meeting and Voting. Members will be given at least four weeks' notice prior to the Members' Meeting to prayerfully consider the nominee. Approval to call a Lead Pastor into service will require an affirmative vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of the members present and voting. Voting will be conducted by secret ballot.

c. **Lead Pastor Term of Service.** The Lead Pastor will serve until resignation, removal, or death.

d. **Termination of the Lead Pastor**

1) **Resignation.** The Lead Pastor may at any time submit his intent to resign in writing to the Chairman of the Board. Termination will be effective upon acceptance of the resignation by the Board.

2) **Removal.** The removal of a Lead Pastor is a serious and highly consequential decision that requires sensitivity, discernment, and adherence to biblical principles. If the Board determines that the Lead Pastor's conduct is immoral, egregiously improper, or harmful to the unity and vision of the Church, the Board may terminate his employment by unanimous affirmative vote of the lay Elders.

4. **Staff.** The Church shall have a staff that actively advances its mission and vision by managing day-to-day operations, leading transformative programs and ministries, and providing vital administrative and logistical support, ensuring that every aspect of Church life is conducted with excellence and in alignment with the Church's spiritual goals.

a. **Staff Organization.** The Lead Pastor, as the chief administrative officer of the Church, leads the staff and is responsible for developing the size, scope, and organizational structure of the staff. The Board advises the Lead Pastor and consents to the staff structure. Additionally, the Board must approve by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote any executive-level organizational changes, including the creation or elimination of executive-level staff positions, reorganization of departmental responsibilities, changes in executive-level reporting structures, and adjustments to staff compensation models or benefits.

b. **Executive Staff.** The Church shall have an Executive Staff comprised of a number of Executive Directors to ensure strategic coordination and integration of efforts across all the Church's ministries and operations. The Lead Pastor leads the Executive Staff and appoints Executive Directors to lead the key ministries and operations of the Church. To promote unity and accountability over the executive leadership of the Church, the appointment of the Executive Directors requires a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote from the lay members of the Board. Executive Directors must be, or be eligible to become, members of the Church and will do so upon appointment.

c. **Executive Director Responsibilities.** Executive Directors are responsible for overseeing and managing specific areas of the Church's ministries and operations. Their responsibilities include:

1) **Strategic Leadership.** Implementing the Church's mission and vision within their respective areas, setting goals, and developing strategies to achieve them.

2) **Operational Oversight.** Managing day-to-day operations of their departments or ministries, ensuring efficient and effective execution of programs and activities.

3) **Team Management.** Leading, supporting, and mentoring staff and volunteers within their areas, fostering a collaborative and productive work environment.

4) **Resource Allocation.** Overseeing the budget and resources for their departments or ministries, ensuring that financial and material resources are used wisely and in alignment with the Church's mission.

5) **Program Development.** Designing and implementing programs and initiatives that address the needs of the congregation and support the Church's goals.

6) **Communication and Coordination.** Serving as a liaison between their ministries or departments and other Church leaders, including the Lead Pastor and the Board, to ensure cohesive and coordinated ministry efforts.

7) **Reporting and Evaluation.** Providing regular reports on the progress, successes, and challenges of their ministry or operational areas, and evaluating the effectiveness of programs and strategies.

d. **Resignation or Removal of Executive Directors.** An Executive Director may resign at any time by submitting a written notice to the Lead Pastor, with the resignation becoming effective upon acceptance. The Lead Pastor has the discretion to remove an Executive Director with or without cause following consultation with the Board.

5. **Pastors.** Scripture does not establish a named office of pastor, but instead describes how God calls some to "shepherd" His people. The role of the pastor, therefore, is a divinely endowed ministry function rather than a formal office within the Church. Pastors are men who have been called by God, ordained by the Board, and entrusted with the responsibility to shepherd, exercise spiritual authority, and provide corporate teaching. Corporate teaching refers to the authoritative, public ministry of Scripture.

