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The Constitution of the Mount Vernon Baptist Church

Since God established a Congregation in 1959 under the name Mount Vernon Baptist Church, of Atlanta, Georgia, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and since He has sustained and prospered this work to the present day as Mount Vernon Baptist Church of Sandy Springs, Georgia; and

Whereas we, having searched the Scriptures under the guidance of His Spirit, have recognized the appropriateness of reconstituting the polity of the Congregation to conform more closely to our understanding of the Scriptural model;

Now therefore, the Congregation does hereby reorganize itself in accord with the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code and the 1959 Articles of Incorporation of this Church and adopts this Constitution as its articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in our Statement of Faith, the Baptist Faith and Message (2000), and in our Church Covenant (which Covenant is attached hereto as Exhibit "A"). This Constitution is in lieu of Bylaws and revokes and replaces previously adopted Bylaws.

Article One, Purpose

Section 1. The Purpose of this Church.

Clause 1. This Church exists for the worship and glory of God.

Clause 2. This Church seeks to accomplish this purpose by knowing one another, equipping one another, and sending one another out to reach the lost, locally and globally.

Article Two, Membership

Section 1. Eligibility for Membership.

Clause 1. Members of this Church shall be believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who:

- (a) give evidence of regeneration;
- (b) have been baptized, by immersion, as believers in obedience to Christ;

1 (c) hold without mental reservation the doctrines of our Church as
2 expressed in the Baptist Faith and Message (2000) and in the
3 Church Covenant; and

4
5 (d) promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church
6 Covenant.

7
8 **Section 2. Admission to membership.**

9
10 Clause 1. An applicant shall be received as a member of the Church upon the
11 recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement by a three-quarters vote at
12 any Church in Conference.

13
14 Clause 2. Other than an Associate Member, no member of this Church shall retain
15 membership in any other Church.

16
17 **Section 3. Duties of members.**

18
19 Clause 1. The duties of members are summarized in the Church Covenant.

20
21 Clause 2. Regular attendance on the Lord's Day, for all who are able.

22
23 **Section 4. Termination of membership.**

24
25 Clause 1. The Church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership
26 following his or her death, and may do so following his or her voluntary resignation,
27 joining another church, or failure to fulfill the duties of membership.

28
29 **Section 5. Discipline.**

30
31 Clause 1. The Church shall have authority to exercise discipline over its members,
32 which may involve excluding from its membership any member who willingly and
33 persistently lives in violation of biblical moral standards including scandalous conduct by
34 which the reputation of Christ or His Church is dishonored. Any such action shall be
35 done in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and those
36 of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 2 Corinthians 2:6-8. The purpose of such
37 discipline is for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual
38 disciplined.

39
40 Clause 2. If a member submits a voluntary resignation or a request for transfer of
41 membership at a time when that member is the subject of discipline or is facing discipline
42 for scandalous conduct by which the reputation of Christ or His Church is dishonored, the
43 Church shall have the authority to refuse that resignation or transfer. The purpose for
44 such a refusal would be to ensure that the Church has done all it can to fulfill the Biblical

1 goal of church discipline, which is to seek the repentance, reconciliation and spiritual
2 growth of each member of the body. A member who would seek to remove himself from
3 the body to avoid an ongoing or forthcoming disciplinary process may thereby miss the
4 God-given opportunity for Biblical discipline, which is intended for his own soul and for
5 protection of the Church.
6

7 Clause 3. A member shall be removed from the membership as a matter of church
8 discipline upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of at
9 least three-quarters vote at any Church in Conference.
10

11 **Section 6. Associate members.**
12

13 Clause 1. Students and others temporarily residing in the Atlanta area who
14 otherwise meet the requirements of membership in the Church may request associate
15 membership and be received as associate members, provided they are members in good
16 standing of another evangelical, Baptist church.
17

18 Clause 2. An applicant shall be received as an associate upon the recommendation
19 of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of at least three-quarters vote at any Church
20 in Conference.
21

22 Clause 3. Associate members shall retain membership in one other evangelical,
23 Baptist church.
24

25 Clause 4. Associate members will be expected to comply with the Church
26 Covenant in the same manner as regular members, however, they shall not be eligible to
27 stand for any office or to vote.
28

29 Clause 5. A person's associate membership with the Church shall terminate
30 immediately upon the ending of residence in the Atlanta area or by voluntary resignation.
31 The Church shall have authority to terminate an individual's associate membership if he
32 or she is consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of scandalous conduct by
33 which the reputation of Christ or His Church is dishonored. In such an event, the Elders
34 shall refer disciplinary action to the Pastor or Elders of the excluded person's home
35 church.
36

