



Church on Mill

Membership Class

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section
**Life as God's People
in God's Kingdom**

I. Every Human Being Belongs to One of Two Kingdoms

A. Kingdom of the World (Matthew 12:26, Revelation 11:15)

B. Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:10, Revelation 12:10)

II. God is Adding Citizens to His Kingdom

A. God's kingdom has already come through Jesus Christ.

Luke 18:36a ESV Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Luke 4:42-44 ESV And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, ⁴³ but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose." ⁴⁴ And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

B. God's kingdom is received.

Mark 10:13-16 ESV And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁵Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." ¹⁶And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

C. To be Christian is to have been delivered from the kingdom of the world into the kingdom of God.

Colossians 1:13-14 ESV He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

D. Only grace brings enemies into God's kingdom and enables belief and repentance.

Mark 1:14b-15 ESV Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." John 3:3-15 ESV Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" ⁵Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ⁸The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

⁹Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

III. The Citizens of God's Kingdom Embrace God's Priorities

A. Citizens of God's kingdom have new priorities as the people of God.

Matthew 22:35-40 And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

1. Love God
2. Love People

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

3. Make Disciples

- B. Although still physically present in the world, Christians are already citizens of heaven. While we wait for Jesus’s return, we gladly band together as a sign, symbol, and foretaste of God’s coming kingdom (Philippians 2, 1 Timothy 2:16, Revelation 9:16).
- C. The church exists to worship the King through loving God, loving people, and making disciples. Being a member of a church does not make one a Christian, rather it affirms God has already received you into his kingdom.

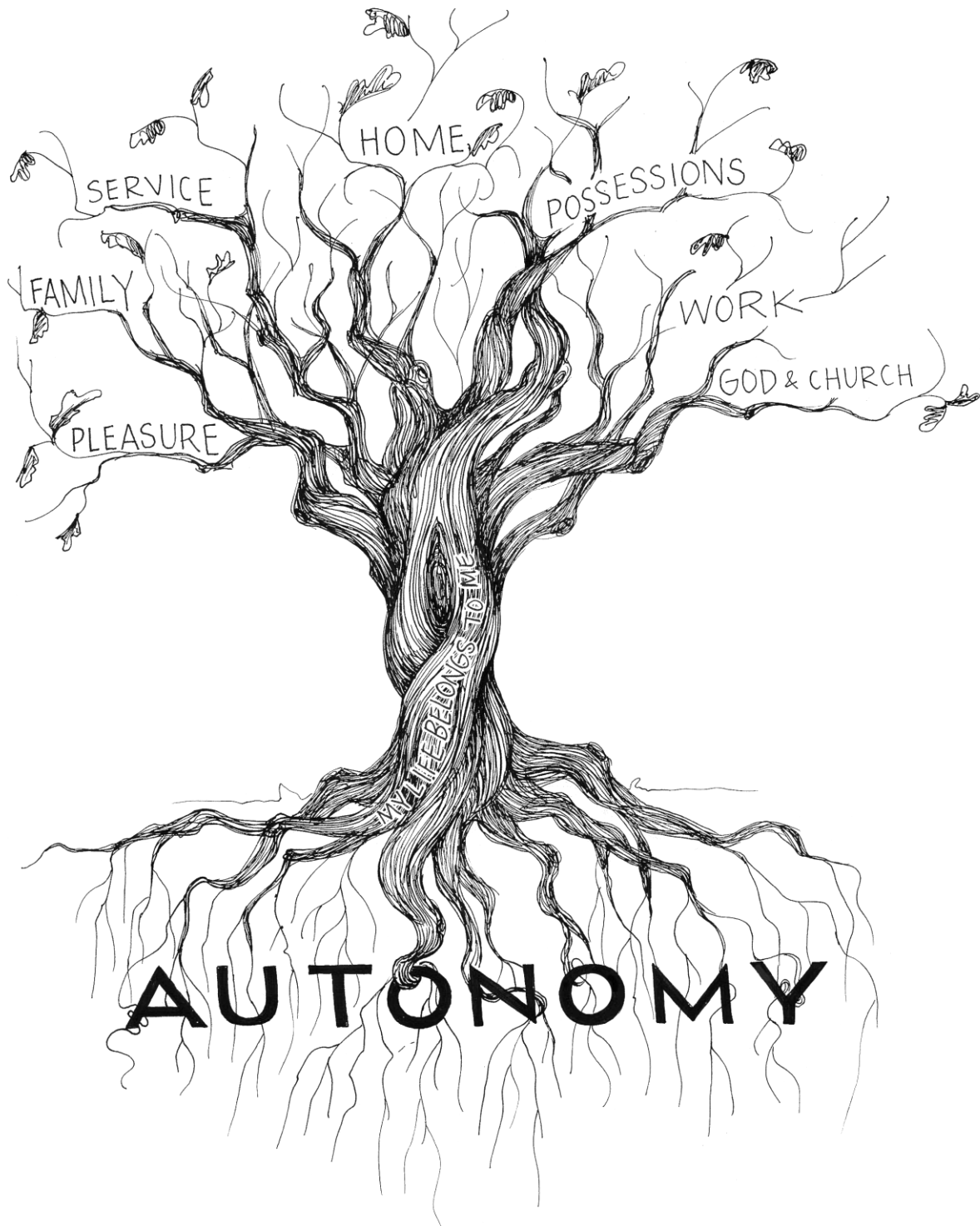
1. A Christian is someone given a new identity through Jesus Christ. *Although received individually, this identity is never individualistic: the Christian life is shared life.* By grace, God’s people live from their identity by listening to God’s Word, relying on his enabling grace, and responding with increasing obedience. In other words, we receive the identity of adopted son or daughter in God’s family, and then live in light of this shocking new kingdom identity.
2. Citizens of God’s kingdom are learning together how to live all of life under the good rule and reign of King Jesus.
3. The ministry of the local church is God’s chosen means of kingdom expansion.

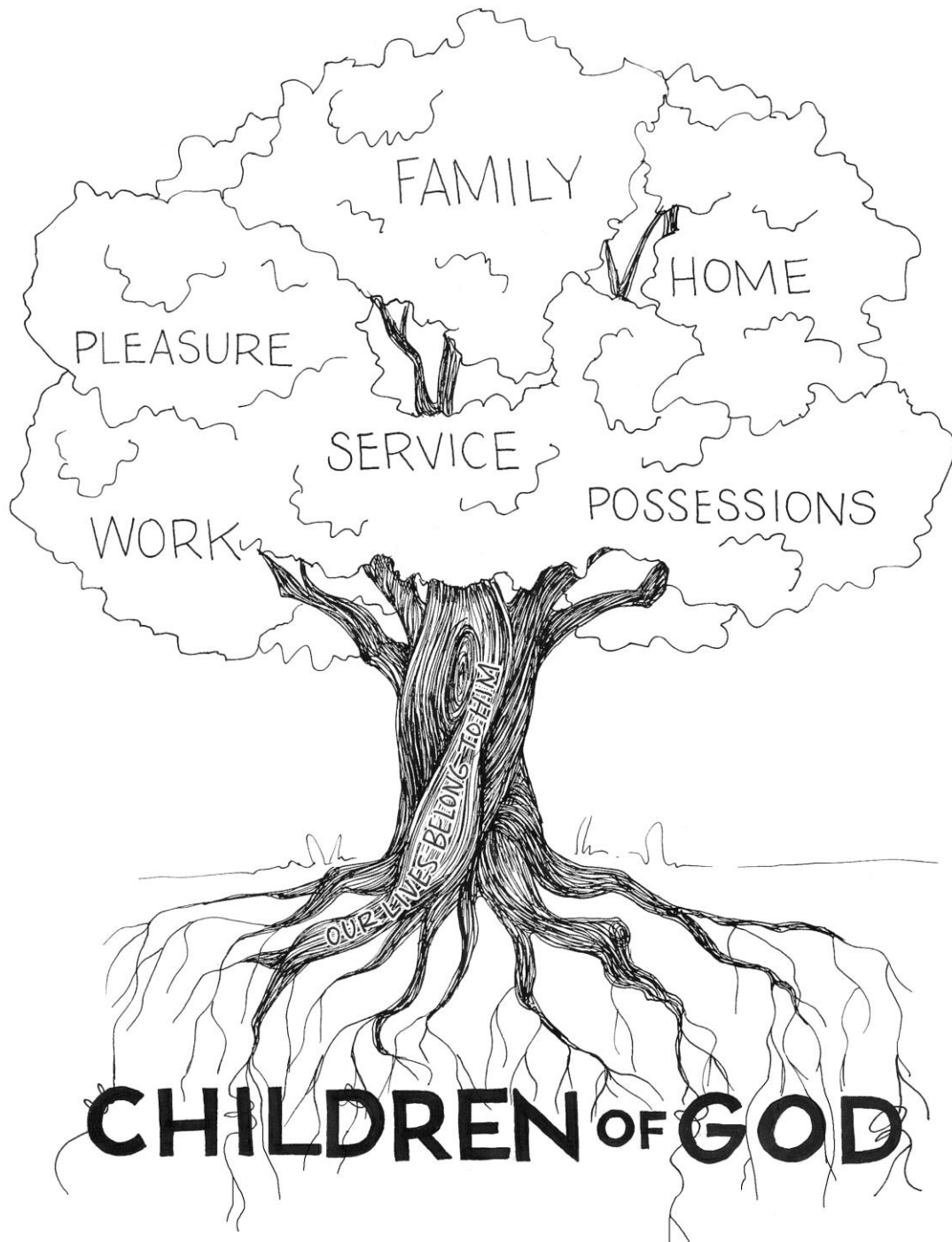


God will have a community that knows him and praises him as God. This is the big picture of the Bible.

