

# MT. PILGRIM MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH OF SOUTH HOUSTON

## Church Covenant

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### **ARTICLE I- NAME**

The name of the organization shall be called: Mt. Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church of South Houston, Houston, Texas.

### **ARTICLE II.-PURPOSE**

The purpose and mission of this Church shall be to labor by the help of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit to carry out the great commission of our Lord Jesus Christ as stated in Matthew 28:18-20, and elsewhere, to this end: Every member shall be urged to take the Gospel of Salvation to the lost, personally and representatively. Converts shall be instructed as to their duty to confess Christ by baptism (immersion in water), and taught in matters of Christian Conduct, Bible Study, Church Attendance, Personal Soul-Winning, Tithes and Offering, Faithfulness to Christ and any other deemed necessary to their spiritual

prosperity and growth. The means employed in carrying out the above shall be by regular and special church services.

### **ARTICLE III. – AUTHORITY**

The Holy Scriptures shall be accepted as the final authority on all matters relating to faith and practice by the members of this Church.

### **ARTICLE IV.-GOVERNMENT**

Section 1. This Church shall be an independent body of baptized believers. The government of this Church shall be vested in its assembled membership, through its duly elected officers, and it shall never be subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, and no denominational or associational representatives shall ever sit in judgment over its affairs.

Section 2. The Church may fellowship and co-operate with other churches for the furtherance of the gospel when such shall be wholly in accordance with the Scriptures, but no rules, regulations, or commitments shall be made to such bodies which call for more than voluntary action on the part of this Church.

### **ARTICLE V.-FINANCE**

Section 1. Scriptural giving is an expression of love of the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore the Church shall be sustained by a voluntary and free will offering uninfluenced by any consideration of material or worldly reward. Tithes and Offerings brought into the general treasury of the Church is the only method of finance found in the Scriptures; therefore, it shall be the duty of the members to bring their Tithes and Offerings into the general treasury of the Church (I Corinthians 16:2).

### **ARTICLE VI-INNER ORGANIZATIONS**

Section 1. Every organizations or societies within this Church will be an integral part of the Church and not an entity in itself. They shall therefore, have as their aims and objectives that of assisting the Church in discharging the obligations and responsibilities which it has imposed upon itself, rather than having separate aims and objectives which usually act as divisive forces. The Pastor may preside over all such organizations and societies.

### **ARTICLE VII.-MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Membership in this Church may be acquired in the following manner:

- A. Baptism: Any person, who demonstrates a change of attitude toward God, and by faith accepts Jesus as the Son of God who died and shed His blood on the Cross at atone for our sins, and accept Him as his own personal Savior and by Baptism, be received into membership.

- B. Letter: Any person, to whom the ordinance of baptism by immersion has been administered by authority of a Christian church, may be a satisfactory letter of recommendation from a Christian church be received into membership upon the acknowledgement of this church.
- C. Experience: A satisfactory statement of faith in Christ may receive any person to whom the ordinance of baptism by immersion that has been administered by authority of a Christian Church into membership upon the acknowledgement of this church.
- D. Benefit of membership: Members of the church will have the benefit(s), the use of the facility for: funerals, weddings, christenings, support of repass meals. Also, the immediate family members (meaning: children, mother, father, sister or brother) will be allowed to be funeralize at the church facility.

Section 2. Membership into this Church may be dissolved or its privileges restricted in the following ways:

- A. Death: At a regular business meeting, the church clerk shall be caused to indicate on the church roll that said member is deceased.
- B. Letter: Letter of dismissal to Baptist Church
- C. Uniting with another Church: Automatically dissolve membership in the Church.
- D. Delinquency: Any member who avoidably misses all services for ninety (90) days shall become an inactive member. Members on the inactive file have no voting privileges at all. Inactive members may request to be reactivated. Four weeks after regular attendance said request membership would be reactivated.
- E. Member's responsibility: Within in ninety (90) days members or family member has not contacted the church
- F. Discipline:
  1. Participation with members of the Church in unauthorized meetings, which pertain to church business, shall be cause for automatic discipline (Romans 16:17).
  2. The evidence of immoral conduct (I Corinthians 5:1-5, 9-13) and the publicity of unsound doctrine (II John 9-11) will be matters affecting the discipline of members. Repentance causes confession and forgiveness (II Corinthians 2:11; II Timothy 2:24-26; II Thessalonians 3:14, 15).

### Section 3. General duties of Members

The members of this Church shall be to acquire bible knowledge, to bring offerings, to progress spiritually, put away questionable habits and to live a life that would honor the Lord Jesus Christ and strengthen His church. It is the duty of the members of this church to cultivate brotherly love (John 13:35) for all the other members of the church and to show this love by using all proper measures to promote their spiritual benefit and prosperity.

