

# By-laws

**I. Membership** *(Note: All members prior to the adoption of this document will be “grandfathered” under the terms of membership, part A and B. This section will apply to new membership following adoption.)*

## **A. Eligibility for Membership**

A person desiring membership:

1. a. must have a personal experience of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ; and  
b. must be baptized following confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; and  
c. must express a willingness to live a godly life in Christ Jesus and be willing to embrace the views of faith and practice as held by this church. Their willingness to live such a life and unite in membership with Mt Zion will be evidenced by the completion of a New Members Orientation taught by an elder(s) where the new member shall be instructed in the Statement of Faith and the concept of stewardship (including time, talents and possessions), church doctrine, constitution, and by-laws.
  
2. A person may become a member if that person previously had a personal salvation experience, was previously baptized, and they express a willingness to live a godly life in Christ Jesus and be willing to embrace the views of faith and practice as held by this church. It is expected that the new member will complete the New Member Orientation as described above.

## **B. Admission to Membership**

1. Individuals may be received through meeting the eligibility of membership stated above. The Elders will recommend potential members for approval by the membership at a regular business meeting or regular worship service of the church. Approval of membership will be granted by a majority vote of the quorum of members at the meeting. Those received into membership will be officially welcomed into the congregation.

## **C. Termination of Membership**

Termination of membership can be a sensitive issue. Cases of termination will be addressed **on a case-by-case basis** taking into consideration all aspects of membership and or lack of involvement. The Elders will appoint a committee to address termination of membership. The committee may consist of 2 Elders, 2 from the Diaconate and a member at large. Membership may be terminated in one of the following ways:

1. Move outside the area—Members known to have permanently moved outside the normal commuting area of the church may be removed from the membership roll after one year on the inactive list.
2. Personal request—A member may request in writing that his name be removed from the roll.

3. Death—In such cases as death, the member's name will be automatically dropped with no need of congregational action.
4. Inaction—When a member does not support the various ministries of Mt Zion for period of one year, with the following being considered when making the decision: lack of (regular) attendance at weekly worship service(s); lack of (regular) involvement in one of more of the weekly small groups; unwilling to use their spiritual gifts in support of Mt Zion; lack of stewardship of time, talent and treasury.

The Elders will attempt to make contact with the individual by phone or through their address of record prior to making a final decision. After considering the above information, the Elders will decide whether to put the person on the inactive list. When a person becomes inactive, the privileges of membership are forfeited.

In situations of shut-ins, college students away at school, and those serving in the military; being considered for the inactive list is not applicable.

5. Discipline - Sadly, some believers are overtaken by sin (Gal. 6:1) and forsake their obedient life-style. Action to **restore** such **members** will be initiated by the Elders in accordance with a biblical process (Mt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1-5; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; 1 Cor 5). When confession and repentance are absent and consequently, the restoration process is unable to move forward, the Elders may recommend termination of membership as prescribed in Mt. 18:15-20.

The situation will be dealt with at a Special Called business meeting. The Special Called meeting will be announced the two Sundays prior to the meeting. If the member wishes to repent and ask forgiveness, the member may request time during a worship service. If the Elders agree, then an appropriate amount of time will be set aside.

Except in the case of death or inaction, the Elders will present action for changes in membership status to the membership at a regular business meeting or a special called business meeting. With a quorum present, a simple majority of members affirms the action, except in the case of discipline, which requires a three-fourths (3/4) majority. A disciplined member will be advised in advance of the action, and the vote will be taken by secret ballot.

#### **D. Responsibilities of Members**

Each member is expected to seek continued growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Bible; to be faithful and systematic in the generous investment of time, gifts, abilities, and resources, and to submit voluntarily to the designated leaders of the church (Heb 13:17).

If, after consulting with the Elders, any member that is unable to harmonize with the beliefs and practices of Mt Zion, agrees to quietly remove themselves and refrain from cultivating conflict and disruption.

