



**mountain view**

Statement of faith &  
church constitution

May 2022

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## What We Believe – Short Statement

### We believe:

1. The Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God and is the all-sufficient and final authority for our faith and practice.
2. In one God, eternally existing in one essence, yet three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
  - a. That the Father is Father of all creation (including mankind) in a general sense, and the nation of Israel, Christ, and Christians specifically.
  - b. That Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man, was born of the virgin Mary.
  - c. The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son; that He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and that He ministers to the believer.
3. In the reality of angels, both good angels who serve God and evil angels who serve their leader, Satan.
4. The Genesis account of God's creation of the universe out of nothing by His spoken word and His creation of mankind.
5. All people are sinners by nature and by choice and are therefore spiritually dead and in need of a Saviour.
6. Salvation is wholly the work of God, and that it is by grace through faith in the work of Christ alone, resulting in right standing before God.
7. The church is the body of Christ, consisting of believers who meet locally for worship, growth, and service to God.
8. In the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and His ascension into heaven, and that He will one day return to catch away His Church and bring His kingdom to completion.
9. All people will face final judgment: believers to reward in heaven and unbelievers to eternal punishment in hell.

## What We Believe – Full Statement

### 1. We believe the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God and is the all-sufficient and final authority for our faith and practice.

*the Bible* – the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, the completed revelation of God, to which nothing is to be added or subtracted.

*verbally inspired* – every word of Scripture is breathed by God.<sup>1</sup> The Holy Spirit moved men to write what they wrote, so the word of God is dependable and cannot be broken.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore without any error whatsoever in the original autographs.

*all-sufficient and final authority* – because the Bible is God's Word and is dependable, it is the highest authority in our lives. It reveals to us who God is and how we are to live before Him.<sup>3</sup> The truth of Scripture is absolute and is not relative or open to personal interpretations that disagree with the authors' intentions.<sup>4</sup> It is to be interpreted and understood in light of the context of the entirety of Scripture, all the parts agreeing to form a unified whole. Though we are to be obedient and loyal to the civil government under which we live, recognising that it is ordained by God, we are to obey God rather than men in situations where it is not possible to be obedient to both.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>2 Tim. 3:16,17

<sup>2</sup>2 Pet. 1:19-21, Isa. 40:8, Prov. 30:5-6, John 10:35

<sup>3</sup>2 Pet. 1:19-21, Ps. 119, 2 Tim. 3:16,17

<sup>4</sup>2 Pet. 1:19-21

<sup>5</sup>Rom. 13:1-7, 1 Pet. 2:13-17, Acts 5:29

**2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in one essence, yet three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

*one God* – the one and only Creator,<sup>6</sup> who is the supreme and sovereign Ruler of all things,<sup>7</sup> all-powerful,<sup>8</sup> all-knowing,<sup>9</sup> all-present,<sup>10</sup> eternal,<sup>11</sup> holy,<sup>12</sup> good,<sup>13</sup> righteous,<sup>14</sup> just,<sup>15</sup> glorious,<sup>16</sup> wise,<sup>17</sup> unchanging,<sup>18</sup> faithful,<sup>19</sup> loving<sup>20</sup> and merciful,<sup>21</sup> and is the only One deserving of worship.<sup>22</sup>

*eternally existing in one essence, yet three Persons* – God is one God and is spirit, yet exists in three co-equal, co-eternal Persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.<sup>23</sup> This aspect of God’s being is commonly referred to as the Trinity.

**a. We believe that God the Father is father of all creation (including mankind) in a general sense, and the nation of Israel, Christ, and Christians specifically.**

Father of all creation (including mankind) in a general sense – In the beginning, God created all things and is as such the Father of all creation<sup>24</sup>. During His creative work, God created the first people in His image<sup>25</sup>. In the sense that God created people, and all people bear God’s image, He is the Father of every person.<sup>26</sup> Father of the nation of Israel specifically – God supernaturally conceived the nation of Israel through Abraham and Sarah and the nation of Israel were to be image bearers before other nations.<sup>27</sup> Father of Christ Specifically – God conceived Christ supernaturally through the Holy Spirit<sup>28</sup> and Christ was the exact imprint of His nature.<sup>29</sup> Father of Christians specifically – Each Christian is supernaturally born of God at salvation<sup>30</sup> and is conformed by God to the image of Christ (the exact imprint of the Father) through the Holy Spirit.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, Christians are adopted into the family of God and so become children through adoption as well.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Gen. 1:1; Neh. 9:6; John 1:1-3

