

## Red Mountain Community Church – How we Operate

### **I. Purpose**

As stated in the Bylaws adopted May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. To promote the gospel of Jesus Christ in accordance with the “Mission Statement” attached as Exhibit A to the Bylaws

### **II. Affiliation**

Red Mountain Community Church is affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America and its Southwest Border District Conference as long as they stand true to the Word of God and their vision is such that we can recognize it to be in harmony with how the Lord has directed us.

### **III. Church Government**

We believe that it is critical that we be led and directed by the head of the Church, Jesus Christ. Our structure of government is meant to achieve that end, to produce theocracy (government by God), not democracy (government by the people). Only in that end will it have meaning. In that spirit, and based on our understanding of the pattern of Scripture, we set forth the following on how this Church will be governed.

The government of Red Mountain Community Church will be congregational in its form in the sense that all leaders are accountable to the congregation (“Scriptural Members”). Under Christ, ultimate authority in the church shall reside in the scriptural members. The congregation shall commission for the work of the oversight of this ministry a group of godly men who, by virtue of giftedness and character, can be trusted to act in accordance with the mind of Christ. The scriptural members will, on an annual basis entrust in the day-to-day matters of church administration to these elders. The ultimate basis for their authority shall be the scriptures. The elders will serve by guiding the believers in the teaching of truth, refuting of error and administering of discipline and sacraments. They will oversee the entire ministry of the church including development of a vision for the church, assessing needs, planning, budgeting, implementing and evaluating. The elders will communicate and consult with the congregation regarding major issues such as changing the Bylaws, final approval of an annual budget, adding to the facility and other such matters during business meetings held throughout the year. All leadership within the church will be done in the spirit of servitude and love according to the principles of 1 Peter 5:3, John 13:1-17 and Matthew 20:25-28.

### **IV. Congregational Meetings**

In order for the scriptural members (see Membership) to be informed and to approve/affirm major issues within the church, Red Mountain will hold periodic business meetings. Business meetings may be attended by all concerned parties and will be led by a member of the elder board.

- A. Annual business meeting:** The purpose of this meeting held in January or February of each year, is to approve the budget for the current year, affirm the elders and transact/communicate any other necessary information to the scriptural members. See Section V paragraph H for voting requirements. While we do not allow absentee ballots, same day, real time on line participation is provided when possible.

- B. Regular business meetings:** Regular business meetings may be called by the elders as deemed necessary to provide a forum for the elders to dialogue with the scriptural members on any important matters.
- C. Special business meetings:** Special business meetings may be called by the chairman of the elder board, the elder board, a majority vote of the scriptural members at a regular business meeting or by a petition signed by twenty per cent of the scriptural members.

## **V. Qualification, Selection and Affirmation of Elders**

Elders must be mature, spiritual men who manifest the qualifications stipulated by the Bible (1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9). They must be endowed with the gift of leadership. They must be men who are called to the office. This standard shall not be lowered. Selection will be made solely on the basis of these scriptural qualifications, without regard for personal popularity, business experience or other functional matters.

**A. The Selection Process:** Understanding that it is the Holy Spirit who must select men for elder leadership of the church, the following process will be used to determine God's choice of the men who are called to be elders:

1. **Potential elders:** Potential elders are identified by the existing elders. When a name is presented to the elders they will prayerfully consider the man's character and giftedness. If they find that, by the standard of the scriptures, he is qualified and if they determine through discussions with him that God has called him to this office and gifted him for it, he will be presented to the scriptural members as a provisional elder for their approval at a church business meeting. The elders may outline a period for elder candidates during which time they will serve as non-voting elders. Scriptural members will be informed of their candidacy and will officially affirm them once they have completed their provisional period.
2. **Affirmation of Elders:** The men who serve as elders will be affirmed by the scriptural members of the church on an annual basis. New elders, before entering full service, will also be affirmed by the scriptural members. The following process will be used in both instances:
  - a. As in all other church business matters, only scriptural members will participate in the affirmation process.
  - b. Affirmation will be done by secret ballot.
  - c. If an elder/provisional elder does not receive the affirmation of 75 percent (75%) of votes being cast, he will not be allowed to serve. Scriptural members will be asked to state their reasons for not affirming an elder/provisional elder and provide their names so that sins and weaknesses on the part of leaders may be adequately addressed.
  - d. For those who have received 75 percent (75%) approval of the scriptural members, any ballot which does not affirm a candidate will be handled in the following way:
    - The person who casts a non-affirming ballot will state their name on the ballot.
    - An elder who has been approved will contact the person to hear the reason(s) for their objection to the candidate.