- D. Applying these truths:

1. The King is gathering a people for Himself. Will you respond to him?
2. To live as God’s people, for God’s glory, in God’s kingdom will require radical re-prioritizations of life. As God’s people, our main concern is not our comfort, but His kingdom. (See the following two illustrations.)





The Invitation: By the grace that is yours in Christ and through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, commit to *radically re-orient* life as a glad participant in kingdom life at Church on Mill.

2

section

Gospel People

I. What is the Gospel?

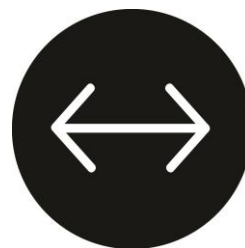
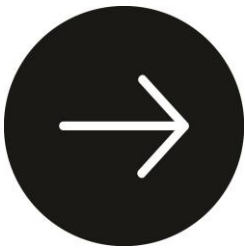
- A. At the most basic level, *the Gospel is the good news of God's power to save through the sacrificial death and bodily resurrection of Jesus* (Romans 1:16-17). Think of the contrast between *advice* and *news*.
- B. Because all people are separated from God by our sin, we do not deserve citizenship in God's kingdom. The gospel is God's gracious work of saving people and welcoming them into his kingdom.

II. The Gospel Doctrinally and Narratively

The full-expression of the gospel is best grasped both doctrinally and narratively.

- A. The gospel expressed in doctrinal categories (Titus 2:1).
 - 1. God
 - 2. People
 - 3. Christ
 - 4. Response

B. The gospel expressed as a narrative (Colossians 1:13-23).



III. Applying the Gospel

A. The gospel addresses the three most common 'states' of living!

1. Guilt
2. Pride
3. Shame

B. As God's people in community our joyful response to the gospel is to:

1. Love God
2. Love people
3. Make disciples

C. Through the gospel God is building a people for himself.

1 Peter 2:9-10 ESV But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

*Before we can begin
to see the cross as
something done for
us, we have to see
it as something
done by us.*

3

section

Purpose, Distinctives, and Philosophy of Ministry

I. The Place of the Local Church in God's Kingdom

- A. The ministry of the local church is God's chosen means of kingdom expansion.
 - 1. God gave the church a message to both proclaim and demonstrate (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts).
 - 2. God intends his followers to help each other stick with Jesus by meeting together regularly (Hebrews 10:23-25).
 - 3. God gave the 'keys of the kingdom' to the church (Matthew 16:13-20, Matthew 18:15-20).
 - a. *What* – what is the biblical gospel?
 - b. *Who* – who is by grace demonstrating having been transferred from the kingdom of the world into the kingdom of God?
- B. Local church membership is a visible affirmation on earth of one's invisible citizenship in heaven.
 - 1. We live as brothers and sisters because God adopted us into his family.

2. We live as the body of Christ because we are all members of his body.

II. Our Purpose: Why We Exist

Our purpose as a church: Glorifying God through lives changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

III. Our Distinctives: Who We Are

As a missional church family, we aim to always be:

- A. *Bible-believing*: The Bible is the Word of God given to teach us about God and how we should live in His world. It is our final authority for all things. It is the ‘roadmap’ for all that we are, say, and do. God’s voice, speaking through it, must make sense of our past and guide our present and future. Personal and corporate traditions, history, and experience are all important, yet it is God alone through Scripture who is definitive. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- B. *Gospel-centered*: The story of the Bible is the gospel - God’s amazing plan to restore all things to himself. The gospel is the ‘good news’ that God has graciously provided a way for sinful people to have a right, loving relationship with Him. Jesus is the way: He left heaven, came to earth, lived a perfect life, and died in our place. Miraculously He rose from the dead to demonstrate victory over sin, death, and the devil. Through the sacrificial death of Jesus, all who turn from their sin and confess Jesus as their Lord are given eternal life. This happens in an instant, yet God’s work in a person does not stop there. The on-going aspect of salvation will continue for the rest of a person’s life; therefore, the gospel is for every day. (John 3:1-18)
- C. *Transformation-minded*: The Christian life is a life of grace-driven, progressive holiness. Followers of Jesus are on a path of being supernaturally changed by God in order to live in increasingly Christlike ways. Real change is possible and even promised. Our character ought to more and more frequently and robustly reflect the life of Jesus. (Ephesians 2:1-10)
- D. *Devoted to each other*: As a local church, being an interconnected, interdependent family of believers, we pursue genuine Christian living together. This can be a reality because the gospel affects not just our relationship with God but also our relationships with people: people who know Jesus can be in harmony with others who know Jesus. We are literally brothers and sisters in Christ who need and rely on one another. (Romans 12:10)
- E. *Passionately engaged in both our community and the world*: As a family of believers who have been and are being changed by the gospel, we cannot help but be moved with compassion for the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and mental needs of both our community and the world at large. God has called us to leave a geographical footprint in the Valley. He has also called us to participate in extending the gospel around the globe. We yearn to engage people in spiritual conversations, demonstrate the love of Christ through acts of mercy, and live in such a way that God will draw people to salvation through our words and deeds. (Acts 1:8)

IV. Our Philosophy of Ministry

- A. Diversity in the church best demonstrates the kingdom of heaven (Revelation 5:9-12).
- B. Leaders are to equip the members for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4).
- C. Geographical proximity tends to enhance opportunities for life-on-life evangelism and discipleship.
 - 1. A local church family should be as simple as possible so that ministry can be maximized; therefore, people not programs are emphasized at Church on Mill. Church on Mill has structure but the structure is designed to fulfill our purpose, not to maintain institutional traditions.
 - 2. Our purpose stays the same but methodology must change to remain effective.
- D. At the core, our approach to ministry is centered on gospel-driven disciple-making (Matthew 28:19-20, Colossians 1:28).
 - 1. Glorifying God through lives changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ occurs as disciples become disciple-makers who make disciple-makers.
 - 2. You are a disciple and a disciple-maker! The question is who are you a disciple of / who are you inviting others to be disciples of?
 - 3. Disciple-making happens in the context of biblical community (John 13:35, John 17:20-21). We encourage this through a culture of disciple-making, ministry teams, Gospel Communities, Connection Classes, and training opportunities.
- E. Training future pastors, missionaries, and leaders for faithful gospel ministry is not optional. Leaders of godly character and theological depth are urgent priorities. It is the responsibility of every church to send equipped leaders to start, revitalize, and bless other churches.
- F. For more information on our philosophy of ministry please read the Gospel of Luke in the New Testament of the Bible, Ephesians in the New Testament of the Bible, attend DiscipleMakers Training, or read the summary of *The Trellis and the Vine* by Colin Marshall and Tony Payne (Appendix 2).

Churches need to make a conscious shift away from erecting and maintaining structures, and towards growing people who are disciple-making disciples of Christ.

4

section

Our Structure

I. Under Christ's Authority Our Structure Starts with You

- A. Every member of the Church on Mill family shares responsibility for the ministry of the church.
- B. Ministry occurs both formally and informally.
 - 1. Formally through groups and ministry teams.
 - 2. Informally through the interconnected relationships of church members. We deeply value a culture of disciple-making, through which all members practice the 'one another' commands of the New Testament.

II. Environments of Membership



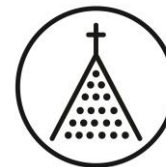
Individual



Discipling



Groups



Gathered Church

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27

III. Disciple-Making in Community

A. Gathered Church

1. Church on Mill gathers corporately every Sunday to celebrate the Risen Savior, share the gospel, encourage one another, observe the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, pray, and get equipped for lives of holiness and mission through the preaching of Scripture.
2. Our worship gathering is designed to build up and send out.
3. We gather every Sunday at 9:30am and 11:15am. The church family works together to make all the components of corporate worship gospel-centered.

B. Connection Classes

1. Connection Classes seek to connect people to meaningful study of Scripture and encourage healthy relationships across the church family.
2. Connection Classes are short-term (typically six weeks) and occur on-site at 9:30am and 11:15am on Sunday mornings. A three-year commitment to these classes will allow you to interact with all the major themes of the Bible. Our hope is that members attend these when they are not in a gathering or serving, as we desire members to spend all of Sunday morning with the church family.

C. Gospel Communities: A gospel community is a group of disciples sharing life together and living their shared life on mission for the glory of God.

1. Gospel, Community, Mission (1 Peter 2:9-10)
2. Every gospel community seeks to make disciples of some particular group of people.
3. Groups typically meet off-site. For more information and to contact a leader go to the church website or see Tad Skinner (tad@churchonmill.org) who serves as Executive Pastor.