#### **E. Classifications of Members/Types of Membership**

##### **1. Active Members**

Active members are members who actively support the church. This support is normally evidenced by attending worship service, giving, and serving. In addition, active members should strive to live in accordance with the doctrinal standards of Holy Scripture. Prior to any regular business meeting or a special called business meeting, the Secretary-Treasurer shall report to the Elders the status of active/inactive membership.

## **2. Inactive Members**

Inactive members are any members who have been absent from the church for a period of one year without manifesting interest and making contribution by attending worship service, giving, and serving. Such persons **may** be placed on the inactive roll by the Elders. As stated above, there may be extenuating circumstances that the Elders may consider.

Persons carried on the inactive roll shall not be counted as active members and shall have no voting rights.

3. **Restoration** - Any person whose name has been placed on the role of inactive members, may by making satisfactory explanation to the Elder Board, be recommended to the church for restoration to the active roll.

## **II. Officers**

### **A. General**

1. All duly elected officers of the church shall be required to show their adherence to the Statement of Faith by signing it annually. All records and keys in the possession of an officer are the property of the church and shall be turned over to the Elder Board as a permanent record at the close of their term of office. No officer shall spend non-budgeted funds of the church except as authorized by the Elder Board or the church body.
2. All officers other than pastors will be elected by the church body at the annual business meeting. Their term of office will begin on the first of the month after the meeting in which they were elected. All resignations before the conclusion of a term shall be presented in writing to the Elder Board.
3. Any officer other than a pastor who willfully neglects his or her duty or demonstrates conduct contrary to scripture, impairing his or her service may be removed from office by one of the following procedures: 1) a petition signed by 20% of the active voting members will constitute a call for special business meeting with the recommendation for removal, and at that meeting a three-fourths (3/4) majority of those voting can ratify the recommendation to remove the officer or 2) a vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the Elder Board may call a special meeting where the membership will hear about the situation; hear from the accused officer, and then a simple majority vote will carry the motion.

### **B. Pastoral Staff**

#### **1. Description**

a. Lead Pastor

The Lead Pastor will be the leader, primary teaching elder, shepherd and guide of the church. He will perform all of the biblical duties of the pastoral office as defined under qualifications and duties. He will be granted authority under God to provide leadership and direction to the church by precept, persuasion, and example. He will either be an ordained/licensed minister or a layman that the congregation is led by the Holy Spirit to be their pastor in spite of lack of formal training.

b. Associate Pastor

An Associate Pastor will be able to perform all of the biblical duties of the pastoral office as defined under qualifications and duties. His authority is granted by God to provide leadership and direction to the church by precept, persuasion, and example, and is subordinate to that of the Lead Pastor. He will either be an ordained/licensed minister or a layman that the congregation is led by the Holy Spirit to be their pastor in spite of lack of formal training.

## 2. Qualifications

Realizing that all men have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God; the preponderance of evidence will show that a candidate for pastor exhibits the following qualifications.

A Pastor of this church will have experienced Christ's saving work in his life (cf. Hebrew 13:7; 1 Timothy 3:6; Eph. 2:8-10). He will accept the fundamental doctrines as expressed by the Articles of Faith (Titus 1:9; cf. Acts. 20:30f). He will have a sense of God's calling to the pastoral ministry (cf. 1 Timothy 4:14). He will be a man of prayer and study of the Word (Acts 6:4; Titus 1:9; cf. James 5:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:15). He will have a high moral and spiritual character and godly example which have been recognized by those around him (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6ff). He will possess demonstrated leadership abilities yet be able to show pastoral care with genuine gentleness and humility (Titus 1:7; cf. Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:4-f; 1 Peter 5:2f). He will possess the gifts and talents necessary to perform his particular pastoral duties, especially an ability to teach (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; cf. Ephesians 4:11-13). He will possess the appropriate biblical training and other educational qualifications for his particular area of responsibility (cf. 1 Timothy 3:2, 7). He will have zeal for evangelism and missions that are local; yet extend world-wide (cf. 2 Timothy 4:2; cf. Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