- If the reason is, according to the Bible, a serious one, the elders will determine if the candidate should be allowed to serve.

**B. Removal of Elders:** If an accusation against an elder arises, the following steps will be taken:

1. Any believer with an accusation against an elder is obligated to attempt to resolve it first through the principle of face-to-face confrontation between themselves and the elder.
2. If no resolution is reached, the accusing believer must take a fellow believer with them and repeat the confrontation.
3. If no resolution is reached, the accusing believer should ask to address the entire elder board concerning the matter. Any accusation against an elder must be made by at least two (2) individuals in order to be addressed (1 Timothy 5:19-20).
4. The elder board will take the matter under consideration and will investigate all matters thoroughly.
5. The elder board will report to the scriptural members their findings and their decision.
6. The elder board's decision will be made final by the approval of the scriptural members. The elder in question must receive 75 percent (75%) of the votes cast to remain in office.

Should the above process be aborted once Step 3 above has been taken, the matter may be dealt with directly by the scriptural members in the following way:

1. After following Steps 1, 2 and 3 above, the scriptural members can ask for a special meeting to be convened (see Congregational Meetings)
2. The scriptural members, through a designated spokesperson, shall present their case to all of the scriptural members present.
3. The voters shall designate three (3) people to investigate the matter thoroughly.
4. The meeting shall be adjourned for a two-week period to allow the three (3) individuals to complete their investigation.
5. The meeting shall be reconvened and the findings reported.
6. A vote will be taken. The elder in question must receive 75 percent (75%) of the votes cast to remain in service.

**C. Elder Emeritus Status:** The elder emeritus status is conveyed to those who serve faithfully for ten (10) years as an elder at Red Mountain Community Church and who have reached 65 years of age. These are men who will remove themselves from their role as governing elders. At that point, the governing elders will convey this title to them. It is meant to state strongly to the congregation that such men are to be held in highest regard for persevering in their walk with God and establishing themselves as credible examples of what it is to follow Jesus Christ.

The role of an elder emeritus is to continue to stay relationally connected to the people of Red Mountain. They will be advocates for the governing elders and the congregation. They will continue to mentor younger leaders of the church. They will continue to seek to shepherd the congregation in the walk of faith. They will communicate to the governing elders issues they sense as they interact with the congregation. They will be called on to give oversight to special ministries as needed by the governing elders.

The governing elders shall establish a time each year when they will meet with all of those with this elder emeritus status. In addition, the elder emeriti will be available to meet with the governing elders at any point where it is felt their wisdom and influence are needed.

- D. Elder Board Meetings:** Regular (usually monthly) meetings are held by the elder board. At these meetings the elders discuss and approve agenda items related to the conducting of church business. The elders shall approach decisions in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit. Although the Bylaws state that decisions of the elder board can be made with a majority vote of the board members, we choose to work through all decisions until a unanimous vote can be obtained.
- E. Annual Board Retreat:** The elders set aside a time each year to get away and seek the guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit as a group. Additional elder retreats are scheduled as needed.
- F. Special Board Meetings:** Special meetings may occasionally be called to deal with issues that need immediate attention or for prayer.
- G. Board Subgroups:** Each elder will serve on one or more subgroup that meet regularly to assess different areas of the church. The subgroups will change over time both in oversight and membership depending on the needs of the church. These subgroups will bring recommendations to the overall board for consideration and discussion.
- H. Elder Decisions Requiring Affirmation of the Scriptural Members:** In order to transact/affirm decisions twenty per cent of the church's scriptural members must be present. While we do not allow absentee ballots, same day, real time on line participation is provide when possible.
  - 1. **The Call of the Lead Pastor:** (See section VIII for lead pastor qualifications and responsibilities) When this position is vacant, the elder board will present one (1) candidate to the scriptural members. The candidate must be approved by 80 per cent of votes being cast.
  - 2. **Affirmation of Elders:** Elders will be affirmed with 75 per cent of votes being cast.
  - 3. **Approval of Annual Budget:** The annual budget or changes to the annual budget of greater than 20 per cent require a simple majority (1 more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  ) of votes being cast.
  - 4. **Incurrence of Additional Debt:** In the event that the elder board seeks to incur substantial additional debt, it must seek the approval of a simple majority (1 more than  $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of the votes being cast.
  - 5. **Transfer:** Transfer of (ie: purchase, sale or long-term lease in excess of 10 years) all or substantially all of the real property owned or leased by the church to an unrelated third party must be approved by a simple majority (1 more than  $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of votes being cast.