Proposal

a. **Qualifications of a Pastor.** Pastors must be members of the Church who meet the qualifications of an Elder (Article 7.1.g.), demonstrate the gifting, aptitude, and devotion required to perform their pastoral duties, and have been ordained by the Board (Article 8.1.).

b. **Number and Call of Pastors.** The Church shall have the number of Pastors required to fill staff positions specifically designated for a Pastor (e.g., the Lead Pastor and Campus Pastors). Additionally, the Board may ordain men who have been called to serve the Church as a Pastor, but do not hold a staff position specifically designated for a Pastor.

c. **Campus Pastors.** The Church shall have Campus Pastors who serve as spiritual and administrative leaders at each campus location. Campus Pastors are responsible for fostering a unified, Christ-centered community within their campuses while aligning with the broader mission of the Church. Each Campus Pastor serves as a shepherd to their congregation and as a collaborative leader within the Church's multi-campus structure, ensuring that each campus operates in harmony with the Church's vision, values, and objectives. This role embodies a commitment to pastoral care, community engagement, and leadership under the guidance of the Lead Pastor.

6. **Deacon Team.** The Church shall have a team of Deacons to minister to the material needs and physical well-being of its members and the Church community. The Deacon Team exemplifies servant leadership, embodying the Church's commitment to serve one another in love.

a. **Authority, Organization, and Selection of Deacons.** The Deacon Team falls under the direct authority of the Board, which is solely responsible for establishing the Deacon Team's organizational structure, the criteria and procedures for Deacon selection, and providing oversight of Deacon ministries.

b. **Qualifications of a Deacon.** Deacons must be members of the Church who demonstrate the following qualifications for a Deacon (1 Timothy 3:1-12).

- **Worthy of Respect** – Admirable, held in high esteem, exemplary, and humble.
- **Sincere** – Heartfelt, earnest, honest, and authentic.
- **Not Indulging in Much Wine** – Free from addictions, self-controlled in all aspects of life.
- **Not Pursuing Dishonest Gain** – Not greedy, financially content, upright in all dealings.
- **Theologically Sound** – Holding to sound biblical theology with deep conviction and the ability to defend the faith.

- **Tested** – Proven worthy over time through experience and consistent character, especially in challenging situations.
- **Faithful in Marriage** – Sexually pure and faithful to their spouse.
- **Family-Oriented** – Manages their household and minor children well; a godly spouse and parent who shepherds and cares for their family.
- **Hospitable** – Welcoming, open, and generous to others, especially strangers.
- **Self-Controlled** – Disciplined in emotions, actions, and thoughts.
- **Gentle and Not Quick-Tempered** – Patient, kind, and not prone to anger or violence.

c. **Deacon Ministries.** Deacon ministries encompass a broad range of services to support the needs of the Church. The Board, in collaboration with the Lead Deacon and the staff, defines the specific ministry areas requiring Deacon support. These areas include but are not limited to administering the ordinances of baptism and communion, managing the benevolence ministry, and providing care for widowed members.

ARTICLE 8. ORDINATION, COMMISSIONING AND LICENSING

1. **Ordination of Pastors.** Ordination is the earthly recognition of God's calling for a man to serve as a Pastor. Through the act of ordination, the Church affirms his call and entrusts him with the responsibility to shepherd, exercise spiritual authority, and provide corporate teaching. This sacred act is reserved for men called to pastoral ministry and is administered by the Board on behalf of the Church.

a. **Local Ordination.** The Church bestows the title “Pastor” through the act of ordination. Men called to serve as a Pastor must be ordained by the Board before they may use the title of Pastor within the Church community. The requirement for local ordination of Pastors reinforces the Board's spiritual guardianship, helps avoid confusion and empowers Pastors to serve the Church more effectively.

b. **Incoming Pastors.** When the Church calls a man who has been previously ordained by another church, the Elders will assess his call and responsibilities. If appropriate, they will proceed with a local ordination. Men called to serve in a position specifically designated for a Pastor (e.g., Lead Pastor or Campus Pastor) will receive ordination from the Board as part of their call to serve in that role.

c. **Ordination of New Pastors.** Any man called to serve as a Pastor who has not been previously ordained will undergo a six-month period of discernment while serving at the Church to ensure that his actions align with his calling.

d. **Ordination of Pastors Serving Outside the Church.** Ordination may be conferred when sending men into environments requiring ordination to fulfill their calling, such as missionaries and itinerant preachers in cultures or organizations that mandate ordination. Ordaining men for pastoral service outside the Church requires thorough evaluation and demonstration of their readiness and calling to present the Gospel in diverse settings.

e. **Ordination of Elders.** The church does not routinely ordain Elders. However, when the Board determines it is beneficial, an Elder called to serve as a Pastor may be ordained.