It is the duty of members to esteem their pastor (I Thessalonians 5:12, 13) to pray for him (II Thessalonians 3:1, 2) and to submit to him in the scriptural exercise of His Holy Spirit given authority (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 12:7, 17).

Toward those outside the membership, it is the duty of members to be exact in fulfilling obligations, keeping promises and as opportunity enables to address the Gospel of Christ to them.

It is the duty of members upon moving from the city to unite with another church of like faith and practice, and request said church to send to the Mt. Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church of South Houston for their letter of recommendation.

## **ARTICLE VIII-CHURCH OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES**

### Section 1. Pastor Duties: and Qualifications:

- A. The Pastor is an under-shepherd or spiritual overseer (Thessalonians 5:12, 13; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 12:7-17). The scriptures refer to this office as the office of a Bishop (I Timothy 3:1-5). Sometimes the Pastor is referred to as the Elder (I Peter 5:1-4; I Timothy 5:17). These are examples of such and also show clearly that the Pastor oversee and supervise the affairs of the Church. He shall not only have the general supervision of the Church but shall have unrestricted liberty in presenting any matter he deems necessary to the Church for its consideration and instruction.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the Pastor to perform the various duties incumbent of his office. He shall be solely responsible for the hiring, firing, discipline and supervision of all employees connected in any way with the Church. This includes voluntary, voted, and hired help.
- C. He shall be the moderator of the Church and preside at its entire business meeting ex-officio member of all the committees and organizations, which includes the privilege of voting; in charge of the pulpit and responsible for supplying speakers. In legal matters he shall act as President.

- D. I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9 give the qualifications of a Pastor. The life of the Pastor and his family should be an example of godliness and spirituality. They should not indulge in worldly or sinful practice, which would tend to weaken the testimony of this Church (I Timothy 3:2, 7).
- E. Because of the office, the Pastor shall be counted worthy of double honor (I Timothy 5:17). No accusation shall be accepted against him without the testimony of two or three witnesses (I Timothy 5:19).
- F. The term of Pastor shall be for undesignated period of time; he shall not be subject to dismissal by the Church at any time except for violation of the Articles of Faith or Church By-Laws, including failure to perform the various duties incumbent of his office.
- G. No person can be considered for the office nor serve as Pastor of this Church whose beliefs and teachings are not in accordance with the Articles of Faith. As set forth in this document, or who will not declare himself to be a fundamental, Pre-Millennial, Independent Baptist.
- H. Section 2. Pastor Call of:

Whenever it is necessary, by death or resignation of the Pastor, the Church shall, without necessary delay, proceed to secure a new Pastor in the following manner:

- A. The Deacon will serve as the Pulpit Committee, if the church does not have qualified deacons when the Pastorate is vacant, a pulpit Committee shall be elected from the membership.
- B. The Pulpit committee shall meet and elect one of its members to contact and invite to the pulpit a minister who meets the requirements of the Constitution and By-Laws. He shall be in accordance with the Articles of Faith. No person shall be invited to the pulpit without consent of the Pulpit Committee. Not more than one man or woman shall be considered at a time.
- C. No Minister will be voted on until the Pulpit Committee has carefully interviewed him and performed a thorough check of his references, including if possible a visit to the candidate's present pulpit. A seminary degree is not required in order for a vote to be taken.
- D. It shall be announced in at least one regular public service, previous to the taking of a ballot that the visiting minister is a candidate for the office of Pastor of the Church, and the voting time announced.

- E. The vote must be by written and secret ballot.
- F. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority of members present and voting shall be necessary for the calling of a Pastor.
- G. The Pulpit Committee shall diligently seek to present a new Pastor, Every two weeks the Pulpit Committee in regards to the progress made will make a report to the congregation.

### Section 3. DEACONS:

- A. The word, which in the King James Version is translated Deacon, according to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, means "servant attendant. aid, waiter, etc." The meaning given for the word "Deacon" in (I Timothy 3:10, 13) is: to be an attendant, to wait upon, to minister. The Greek words translated deacons in (Philippians 1:1 and I Timothy 3:8, 12) is given to mean: and attendant, a waiter, specifically as a Christian Teacher of Pastor. Because this Church accepts the scriptures as final authority rather than tradition, the office of Deacon shall not in any way be taken to mean authority over the Church and Pastor.
- B. The general duties of a Deacon, aside from appointed task, shall be to assist the Pastor in building up the Church spiritually: to visit the sick and sorrow, the need; to strive personally to win the lost to Christ; to guard and protect the reputation of the church and Pastor against gossip, to investigate delinquents; and to endeavor to remedy and spiritual weakness in the lives of its members to cooperate with the Pastor in the care, operation, and repair of the physical property of Church. Duties toward the Pastor shall be to pray for him earnestly and continually; to see that his material and physical needs are taken care of to strive in every way to help him in the performance of scriptural duties.
- C. (I Timothy 3:8-13) give the qualifications of a Deacon and his wife. The Deacon and his family should not indulge in worldly and sinful practices, which would tend to weaken the testimony of this Church (Thessalonians 5:22). No one who uses excessive liquor or illegal drugs, who brings disrepute upon the Church through sinful language, practice or associates shall be considered for Deacon, or having fallen into such practices and persisting in same be retained. Should the Deacon's life begin to conflict with the qualifications of (I Timothy 3:8-13) he will be expected to humbly resign his position. Such practice will be grounds for dismissal from office if no resignation is offered.
- D. No person shall be elected to the office of Deacon who has not been a faithful member of the Church for a period of one year or more (I Timothy 3:10).