<sup>7</sup> Ps. 97; Prov. 30:4

<sup>8</sup> Ex. 15:6; Ps. 62:11; Luke 1:37

<sup>9</sup> Prov. 15:3; 2 Chron. 16:9

<sup>10</sup> 1 Ki. 8:27; Ps. 139: 7-12

<sup>11</sup> Deut. 33:27; Ps. 90:2; Rev. 1:8

<sup>12</sup> Ps. 119:68; Mark 10:18

<sup>13</sup> Ex. 33:19; Ps. 145:9

<sup>14</sup> Ps. 25:8-10; Ps. 119:137,138

<sup>15</sup> Ex. 34:6,7; Deut. 32:4

<sup>16</sup> Ps. 24:7,8; 1 Tim. 6:15,16; Heb. 1:1-3

<sup>17</sup> Isa. 28:29; 55:9; Rom. 16:27

<sup>18</sup> Ps. 102:27; Mal. 3:6

<sup>19</sup> Ex. 34:6,7; Num. 23:19; Lam. 3:22,23

<sup>20</sup> Ex. 34:6,7; Rom. 5:7,8; 1 John 4:8,16

<sup>21</sup> Ex. 34:6,7; Eph. 2:4-8

<sup>22</sup> 2 Sam. 22:4; 1 Chron. 16:25,26

<sup>23</sup> Gen. 1:28; Matt. 28:19; Mark 12:29; 2 Cor. 13:14

<sup>24</sup> Gen. 1

<sup>25</sup> Gen. 2:26

<sup>26</sup> Luke 3:38; Acts 17:28-29

<sup>27</sup> Gen. 17:12-19; Jer. 31:9

<sup>28</sup> Luke 1:35

<sup>29</sup> Heb. 1:3; John 14:9

<sup>30</sup> John 1:12; John 3:3

<sup>31</sup> Rom. 8:29

<sup>32</sup> Rom 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5

**b. We believe that Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man, was born of the virgin Mary.**

*fully God and fully man* – Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has existed from all eternity equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, being Himself God.<sup>33</sup> He became a man to carry out the purposes of God in redemption,<sup>34</sup> and maintaining His innocence as a man,<sup>35</sup> did not at any point cease to be fully God.<sup>36</sup>

*born of the virgin Mary* – Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit<sup>37</sup> and was born to Mary, who was a virgin.<sup>38</sup> This miraculous birth fulfilled prophecy,<sup>39</sup> was a sign that Jesus Christ was truly God and truly man<sup>40</sup> and was necessary that He might not inherit Adam's sinful nature.<sup>41</sup>

**c. We believe the Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son; that He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; and that He ministers to the believer.**

*equal with the Father and the Son* – the Holy Spirit is truly God and equal in nature and attributes with the Father and the Son.<sup>42</sup>

*convicts the world* – the Holy Spirit reveals the sinfulness of man in unbelief, the truth concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ and the judgment that faces those who oppose God.<sup>43</sup>

*ministers to the believer* – the ministry of the Holy Spirit to the believer includes bearing witness to the truth of the gospel,<sup>44</sup> bringing about spiritual new birth,<sup>45</sup> sealing,<sup>46</sup> indwelling,<sup>47</sup> guiding,<sup>48</sup> teaching,<sup>49</sup> sanctifying,<sup>50</sup> helping<sup>51</sup> and filling.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> John 1:1-3; 10:30; 14:9,10

<sup>34</sup> John 1:14; Rom. 8:3,4

<sup>35</sup> Heb. 4:15; 5:7-9

<sup>36</sup> Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 2:9; Titus 2:13,14

