

CONSTITUTION

of the

Mercy Hill Baptist Church, Shepherdsville, KENTUCKY

Preamble

Having been called by God to establish a church here in Shepherdsville, under the name of Mercy Hill Baptist Church, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we do formally establish this constitution, on June 9th, 2013.

Articles of Faith:

We recognize the Baptist Faith and Message from the year 2000 as our Articles of Faith

By-Laws

Article 1 – Name

The name of this church is Mercy Hill Baptist Church

Article 2 – Purpose and Mission

Mercy Hill Baptist Church exists to glorify God by making, equipping, and sending out fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.

Article 3 – Officers

Section 1 – The Lead Pastor

The lead pastor shall be a full time elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the vocation of preaching and teaching. He shall preach on the Lord's Day, serve as the worship leader of the church, act as the immediate overseer of church staff and ministry teams, function as the administrative head of the church, and the chairman of the elders. He will take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of ministry, encourage sound doctrine, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. He shall perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office of lead pastor.

His call shall not be subject to a triennial reaffirmation, the term limitation for elders or the required one-year sabbatical required of elders.

Section 2 – Associate Pastor

The lead pastor may recommend to the elders that the church call an additional pastor whose relationship to the lead pastor is that of associate. An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 4, below, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the vocation of preaching and teaching. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation for elders. He shall assist the lead pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties which may be specifically assigned to him by the church. In the absence or incapacity of the lead pastor for defined periods of time (such as illness, etc.), the associate pastor shall assume responsibility for his duties.

Section 3 –Elders

The elders shall be men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3: 1–7 and Titus 1: 6–9. The elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6: 1–6 and I Peter 5: 1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word and shepherding God's flock.

The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. This recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church triennially. After an elder has served a three-year term, he may only be re-elected to the office of elder after a one year sabbatical. An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any elder may be dismissed when the recommendation for his dismissal brought by the remaining elders receives a two-thirds vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church.

The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons, pastors, staff and appointed ministry directors and teams, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions.

The elders are further to ensure that all who preach and teach the word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions. The elders may establish ministry positions or teams to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of the elders. The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. The lead pastor shall serve as chairman of elders' meetings, unless he delegates the role to a fellow elder. The elders shall elect one of their number to serve as moderator of members' meetings, and as the secretary of elder meetings.

Each year the elders, in cooperation with other pastors, staff and deacons, shall present to the church an itemized budget two weeks prior to a regular members' meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

Section 4 – Ministry Directors

The elders may nominate and appoint members of the church to serve as directors of a specific ministry area or team. Ministry directors are appointed by the elders. They serve under the direct oversight of a member of the Pastoral Ministry Team. Ministry directors are not required to be nominated to or affirmed by the church.

Section 5 – Deacons and Deaconesses

The office of deacon is described in 1 Timothy 3: 8–13 and Acts 6: 1–6. The elders will recommend gifted and qualified men or women to the church to serve as a deacon or deaconess. The church shall recognize men and women who possess particular gifts of service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons and deaconesses if two thirds of the members affirm the recommendation. Deacons and deaconesses shall provide for the physical needs of members, visit the sick and ensure that all members are receiving the care they need.

Section 6 – Clerk

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the church. The clerk shall appointed by the elders. In the absence or incapacity of the clerk the elders shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk.

Section 7 – Treasurers

The Director of Finance and two members appointed by the elders to serve as members of a Finance Team shall function as the treasurers. They shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurers shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the elders and the church at each Member's Meeting. The treasurers shall also ensure that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church.

Article 4 – Elections

Section 1 – Principles

Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process; nominations are made by the elders; all candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members; the election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ; if after prayer a member determines that he or she is unable to affirm a nomination made by the elders then it is the obligation of that member to provide biblical support for holding such an opinion. Upon receipt of such objections the elders will review their nomination.

Section 2 – Selection of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a Members' Meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elders, pastor team members, deacons, or deaconesses shall be presented by the elders at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which that officer is to be affirmed. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders in private at which point the elders may choose to reconsider the nomination. If two thirds of members are able to affirm the candidate for any office within the church they will be appointed to the office nominated for.

Section 3 – Calling of Pastoral Staff

The elders will appoint a search committee of church members to prayerfully seek candidates for pastoral staff. The search committee will work with the elders to consider potential candidates. After being satisfied with a candidate, the elders will present a nominee to the membership for affirmation. The church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential pastoral staff, particularly candidates for Lead Pastor and Associate Pastor. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called to the pastoral staff must be given at two Sunday morning services prior to the date of a special Member's Meeting called to affirm the nomination of the candidate.

Article 5 – Membership

Section 1 – Qualifications

To qualify for membership a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, has been baptized as a believer in obedience to Christ, and wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the *Articles of Faith* and *Church Covenant*. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the elders deem appropriate.

Section 2 – Admission of Members

Candidates for membership must meet with an elder, sign the church covenant, and complete a new member's class. The candidate should be actively involved in a missional community. The elders may recommend such candidates for membership at a special or regular member's meeting. A candidate shall be recognized as a full member upon the affirmation of the membership.

Section 3 – Duties and Privileges of Membership

Each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. It is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and to give prayerful consideration of all business brought to the attention of the membership by the elders, and to discern whether the lord is leading the church to affirm all nominees for offices or membership.

Section 4 – On Church Discipline

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her commitment to the *Church Covenant* shall be subject to the discipline of the elders and the church. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private attempts at restoration have failed. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, deposition from office, and excommunication. The elders reserve the right to suspend any member from all positions of leadership until the completion of the discipline process. The aim of such discipline is for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined; For the instruction of other Christians; For the purity of the church as a whole; For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians; and Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character. (Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5:1-12, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11)

Section 5 – Termination of Membership

Termination of membership shall be recognized by the church following the death or voluntary resignation of any church member. Membership may be terminated as an act of church discipline at the recommendation of the elders and with two-thirds of the members giving their assent at any regular or special meeting of the members. Termination because of church discipline is always done in love, with the hope of revealing unrepentant sin, provoking future reconciliation and restoration to membership.

Article 6 – Gatherings/Meetings

Section 1 – Worship Gatherings

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day, and may be held throughout the week as the church determines. The ordinances of the church (baptism and the Lord's Supper) shall take place during a worship meeting. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at each regular worship gathering of the church. Regenerate believers in Jesus Christ who are not under the discipline of a church, or who do not carry unrepentant sin, shall be invited to take part in the Lord's Supper celebration.

Section 2 – Member's Meetings

There shall be a regular Member's Meeting at least quarterly, at some time apart from a public worship service. An elder shall preside as moderator at all Members' Meetings of the church. A quorum shall be understood to be those members present. A budget shall be approved by the membership at a Member's Meeting no less than one month prior to the start of the fiscal year. Special Member's Meetings may be called as required by the elders. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at least one week preceding the meeting.

Article 7 – Dispute Resolution

The church shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles and the avoidance of suits of law or equity to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church. (1 Corinthians 6:1-8)

Article 8 – Amendments

The Articles of Faith, by-laws and Church Covenant may be amended by a two thirds vote of the members present and voting at a Member's Meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing and shall have been announced to the church over two successive Sundays prior to such vote.