2. **Commissioning.** Commissioning is the earthly recognition of God's calling for members to serve the Church as Elders, Deacons, or other ministry leaders, and affirms their sanctified role in ministry.

a. **Commissioning of Elders.** An Elder Nominee becomes eligible for commissioning upon affirmation by the Board to serve as an Elder. After an Elder's term of service expires, he retains the commission but moves to an inactive status. If an inactive Elder is called back to an active status, the original commissioning remains valid and there is no need to commission the Elder again.

b. **Commissioning of Deacons.** A Deacon becomes eligible for commissioning after completing the Board-directed selection and training process and affirmation by the Board.

c. **Commissioning of Members Serving Outside the Church.** Commissioning may be conferred when sending members into ministry environments that require a formal commission to fulfill their calling. Commissioning members for ministry outside the Church requires a thorough evaluation and demonstration of their readiness and calling to present the Gospel in diverse settings.

3. **Withdrawal of an Ordination or Commission.** The Board may, by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote, withdraw an ordination or commission under any circumstances to preserve unity and maintain the spiritual integrity of the Church.

4. **Licensing.** Anyone who has been ordained by the Church may apply for a license from the State of Virginia to perform marriages.

ARTICLE 9. FINANCIAL POLICIES

1. **Stewardship and Financial Management.** The responsible stewardship and effective management of the Church's financial resources – including donations, tithes, offerings, investments, and expenditures – require transparency, accountability, and alignment with the Church's ministry goals.

a. **Financial Oversight and Record Keeping.** The Treasurer is responsible for creating and maintaining accurate financial records under the supervision of the Lead Pastor. The Treasurer provides quarterly reports to the Board of Directors and presents an annual report of the Church's financial status and activities to the members of the Church.

b. **Budget and Audit.** The Treasurer, with guidance from the Lead Pastor and in collaboration with the Executive Staff, is responsible for preparing a unified annual budget that details past and projected incomes and expenditures for the fiscal year. The Treasurer submits the budget to the Board for approval. Additionally, the Treasurer, along with the Board, oversees the annual audit process, which is conducted by an independent auditor to ensure financial accountability.

c. **Accounting Procedures.** The Treasurer, under the direction of the Lead Pastor, oversees the receipt and disbursement of funds, as well as the maintenance of financial records. The Treasurer and other authorized agents are responsible for signing checks and ensuring that all accounting practices are robust and compliant with accepted principles.

d. **Deposits and Banking.** The Board selects reputable banks or financial institutions to securely manage and account for the Church's financial assets.

2. **Contractual Authority and Procedures.** The President and/or the Chairman are authorized to sign contracts that legally and financially bind the Church, provided these contracts have been approved by the Board or are in accordance with a Board-approved procedure. Additionally, the Board may grant written authorization to other officers or agents of the Church to enter into contracts or execute instruments on the Church's behalf. This authority can be broad or limited to specific situations. Without proper authorization, no officer, agent, or employee has the power to bind the Church to any contract, agreement, or financial obligation. For contracts with a potential or actual value exceeding 1% of the Church's annual budget, the Church must obtain and review at least three written estimates before awarding the contract. The Board may also establish additional rules to ensure the integrity of the contracting process.

3. **Gifts, Contributions, and Endowments.** The Board has the authority to accept, or appoint agents to accept, any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise on behalf of the

Church, whether for general purposes or for a specific purpose. Any endowment, whether intended for general or special purposes, must be approved by the Board.

a. Acceptable Gifts

1) **Cash and Equivalents.** Includes cash, checks, and electronic transfers.