<sup>37</sup> Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35

<sup>38</sup> Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22,23

<sup>39</sup> Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22,23

<sup>40</sup> 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 2:17,18

<sup>41</sup> Luke 1:35; Col. 2:9; Heb. 7:26,27

<sup>42</sup> Ps. 139:7,8; Rom. 1:4; Heb. 9:14

<sup>43</sup> John 16:7-11

<sup>44</sup> John 15:26; 16:13,14; Heb. 10:14-17

<sup>45</sup> John 3:5-7; Titus 3:5

<sup>46</sup> Eph. 1:13,14

<sup>47</sup> Eph. 2:22; 2 Tim. 1:14

<sup>48</sup> Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18

<sup>49</sup> John 16:13-15; I John 2:20,27

<sup>50</sup> Rom. 8:4,13; Gal. 5:22,23; 2 Thess. 2:13

<sup>51</sup> John 15:26,27; Eph. 3:16

<sup>52</sup> Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 5:18

### **3. We believe in the reality of angels, both good angels who serve God and evil angels who serve their leader, Satan.**

*angels* – Angels are spirit-beings created by God in the beginning.<sup>53</sup> The angels were created to glorify God and carry out His will.<sup>54</sup>

*good angels* – Angels who did not follow Lucifer in his rebellion against God were thereby confirmed in holiness. The holy angels are sent forth by God to minister to the heirs of salvation.<sup>55</sup>

*evil angels* – Through pride, one of the chief angels, Lucifer, rebelled against God and fell from his honoured position,<sup>56</sup> thus becoming the devil, or Satan. In his revolt, he drew away with him a host of angels who fell with him.<sup>57</sup> Both the devil and the fallen angels are the enemies of God and the believer today,<sup>58</sup> but will one day be judged by God with everlasting punishment.<sup>59</sup>

### **4. We believe the Genesis account of God's creation of the universe out of nothing by His spoken Word and His creation of mankind.**

*the Genesis account* – While not giving us all the details of how God created, the opening chapters of the book of Genesis are a wholly reliable account of the fact that God did create all things.<sup>60</sup>

*creation of the universe* – All things, seen and unseen, were created by a direct act of God through His Son, Jesus Christ.<sup>61</sup> The triune God, however, is uniquely the Uncreated One. God, through Christ, continues to uphold and sustain His creation.<sup>62</sup> The creation is an inescapable witness to the existence and power of God.<sup>63</sup>

*out of nothing* – God created all things solely by the power of His spoken word, apart from any existing substance.<sup>64</sup> His word and power of being were sufficient to bring into existence all created things.

*creation of mankind* – God created man out of the earth, and woman out of man, both in His image to rule the earth.<sup>65</sup> We reject all theories of biological evolution as explanations of the origin of man and the universe. As the image-bearer of God, man is distinct from, and set over, all forms of animal life and is accountable to his Creator.

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<sup>53</sup> Job 38:4-7

<sup>54</sup> Ps. 103:20-21

<sup>55</sup> Heb. 1:14

<sup>56</sup> Isa. 14:12-15; Ezra 28:11-19

<sup>57</sup> Rev. 12:3,4

<sup>58</sup> 1 Pet. 5:8,9

<sup>59</sup> Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10

<sup>60</sup> Gen. 1,2

<sup>61</sup> John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15,16

<sup>62</sup> Col. 1:17

<sup>63</sup> Rom. 1:20

<sup>64</sup> Ps. 33:6-9

<sup>65</sup> Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7

**5. We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are therefore spiritually dead and in need of a Saviour.**

*sinner* – Sin is any transgression of, or failure to perfectly obey, the will of God as revealed in His Law.<sup>66</sup> The Scriptures clearly teach that all have sinned.<sup>67</sup>

*by nature* – The first man, Adam, was created without sin, but by a voluntary act of disobedience fell from that state to one of sin and corruption.<sup>68</sup> Because Adam functioned as the head and representative of the entire human race, this state of sin and spiritual death was transmitted to all generations of Adam's offspring.<sup>69</sup>

*by choice* – Sin is not only a nature inherited from Adam but also a conscious and deliberate act of the will.

*spiritually dead* – The fall is of such magnitude and depth that it has affected all aspects and faculties of the unregenerate person, resulting in that person's total inability to save himself or herself from sin and judgment.<sup>70</sup>

*in need of a Saviour* – Apart from the grace of God in Christ Jesus, all are dead in trespasses and sins, and completely lost. We believe, however, that though the fall marred and distorted the image of God in man, it did not eradicate it.<sup>71</sup>

**6. We believe that salvation is wholly the work of God, and that it is by grace through faith in the work of Christ alone, resulting in right standing before God.**

*salvation* – Salvation is the act of God in rescuing a lost sinner from eternal judgment and the wrath of God. It involves every aspect of the person: spirit, soul, and body.