## **VI. Covenant of Fellowship**

When you make the decision to become a member of our Church, you identify yourself as an important part of our Church family. As a family, there are certain things that God commands us to do for each other. We believe that these form the backbone of Christian ministry. How well we do them will

dramatically affect our success as a Church in the matters God has called us to. We believe the following things are our responsibilities towards one another:

- A. We pray regularly for the church its individuals, leaders and ministries (1 Tim 2:1, 8)
- B. We serve those within the church as needs arise (Romans 15:1-2)
- C. We forgive, submit to, look out for and stimulate one another's walk with God (Eph 4:32, 5:21, Phil. 2:1-5, Heb. 10:24)
- D. We willingly submit to the authority and discipline of the leaders of the church (Heb. 13:7)
- E. We serve in various ministries of the church as we have been gifted (Eph. 4:4-13)
- F. We seek to live holy lives according to the teaching of God's Word and will seek the support of others in so doing (1 Pet. 1:15)
- G. We consider the nurture and training of our children to be our responsibility and duty (Eph. 6:4)
- H. We support the church financially as God has enabled us
- I. When problems arise between ourselves and other believers we will respond in love and are committed to the following:
  - 1. We will pray about the situation and ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Rom 12:20-21)
  - 2. We will examine ourselves first, before we begin our examination of others (Matt. 7:1-5)
  - 3. We will believe the best about the other parties until the facts confirm otherwise (1 Cor. 13: 6-7)
  - 4. We will honor the scriptural principle of dealing with the other party face to face (Matt 18: 15-16)
    - We will talk directly with the concerned party, not about them, when we believe a wrong has been committed or when admonishment is needed
    - We will respond in a teachable manner when we are admonished by someone else

## **VII. Membership**

Membership at Red Mountain comes with the responsibility of helping to determine the affairs of the church. Any believer wishing to become a member of the congregation may do so. However, voting privileges will be extended when the member reaches eighteen years of age.

- A. Notify the Church of your intent to become a member and complete the Membership Class
- B. Meet with an elder to express your belief in Jesus Christ as your Savior
  - Agree to the Red Mountain Covenant of Fellowship
  - Abide with how Red Mountain operates
- C. Be presented and affirmed by the scriptural members at a business meeting

## **VIII. Matters Concerning the Lead Pastor**

Candidates for an available lead pastor position must be mature, spiritual men. They must be endowed with the gift of leadership and must be called to the office. This standard will not be lowered. As with the selection of elders, this selection will be made on the basis of scriptural qualifications without regard for personal popularity, business experience, or other functional matters.

**A. Qualifications**

1. The scriptural qualifications of an elder stipulated by the Bible in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
2. The spiritual gifts associated with this ministry
3. An agreement with the church's Statement of Faith and an agreement to abide by the Bylaws
4. The willingness to make a long-term commitment to Red Mountain

**B. Responsibilities**

Also serving as an elder, the chosen candidate will have oversight of the following areas:

1. The teaching and preaching of scripture in the public worship services
2. The shaping and articulation of the overall vision of the church
3. The overall health of the church with respect to its mission and vision
4. The development of leadership within the church
5. The shepherding of the pastoral staff
6. The day-to-day direction of the pastoral staff

By virtue of his responsibilities, he will be considered a member of the church, a member of the elder board and an ex-officio member of all ministry groups.

**C. Resignation and Termination**

1. If the lead pastor desires to resign, or if the church desires his termination, three (3) months' notice will be given in writing, unless waived by mutual consent by the lead pastor and the board of elders.
2. Termination of the lead pastor shall follow the same guidelines as the dismissal of elders unless specifically noted otherwise in this section.

Reasonable compensation shall be continued during the time period prior to actual termination of ministry unless waived by mutual consent of the lead pastor and the board of elders, or by the lead pastor accepting other employment.

**IX. Matters Concerning Other Staff**

**A. Other Pastoral Staff**

Additional pastoral staff members shall work in conjunction with and be responsible to the Lead Pastor or his designate. All members of the pastoral staff shall qualify for their respective offices according to the standards of elders set forth in Scripture. They shall be members of the church by virtue of their position and be in full accord with the statement of faith of the Church. They may or may not be members of the Elder Board. The individual shall be commissioned by the congregation for the work of the ministry including the dispensing of the various sacraments.

**B. Other Salaried Employees**

In order to accomplish the work of the Church, other workers may be employed as deemed necessary. Selection of other salaried employees, establishing terms of employment and termination of employment shall be administered under the authority of the Board of Elders.