D. Ministry Teams

1. The vast majority of the ministry at Church on Mill happens through the membership! We are grouped into groups (above) and teams (below) of people who support a specific aspect of church life.
2. Current teams include:
 - College Ministry Team
 - Teaching Team (GC's Connection Classes, Disciplemakers)
 - Worship Gathering Team
 - Preschool & Children's Team

- Missions Team
 - Greeters Team
 - Fellowship Team
 - Youth Team
 - Property Team
 - I-Help Team
 - Administrative Team
 - Life Among the Nations Ministry Team
3. It would be an honor to have you serve on a ministry team. Every follower of Jesus is gifted by God and called to serve Him (Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 1 Peter 4:10-11, Ephesians 2:8-10). Email Katie (katie@churchonmill.org) for more information about a specific ministry team.

IV. Organizational Structure

The Bible outlines a specific structure for the local church which can be summarized by the phrase ‘elder-led congregationalism.’

- A. Membership: The church is her members! God entrusts the final authority of and responsibility for the local church to the members. As a congregational church, the members are responsible for (Matthew 16:13-20, Matthew 18:15-20):

Who – Who is by grace demonstrating having been transferred from the kingdom of the world into the kingdom of God?

What – What is the biblical gospel?

These two responsibilities motivate members to:

1. Oversee membership (Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5-6, 2 Corinthians 5-8)
2. Meet regularly (Hebrews 10:24-25)
3. Preserve unity and promote holiness in life on life relationships (Acts 2:42-47, Ephesians 2-3)
4. Grow in and hold fast to the gospel (2 Peter 3:18, Hebrews 10:23)
5. Guard the gospel message by removing Elders who teach a false gospel (Galatians 1:6-9)
6. Follow the Elders’ leadership (Hebrews 13:17)

A local church is a group of Christians who regularly gather in Christ’s name to officially affirm and oversee one another’s membership in Jesus Christ and his kingdom through gospel preaching and gospel ordinances.

B. Eldership: Elders serve as the pastors of the church. They are responsible to shepherd the church as a team of lay and vocational equals. They are responsible to:

1. Protect the church from false teaching and teachers (Acts 20:17-35)
2. Feed and thereby equip the church by passionately preaching and teaching God's Word (Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Timothy 6:3-10, Titus 3:8-11)
3. Lead the church (1 Timothy 5:17-18)
4. Care for the spiritual needs of the church (James 5:14, Hebrews 13:17, 1 Peter 5:1-4).
5. Serve as examples of Christlikeness (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Peter 5:1-4)

Current elders include:

Chuck Newkirk

Randy Hagler

Tad Skinner

Todd Diehl

C. Diaconate: Deacons assist the Elders in serving the church by providing godly servanthood in the various service-oriented functions of the church (Acts 6:1-7). This protects the church from unmet needs and the Elders from a lack of time to focus on the ministries of prayer, teaching the Word, and shepherding the church. The following roles are fulfilled by Deacons (who welcome your involvement in their respective areas of ministry):

Amber Ward	Corporate Worship
David Brown	I-Help
David Oaks	Youth Ministry
Jessica Oaks	Children's Ministry
Katina Skinner	Women's Discipleship and Mentoring
John Hernandez	Properties
Megan Roberts	Preschool Ministry
Ming Chen	Internationals
Pat Nickel	Benevolence
Stephen Shelton	Financials
Wally Hall	Hospital Vistation

V. Church Staff and Staying Informed

A. The purpose of the church staff is to equip people for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16).

1. Each Director or Pastor has particular ministry areas he or she oversees; additionally, each staff member provides oversight to ministry teams and participates in a Gospel Community. The staff is here to serve you and wants to know you personally.

2. Current staff members include:

a. Core Staff Team

Anthony Baldwin	Campus Missionary	<i>LATN Missionary to ASU</i>
Chuck Newkirk	Lead Pastor / Elder	<i>Preaching, Leadership, Vision</i>
Erik Naylor	Executive Director of Collegiate Ministries	<i>American college ministry and international college ministry</i>
Gracie Turner	Pastoral Assistant	<i>lead pastor administrative and ministry support</i>
Katie Binns	Administrative Assistant	<i>office management and communication</i>
Maddie Pinto	Director of College Ministry	<i>American College Ministry</i>
Mary Jo Courtney	Campus Missionary	<i>LATN missionary to ASU</i>
Mike Bond	Director of Family Ministries	<i>equipping parents, deacons, and kids</i>
Shing Chow	Campus Missionary	<i>LATN missionary to ASU</i>
Tad Skinner	Executive Pastor	<i>stewardship, administration/ implementation of vision, counseling</i>

b. Ministry Interns and Residents (Temporary Training Positions)

Andy Clare	Pastoral Resident	<i>Training under lead pastor</i>
Phil Hoshiwara	Pastoral Resident	<i>Training under lead pastor</i>

c. Support Staff

David Brown	Facilities	<i>Building management</i>
Stephanie Posavek	Accountant	<i>finances</i>

Note: All staff's email addresses are firstname@churchonmill.org.

B. Stay Informed

1. Be **pro-active** in relationship building, discipling, and getting involved in a group.
2. Sign-up for the blog. A general church blog (“News Blog”) is updated weekly and available at www.churchonmill.org. This is the best way to stay current on what is happening at Church on Mill.
3. Serve. Quickly identify areas of need, interest, and spiritual giftedness. Your service is needed and this is a terrific way to grow and meet people.
4. Make sure to attend Members Meetings. The church family has important membership gatherings six times per year on Sunday evenings at 6:00pm.

5 section Membership Statement of Faith

I. The Tri-une God

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three equally divine, unified Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who know, love, and glorify one another. This one true and living God is infinitely perfect both in his love and in his holiness. He is the Creator of all things and is worthy to receive all glory and adoration.

II. Revelation

We believe that God has graciously disclosed his existence and power in creation and has supremely revealed himself in the person of his Son, the incarnate Word. God has also revealed himself in his written Word, the verbally inspired sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments. It is complete in its revelation of his will for salvation, sufficient for all that God requires us to believe and do, and final in its authority over every domain of knowledge to which it speaks. The Bible is to be believed, as God's perfect instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.

III. Creation of Humanity

We believe God created men and women in his image and for his glory. Equal yet different, Adam and Eve were brought together in a one-flesh marriage union that establishes the only normative pattern of sexual relations for men and women. In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. Both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and develop their full potential in the ministries of the people of God.

IV. The Fall

We believe that Adam, made in the image of God, distorted that image and forfeited his original purity by falling into sin through Satan's temptation. As a result of sin, all creation is cursed and all human beings are alienated from God, corrupted, and condemned finally and irrevocably to death. The supreme need of all human beings is to be reconciled to the God under whose just and holy wrath we stand.

V. The Plan of God

We believe that from all eternity God determined in grace to save a great multitude of guilty sinners from every tribe and language and people and nation. In love, God commands and implores all people to repent and believe in Jesus, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved. God justifies and sanctifies those who by grace place faith in Jesus and will one day glorify them—all to the praise of his glorious grace.

VI. The Gospel

We believe that the biblical gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ—God's very wisdom and power to those who are being saved. This good news is centered on the historical events of the cross and resurrection. By his life and death, Jesus Christ acted as our representative and substitute. He died for our sins to reconcile us to God, and by his resurrection was vindicated by his Father, defeated Satan, broke the power of death, and brought us everlasting life. When the gospel is received, believed, and held firmly, individuals are saved from eternal condemnation into this everlasting life.

VII. The Redemption of Christ

We believe that the eternal Son became flesh: fully God and fully human being, one Person in two natures. The man Jesus, the promised Messiah of Israel, was conceived through the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit, and was born of the virgin Mary. He perfectly obeyed his heavenly Father, lived a sinless life, proclaimed the kingdom of God, performed miraculous signs, was crucified to satisfy God's just wrath, arose bodily from the dead, and ascended into heaven. As the mediatorial King, he is seated at the right hand of God the Father, exercising in heaven and on earth all of God's sovereignty, and is our High Priest, righteous Advocate, and Savior.

VIII. The Justification of Sinners

We believe that Christ, by his obedience and death, fully discharged the debt of sin. By his sacrifice, he bore in our stead the punishment due us for our sins, making full satisfaction to God's justice on our behalf. By his perfect obedience he satisfied the just demands of God on our behalf, since by grace through faith alone that perfect obedience is credited to all who trust in Christ alone for their acceptance with God.

Sound doctrine is essential equipment for navigating the twisting city streets of our lives. So don't leave home without it.

IX. The Power of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit applies this salvation to his people. Sent by the Father and the Son, the ‘other’ Helper is present with and in believers. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and by his powerful and mysterious work regenerates spiritually dead sinners, awakening them to repentance and faith. In him they are baptized into union with the Lord Jesus such that they are justified before God by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. By the Spirit's agency, believers are renewed, sanctified, gifted, adopted into God's family, and participate in the divine nature.