37 *Article Three, Meetings*
38

39 **Section 1. Regular meetings.**
40

41 The Church shall meet together for public worship each Lord's Day and at other times
42 throughout the week as the Church may determine.
43

1
2 **Section 2. Church in Conference.**
3

4 Clause 1. The Church shall hold Church in Conference meetings at least every
5 quarter. No person who is not a member can vote or hold any elected or appointed
6 position in the Church.
7

8 Clause 2. The Elders, whenever they deem it necessary, or within thirty days of
9 receiving a written request signed by ten percent of the voting membership, shall call a
10 special Church in Conference.
11

12 Clause 3. No Church in Conference shall be held until the date, time, and place of
13 such meeting has been announced at all Sunday morning and Sunday evening services of
14 the Church for at least two weeks prior to the Church in Conference in question.
15

16 Clause 4. The Chairman of Elders shall preside as the Moderator at every Church
17 in Conference and shall be responsible to maintain order and to recognize the presence of
18 a quorum before considering any matters requiring a vote. In the event the Chairman of
19 Elders is not present at a meeting, those Elders who are present will designate a substitute
20 moderator for that meeting.
21

22 Clause 5. Church in Conference meetings shall proceed according to a reasonable
23 order.
24

25 Clause 6. Any action required to be taken by the Church in Conference shall
26 require the recognition of the presence of a quorum by the presiding officer. The
27 presence of five percent (5%) of the members shall constitute a quorum and shall be
28 required to do business. Motions shall be adopted upon the agreement of a majority of the
29 members present, except on matters requiring more than a mere majority vote as
30 otherwise provided for in this Constitution.
31
32
33

34 **Section 3. Actions taken in Church in Conference.**
35

36 The Church, duly assembled at a Church in Conference, shall be responsible:
37

- 38 (a) to elect officers;
39
40 (b) to receive individuals into Church membership;
41
42 (c) to recognize the termination of membership due to death, transfer
43 of membership, or voluntary resignation;
44

- 1 (d) to edit or amend the Statement of Faith or Church Covenant;
- 2
- 3 (e) to exercise Church discipline;
- 4
- 5 (f) to approve, once in every year, a Church budget;
- 6
- 7 (g) to hear reports from the Elders and, from time to time, various
- 8 Deacons and ministry teams; and
- 9
- 10 (h) to take any other action they deem necessary or desirable.
- 11

12 Section 4. Alternative voting for members in special circumstances.

13

14 When matters involving the election of Elders and Deacons and the approval of the

15 annual Church budget are to come before the Church in Conference for a vote, any

16 member of the Church who is serving under the Commission of this Church on the

17 mission field or who is known to be a home bound member or who is away on active

18 duty in military service shall be notified in writing of the proposed election or vote

19 and shall be eligible to vote by correspondence on the question. Writing or

20 correspondence shall include e-mail for those who regularly receive information

21 from the Church in that manner, but shall mean by regular mail for those known not

22 to have e-mail. It shall be the responsibility of the member to provide the Church

23 with a current address or e-mail.

24

25 *Article Four, Government*

26

27 **Section 1. Biblical offices.**

28

29 The biblical offices in the Church shall be Elders and Deacons, but final earthly authority

30 is vested in the assembled Congregation.

31

32 **Section 2. Elders.**

33

34 Clause 1. Oversight of the ministry and resources of the Church shall be vested in

35 a Council of Elders, which shall be comprised of not fewer than seven men who are

36 members of the Church and who satisfy the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7

37 and Titus 1:6-9.

38

39 Clause 2. At least once in every year, the Elders shall at any regular Church in

40 Conference solicit from the Congregation recommendations for the office of Elder, which

41 recommendations shall be given to the Elders in private, and not publicly. The Elders

42 shall give due consideration to any recommendations received.

1
2 Clause 3. Elders shall be selected as follows: The Council of Elders shall at any
3 regular Church in Conference present to the Church a list of nominees to the office of
4 Elder. For a period of at least one month, the Church shall consider whether such
5 nominees are qualified for the office. If any member believes one or more of the
6 nominees to be unqualified, that member shall express such concern to the Elders, who
7 may on the basis of that advice remove names from the list of nominees. No name shall
8 be added to the list of nominees, which was not included on the initial list. When a period
9 of one month has elapsed, the Elders shall at the next regular Church in Conference
10 present a final list of nominees to the Church, who shall vote yea or nay by written and
11 signed ballot on each of the nominees separately. The Moderator and Treasurer (or in
12 their absence two or more members designated by the Elders) shall count the votes, and
13 any nominee receiving approval by three-fourths shall, in due haste, be publicly
14 recognized as an Elder and set apart as such.