*wholly the work of God* – God's work of salvation is entirely of His grace and mercy, apart from any human accomplishment or merit.<sup>72</sup>

*by grace* – Salvation is totally undeserved by the sinner and springs entirely from the love and choosing of God the Father in His eternal purpose.<sup>73</sup>

*through faith* – A saving response to the gospel is one of repentance or turning from sin, and of turning to Christ in faith,<sup>74</sup> believing on His name.<sup>75</sup>

*the work of Christ alone* – Salvation was accomplished by God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in His perfect obedience to the Law of God and in His willing and substitutionary death on the cross for sinners, the Just dying for the unjust.<sup>76</sup> The death of Christ paid fully for sin and completely satisfied the Father's anger toward sin; no human works or merit may be added to it. This work of salvation is applied to an individual by the Holy Spirit in what is called regeneration or the new birth, which is an instantaneous event and not a process.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> 1 John 3:4

<sup>67</sup> Rom. 3:10-12, 23

<sup>68</sup> Gen. 3

<sup>69</sup> Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12

<sup>70</sup> Eph. 2:1-3

<sup>71</sup> James 3:9

<sup>72</sup> Titus 3:4-7

<sup>73</sup> Eph. 1:3-6

<sup>74</sup> Acts 20:21

<sup>75</sup> John 20:30-31

<sup>76</sup> 1 Peter 3:18

<sup>77</sup> John 3:5-8



*right standing before God* – In salvation, God forgives the sins of the believing sinner<sup>78</sup> and grants the gift of eternal life.<sup>79</sup> The believer is justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, the believer is kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ,<sup>81</sup> through the compassionate and unfailing High Priesthood of the Lord Jesus on behalf of every believer.<sup>82</sup>

**7. We believe the church is the body of Christ, consisting of believers who meet locally for worship, growth and service to God.**

*the body of Christ* – All believers from every generation and from every people group, who make up the body and bride of Christ at His return.<sup>83</sup>

*believers who meet locally* – The pattern of the New Testament shows that believers organised themselves in local assemblies under leaders gifted by God for that purpose.<sup>84</sup>

*worship, growth, and service to God* – The church gathers to corporately glorify God through the preaching and teaching of the Bible, through praise and adoration directed to Him for His character and His works, through fellowship with and encouragement of fellow-believers and through the spreading of the gospel to the surrounding community and the whole world.<sup>85</sup>

Two specific ways we glorify God are by obedience to His commands to practise the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is a one-time event following salvation, which plays no part in salvation, whereby an individual signifies his identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. We believe that immersion is the mode of baptism most faithful to the teaching of Scripture.<sup>86</sup> The Lord's Supper is a celebration through which believers call to mind the work accomplished by Christ through His death on the cross.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Eph. 1:7

<sup>79</sup> Rom. 6:23

<sup>80</sup> Rom. 5:15-19

<sup>81</sup> Jude 1

<sup>82</sup> Heb. 4:14-16; Heb. 7:23-25

<sup>83</sup> Matt. 28:18-20; Rev. 21:1-4; 1 Pet. 2:5-10; Rom. 12:5

<sup>84</sup> Acts 2:46; Heb. 10:25; Eph. 4:11,12; Acts 6:3-6; 1 Tim. 3:1-13

<sup>85</sup> Acts 2:44-47; 1 Pet. 2:9; 2 Cor. 5:18,19; Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Thess. 5:11; Eph. 4:11-16

<sup>86</sup> Acts 2:41; Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:3-5

<sup>87</sup> 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Luke 22:17-20

**8. We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and His ascension into heaven, and that He will one day return to catch away His Church and bring His kingdom to completion.**

*bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ* – The literal, physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, which confirms the truth of His deity and the efficacy of His atoning work on the cross.<sup>88</sup>

*ascension into heaven* – Christ ascended to the right hand of God the Father, where He now mediates as our High Priest and Advocate.<sup>89</sup>