## 3. Selection

A vacancy in the office of Lead Pastor will initiate the appointment of a Pulpit Committee by the Elder Board. The Pulpit Committee shall be composed of five members, two of whom shall be Elders, two from the Diaconate, and one member at large. The Pulpit Committee will seek a qualified candidate, secure approval of the Elder Board, and then present the candidate to the congregation. A written recommendation will be followed by opportunities for the membership and congregation to meet the candidate and his family. No vote will be taken for at least two weeks following the written recommendation. A minimum three-fourths (3/4) majority of a voting quorum and voting by secret ballot is required to extend a call. The vote may be taken at a regular or special business meeting of the congregation. Notice of this meeting and its purpose shall be communicated to each

member and read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays immediately prior to the event. The Lead Pastor will serve as an Elder by virtue of his call. Any Pastor will be called, or offered a position prior to membership in the church, but he must meet the qualifications of members. The initial salary, allowances and vacation as well as any other considerations deemed advisable shall be determined by the Elder Board at the time of the call and submitted to the candidate in writing. The membership shall approve the compensation package by approval of the call.

#### **4. Term**

A Pastor serves for an indefinite period of time, subject to the termination language in Section II - 6.

#### **5. Duties**

a. The Lead Pastor will:

- i. preach the Gospel at most worship services and administer the ordinances,
- ii. oversee the church membership and its spiritual interests.
- iii. represent the church in welcoming new members before the congregation.
- iv. be a member of the Elder Board.
- v. be a supervisor for any staff that may be hired.
- vi. pray as led by the Holy Spirit.
- vii. perform such other duties as generally pertain to such a position. (And as discussed with the Elder Board)
- viii. be an ex-officio member of all church committees

#### **6. Termination**

The relationship between a Pastor and the church shall be continuous until dissolved by either giving thirty days written notice or less by mutual consent. In the event the church initiates such action, the matter shall be presented to the church by the Elder Board at a Special Business Meeting called for that purpose. Prior to said meeting at least two weeks written notice shall be given to the congregation. In the case of dismissal, the termination shall be immediate, with the Pastor receiving one month's salary as severance pay. The dismissal of a Pastor shall require a three-fourths vote of an appropriate voting quorum to make such an action valid.

If the Elder Board confirms sinful behavior on the part of the Lead Pastor that is disqualifying according to 1 Timothy 3:1-8; 5:19-20, and Titus 1:5-9, they may act to immediately remove the Pastor from all privileges, responsibilities and duties, pending a vote of the membership to affirm their action. Severance will not be available to the pastor under these circumstances. If he chooses, the Pastor will be given opportunity to address the charges before the vote is taken.

A Pastor who has been disabled to the point where he cannot adequately perform his duties will be maintained on full salary for a period of three months. After that he may be given a leave of absence without pay for a period of up to nine months. If there is no reasonable prospect of his return to full functioning at the end of that period, his employment shall be terminated.

## **C. Elders**

### **1. Qualifications**

Male members of the congregation who meet the character and leadership qualifications revealed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, and agrees to participate in the Elder training course, and fully support the doctrine and practice of Mt Zion are eligible to serve as Elders.

However, being an elder is a calling by the Holy Spirit, similar to being called as a Pastor. Therefore, potential Elders should not take this responsibility lightly, nor should the membership vote for a potential Elder based merely on popularity.

The Elder Board should hold themselves to the highest standard and at a minimum, take a self-evaluation assessment at least annually. This should be a written assessment and then discussed among the Elder Board. It may be an assessment that is developed by the Elder Board or obtained outside the church. It is not necessarily to be released to the membership.

### **2. Duties**

The Elders will:

- a. help lead the spiritual growth and create a vision for the church. This would include but not be limited to prayer, Bible teaching, and counseling. They will work with the Lead Pastor and other pastoral staff to shepherd the spiritual affairs of the church.
- b. oversee the physical facilities of the church.
- c. oversee and be responsible for all financial aspects of the church.
- d. oversee church receipts each Sunday
- e. select a chairman of the Elder Board who shall preside at the Annual Business Meeting &/or any Special Meetings.
- f. select a chairman of the Elder Board who shall, in conjunction with the Church Secretary, assist the Secretary in making the Agenda, and seeing that copies are printed for the congregation.