X. The Kingdom of God

We believe that those who have been saved by God and regenerated by the Holy Spirit enter the kingdom of God and delight in the blessings of the new covenant: the forgiveness of sins; the inward transformation that awakens a desire to glorify, trust, and obey God; and the prospect of the glory yet to be revealed. Good works constitute indispensable evidence of saving grace; therefore, as citizens of God's kingdom, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, doing good to all, especially to those who belong to the household of God. The kingdom of God, already present but not fully realized, is the exercise of God's sovereignty in the world toward the eventual redemption of all creation; it inevitably establishes a new community of human life together under God.

XI. God's New People

We believe that God's new covenant people are already seated with Christ in the heavenlies. This universal Church is manifest in local churches of which Christ is the only Head; thus each “local church” is, in fact, the church, the family of God, the bride of Christ, the assembly of the living God, the body of Christ, and the pillar and foundation of the truth. The church is distinguished by her gospel message, her sacred ordinances, her discipline, her great mission, and, above all, by her love for God, and by her members' love for one another and the world. These distinguishing qualities are fostered in the congregational church through a humble, biblically qualified male eldership and a passionate, servant-oriented male and female diaconate.

XII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is a symbolic act of obedience modeled by Jesus Himself and is commanded for every individual who has received the saving benefits of Christ's atoning work and become His disciple. The Lord's Supper is also a symbolic act of obedience for all genuine followers of Christ. It symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood on our behalf, and is to be observed repeatedly throughout the Christian life as both a sign of continued participation in the atoning benefits of Christ's death and demonstration of our unity with other members of Christ's body.

XIII. The Mission of the Church

We believe God's people should increasingly be marked by Christlikeness, prayerfulness, joyful obedience, love for God, and love for neighbor, as members seek the fulfillment of the church's mission. The mission of the church, graciously given by God, is to make disciples, by declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God the Father and teaching believers to obey all God commands. As salt and light, disciples eagerly and faithfully sacrifice to seek and save the lost, love others in word and deed, work for righteousness and justice, and care for all in need.

XIV. The Restoration of All Things

We believe in the personal, glorious, and bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ with his holy angels, when he will exercise his role as final Judge, and his kingdom will be consummated. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the just and the unjust—the unjust to judgment and eternal conscious punishment in hell, as our Lord himself taught, and the just to eternal blessedness in the presence of him who sits on the throne and of the Lamb, in the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness. On that day the church will be presented faultless before God by the obedience, suffering, and triumph of Christ, with all sin and its wretched effects forever banished.

This non-binding “Membership Statement of Faith” represents the theological views of many in the Church on Mill family. Our elders hope to see members formally adopt this statement of faith in the future. See also “Eldership Statement of Faith” for the theological perspective of the church’s leadership.

Membership Statement of Faith (December 12, 2014) - This document represents the theological convictions of many of the members of the Church on Mill family and is our understanding of the dominant teachings of Scripture. It is a compilation of numerous doctrinal statements. It is largely adapted from the Gospel Coalition’s Confessional Statement, which is part of their Foundation Documents. These Foundation Documents were adopted by the Council of The Gospel Coalition on May 22, 2007, and revised on April 12, 2011. Used by permission of The Gospel Coalition (thegospelcoalition.org), Deerfield, IL 60015. Other doctrinal statements influencing this statement include, but are not limited to, The Baptist Faith and Message of 2000, The Nicene Creed, The Apostles Creed, and the New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith 1833.

6

section

Membership at Church on Mill

I. What is Church Membership?

- A. Church membership is the biblical method we use to give:
 - 1. Christians a formal opportunity to say, “As a member of God’s Kingdom [universal Church], I believe this is the local church God has led me to commit myself to.”
 - 2. And the church the opportunity to say, “We see evidence of God’s saving work in your life and welcome you into the family.”
- B. A metaphor for membership: Think of membership not as joining a club but being recognized by and given significant responsibility in an embassy.

The lives of Christians together display visibly the gospel they proclaim audibly.

II. Why Have Formal Membership?

There are many reasons to have a formal church membership. These reasons include:

- A. Membership strikes at the very heart of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. A Christian is a forgiven child of God who, as a disciple, seeks to make disciples who make disciples in the context of a local church.

- B. Membership is the context through which the “what” and “who” of the keys of the kingdom are best practiced.
 - 1. Affirming and remaining in membership are of utmost importance in a Christian’s life.
 - 2. Formative and corrective church discipline are impractical apart from membership.
 - 3. Our ‘care list’ aids members in loving each other well.
- C. In some form or fashion membership clearly took place in the churches in the Bible.
 - 1. Records were kept of widows so they could be supported (1 Timothy 5:3-16).
 - 2. Elders and Deacons were put in place by church leadership and members (Acts 6:1-6, Acts 20, Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1).
 - 3. Elders are charged with responsibility for a specific group of people (1 Peter 5:1-4) and are held accountable for how they care for members (Hebrews 13:17).
 - 4. Members are commanded to gather together (Hebrews 10:23-25).
 - 5. Our Elders need to know who they are responsible to protect, feed, lead, and care for. And our members need to know who they are responsible to vote into office, membership, and remove if circumstances require.
 - a. Under the leadership of the Elders, church members are commanded to “exercise the keys of the kingdom”, meaning they are to lovingly ensure the church continues to serve as a faithful sign of God’s kingdom on earth (1 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 2:6, Galatians 6:1, Matthew 18:15-20).
 - b. If an Elder (or all the Elders) become disqualified or preach a heretical, false gospel, the church needs committed members who will remove them (Galatians 1, 1 Timothy 3).
- D. The daily commitment of membership is imperative to your spiritual development. Christianity is meant to be lived in community. We need each other.
- E. Modern American Culture, especially here in the Valley, is quite noncommittal. This is countercultural to biblical Christianity. Membership serves as an antidote to the self-absorption that surrounds us.

III. Eldership Commitment: What Do Elders Pledge to Do?

When elders are installed into their calling to care for you through servant leadership, they affirmatively answer the following vows in recognition of their commitment.

- A. Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9-10)?
- B. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the inerrant Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, complete in their revelation of God's will for salvation, and sufficient for all that God requires us to believe and do (2 Timothy 3:16)?
- C. Do you affirm the Eldership Statement of Faith and commit to teach in accordance with it, since it contains the truth taught in Scripture (Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 15)?
- D. Do you gladly agree to this church's understanding of a congregationally-governed, elder-led, and deacon-served local church, and do you pledge to submit to your fellow elders in the Lord (Acts 20:17-38)?
- E. Do you promise to protect this church from false teaching and false teachers by faithfully guarding biblical doctrine, and do you pledge to promote the purity and peace of this church even if persecution or opposition may arise (Acts 20:28-31, 1-2 Timothy)?
- F. Do you promise to feed this church by passionately preaching and teaching the whole counsel of Scripture, in order that the biblical gospel be proclaimed and the members be equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 4:1-5)?
- G. Do you promise to lead this church through sacrificial, courageous, and humble pastoral oversight which will remind the church of God's good authority (1 Peter 5:1-4)?
- H. Do you promise to care for the spiritual needs of all church members, and as fellow members, receive the care of this church, even as you help members learn to diligently care for one another (1 Peter 5:1-4)?
- I. Do you promise to serve as examples of mature, increasing Christlikeness, in order to adorn the gospel in your manner of life and invite the church into ever-growing holiness (1 Tim 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4)?
- J. Notwithstanding the many demands placed upon the elders, do you take personal responsibility to devote yourself to prayer, the ministry of the Word, and the shepherding of God's people, in such a way that Church on Mill, and the Lord Jesus himself will be blessed (Philippians 2-3, 1 Peter 5:1-4)?

IV. Membership Commitment: What Do Members Pledge to Do?

The Bible uses many different images to describe what the church is, such as a body and a bride. One of our favorites is that the church is a family. A family gives and receives in an environment of love, commitment, responsibility, care, and mutual submission. We express the opportunities membership affords in the following statements:¹

¹ This is called congregationalism. Church on Mill's polity is that we are congregationally-governed, elder-led, and deacon-served.

- A. We are Christians saved from the penalty of sin, the enslaving power of sin, and God's eternal wrath by faith in Jesus Christ. He is now both our Lord and Savior. We have been made new creations in Christ and thus are radically different people than we were before. We are assured we have and forever will have eternal life. By God's grace, we live in light of these marvelous truths (John 3:16-18, Romans 3:23-26, 2 Corinthians 5:17).
- B. We will rejoice at each others's happiness and endeavor to bear each other's burdens and sorrows, always remembering to pray for one another (Romans 12:15, James 5:16).
- C. We will walk together in love, exercising an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other. If occasion requires, we will humbly plead with one another to cease in sinful behavior and encourage the confession of sin to one another (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, Galatians 6:1-5, 1 John 1:6-10).
- D. We will regularly gather together in corporate worship and small group fellowship, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves (Acts 2:46, Hebrews 10:24-25).
- E. We will be diligent to preserve unity and peace (Ephesians 4:1-3).
- F. We will pursue a deeper understanding of God and His will through personal spiritual disciplines, relying upon God's power to enable us to live out what we learn so that God is glorified, others are blessed, and we are transformed (Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 1 Timothy 4:7-10).
- G. We will strive to properly manage the resources God has given us, including our time, bodies, spiritual gifts, talents, finances, and possessions (Ephesians 5:15-18; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:1-16; Galatians 5:22-26; Proverbs 3:9-10, 1 Corinthians 12:7-31, 2 Corinthians 8-9).
- H. We will aim to bring up all who are in our care and through example, word, and deed seek the salvation of our friends, family, community, and world (Deuteronomy 6:4-25, Matthew 18:19-20, Acts 1:9, Colossians 4:5, Ephesians 5:22-6:4).
- I. We will seek, by God's power, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and pursuing holiness, remembering as new creations in Christ we have a special obligation to live holy lives (Romans 13:12-14, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:16-26).
- J. We will work together for the continuance of a faithful gospel ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, vision, purpose, priorities, and doctrines.
- K. We will, when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

These statements do not imply that we will never fall short of the goals stated herein, but that the desire of our hearts, as members, is to fulfill each of the responsibilities. Honesty, humility, and the pursuit of holiness is expected but perfection will not be a reality for anyone until we are in the presence of Jesus Christ. We trust that commitment will be a personal blessing to your own journey in Christ, as well as a blessing to the rest of the church family.