*He will one day return to catch away His Church and bring His kingdom to completion* – The return of Christ may occur at any time. He will return to catch away His Bride, the Church, which will enjoy the fruits of His redemptive work for eternity. Prior to the full completion of the kingdom, there will be a time of tribulation and suffering on the earth. The rule of Christ over His kingdom is a literal, physical rule in fulfilment of the unconditional covenants of Scripture.<sup>90</sup>

**9. We believe all people will face final judgment: believers to reward in heaven and unbelievers to eternal punishment in hell.**

*believers to reward in heaven* – Having been justified by God through the death of Jesus Christ, believers already have certainty of an eternity in heaven with God and face no condemnation. The final judgment for believers is an examination of the works done on earth. Believers receive rewards for those works done in Christ to the glory of God, rewards which will be offered back to God in worship.<sup>91</sup>

*unbelievers to eternal punishment in hell* – Having remained in rebellion against the holy God, unbelievers are condemned already. The result and consequence of their rebellion is that God sentences them to an eternity of suffering in hell.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Matt. 28:6; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:38,39

<sup>89</sup> John 20:17; Acts 1:9; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1

<sup>90</sup> Matt. 24:21-31,44; 1 Thess. 4:15-17

<sup>91</sup> Matt. 5:12; Rom. 14:10-12; Heb. 9:27; 12:23

<sup>92</sup> Dan. 12:1,2; Matt. 10:28; 25:46; Heb. 9:27

# Church Constitution

## Name, Purpose, and Organisation

### Name

The name of this church shall be “Mountain View Baptist Church.”

### Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be to glorify God. It shall seek to do this by promoting the worship of God, earnestly praying, teaching the Word of God, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, evangelising the lost and edifying and equipping the saved. Mountain View Baptist Church shall exist as an organisation in its own right, separately from its members. To implement this purpose legally the church will be integrated as a non-profit, tax-exempt organisation under the laws of the country of South Africa, so that it may own, provide and/or maintain a place of worship (including suitable property and buildings); receive, hold and disburse gifts, inheritances, donations and funds, and enter into contract in its own right; and/or do all and sundry things necessary or incident to carry on such a purpose.

### Origination

The first Mountain View congregation began in the Helderberg (Western Cape) area in September 2002. We set out to do God’s will and prayed for Him to form, build, and then lead the church as a congregational family. We understand our mission is to plant similar churches taking to heart the charge from Jesus Christ to carry out the Great Commission. We believe Jesus Christ ultimately births local churches, and He shall remain the Head of His Church and be the Chief Cornerstone.<sup>93</sup>

### Designations

**Pastor** - the term Pastor refers to and includes the following Biblical titles:

- a. Pastor/Shepherd<sup>94</sup>
- b. Pastor/Teacher<sup>95</sup>
- c. Bishop/Overseer<sup>96</sup>
- d. Elder<sup>97</sup>

**Leadership Team** - the term Leadership Team refers to a group comprised of Pastor(s), Deacons<sup>98</sup>, Treasurer, and other position(s) as approved and appointed by the church.

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<sup>93</sup> 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:16; Acts 2:42; Acts 6:4; Acts 5:42; Acts 1:8; Eph. 4:12; Matt. 28:18-20; Eph.5:23; Eph. 2:20

<sup>94</sup> Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Peter 5:1-4

<sup>95</sup> Eph. 4:11

<sup>96</sup> Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1,2; Titus 1:7

<sup>97</sup> Acts 20:17; 1 Tim. 5:17; James 5:14, 1 Peter 5:1

<sup>98</sup> Matt. 23:11; John 12:26; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 3:8

## **Membership**

### **Qualifications and Admission**

The qualifications of membership at Mountain View Baptist Church are the following:

1. Professing faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour.
2. Having been baptised by immersion.
3. Having submitted to the constitution and doctrinal statement of the church.
4. Having been recommended by the pastor(s) and deacons (Leadership Team) of the church.
5. Having been accepted by vote of the church.

Any person who meets these requirements is accepted into membership, whether they have been saved and baptised and are now joining the local church, or they are transferring from another church, or they are being restored to the church after the discipline process.