15
16 Clause 4. In accordance with 1 Timothy 2:12 women shall not serve as Elders.

17
18 Clause 5. A majority of the Council of Elders shall be laymen, that is, Church
19 members not in the regular pay of the Church.

20
21 Clause 6. With the exception of the Elders serving on staff, Elders shall be
22 reaffirmed by vote of the Church triennially, and having served two consecutive three-
23 year terms, shall not be eligible for re-election for one year. Elders serving on staff shall
24 not be subject to a reaffirmation vote, or to any term limit. When the first class of Elders
25 is elected following the adoption of this Constitution, those Elders shall serve initial
26 terms of one, two or three years, as determined by the Elders at their first meeting
27 following that first election of Elders.

28
29 Clause 7. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure as an Elder.

30
31 Clause 8. The Council of Elders shall choose its Chairman, Vice Chairman and
32 Secretary. The Chairman of Elders shall be chosen by the Council of Elders from among
33 the lay elders, that is those not in the regular pay of the Church. The Council of Elders
34 shall serve in lieu of a board of directors and the Chairman of Elders shall serve as the
35 chief officer of the Church for legal purposes. In addition to such other duties as may be
36 set forth in this Constitution or otherwise be delegated by the Council of Elders, the Vice
37 Chairman shall serve as Chairman in the event of the incapacity or absence of the
38 Chairman.

39
40 Clause 9. The Elders shall, in keeping with the principles set forth in the
41 Scriptures, especially Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14; and 1 Peter
42 5:1-4, undertake the responsibility of shepherding God's flock by devoting themselves to
43 prayer and the ministry of the Word. They shall have the following particular authority:
44

- 1 (a) to plan and oversee corporate worship services;
- 2
- 3 (b) to oversee the ordinances of the Church, which ordinances are
- 4 Baptism and the Lord's Supper;
- 5
- 6 (c) to examine and instruct prospective members;
- 7
- 8 (d) to oversee the process of Church discipline;
- 9
- 10 (e) to examine and recommend candidates for all offices and
- 11 positions;
- 12
- 13 (f) to oversee the work of the Deacons and all other agents of the
- 14 Church; and
- 15
- 16 (g) to set direction and take any other action which shall be necessary
- 17 and proper for faithfully overseeing and shepherding the Church.
- 18

19 Clause 10. An Elder shall be removed from office by a three-fourths vote at any
20 Church in Conference. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions
21 of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and those of the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17-
22 21.

23
24
25 **Section 3. Deacons.**

26
27 Clause 1. Particular service to the Church shall be provided by Deacons, the
28 number of which shall vary as the Church has need, and who shall satisfy the
29 qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

30
31 Clause 2. Each diaconate position shall serve a particular need of the Church, and
32 shall be created or dissolved upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent
33 agreement of three-fourths at any Church in Conference.

34
35 Clause 3. At least once every year, the Elders shall at a Church in Conference, and
36 by other notice, solicit from the Congregation recommendations for qualified persons to
37 serve as deacons, which recommendations shall be given to the Elders in private, and not
38 publicly. The Elders shall give due consideration to any recommendation received.

39
40 Clause 4. Deacons shall be selected as follows: The Council of Elders shall at a
41 Church in Conference present to the Church a list identifying a nominee for each specific
42 diaconate position to be filled. For a period of at least one month, the Church shall
43 consider whether each nominee is qualified for the office of deacon and gifted for the
44 specific deacon position to which he is nominated. If any member believes one or more

1 of the nominees to be unqualified to be a deacon or not gifted for the specific deacon
2 position to which he is nominated, that member shall express such concern to the Elders,
3 who may on the basis of that advice remove names from the list of nominees and
4 substitute for specific deacon positions other names who are already in nomination by the
5 Church. When a period of one month has elapsed, the Elders shall at the next Church in
6 Conference present to the Church a final list of deacon nominees and associated
7 diaconate positions. The Church in Conference shall vote yea or nay by written, signed
8 ballot on each of the nominees in turn. The Moderator and Treasurer (or, in their absence,
9 two or more members designated by the Elders) shall count the votes, and any nominee
10 receiving approval by three-fourths shall be a Deacon, and shall in due haste be publicly
11 recognized and set apart as such.