V. How Do I Become a Member?

- A. You can start the process of becoming a part of the Church on Mill family by completing the membership application. A member of the Elder Team will contact you to set up a Membership Interview. We look forward to getting to know you!
- B. Church membership is open to everyone who has professed faith in Jesus Christ, proclaimed that faith in believer's baptism, and both understands and is committed to membership as outlined in this class material.
- C. After your membership interview you will be introduced to the church family in the weekly worship gathering as a candidate for membership and announced at the next regularly scheduled Members Meeting.

VI. How Does Membership End?

- A. Membership is a commitment to God and the Church on Mill family, and it is the Church on Mill family's commitment to you! Since it is a most serious and important commitment, membership will never be terminated flippantly.
- B. If you are sent by Church on Mill to plant or revitalize a church, once membership is established in that new church family, you will be removed from membership and the members of the church will be informed in a regular Members Meeting.
- C. In the event that you join another gospel preaching church or pass away, you will be removed from membership and the members of the church will be informed in a regular Members Meeting.
- D. In the event that you cease contact with the church family or are living in significant unrepentant sin, you will be pursued by the church according to biblical instruction. In rare cases such pursuit may require the members to remove your membership in a Members Meeting as an act of love and hope.

Appendix 1

Eldership Statement of Faith

I. The Tri-une God

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three equally divine, unified Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who know, love, and glorify one another. This one true and living God is infinitely perfect both in his love and in his holiness. He is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, and is worthy to receive all glory and adoration. Immortal and eternal, he perfectly and exhaustively knows the end from the beginning, sustains and sovereignly rules over all things, and providentially brings about his eternal good purposes to redeem a people for himself and restore his fallen creation, to the praise of his glorious grace.

II. Revelation

We believe that God has graciously disclosed his existence and power in the created order, and has supremely revealed himself to fallen human beings in the person of his Son, the incarnate Word. Moreover, this God is a speaking God who by his Spirit has graciously disclosed himself in human words: God has inspired the words preserved in the Scriptures, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, which are both record and means of his saving work in the world. These writings alone constitute the verbally inspired Word of God, which is utterly authoritative and without error in the original writings, complete in its revelation of his will for salvation, sufficient for all that God requires us to believe and do, and final in its authority over every domain of knowledge to which it speaks. We confess that both our finitude and our sinfulness preclude the possibility of knowing God's truth exhaustively, but we affirm that, enlightened by the Spirit of God, we can know God's revealed truth truly. The Bible is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. As God's people hear, believe, and do the Word, they are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel.

III. Creation of Humanity

We believe people exist to glorify God. God created human beings, male and female, in his own image. Adam and Eve belonged to the created order that God himself declared to be very good, serving as God's agents to care for, manage, and govern creation, living in holy and devoted fellowship with their Maker. Men and women, equally made in the image of God, enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus and are both called to move beyond passive self-indulgence to significant private and public engagement in family, church, and civic life. Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union that establishes the only normative pattern of sexual relations for men and women, such that marriage ultimately serves as a type of the union between Christ and his church. In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the church, the husband exercising headship in a way that displays the caring, sacrificial love of Christ, and the wife submitting to her husband in a way that models the love of the church for her Lord. In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential in the manifold ministries of the people of God. With reference to church offices, God calls qualified men to be Pastors (Elders) and qualified men and women to be Deacons.

IV. The Fall

We believe that Adam, made in the image of God, distorted that image and forfeited his original blessedness—for himself and all his progeny—by falling into sin through Satan’s temptation. As a result of sin, all creation is cursed and all human beings are alienated from God, corrupted in every aspect of their being (e.g., physically, mentally, volitionally, emotionally, spiritually) and condemned finally and irrevocably to death—apart from God’s own gracious intervention. The supreme need of all human beings is to be reconciled to the God under whose just and holy wrath we stand; the only hope of all human beings is the undeserved love of this same God, who alone can rescue us and restore us to himself.

V. The Plan of God

We believe that from all eternity God determined in grace to save a great multitude of guilty sinners from every tribe and language and people and nation, and to this end foreknew them and chose them. In love God commands and implores all people to repent and believe. God justifies and sanctifies those who by grace have chosen to place faith in Jesus, and that he will one day glorify them—all to the praise of his glorious grace.

VI. The Gospel

We believe that the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ—God’s very wisdom. Utter folly to the world, even though it is the power of God to those who are being saved, this good news is christological, centering on the cross and resurrection: the gospel is not proclaimed if Christ is not proclaimed, and the authentic Christ has not been proclaimed if his death and resurrection are not central (the message is: "Christ died for our sins . . . [and] was raised"). This good news is biblical (his death and resurrection are according to the Scriptures), theological and salvific (Christ died for our sins, to reconcile us to God), historical (if the saving events did not happen, our faith is worthless, we are still in our sins, and we are to be pitied more than all others), apostolic (the message was entrusted to and transmitted by the apostles, who were witnesses of these saving events), and intensely personal (where it is received, believed, and held firmly, individual persons are saved).

VII. The Redemption of Christ

We believe that, moved by love and in obedience to his Father, the eternal Son became human: the Word became flesh, fully God and fully human being, one Person in two natures. The man Jesus, the promised Messiah of Israel, was conceived through the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit, and was born of the virgin Mary. He perfectly obeyed his heavenly Father, lived a sinless life, proclaimed the kingdom of God, performed miraculous signs, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead on the third day, appeared to many, and ascended into heaven. As the mediatorial King, he is seated at the right hand of God the Father, exercising in heaven and on earth all of God’s sovereignty, and is our High Priest and righteous Advocate. We believe that by his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus Christ acted as our representative and substitute. He did this so that in him we might become the righteousness of God: on the cross he canceled sin, propitiated God, and, by bearing the full penalty of our sins, reconciled to God all those who believe. By his resurrection Christ Jesus was vindicated by his Father, broke the power of death and defeated Satan who once had power over it, and brought everlasting life to all his people; by his ascension he has been forever exalted as Lord and is preparing a place for us to be with him. We believe that salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved. Because God chose the

lowly things of this world, the despised things, the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, no human being can ever boast before him—Christ Jesus has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption.

VIII. The Justification of Sinners

We believe that Christ, by his obedience and death, fully discharged the debt of all those who are justified. By his sacrifice, he bore in our stead the punishment due us for our sins, making a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice on our behalf. By his perfect obedience he satisfied the just demands of God on our behalf, since by faith alone that perfect obedience is credited to all who trust in Christ alone for their acceptance with God. Inasmuch as Christ was lovingly given by the Father for us, and his obedience and punishment were accepted in place of our own, freely and not for anything in us, this justification is solely of free grace, in order that both the exact justice and the rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners. We believe that a zeal for personal and public obedience flows from this free justification.

IX. The Power of the Holy Spirit

We believe that this salvation, attested in all Scripture and secured by Jesus Christ, is applied to his people by the Holy Spirit. Sent by the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ, and, as the 'other' Helper, is present with and in believers. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and by his powerful and mysterious work regenerates spiritually dead sinners, awakening them to repentance and faith, and in him they are baptized into union with the Lord Jesus, such that they are justified before God by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. By the Spirit's agency, believers are renewed, sanctified, and adopted into God's family; they participate in the divine nature and receive his sovereignly distributed gifts. The Holy Spirit is himself the down payment of the promised inheritance, and in this age indwells, guides, instructs, equips, revives, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

X. The Kingdom of God

We believe that those who have been saved by the grace of God through union with Christ by faith and through regeneration by the Holy Spirit enter the kingdom of God and delight in the blessings of the new covenant: the forgiveness of sins, the inward transformation that awakens a desire to glorify, trust, and obey God, and the prospect of the glory yet to be revealed. Good works constitute indispensable evidence of saving grace. Living as salt in a world that is decaying and light in a world that is dark, believers should neither withdraw into seclusion from the world, nor become indistinguishable from it: rather, we are to do good to all for the glory of God. Recognizing who's created order this is, and because we are citizens of God's kingdom, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, doing good to all, especially to those who belong to the household of God. The kingdom of God, already present but not fully realized, is the exercise of God's sovereignty in the world toward the eventual redemption of all creation. The kingdom of God is an invasive power that plunders Satan's dark kingdom and regenerates and renovates through repentance and faith the lives of individuals rescued from that kingdom. It therefore inevitably establishes a new community of human life together under God.