2) **Digital Assets.** Cryptocurrency.

3) **Tangible Property.** Gifts of personal property, such as equipment or supplies, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for their usefulness, condition, and potential costs to the Church.

4) **Securities.** Publicly traded securities may be accepted and, as a general rule, will be sold immediately upon receipt.

5) **Real Estate.** Gifts of real estate will be subject to a thorough review, including environmental and legal assessments, to determine suitability.

6) **Life Insurance.** The Church may accept gifts of life insurance policies where the Church is named as the owner and beneficiary of the policy.

7) **Planned Gifts.** Bequests, trusts, and other planned giving vehicles will be reviewed by the Board to ensure they align with the Church's long-term goals and financial planning.

b. Gift Restrictions

1) **Donor-designated Gifts.** Donors may designate gifts for specific purposes. The Church will honor donor intent but reserves the right to redirect funds if the designated purpose is no longer viable or consistent with the Church's mission.

2) **Incompatible Gifts.** The Church reserves the right to refuse any gift that is inconsistent with its mission, values, or ethical standards, or that would impose undue financial or administrative burdens.

c. Legal and Tax Considerations. Donors are advised to seek independent legal and tax counsel. The Church will provide the necessary documentation for tax purposes but cannot offer legal or financial advice.

d. **Confidentiality.** Donor information will be kept confidential, except as required by law.

4. **Benevolence Fund.** In keeping with biblical teaching to help those in need, the Church will establish a benevolence fund to address the material and financial needs of its members. The Board will establish guidance, procedures, and criteria for the distribution of financial assistance, and the Deacon Team will administer and manage the program.

5. **Partnerships and External Business Ventures.** The Board may authorize, in writing, any officer or agent of the Church to enter into partnerships, joint ventures, or to create auxiliary corporations or limited liability companies (LLCs). These actions must align with the Church's religious purposes and goals as outlined in these bylaws and must not jeopardize the Church's tax-exempt status.

6. **Fiscal Year.** The Board sets the Church's fiscal year and has the authority to adjust it as needed.

ARTICLE 10. MEETINGS

1. **Worship.** The Church shall meet regularly for public worship on Sundays unless otherwise specified by the Board. Worship meetings may be held in various locations and at various times depending on the need and availability of facilities at each campus.

2. **Members' Meetings.** All Church business requiring a vote by the members will be conducted during a Members' Meeting. These meetings will be presided over by the Board or their designated representative. The Board may schedule Members' Meetings as needed, either at a single location or telecast to multiple locations.

a. **Notice and Agenda.** Members' Meetings will be announced at least two weeks in advance. The announcement will include the purpose, date, and time of the meeting along with the text of any motions recommended for a vote.

b. **Member Inquiries and Pre-Meeting Discussions.** Any member with questions regarding proposals that will come before a Members' Meeting is encouraged to inquire or request additional information from the Elders before the Members' Meeting. For complex issues or matters of significant importance, the Church may hold preliminary meetings before the Members' Meeting to encourage open discussion and ensure clarity. These preliminary meetings offer members an opportunity to engage in dialogue, ask questions, and better understand the issues before casting their votes. There is generally no opportunity for open discussion at the Members' Meeting.

Proposal

c. **Quorum.** The members present at the start of a duly called Members' Meeting will constitute a quorum for conducting business.

d. **Record Keeping.** The Secretary of the Board will be responsible for recording the minutes of each Members' Meeting.

e. **Reporting of Results.** Members will be informed of the results of all votes taken during Members' Meetings promptly after the meeting concludes.

f. **Voting Rights.** Every member who is not under Church discipline and present at a duly called meeting has the right to vote on matters before the Church. Proxy voting is not permitted.

g. **Matters Requiring a Vote.** The following matters require a vote by eligible members. All matters require a 3/4 affirmative vote to pass unless otherwise indicated.

1) **Merger or Dissolution of the Church.** Approval of the merger into another Church, or dissolution of the Church.

2) **Sale of Assets.** Approval of the sale of more than 25% of the Church's assets.