12
13 Clause 5. Deacons shall serve for one term of three years and may be reaffirmed
14 by a vote of the Church for one additional three-year term. Deacons who have served
15 two consecutive three-year terms shall then not be eligible to serve as a deacon for a
16 period of one year.

17
18 Clause 6. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6, Deacons shall
19 support the Elders' ministry of the Word while they work to maintain the unity of the
20 Church, and care for the physical needs of the Church. The Elders shall, from time to
21 time, request the Deacons, individually or as a group, to meet together with the Elders for
22 the purpose of discussing the Deacon ministry of the Church. In addition, the Vice
23 Chairman of Elders shall call and lead a meeting at least once each quarter of all
24 Deacons, along with all non-Deacon heads of ministry teams, for the purpose of prayer,
25 encouragement and coordination of Deacon and ministry team activities.

26
27 Clause 7. The Church will, upon recommendation by the Elders, recognize
28 Deacons to take responsibility for the following specific ministries:

- 29
30 (a) for overseeing the budget and financial affairs of the Church ;
31 (b) for attending to matters related to Church personnel;
32 (c) for attending to the mission outreach of the Church;
33 (d) for seeing that the sick, the sorrowing, the aged, and the infirm
34 receive spiritual and physical comfort;
35 (e) for receiving, holding, and disbursing a fund for benevolence, and
36 for reporting from time to time on the use of such funds to both
37 the Elders and the Church;
38 (f) for attending to the accommodations for corporate worship,
39 including greeting;
40 (g) for attending to the elements of the Lord's Supper;
41 (h) for attending to baptisms; and
42 (i) for attending to details pertaining to sound and media.
43

1 In addition, the Elders may identify and recommend to the Church the
2 recognition of deacons to serve in other specific diaconate ministries as the Church may
3 have need.

4
5 Clause 8. After the Elders have approved a budget, the Deacon of Finance shall
6 present to the Church in August a budget, which shall then be considered and voted upon
7 by the Church in September in accordance with the fiscal year starting October 1. The
8 Deacon of Finance shall work closely with the Treasurer to track the account balances,
9 revenues, and expenses of the Church for the Elders and the Congregation with the goal
10 of achieving a balanced budget within each fiscal year. No person or group shall solicit
11 money on behalf of the Church or any of its ministries without the prior written approval
12 of the Council of Elders and the Deacon of Finance.

13
14 Clause 9. A Deacon may temporarily be removed from office by a decision of the
15 Elders, which removal shall then become effective for the remainder of the Deacon's
16 term upon the subsequent agreement of the Church at any Church in Conference.

17
18 Clause 10. In the event a diaconate position becomes vacant or the Elders identify
19 a new diaconate position, the Elders may appoint a person to fill that position and assume
20 its responsibilities, until such time as that or another person can be duly recognized by the
21 Church as a Deacon to serve in that specific diaconate ministry.

22
23 Clause 11. Ministry teams may be formed by the Deacons to assist them in
24 fulfilling their roles. The Elders and Staff shall provide assistance to the Deacons in the
25 forming of ministry teams by helping identify Church members who have appropriate
26 gifts and the desire to serve in particular areas. The Senior Pastor or Elders may form
27 additional ministry teams. Members of ministry teams shall be reported to the Church at a
28 Church in Conference but no vote of confirmation by the Church is required.

29
30
31
32 **Section 4. Senior Pastor.**

33
34 Clause 1. Primary responsibility for preaching and teaching the Scriptures in
35 public meetings of the Church may be vested in a Senior Pastor, who shall be an Elder.

36
37 Clause 2. A Senior Pastor shall be selected as follows. The Elders shall form a
38 Senior Pastor Search Committee whenever a vacancy occurs. That committee shall
39 present their recommendation to the Elders. The Elders at any Church in Conference shall
40 present to the Church the name of one nominee to the position of Senior Pastor. For a
41 period of at least one month, the Church shall consider the nominee's gifts in preaching
42 and teaching, and his commitment to minister personally to the members of this Church.
43 If any member believes the nominee to be unqualified, that member shall express his
44 concern to the Elders. When a period of one month has elapsed, the Elders shall at a

1 Church in Conference, present the nominee for Senior Pastor to the Church, who shall, by
2 written and signed ballot, vote yea or nay on his selection as such. The Moderator and
3 Treasurer (or, in their absence those members designated by the Elders present) shall
4 count the votes, and if the nominee receives the approval of at least three-quarters of the
5 members present and voting, he shall be a member of the Church, an Elder, and the
6 Senior Pastor, and the Church shall in due haste publicly recognize him as such.