### **Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the members of this local church family include the following:

1. Assuming responsibility for their own spiritual growth through personal Bible study and prayer.
2. Participating weekly in the main worship service and on a regular basis.
3. Joining the *Forever Family* life of the church through a small group context.
4. Exercising their spiritual gifts in specific areas of involvement and ministry.
5. Caring, supporting, and upholding others in the family through the variety of ministries of the church.
6. Being committed to prayer within the local church family and other believers worldwide.
7. Contributing financially to the church in a consistent and generous manner.
8. Sharing their faith personally while upholding others in prayer who proclaim the gospel around the world.
9. Living in the world in such a way so as to reveal God's glory to the world.
10. Supporting and responding positively to the leadership of the church in matters of church vision, policy, and discipline.

### **Classifications**

The various categories of membership at Mountain View Baptist Church are as follows:

1. *Active*: members in good standing who attend services on a regular basis. Active membership includes those physically unable to attend, members who evidence desire to participate in the life of our local church but are not able to attend on a regular basis.
2. *Inactive*: members who are not physically able to attend and/or do not attend services on a regular basis
3. *Non-resident*: members who are temporarily away from our local church but intend to either return to this area or to join a local church in a new location.
4. *Youth*: non-voting members who are under 21 years old.

5. *Associate*: individuals who are temporarily located in our area and desire to participate in the life of our local church while maintaining their permanent local church membership in another area. The qualifications for associate membership are the same as those for regular membership.

### **Discipline of Members**

This church will carry out the God-given task of discipline as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1-5. Generally, that pattern is as follows:

- The offended believer should privately seek out the one who has offended them to seek reconciliation.
- If the offending believer does not listen, the offended believer should return to them with one or two others, who can assist in seeking reconciliation. If the offending believer still does not listen, they may serve as witnesses to that fact.
- If the offending believer does not listen, the matter should be brought before the church. This must be done in the proper manner, under the oversight of the pastor(s).
- If all efforts at reconciliation fail, the offending believer is to be removed from the church, for the sake of the reputation and glory of Jesus Christ and pursued in love as an unbeliever.

The Leadership Team will oversee all disciplinary matters.

Upon recommendation of the Leadership Team, and by a majority vote of the members, fellowship may be withdrawn from any member failing to repent of sin. The ultimate goals of this withdrawal of fellowship are the glory of God and the restoration of the individual to fellowship upon repentance from their sin.

### **Termination of Membership**

Any individual's membership may be terminated after any of the following:

1. Request of the individual.
2. The beginning of permanent membership of an individual in another congregation.
3. Vote of the church following the discipline process.
4. A prolonged period inactivity and lack of attendance at the meetings of the church.

### **Government**

#### **Form**

#### **Congregational Form**

Mountain View Baptist Church operates with a congregational form of government. The vote of the members of the church, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and under the direction of the Leadership Team, is final. Those members in good standing who are at least 21 years of age may vote in the business of the church and may serve as its officers provided they meet the qualifications for the office. Absentee ballots shall be provided upon request.

## **Business Meetings**

1. Annual general meeting of the church members: The church will hold an annual general meeting in February of each year.
2. Other: The church may hold special business meetings whenever it is deemed necessary by the pastor(s) or deacons.
3. Upon written request of fifty percent (50%) of the active voting membership of the congregation, the Leadership Team shall be required to call a special meeting. The request shall state the nature of the business, and public announcement of the meeting shall be given two (2) weeks in advance. The meeting shall be for the stated purpose only.
4. Quorum For Meetings
  - a. For church membership meetings: fifty percent (50%) of the active voting membership shall constitute a quorum.
  - b. For Leadership Team meetings: fifty percent (50%) attendance of the elected office bearers shall constitute a quorum.
5. Order: The business meetings of the church shall be conducted in an orderly manner. Congregational votes shall take place after a motion has been made and seconded, with any necessary discussion completed.
6. The Leadership Team must hold a minimum of two (2) meetings per year. The lead pastor will act as the chairperson of the Leadership Team meeting. In the absence of the lead pastor an associate pastor will chair the meeting. In the absence of the pastors the chairman of the deacons will preside.
7. Minutes will be kept for all meetings. The approved copies of these minutes must be kept safely and always be on hand for members to consult.