- E. A Deacon is to be faithful in all things, especially the regular and special services of the Church. Therefore, unless because of illness or otherwise providentially hindered, a Deacon is expected to attend all Church Business and Deacon's meetings. Habitual absence from these meetings shall disqualify the Deacon and his office shall be declared vacant.
- F. Each Deacon shall be elected shall for a undesignated period of time; he shall not be subject to dismissal by the Church at any time except for violation of the Articles of Faith or Church By-Laws, including failure to perform the various duties incumbent on his office.
- G. The present Deacons and Pastor shall nominate men.
- H. Duties shall be to sign legal papers for the Church, Act as an auditing committee, and to aid the Pastor and Deacons with the care, operation and repair of the Church.
- I. As these men will be looked to as leaders in the Church, they will be required to meet the qualifications of a Deacon.

**Section 4. FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

Shall be comprised of men or women selected from the Pastor and Deacon Board. It shall be their responsibility to act as guardian of the Church's financial interest. All matters in excess of the stipulated amount in the Church minutes shall not be conducted without their approval nor shall they prefer approval on any matter involving to an amount stipulated by the minutes without the Church. In the same spirit as all other committees, they shall assist the Pastor and help him to expedite any matters involved in the Church's official interest.

**Section 9. FINANCE SECRETARY:**

Shall be selected from the Deacon Board or staff to keep a fair book of accounts, pay all orders drawn upon by order of (1) the Church (2) the Pastor (3) the Finance Committee, providing such drawing by the Pastor and Finance Committee is for the work of the Church and is not in excess of the amount specified in the Church minutes.

**Section 10. SPIRITUAL STANDARDS:**

In order to promote a high spiritual standard of this church, all officers, teachers and leaders will be expected to attend all regular services of this Church, except they be sick or providentially hindered, and their office shall be declared vacant after evident.

## **ARTICLE IX-CHURCH BUSINESS**

### **Section 1: ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING**

- A. The annual meeting for the election of officers and the reading of annual reports and the adoption of the budget shall be held the first Wednesday of February each year, unless the Church votes in advance of this date to have it at another time.
- B. **REPORTS:** The Church Finance Secretary shall bring the membership roll up to date prior to the annual election, and give a report to the Church at that time of the number received and dismissed and the number on the roll. The Pastor or Finance Secretary shall check the report, prior to the meeting. The Church Finance Secretary shall give the financial report of total receipts, expenditures and indebtedness of the Church. Such reports and records shall be examined by the Deacon Board, ahead of time. All other committees appointed or elected shall give a report if called upon to do so.

### **Section 2. DEACON MEETING**

The Pastor for the purpose of reviewing spiritual matters of the Church shall call the meetings of the Deacons. In no case shall such meetings be postponed more than three (3) months.

### **Section 3. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

- A. Special meeting for business may be called at any time by the Pastor when such meeting falls on regular times of service, provided such meetings do not include major business such as selling of Church property and mortgaging property.
- B. The Pastor may call special business meetings, falling on a time other than regular Church service providing it be announced in at least one regular service prior to the date of the meeting; except it be for the purpose of selling Church property.
- C. Special business meetings for the purpose of buying and selling Church property may be called by the Pastor provided said proposition has been read from the pulpit and the date and times of the meeting announced for at least two (2) consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting and no other business except that which has been announced shall be taken care of at said meeting. Such business shall require a majority vote of the members present in order to purchase, sell or mortgage property.



#### Section 4. UNAUTHORIZED MEETING

No secret or unauthorized business meetings are permitted. No business beyond that of routine weekly affairs shall be carried on in the absence of the Pastor.

#### Section 5. VOTING

Unless otherwise stipulated in the Constitution and By-Laws, a majority vote of the voting members present and voting at any constitutionally called business meeting shall be required.

#### Section 6. AMENDMENT OF ARTICLES OF FAITH

No amendment shall ever be voted on the Articles of Faith of this Church.

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