7
8 Clause 3. The Senior Pastor shall preach regularly on the Lord's Day, administer
9 the ordinance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and perform such other duties as usually
10 pertain to that office.

11
12 Clause 4. In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor, the Elders shall
13 assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

14
15 **Section 5. Associate Pastors.**

16
17 Clause 1. The Church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the Senior
18 Pastor is that of associate.

19
20 Clause 2. An Associate Pastor shall assist the Senior Pastor in the performance of
21 his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of
22 pastor.

23
24 Clause 3. An Associate Pastor shall be selected in a manner identical to the
25 selection of the Senior Pastor, except that a search committee is not required.

26
27 **Section 6. Assistant Pastors.**

28
29 Clause 1. The Church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the
30 Senior Pastor is that of an assistant.

31
32 Clause 2. An Assistant Pastor shall assist the Senior and Associate Pastor(s) in the
33 performance of their regular duties, and shall perform other duties as usually pertain to
34 the office of pastor.

35
36 Clause 3. An Assistant Pastor shall be selected in a manner identical to the
37 selection of the Senior Pastor, except that a search committee is not required.

38
39 **Section 7. Staff.**

40
41 The Elders may hire additional staff to assist with pastoral and administrative ministry.

42
43 *Article Five, Administration*

1
2 **Section 1. Clerk.**
3

4 Clause 1. The Clerk, who shall be considered an officer of the Church, shall
5 record the minutes of all regular and special Church in Conference meetings and give
6 reports as requested by the Elders, particular Deacons, or the Church. In compliance with
7 O.C.G.A. 14-3-840 (e), the Clerk shall serve in lieu of the legal office of secretary.
8

9 Clause 2. The Clerk shall be selected to a renewable term of one year upon the
10 recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of a three-fourths vote at
11 any Church in Conference.
12

13 Clause 3. The Clerk may be removed from office by a decision of the Elders, or
14 by a three-quarters vote at any Church in Conference.
15

16 **Section 2. Treasurer.**
17

18 Clause 1. The Treasurer, who shall be considered an officer of the Church, shall
19 ensure that all funds and securities of the Church are properly secured in such banks,
20 financial institutions, or depositories as designated by the Church. The Treasurer shall
21 also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in
22 books belonging to the Church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee
23 that all funds belonging to the Church are appropriately handled by any officer,
24 employee, or agent of the Church. The Treasurer shall render to the Elders, whenever
25 they may require it, an account of all financial transactions and of the financial condition
26 of the Church. The Treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of
27 the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the Church to the Congregation.
28

29 Clause 2. The Treasurer shall be elected to a renewable term of one year upon the
30 recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of three-quarters vote at a
31 Church in Conference.
32

33 Clause 3. No person shall serve more than three consecutive terms as Treasurer.
34

35 Clause 4. No person currently serving as an Elder, paid staff member of the
36 Church, or as the Deacon of Finance, shall be eligible for the office of Treasurer.
37

38 Clause 5. The Treasurer shall be removed from office upon the recommendation
39 of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of a three-quarters vote at any Church in
40 Conference. In addition, the Treasurer and any Assistant Treasurer may be removed
41 immediately for defalcation or dishonesty by action of the Elders.
42

1 Clause 6. One or more Assistant Treasurers may be recommended by the Elders.
2 Any Assistant Treasurer shall be elected in a similar manner, for similar terms and shall
3 have similar qualifications, as the Treasurer.
4

5 *Article Six, Church Policy Manual*

6 The Council of Elders shall be responsible for creating and adopting a Church Policy
7 Manual which shall set forth Church policies not covered in this Constitution. The
8 Church Policy Manual may not contain any policies or procedures that are in conflict
9 with this Constitution. The Church shall be informed when the Church Policy Manual is
10 adopted or amended by the Elders. The Church Policy Manual shall be kept in the
11 Church office and a copy shall be provided upon request to any member of the Church.
12

13 *Article Seven, Property and Assets*

14 Clause 1. The Church shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase,
15 and so hold such real, personal, or mixed property as it is authorized by the laws of the
16 State of Georgia, and is deemed necessary or appropriate for the functioning of the
17 Church, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, bill of sale,
18 deed, or otherwise. All property shall be held in the name of the Church.
19