3) **Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws.** Approval of changes to the Constitution and Bylaws.

4) **Acquisition of Debt.** Approval of acquiring new debt that causes the Church's total debt to exceed twice its annual income.

5) **Lead Pastor.** Approval to affirm and install a Lead Pastor.

6) **Other Matters.** Any other matters or decisions deemed necessary by the Board for consideration by the members.

ARTICLE 11. SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS

1. **Purpose and Scope.** The Church will maintain supplemental documents as needed to ensure clarity, consistency, and compliance with our mission and standards across all ministries and operational areas. These documents, which may include handbooks, operating procedures, or guidelines, provide detailed instructions and protocols tailored to the diverse functions and roles within the Church. By clearly outlining expectations, procedures, and policies, they aim to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our ministries and administrative operations. While these documents serve to complement the

Constitution and Bylaws, they remain subordinate, ensuring that all guidelines are in alignment with the overarching governance and operational framework of the Church.

2. Responsibilities. The Board will establish and maintain the operational procedures for the Board of Elders, the Board of Directors and the Deacon Team. The Executive Directors will establish and maintain documents that detail the procedures, guidelines and standards for Church employees and ministry volunteers serving within their respective ministries or operational areas.

3. Availability. To ensure transparency, foster informed decision-making, and promote seamless collaboration across the Church, all supplemental documents must be readily accessible to the teams they directly affect. The Board and Executive Directors are tasked with ensuring these documents are not only up to date but also easily accessible to all relevant parties. Making these documents available to other interested groups within the Church nurtures a culture of openness and mutual understanding, empowering every member to contribute effectively to our shared mission.

ARTICLE 12. ASSOCIATIONS

The authority to lead the Church resides solely with its members and is independent of any other ecclesiastical body. Deeply rooted in the Southern Baptist tradition, the Church draws nourishment and strength from its rich doctrinal heritage, firmly adhering to the principles outlined in the *Southern Baptist Faith and Message 2000*. At the discretion of the Board and in support of the Church's mission, the Church may enter into ministerial affiliations with other like-minded Churches and organizations. Additionally, the Board may terminate any affiliation when it no longer serves to advance the mission and ministry of the Church.

ARTICLE 13. INDEMNIFICATION

1. Eligibility and Conditions for Indemnification. The Church shall indemnify and advance expenses to any person who, due to their role as a director, elder, officer, employee, or agent of the Church, is made or threatened to be made a party to any civil or criminal action or proceeding. This indemnification shall apply unless the person is found liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of their duties to the Church, or in cases of willful misconduct, gross negligence, or fraud.

2. Procedure for Indemnification. The board shall make decisions regarding indemnification, or the advancement of expenses based on a written assurance from the indemnitee to repay such amounts if it is ultimately determined that they are not entitled to

indemnification. This obligation extends beyond the tenure of the indemnitee and benefits their heirs, executors, and administrators.

3. Insurance for Liability. The Church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any such persons against any liability asserted against them or incurred by them in any such capacity, or arising from their status as such, whether or not the Church has the power to indemnify them against such liability under these provisions.

ARTICLE 14. AMENDMENTS

Members may propose changes to the Constitution and Bylaws by submitting their proposals to the Board for review and consideration. If accepted by the Board, the Church Constitution and Bylaws may be amended when three-fourths (3/4) of the members who are present and voting at a duly called Members' Meeting vote for approval. Copies of the proposed changes, along with the Board's recommendations, will be provided to members at least two weeks before the Members Meeting. For significant changes, the Board of Elders may also hold advance meetings to discuss the proposals before the vote.

PROPOSAL

Approval and Adoption of the Constitution and Bylaws of The Mount Church

We, the members of the Board, hereby certify that this Constitution and Bylaws has been reviewed, approved, and adopted by the members of The Mount Church on March 8, 2025. This document is effective as of the date of adoption and supersedes any prior Constitution and Bylaws of The Mount Church.

Scott Johnson, Chairman of the Board

Adam Sauer, President of the Board

Jason Mitzel, Elder

Omen Quelvog, Elder

James Mallory, Secretary of the Board