## **Offices**

### **Powers of the Elected Office Bearers**

#### **The leadership of Mountain View Baptist Church shall be vested in the Leadership Team comprised of Pastors and Deacons.**

The management committee of the Mountain View Baptist Church organisation shall be made up of the Leadership Team, which is comprised of pastor(s), deacons and the treasurer. This management committee may take on the powers and authority that it deems necessary to achieve the objectives of the organisation; these powers are limited by the provisions more fully described under the duties and responsibilities for each office bearer. The Leadership Team will be made up of not less than six (6) members. They are the office bearers of the organisation.

### **Trustee Registration of the Representative Office Bearers**

Each year the lead pastor, three (3) members of the Leadership Team, and a member of The Association of Baptist for World Evangelism shall be appointed as Trustees. The five (5) individual names shall be registered as Office Bearers for the Constituted Voluntary Association with the Department of Social Development of South Africa as official representatives of MVBC.

## Pastors

### Qualifications

The following qualifications for pastors are taken from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1:

Above reproach	Well thought of by outsiders	Not a drunkard
Sober-minded	A lover of good	Not quarrelsome
Respectable	Holy	Managing his own household well
Able to teach	Holding firm to the Word	Not a recent convert
Not violent, but gentle	Husband of one wife	Not arrogant
Not a lover of money	Self-controlled	Upright
Keeping his children submissive	Hospitable	Disciplined

- Candidates for pastor must agree with the doctrine of the church.
- Additionally, qualifications for a candidate for pastor may include specific skills and abilities deemed necessary for the position by the other pastor(s), the deacons, and the search committee.

### Duties and Responsibilities

- Overseeing / managing / shepherding the church. (1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:4-5; Acts 20:28-30; 1 Cor. 9:7)
- Teaching biblical truth. (Acts 2:41-42; Acts 11:23, 26; Titus 1:9)
- Modelling Christ-like behaviour. (1 Thess. 2:10-12; 1 Tim. 4:12)
- Maintaining doctrinal purity. (Acts 20:30-31; 2 Tim. 2:23-26; Titus 1:11)
- Taking the lead in the discipline of unruly believers. (1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Cor. 4:14)
- Overseeing financial matters. (Acts 11:29,30; 1 Cor. 16:3-4)
- Praying for those who are ill. (Jas. 5:13-16)
- The lead pastor shall function as moderator of the church; another pastor may function as moderator if the lead pastor is unable.
- Additional specific responsibilities may be determined by the pastoral staff and the deacons and may be unique to a particular pastoral position.

### Calling, Election and Termination

- The Leadership Team, with the possible inclusion of a search committee, shall be responsible for identifying and evaluating possible candidates to fill a pastoral position. The candidate shall be given the exposure to the congregation deemed necessary by the Leadership Team before the congregation votes whether or not to call the pastor. This may often include opportunity to preach, as well as to minister to the congregation in a variety of other settings.

- The pastor shall be elected to an indeterminate term. Voting shall be by ballot, and a three-fourths (75%) majority of all members present shall be required for election.
- The pastor shall give the church a written notice of his intention to resign at least 60 days in advance of the effective date of his resignation.
- The church may, by a two-thirds (67%) vote of a regularly called business meeting, dismiss a pastor from his position, if so biblically deemed necessary.

## Deacons

### Qualifications

The following qualifications for deacons are taken from 1 Timothy 3:

Dignified	Not double-tongued
Not addicted to much wine	Not greedy for dishonest gain
Holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience	Tested, proven to be blameless
Not slanderers	Sober-minded
Faithful in all things	Husband of one wife
Managing their children and households well	

### Duties and Responsibilities

- Serve as partners with the pastor(s) in providing shepherding care for the members of the church.
- Serve as partners with the pastor(s) in the leadership of the church.
- Serve as partners with the pastor(s) in ensuring the needs of the congregation are being met.
- Serve as partners with the pastor(s) in ensuring the fiscal responsibility of the church.
- Assure the preparation of the elements and table for the Lord's Supper; assist in serving.
- Examine with the pastor(s) all candidates for church membership. Ensure that the church meets the needs of the congregation.
- In the absence of any pastor(s) for an extended period of time, the deacons shall arrange for pulpit supply, and shall form the search committee.
- Perform other duties as prescribed by the church.