20 Clause 2. No real property shall be purchased, disposed of, encumbered or leased
21 without approval by a three-fourths vote at a Church in Conference where notice of the
22 conference and the proposed action have been given at all Sunday morning and Sunday
23 evening services for two weeks prior to the conference.
24

25 Clause 3. In case of division of the Church by conflict (from which we pray God
26 by His mercy to preserve us), all property and assets of the Church shall belong to those
27 who abide by this Constitution.
28

29 Clause 4. In case of dissolution of the Church, the property and all assets shall be
30 sold, either through private or public sale. From the proceeds, firstly all current and long-
31 term obligations of the Church shall be paid. Secondly, all remaining funds shall be
32 distributed to one or more Christian ministries (recognized as an IRS 501 (c) (3)
33 organization), as the Church shall determine. The Church shall be considered dissolved
34 if so decided by the Church by a three-fourths written ballot vote at a Church in
35 Conference called for that purpose, or when no Church in Conference meeting has been
36 held for three consecutive years, or when less than six members remain.
37

38 *Article Eight, Indemnification*

39 The Church shall indemnify and hold harmless any and all Elders, Deacons, officers,
40 business administrators, Pastors and staff personnel for any expenses actually or
41 necessarily incurred in conjunction with any action, suit or proceeding against such

1 members as a result of matters arising out of their discharge, in good faith, of their duties
2 to the Church. This indemnification shall include attorney fees and shall occur as the
3 expenses are incurred and in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit or
4 proceeding, on receipt of the members' promise to repay the amount advanced if proved
5 in court that the conduct which is the subject matter of the action involved a deliberate
6 intent by said member to injure the Church's best interests.

7
8 *Article Nine, Ratification*

9
10 This Constitution shall be ratified upon the approval of a three-fourths vote at a Church in
11 Conference, and shall take effect upon the recognition of at least seven Elders pursuant to
12 a transition plan which shall first be approved by a three-fourths vote at a Church in
13 Conference.

14
15 *Article Ten, Amendments*

16
17 **Section 1. Amendment of Statement of Faith or Church Covenant.**

18
19 The Statement of Faith or Church Covenant shall be amended upon the recommendation
20 of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of a three-quarters vote at any regular Church
21 in Conference, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at any
22 previous Church in Conference, and shall have been announced at all Sunday morning
23 and Sunday evening services of the Church for at least two weeks immediately prior to
24 final consideration. Any member serving under the commission of this Church on the
25 mission field or who is known to be a homebound member shall be notified in writing of
26 the proposed amendment and shall be eligible to vote by correspondence on this question.

27
28 **Section 2. Amendment of this Constitution.**

29
30 This Constitution shall be amended by a three-quarters vote at any regular Church in
31 Conference, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at any previous
32 Church in Conference, and shall have been announced at all Sunday morning and Sunday
33 evening services of the Church for at least two weeks immediately prior to final
34 consideration. Any member serving under the commission of this Church on the mission
35 field or who is know to be a home-bound member shall be notified in writing of the
36 amendment and shall be eligible to vote by correspondence on this question.
37

1 *Exhibit A, Church Covenant*

2 Having been led by the Spirit of God to accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and
3 on the profession of our faith in Him, having been baptized in the name of the Father,
4 Son, and Holy Spirit, we do now prayerfully and seriously make this covenant with God
5 and with one another.

6 We determine, therefore by the grace of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk
7 together in Christian love; strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge,
8 holiness, and strength; to uphold its doctrine, ordinances and discipline according to the
9 teachings of the New Testament; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of
10 the ministry, the expense of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel
11 through all nations; to identify and cultivate our spiritual gifts and dedicate our energies
12 to the service of Christ's Kingdom; to seek to lead others into its fellowship to the end
13 that His Kingdom may be promoted.

14 By God's help we further agree to cultivate personal and family devotions; to endeavor to
15 lead our children to a personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, to instruct them in
16 the Scriptures and the spirit of this covenant, and to seek the salvation of our family and
17 acquaintances.

18 To give no man cause to speak evil against us, we will seek to be just in our dealings, to
19 be faithful to our commitments, to set the proper example in our attitude and conduct, and
20 to avoid conversation harmful to others and inappropriate anger. Realizing that the body
21 is the temple of the Holy Spirit, we will avoid things that are harmful to the body,
22 exercising self-discipline and cultivating purity in our lives.

23 We pledge to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer;
24 to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and
25 courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, always ready for reconciliation, and
26 mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

27 Moreover, when we move from this place we will as soon as possible, unite with some
28 other church, where we can carry out the principles of God's Word and the spirit of this
29 covenant.