XI. God's New People

We believe that God's new covenant people have already come to the heavenly Jerusalem; they are already seated with Christ in the heavenlies. This universal Church is manifest in local churches of which Christ is the only Head; thus each "local church" is, in fact, the church, the household of God, the assembly of the living God, and the pillar and foundation of the truth. The church is the body of Christ, the apple of his eye, graven on his hands, and he has pledged himself to her forever. The church is distinguished by her gospel message, her sacred ordinances, her discipline, her great mission, and, above all, by her love for God, and by her members' love for one another and for the world. Crucially, this gospel we cherish has both personal and corporate dimensions, neither of which may properly be overlooked. Christ Jesus is our peace: he has not only brought about peace with God, but also peace between alienated peoples. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both Jew and Gentile to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. The church serves as a sign of God's future new world when its members live for the service of one another and their neighbors, rather than for self-focus. The church is the corporate dwelling place of God's Spirit, and the continuing witness to God in the world.

XII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is a symbolic act of obedience modeled by Jesus Himself. It is intended for the individual who has received the saving benefits of Christ's atoning work and become His disciple. As a testimony to God, the church, oneself, and the world, a believer should be immersed in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Water baptism is a visual demonstration of a person's union with Christ in the likeness of His death, burial, and resurrection. It signifies that one's former way of life has been put to death and vividly depicts a person's release from the mastery of sin. The Lord's Supper is also a symbolic act of obedience. As with water baptism, this act of worship is to be observed by those who have become genuine followers of Christ. The Lord's Supper symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood on our behalf, and is to be observed repeatedly throughout the Christian life as a sign of continued participation in the atoning benefits of Christ's death. As we partake of the Lord's Supper with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we remember and proclaim the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls, signify our unity with other members of Christ's body, and anticipate His second coming.

XIII. The Mission of the Church

We believe God's people should increasingly be marked by Christlikeness, prayerfulness, joyful obedience, love for God, and love for neighbor, as members seek the fulfillment of the church's mission. The mission of the church, graciously given by God, is to make disciples, by declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God the Father, and to teach believers to obey all God commands. As salt and light, disciples eagerly and faithfully sacrifice to seek and save the lost, love others in word and deed, work for righteousness and justice, and care for all in need.

XIV. The Restoration of All Things

We believe in the personal, glorious, and bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ with his holy angels, when he will exercise his role as final Judge, and his kingdom will be consummated. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the just and the unjust—the unjust to judgment and eternal conscious punishment in hell, as our Lord himself taught, and the just to eternal

blessedness in the presence of him who sits on the throne and of the Lamb, in the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness. On that day the church will be presented faultless before God by the obedience, suffering, and triumph of Christ, all sin purged and its wretched effects forever banished. God will be all in all and his people will be enthralled by the immediacy of his ineffable holiness, and everything will be to the praise of his glorious grace.

Eldership Statement of Faith (Adopted November 11, 2013; Re-adopted December 30, 2015). This document represents the theological convictions of the Elders of Church on Mill. Elders affirm and teach in accordance with these biblical convictions. This Statement is a compilation of numerous doctrinal statements, and is largely adapted from The Gospel Coalition's Confessional Statement, which is part of their Foundation Documents. These Foundation Documents were adopted by the Council of The Gospel Coalition on May 22, 2007, and revised on April 12, 2011. Used by permission of The Gospel Coalition (thegospelcoalition.org), Deerfield, IL 60015. Other doctrinal statements influencing this Statement include, but are not limited to, The Baptist Faith and Message of 2000, The Nicene Creed, The Apostles Creed, The Second London Baptist Confession of Faith 1689, and The New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith 1833.

Appendix 2

Constitution

OF

CHURCH ON MILL
FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH OF TEMPE
TEMPE, ARIZONA
ADOPTED AUGUST 16, 2010

PURPOSE: WHY WE EXIST

Glorifying God through lives changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ
(Ps 34:1-3, Jn 3:16, Jn 14:6, Rom 10:9-13, Eph 4:20-21, Col 1:15-23, 1 Cor 15:1-28, 2 Cor 5:17-21)

MEANS: WHAT WE DO

Our passion is to see God at work among us as we seek to fulfill our God-given purpose. This is accomplished through three primary means, including *connecting*, *transforming*, and *living*.

A. Connect: To God and each other (Matt 28:19-20, Mark 12:28-31, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:42-47, 2 Tim 1:8-14, 1 Thess 3:11-14, Heb 10:24-25, 1 Jn 1:3, 1 Jn 4:19-21)

B. Transform: Into mature followers of Jesus (Rom 12:1-2, 2 Cor 3:12-18, Eph 4:11-16, Phil 1:6, Phil 2:12-13, Col 1:28-29, 1 Tim 4:7-8, 1 Thess 5:23-24)

C. Live: As missional people who serve in Jesus' name (Micah 6:8, Matt 28:18-20, Mk 12:31, Jn 20:21, Rom 12:3-8, 1 Cor 12, Eph 2:8-10, Col 4:5-6)

DISTINCTIVES: WHO WE ARE

As a missional church family, we aim to always be:

A. Bible-believing: The Bible is the Word of God given to teach us about God and how we should live in His world. It is our final authority for all things. It is the 'roadmap' for all that we are, say, and do. God's voice, speaking through it, must make sense of our past and guide our present and future. Personal and corporate traditions, history, and experience are all important, yet it is God alone through Scripture who is definitive. (Ps 1, Ps 119, Matt 22:29-33, Mrk 7:1-23, Jn 17:17, 2 Tim 3:16-17, 2 Pt 1:20-21)

B. Gospel-centered: The story of the Bible is the gospel - God's amazing plan to restore all things to himself. The gospel is the 'good news' that God has graciously provided a way for sinful

people to have a right, loving relationship with Him. Jesus is the way: He left heaven, came to earth, lived a perfect life, and died in our place. Miraculously He rose from the dead to demonstrate victory over sin, death, and the devil. Through the sacrificial death of Jesus, all who turn from their sin and confess Jesus as their Lord are given eternal life. This happens in an instant, yet God's work in a person does not stop there. The on-going aspect of salvation will continue for the rest of a person's life; therefore, the gospel is for every day. (Jn 3:1-18, Rom 3:21-26, Rom 10:13-15, 2 Cor 5:21, Gal 1:6-9, Gal 2:16-3:14, 2 Tim 2:8-10, 1 Thess 2:4)

C. Transformation-minded: The Christian life is a life of grace-driven, progressive holiness. Followers of Jesus are on a path of being supernaturally changed by God in order to live in increasingly Christlike ways. Real change is possible and even promised. Our character ought to more and more frequently and robustly reflect the life of Jesus. (2 Cor 5:17, Eph 2:1-10, 1 Tim 1:12-17)

D. Devoted to each other: As a local church, being an interconnected, interdependent family of believers, we pursue genuine Christian living together. This can be a reality because the gospel affects not just our relationship with God but also our relationships with people: people who know Jesus can be in harmony with others who know Jesus. We are literally brothers and sisters in Christ who need and rely on one another. (Jn 13:34, Rom 12:10, 1 Cor 13:4-6, Gal 6:2, Phil 2:3)

E. Passionately engaged in both our community and the world: As a family of believers who have been and are being changed by the gospel, we cannot help but be moved with compassion for the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and mental needs of both our community and the world at large. God has called us to leave a geographical footprint in the Valley. He has also called us to participate in extending the gospel around the globe. We yearn to engage people in spiritual conversations, demonstrate the love of Christ through acts of mercy, and live in such a way that God will draw people to salvation through our words and deeds. (Lk 4:18-19, Jn 20:21, Acts 1:8, 1 Pt 3:13-17)

Appendix 3

Bylaws

OF

CHURCH ON MILL
FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH OF TEMPE
TEMPE, ARIZONA
ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 20,2015

ARTICLE I

ORGANIZATION

Church on Mill First Southern Baptist Church of Tempe (hereinafter referred to as "the Church"), is hereby organized upon the foundation of the Christian faith and principles set forth in the Holy Bible. The purpose of these Bylaws is to govern the Church body in an orderly manner consistent with the laws of Arizona relating to nonprofit corporations and the Christian principles upon which the Church is founded.

The Church shall have and continuously maintain in the State of Arizona a known place of business and a statutory agent, both of which shall be registered with the Arizona Corporation Commission.

ARTICLE II

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualifications for Membership.

- A. By Baptism. Any person publicly professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and declaring it as his purpose to follow Him as His disciple may be received into full fellowship of this Church, subject to baptism by immersion in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- B. By Letter. Members in good standing of other churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention may be received into full membership of this Church upon receipt of a letter of transfer from the former church.
- C. By Statement. Admission into membership may be by personal statement after giving evidence of their Christian experience, satisfactory to the Church, that the person has publicly professed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and has previously been or now agrees to follow the example set by Jesus Christ in His baptism by immersion.