### **3. Elder Board**

This board shall be comprised of the Lead Pastor who shall be *primus inter pares* (first among equals) together with three men who meet the qualifications above. In addition to the above duties the Elder Board shall work together with the Lead Pastor to establish the church's mission and vision as well as develop necessary policy and ministries to implement them.

The Elder Board is the Board of Directors for the church, and the officers of the Board will function as the officers of the corporate body. (Chairman = President; Vice-Chairman = Vice-President.

#### **4. Board Term**

Elders will be called by the church membership. It is suggested that three elders (plus the pastor, who serves as a function of his office) be called, unless the membership, by a three-fourths vote, believes that another number (2, 4 or more) will serve at all times. The Elders will elect their own officers, however, the pastor will not be eligible to be an officer. The chairman may not be elected for more than 2 consecutive years. However, the same man may be elected again after a minimum of one year.

The term of office for an Elder will be three consecutive years. Approximately one third of the Elders will be up for election each year.

### **D. Deacons and Deaconesses**

#### **1. Diaconate Board**

The Diaconate Board shall consist of three men and three women who meet the qualifications. They shall select their own officers at the first meeting after the election.

#### **2. Qualifications**

members who meet the appropriate qualifications revealed in scripture (1 Timothy 3:8-13, Titus 2:3-5, Acts 6:3 and Romans 16:1-2) and fully support the doctrine and practice of Mt Zion are eligible to serve as Deacons or Deaconesses.

#### **3. Term**

The Diaconate will be elected by the church membership. A minimum of six will serve, but more may be elected as ministry needs require. Approximately one third of their number will be up for election each year. A Deacon shall be elected for a three-year term. Upon completion of a full term they are required to lay out for one year.

#### **4. Duties: A Diaconate member shall oversee and give attention to:**

- a. the practical aspects of ministry, including contacting the membership on a regular basis.
- b. overseeing the setup of the ordinances of the church
- c. oversee the set up and break down for events
- d. securing worship greeters and ushers at events
- e. the needs at weddings
- f. the needs at funerals and memorials
- g. hospitality
- h. oversee the nursery
- i. event planning

### **E. Secretary-Treasurer**

#### **1. Qualifications**

The Secretary-Treasurer of Mt Zion will have, at least, a working knowledge of bookkeeping, and will know or be willing to learn the system that the church currently uses for budgetary and accounting purposes.

## **2. Term**

The Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected for a one-year term and may be reelected.

## **3. Duties: A Secretary-Treasurer will:**

- a. make all disbursements by check for which authorizations have been approved in accordance with the By Laws.
- b. keep records of all deposits.
- c. keep records required by law as well as records of all money spent.
- d. present a monthly financial report to the Elder Board.
- e. present a financial report at the Church's regular Business Meetings.
- f. keep a separate account of each contributor and furnish each with a statement of it at the end of the year.
- g. take minutes at Elder Board meetings and produce them in printed form.
- h. take minutes at regular business meetings and special called business meetings and produce them in printed form.
- i. keep all documents and records preserved, organized and able to deliver the same to the Elder Board as needed.
- j. keep a complete list of the membership, with appropriate demographic information.
- k. In conjunction with the Chairman of the Elders, assist the Chairman by making an agenda for a Regular Business Meeting, or any Special Called Meeting and to make copies for the membership and guests who attend.

## **III. Committees**

### **1. General**

From time to time, a committee may be needed to assist in the ministry needs of the church. Some examples, including, but not limited to, are a Pastoral Search Committee, Playground Committee, and etc.

### **2. Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee will be appointed each year to select nominees for any open positions or terms that are completed on committees for which the membership will elect at the annual business meeting.

### **3. Qualifications**

Because their task may, from time to time, be confidential; the members of these committee(s) must be persons of understanding, maturity and discretion.