### Election

- Nominations for deacon shall be put forward by the Leadership Team at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the election.
- Deacons shall be elected by majority vote of the church.
- Deacons shall be elected to two-year terms. Deacons may serve an additional two (2) terms before rotating off the Leadership Team for at least one year.
- The number of deacons shall be determined by the current needs of the congregation as discerned by the Leadership Team.



## **Other Offices**

### **Treasurer**

- The church shall annually elect a treasurer who is responsible for the receiving and handling of all monies.
- The treasurer's duties shall include:
  - ensuring the payment of the salaries of all church employees,
  - paying the bills of the church,
  - keeping an accurate record of accounts,
  - reporting to the Leadership Team, *and*
  - preparing a written report for the congregation for the annual business meeting.
- The treasurer shall be a person with upright character, good reputation, willingness to serve and have the consistent support of the church.
- The treasurer and the registered official representatives shall ensure all statutory reporting and communication to the Department of Social Development and South Africa Receiver of Revenue, and any other legislated Government Office.

### **Secretary**

- The church shall annually elect a secretary who is responsible for maintaining a membership list and recording minutes at meetings.
- The secretary shall be a person with upright character, good reputation, a willingness to serve and have the consistent support of the church.

### **Other**

The church may create and/or eliminate other positions of church government as deemed expedient and helpful to the ministry of the church.

### **Limits of Liability for Members and Office Bearers**

No member or office bearer shall be liable to make good to Mountain View Baptist Church or any other claimant any loss occasioned or sustained from any cause, howsoever arising, except such loss as may arise from or be occasioned by his or her own personal dishonesty or other wilful misconduct or gross negligence.

## **Church Finances**

### **Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the church shall be from 01 March to 28 February.

### **Financial Record Keeping and Administration of Funds**

- The Leadership Team will assure that complete and accurate records of all receipts, expenditures, assets and liabilities of the church are maintained. After the end of the fiscal year (or any other date as determined) the Leadership Team will arrange for the preparation of the financial statements (to be prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles) for the designated reporting period.
- The Leadership Team has the right (but is not obligated) to appoint a practising Chartered Accountant (SA) to act as auditor for the church, who will report on the financial statements in the customary manner.

- The Leadership Team has the right to make use of the services of registered financial service providers to invest funds and make provisions for the benefit of the ministry of Mountain View Baptist Church.
- The Leadership Team has the right to acquire and manage or control assets, as they deem necessary to be used for the purpose of the ministry.

### **Forms of Giving**

All funds raised by the church shall be by free-will offering or other donations. It is the policy of the church not to raise funds through the sale of merchandise. The church may allow the sale, without profit, of such Christian literature or materials which has as its purpose the furthering of the objectives of the church.

### **Distribution of Income and Assets**

Other than approved church expenses, approved missions work, staff salaries and approved community support, no income or assets may be distributed to members or office bearers.

### **Organisation**

#### **Ordination**

Should the church wish to ordain a man for the ministry, it shall call an ordination council of qualified ministers and individuals to examine the candidate, including individuals requested by the candidate. The council shall examine the candidate and present a recommendation to the congregation. The church shall then, with a three fourths (75%) approval, ordain the candidate.

#### **Continuation**

Mountain View Baptist Church continues to exist even when its membership changes and there are different office bearers.

#### **Dissolution**

The church may be dissolved by a two-thirds (67%) majority vote of the membership. In the event of the dissolution of the church organisation, all outstanding debts and obligations shall be paid first. After those obligations have been fulfilled, the Leadership Team made up of pastor(s) and deacons shall turn the net assets of the church over to the registered Trustees (Trustee Registration of the Representative Office Bearers) formally appointed with the Department of Social Development for Mountain View Baptist Church who will ensure that these net assets are redeployed as they deem appropriate to a non-profit missions organisation. The registered Trustees and Leadership Team will assure that all transactions are in compliance with the laws of the country of South Africa.

#### **Amendments**

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (67%) vote of the members present at a business meeting. This meeting should be publicly announced at least three Sundays (21 days) prior to the meeting.