D. Restoration. A person from whom membership has been withdrawn may be restored to membership upon presentation of evidence satisfactory to the Church.

E. Election of Members. After meeting one of the qualifications for membership set forth above, a person shall be received into membership by a majority vote of the members present at any member meeting.

F. Classification of Members. Members shall be classified as active unless they meet the following criteria:

1. Inactive members are those members who have not attended either worship, prayer, or discipleship activities of the Church for a period of one year, except for reasons of incapacity.

2. Inactive members may return to active member status by attending worship, prayer, or discipleship activities of the Church in two weeks in a two-month period.

G. Termination of Membership. Any one of the following will terminate a person's membership in this Church:

1. Death of the member.

2. Upon the member's joining another church and the request of said church for a letter of transfer from this Church.

3. Upon a member joining a church of another faith, Church membership may be withdrawn by vote.

4. The Church may withdraw a person's membership for causes deemed proper by the Church according to the scriptures.

5. All terminations of membership, except due to death, shall be by majority vote of the members present at any regular member meeting.

ARTICLE III

MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services. Public services for worship shall be held on Sundays. Other public services or organizational meetings for worship may be held at such other occasions as are deemed best for the advancement of the cause of Christ.

Section 2. Member Meetings.

A. Regular Member Meetings. Regular member meetings of the Church shall be held at least quarterly, or more frequently if needed, as determined by the Elders. Written and/or oral

reports from the general officers of the Church and the various organizations shall be received and filed with the Secretary. One week's notice of the date and time of the meeting shall be given to the members at a regularly scheduled worship service.

B. Special Member Meetings. The Elders may call a special member meeting. One week's written notice of the subject, date, time and location must be given unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable. Publication in the church bulletin shall constitute adequate written notice.

C. Annual Member Meetings. The Church shall hold an annual member meeting as specified in the Articles of Incorporation. The purpose of the meeting will be to approve the budget for the succeeding year, and address any other matters which might concern the Church at that time. One week's written notice of the date and time of the meeting shall be given to the members. Publication in the church bulletin shall constitute adequate written notice.

D. Quorum. Ten percent (10%) of the active members of the Church shall constitute a quorum. Only active members shall vote on matters brought to a vote of the members. In order for a matter to be approved, there must be a fifty one percent (51%) majority of the members present, unless a higher percentage is required by these Bylaws.

E. Presiding Officer and Meeting Procedures. The Elders shall appoint an Elder to preside at each member meeting. Member meetings will be conducted with procedure appropriate to biblical guidelines and Christian conduct.

F. Secretary. The Elders shall appoint a non-Elder as a Secretary who shall be responsible to maintain a correct roll of members of the Church and to maintain minutes of member meetings, which minutes shall be available to members within one week after a member meeting.

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Section 1. Governance generally. Church on Mill shall be governed by a biblical structure; namely, congregationalism, eldership, and diaconate. The members and Elders shall be mutually accountable to one another. Members are responsible to follow Elder leadership (1 Peter 5:1-4, Hebrews 13:17), and Elders are responsible to bring before the members the biblically-identified issues set forth in the first bullet point below.

- Congregationalism: Church on Mill is congregationally governed. God entrusts the final authority of and responsibility for the local church to the members; this is expressed biblically in four areas of decision making. The members are responsible for: preserving unity and promoting holiness in matters of significant dispute between members (Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians. 6:1-8); guarding the gospel message by removing Elders who teach a false gospel (Galatians 1:6-9); protecting the purity and reputation of the church by overseeing her

membership (2 Corinthians 5-8; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, cf. Matthew 18:15-17); and affirming the church's budget and office holders.

- Eldership: Church on Mill is Elder led. God cares for, teaches and protects the local church through a plurality of qualified and called men who share these pastoral responsibilities.
- Diaconate: Church on Mill is served by Deacons. God frees the Elders to concentrate on spiritual oversight and provides for the physical care, administrative needs and day-to-day functioning of the church through qualified and called men and women.

Section 2. Elders/Pastors.

A. Responsibilities. Elders serve as the pastors of the Church. They are responsible to shepherd the Church as a team of equals. They protect the Church from false teaching and teachers, feed and thereby equip the Church by passionately preaching and teaching God's Word, lead the Church through sacrificial, courageous and humble oversight, care for the spiritual needs of the Church, and serve as examples of Christ likeness (Acts 20:28-32; 1 Timothy 6:3-10; Titus 3:8-11; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 3:2; Acts 20:17-35; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 4:1-4; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:3). The Elders shall constitute the Board of Directors of the corporation as required by Arizona law.

B. Number and Length of Service. There shall be at least three Elders, and the Elders shall include at least one member of Church staff and at least one member who is not a member of Church staff (1 Timothy 5:17-18). Any Elder who is not employed on the Church staff shall be appointed for a period of four years, after which he shall take a sabbatical of one year, during which sabbatical the Elder shall not be permitted to vote on matters before the Elders. The serving Elders shall submit to the members for reaffirmation of further service as an Elder any qualified Elder who has completed his sabbatical. An Elder who is a member of Church pastoral staff shall serve as an Elder as long as he holds such pastoral staff position. It is recommended that Church staff implement appropriate alternative methods to provide rest for such Elders.

C. Qualifications. Men who are members, called by God and affirmed by the membership as Elders shall satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure as an Elder.

D. Affirmation of Elders. The body of Elders shall propose new Elders to the members at least two weeks prior to a members meeting at which the members may affirm or reject any proposed Elder. A candidate for the office of Elder shall hold office if affirmed by a vote of at least seventy five percent (75%) of the members present at the meeting.

E. Removal of Elder. Upon the assent of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at a member meeting any Elder shall be removed from office. In addition, pursuant to 1 Timothy 5:19-25, the body of Elders may remove any Elder on the evidence of at least two witnesses that the Elder does not satisfy the biblical qualifications of the office set forth in subsection C above. Any Elder may voluntarily step down from the office for any reason other than failure to satisfy the biblical qualifications of the office.

F. Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor shall be a member of the Elders, and shall remain an Elder as long as he serves as Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor's main responsibilities shall be preaching and teaching God's Word and leading the Elders in discerning and communicating the biblical vision for the Church.

1. Qualifications and Responsibilities of Lead Pastor. In addition to the qualifications and responsibilities of all Elders, the Lead Pastor shall be especially recognized as qualified, trained and gifted in preaching and teaching of God's Word. The Lead Pastor shall have primary responsibility for overseeing the ministry of the pulpit, administration of ordinances, oversight of Church staff, and any of these responsibilities may be delegated at his discretion.

2. Selection of Lead Pastor. Upon a vacancy in the position of Lead Pastor, the Elders shall nominate, subject to affirmation by the members, a lead pastor selection team of Church members, which team shall include at least one Elder. Upon the lead pastor selection team and the Elders reaching unanimous agreement that a single particular candidate for Lead Pastor shall be brought forth, that candidate shall be brought before the Church members for a vote of affirmation. Notice of a member meeting to consider such a candidate shall be publicly given for at least three consecutive weeks prior to the meeting. A candidate for the office of Lead Pastor shall be affirmed if affirmed by a vote of at least seventy five percent (75%) of the members present at the meeting.

3. Removal of Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor may be removed pursuant to the same procedures applicable to the removal of other Elders, except for the Lead Pastor to be removed by the Elders, removal shall be effective only upon the unanimous agreement of all remaining Elders.

G. Staff Pastors. Staff members with broad pastoral responsibilities, as outlined in subsection A, shall be subject to affirmation as Elders pursuant to the procedures set forth in subsection D.

Section 3. Deacons.

A. Responsibilities. Deacons shall assist the Elders in serving the Church by providing leadership over the various service oriented functions of the Church, so that the Elders may concentrate their efforts on the Word of God and prayer (Acts 6:1-7). Deacons may call upon other Church members to fulfill the service oriented functions.

B. Qualifications. Men and women who are members, called by God and affirmed by the membership as Deacons shall satisfy the qualifications for the office of Deacon as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

C. Affirmation of Deacons. The Elders shall propose new Deacons to the Church members at least two weeks prior to a member meeting at which the members may affirm or reject any proposed Deacon. A candidate for the office of Deacon shall hold office if affirmed by a vote of at least seventy five percent (75%) of the members present at the meeting.

D. Length of Service. The serving Elders shall submit to the members for reaffirmation for further service as a Deacon any qualified Deacon who has completed four years of service since his or her last reaffirmation by the members. Deacons who hold office on the date of adoption of these Bylaws may hold office for four years from the date of such adoption prior to being submitted for reaffirmation.

E. Removal of Deacon. Upon the assent of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at a member meeting, any Deacon shall be removed from office. In addition, the Elders may remove any Deacon on the evidence of at least two witnesses that the Deacon does not satisfy the biblical qualifications of the office set forth in subsection B above. Any Deacon may voluntarily step down from the office for any reason other than failure to satisfy the biblical qualifications of the office.

ARTICLE V

MINISTRY TEAMS

The Deacons and the Elders may form Ministry Teams. Such teams shall deal with administrative functions, ministry areas, discipleship, facilities, etc. Ministry Team leaders shall be active members of the Church. Other ministry team members serve at the team's discretion.