### **4. Duties**

Depending on the committee being formed, the duties and timetable will be proscribed by the Elder Board.

## 5. Committee Makeup

These committees will be appointed by the Elder Board and be composed of 5 people; 2 elders, 2 from the Diaconate, and 1 member at large. The committee will elect their own officers.

## IV. Other

### 1. Meetings

**a. Church Services.** The Church shall conduct the following services:

- i. A worship service(s) on Sunday morning.
- ii. Sunday School on Sunday morning.
- iii. Times during the week for Bible study, prayer and fellowship.
- iv. An observance of the Lord's Supper at least once each month.
- v. Any other services deemed necessary or useful by the Board of Elders.

**b. Business Meetings**

**i. Regular (see First Amendment below)**

The Regular Business Meeting is the Annual Business Meeting which will be held the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday following the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in February. The specific date and time of each meeting shall be announced two consecutive weeks in advance in church services and announced in the newsletter.

**ii. Special**

- a. Special Business Meetings may be called at any time by 3/4 vote of the Elder Board, provided that the announcement of the meeting and its purpose is made for two weeks from the pulpit. Matters of greater gravity may require a mailed notice to all the membership.
- b. The Pastor or the Chairman of the Elder Board shall call a Special Business Meeting whenever requested to do so by 20% of the membership with a signed petition.
- c. A meeting may be called at any worship service by the Pastor or the Elder Board without a two-week notice for the purpose of acting on the recommendation for the reception of new church members.

### 2. Quorum

A quorum is 20% of the membership. The Secretary-Treasurer will compare those in attendance with the official membership list and give this information to the chairman of the Elder Board. The Chairman will announce the results. If a quorum is not present: calls will be made to try to get members to attend. In the event that a quorum is still not present, the chairman will announce that the meeting has been postponed and will set a 1 week to 3 weeks out for the meeting.

In the event that a quorum is not present at the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt for an annual meeting, the Elder Board will determine at their next regular Elder meeting if and when an annual meeting will be held.

### **3. Voting**

#### **a. Eligibility**

All active members 18 years of age or older are eligible to vote.

#### **b. Voting Procedures**

1. A vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present shall be necessary for the following:
  - a. The call or dismissal of any Pastoral Staff.
  - b. The adoption or amending of the Articles of Faith, Constitution, and By-Laws.
2. A simple majority vote of the members present shall be necessary in all other matters of business, unless specifically called out in this document.
3. Most procedural matters and policy matters may be voted on using a raised hand unless the Chairman determines a need for a written ballot.
4. In the event that a vote is proposed using a raised hand, any three members may make a verbal request that the vote be by written ballot.

### **4. Rules of Order**

It is understood that the Bible is our final authority and that the biblical principles of unity, cooperation, and doing all things to the glory of Jesus Christ are the guiding concern. If procedural assistance is required, and questions of order arise, these shall be settled by the customary rules governing deliberative bodies as given in *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*.

### **5. Minutes & Agenda**

Minutes of church business meetings and Elders' meetings are the official records of the church. The Secretary-Treasurer of the Church will maintain these records. Minutes of meetings, balance sheets, and budget reports are open to the members upon request. All other records maintained by the Secretary-Treasurer are only available to the members with the permission of the Elder Board. Matters of a sensitive nature, including, but not limited to personnel records, may be treated as confidential in the records.

Agendas for business or Elders' meetings may be requested for review prior to the meeting. Items not included on the agenda may be brought to the floor by the chairman at his discretion. The Elders will determine when issues on their agenda are suitable for executive session. Executive sessions are open only to the Elders and any others the Elders request to attend.

Regular records should be maintained by all Committees and ministries as appropriate. Copies should be forwarded to the Chairman of the Elder Board and Pastor.

### **6. Annual Report**

Following the close of each fiscal year the Elders will be responsible to direct the Officers, and Committees (if appropriate) to present an annual report to the congregation as necessary.

## **7. Financial Matters**

### **a. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the church will be January 1 through December 31.

### **b. Annual Budget**

Each December, the Elder Board will recommend a budget for approval by the membership at the annual meeting. Once approved, the budget is not a mandate to spend, but provides reasonable parameters for fulfilling the ministry in the coming year. The Elders are authorized and responsible to conduct the affairs of the church within that budget and see that delegated budget managers also do so. The Elders are also authorized to establish, manage, and disburse designated funds which will advance the ministry of the church. They may also take action outside the budget if emergency conditions exist where a delay would likely cause material or irreparable loss, damage, or injury to people, property, or the welfare of the church, provided these expenses are reported to the membership at the next regular business meeting. They may also make strategic expenditures beyond the budget if funds are available, but not to exceed six percent (6%) of the annual budget without prior congregational approval and provided the congregation is notified at the next regular business meeting.

### **c. Financial Review**

A review of the church financial records will be conducted by a CPA auditing firm if a motion is offered and passed at a regular or special business meeting.

### **d. Financial Policy**

Funding for the local and world-wide ministry of Mt Zion will be obtained through the voluntary gifts of the members and friends of the church. All fund-raisers outside the normal operational ministries of the church are subject to approval by the Elders. Funds for auxiliary or para-church ministries may not be solicited without approval of the Elders.

### **e. Gifts**

Any gifts of money or other physical property given to the church or any of its ministries will become the property of the church and will be administered by the Elders or their designees. The church reserves the right to accept or deny designated gifts. Designated gifts will be used for the purposes designated within legal limits. If a gift is given under unacceptable conditions, the church will seek an appropriate designation or attempt to return the gift to the donor. Designated gifts not disbursed within three years of the initial gift shall be disbursed in a way that is as close to the original intent to which the gift was given.

## **8. Implementation**

### **a. Election**

After the adoption of this document, an election will be held, the purpose of which will be to elect the Elders, the Diaconate and the Secretary-Treasurer. A motion from the floor duly made and seconded will set the date of the election. The date may include the date that this document is adopted. Otherwise, the Special Meeting election must occur after a minimum of 3 weeks. The motion to set the date must pass by  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote of membership present at the meeting.

The current Board of Trustees will remain in office until the election is completed. For the first election after the adoption of this document, the existing Board of Trustees will be the nominating committee. In subsequent years, the nominating committee will be as described in Section III-1 through Section III-5 above.

b. Implementation

Elders' terms will be phased: one Elder will be elected for a 3-year term, one Elder will be elected for a 2-year term, and one Elder will be elected for a 1-year term. It is the intent that the terms will be 1 year, 2 year or 3 years plus whatever months from the Special Meeting to elect leadership until the annual meeting date.

When the initially elected Elders' terms are up, they will be eligible to be re-elected at the next annual meeting subject to the provisions of this document.

The Diaconate terms will be phased: 1 man and 1 woman will be elected for a 3-year term, and 1 man and one woman will be elected for a 2-year term, and 1 man and 1 woman will be elected for a 1-year term. It is the intent that the terms will be 1 year, 2 year or 3 years plus whatever months from the Special Meeting to elect leadership until the annual meeting date.

When the initially elected Deacons' and Deaconesses' terms are up, they will be eligible to be re-elected at the next annual meeting subject to the provisions of this document.

Signature of Chairman Steve E. Abrams  
of Outgoing Board of Trustees

Document Adopted at Special Called Meeting: July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Signature of Chairman Steve E. Abrams  
of Incoming Elder Board

Election of New Leadership at Special Called Meeting October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**First Amendment  
to the**

## Bylaws of Mt Zion Community Church, Inc

The following amendment was approved by the membership at the Annual Business Meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The Regular Business Meeting is the Annual Business Meeting which will be held the first Sunday in February immediately after the worship service. The annual meeting shall be announced two consecutive weeks in advance in the church services.

This approved amendment voids Section IV1bi in the Bylaws.

Signature of Chairman of Elder Board \_\_\_\_\_ *John Eis* \_\_\_\_\_