ARTICLE VI

CONTRACTS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS AND FUNDS

Section 1. Contracts. The Elders may authorize any Elder or Elders, agent or agents to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Church, and such authority may be general or may be confined to specific instances.

Section 2. Checks. All checks, drafts or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Church shall be signed by such authorized person(s), and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Elders.

Section 3. Deposits. All funds of the Church shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Church in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Elders may select.

Section 4. Gifts. The Elders may accept on behalf of the Church any contribution, gift, bequest or devise for any purpose of the Church.

Section 5. Treasurer. The Elders shall appoint a non-Elder as a Treasurer who shall be responsible to maintain accurate records of all funds received and paid, and shall produce monthly and annual financial reports to be distributed at the regular and annual member meetings and maintained by the Secretary in the Church's records.

ARTICLE VII

PURCHASE OF REAL PROPERTY

In the event the Church owns, or elects to purchase real property, the following covenants, conditions and restrictions shall apply to such real property:

Section 1. The deed conveying the ownership of the real property to the Church shall contain covenants, conditions, and restrictions consistent with those set forth in this Article VII.

Section 2. Real property owned by the Church as Grantee shall be used for the benefit of the members of the Church who are determined to be in harmony with and affiliation with the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention ("ASBC"), even if the members determined to be in harmony with the ASBC shall be a minority of the membership.

Section 3. For Church members to be in harmony with and affiliation with the ASBC requires that the messengers of the Church shall be recognized and given full voting privileges at the annual meetings of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 4. Should the Church messengers be denied such recognition and voting privileges by the ASBC, or in case the organic existence of the Church shall cease, or in case its house of worship or the real property owned by the Church shall be abandoned or shall cease to be used as a house or place of Southern Baptist worship by those in harmony with or affiliated with the ASBC, as above set forth, or in case same shall be sold by the Church or the title be transferred by legal process or otherwise, without the written consent of the ASBC, then in each and every such case the title to the above described property shall revert to and become vested in Valley Rim Baptist Association (the "Association"), or its successor, to be used for a church or mission in harmony with and affiliated with the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 5. If, at such time of reversion of the title to the Association, the Association or a successor shall not be in existence, or shall fail to be in harmony with and affiliated with the ASBC, then title shall revert to the ASBC, or its successor, to be used for church and mission purposes.

Section 6. No reversion shall render invalid or operate in any way against the lien of any mortgage or deed of trust given with respect to the conveyed property in good faith, and for value and on any such reversion Grantor shall take title to the conveyed land subject to any such mortgage or deed of trust. Provided, however, that should any such mortgage or deed of trust be foreclosed, then the title acquired by such foreclosure, and the person or persons who thereby and thereafter become the owner or owners of the conveyed premises, shall be subject to and bound by all the restrictions contained in this instrument.

Section 7. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the provisions in this ARTICLE VII of the Bylaws may not be amended or repealed except by eighty five percent (85%) of the voting members of the Church at any special member meeting, after such proposal for amendment or repeal has been made available, in writing, to all Church members at the worship services taking place during at least the two (2) weeks prior to the special member meeting wherein the vote will be conducted.

ARTICLE VIII

LIABILITIES AND INDEMNIFICATION

Section 1. Non-liability. No member, Elder, officer, agent or employee of the Church is liable for the acts or failure to act of any other member, Elder, officer, agent or employee of the Church. No member, Elder, officer, agent or employee of the Church shall be liable for his or her action or failure to act under these Bylaws, excepting only acts or omissions arising out of his or her willful malfeasance. Any action taken by the Church shall not create personal liability on its members, Elders or officers.

Section 2. Indemnification. The Church shall indemnify, defend, protect and hold harmless its members, Elders, officers and employees to the maximum extent permitted by law.

ARTICLE IX

SUSPENSION, AMENDMENT OR REPEAL

The Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws may be amended or repealed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present and voting at any special member meeting of the Church, after such proposal for amendment or repeal has been made available, in writing, to all Church members at the worship services taking place during at least the two (2) weeks prior to the special member meeting wherein the vote will be conducted. ARTICLE VII may not be amended or repealed except as stated in Article VII Section 7.

ARTICLE X

TRANSITION

Upon the adoption of these Bylaws, the members shall appoint a transition team of at least three members, which transition team shall assist the Lead Pastor in guiding the Church and in vetting potential Elder candidates to be proposed to the members for affirmation as provided in Article IV Section 2(D) (1 Timothy 5:22). No member of the transition team shall be considered as an Elder candidate by the transition team. Upon the affirmation by the members of two new Elders (such that, with the Lead Pastor, there shall then be three Elders) the transition team shall be automatically dissolved. The transition team shall serve as the Board of Directors of the corporation until the transition team dissolves.

Appendix 4

Quote Attribution

“God will have a community who knows him and praises him as God. This is the big picture of the Bible.”

Mark Dever, *Understanding the Great Commission*. Nashville, B&H Publishing Group, 2016; 10.

“Before we can begin to see the cross as something done *for* us, we have to see it as something done *by* us.”

John R.W. Stott, *The Cross of Christ*. Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 1986; 59-60.

“...churches need to make a conscious shift – away from erecting and maintain structures, and towards *growing people who are disciple-making disciples of Christ*.”

Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine*. Kingsford: Matthias Media, 2009; 17.

“A local church, I said is a group of Christians who regularly gather in Christ’s name to officially affirm and oversee one another’s membership in Jesus Christ and his kingdom through gospel preaching and gospel ordinances.”

Jonathan Leeman, *Church Membership*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2012; 62-63

“Sound doctrine is essential equipment for navigating the twisting city streets of our lives. So don’t leave home without it.”

Bobby Jamieson, *Sound Doctrine*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2013; 21.

“The lives of Christians together display visibly the gospel they proclaim audibly.”

Mark Dever, *The Church*. Nashville, B&H Publishing, 2012; 40.

Appendix 5

Our Affiliation

I. Church Affiliations

Church on Mill is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Every church affiliated with the SBC is an independent, autonomous local church. This relationship allows us to voluntarily partner with the SBC in chosen ministry areas. Being baptistic in theology we gladly affirm not less than the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

The most important benefit of being associated with the SBC is the opportunity to contribute to the Cooperative Program which funds mission work both in America and around the world. The International Mission Board, the SBC's international missions agency, is one of the largest in the world. A portion of every dollar given at Church on Mill goes to support missions locally, regionally, and globally (<http://www.imb.org>).

We also work in close cooperation with the Arizona Chapter of The Gospel Coalition (<http://arizona.thegospelcoalition.org> and <http://www.thegospelcoalition.org>) and 9Marks (<http://www.9marks.org>).

II. Global Partnerships

Church on Mill is active in disciple-making both locally and globally. Our international missions partnerships include missionaries in:

- **Scotland** (The McConnell Family | Niddrie Community Church | www.20schemes.com)
- **Italy** (The Krause Family | Serenissima Bible Church | sbible.smggroup.info)
- **Southeast Asia** (The Kenney Family | www.imb.org)
- **East Asia** (The Patterson Family | www.cru.org)

Appendix 6

The Trellis and the Vine

The Ministry Mind Shift that Changes Everything

“Thus the goal of Christian ministry is quite simple, and in a sense measurable: are we making and nurturing genuine disciples of Christ? The church always tends towards institutionalism and secularization. The focus shifts to preserving traditional programs and structures, and the goal of discipleship is lost. The mandate of disciple-making provides the touchstone for whether our church is engaging in Christ’s mission. Are we making genuine disciples of Jesus Christ?”

(The Trellis and the Vine, 14)

Every true church exists to glorify God by making disciples who make disciples. Here at Church on Mill, we express that purpose as “glorifying God by lives changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.” The aim of this article is to explain how we approach that great task of multiplying disciples.

A book called *The Trellis and the Vine*, quoted above, is immensely helpful in guiding us to understand why Church on Mill does ministry in the manner that we do. In the book, the trellis and the vine are a metaphor for the church. The trellis consists of the supporting structures of the church like organized programs and classes, budgets, administrative work, and anything that involves systems and planning. The vine is the people growth, whether that be people engaging in discipleship, evangelism, or just reading the Bible with someone else. In short, this people-work can be called disciple-making, and it is our charge as a church, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20).

The authors of the book make the point that often church leaders believe (intentionally or unintentionally) that putting loads of work into a trellis is the way to a healthier vine—that is, if we only make sure our structures are vast and ever-expanding, we will be able to grow a healthy body of people. And, to a certain degree, this philosophy seems successful. A large group of people may flock to a church that seems to have everything. However, the trellis of the church can easily become the sole focus of the church. The trellis exists for the vine, while the converse is not true.

This brings us to a question: what does the trellis look like at Church on Mill? You have probably already noticed. We have less programs and activities than you might expect, and the ones we do have may seem a bit strange before the intention behind them is known. Perhaps the trellis here doesn’t look flashy at all. We gather Sundays to sing, sit under God’s word, and pray. We scatter throughout the week to live shared lives on the mission of making disciples. We get trained on Wednesdays. We take our church membership seriously. That’s basically it.

A better question may be this: is the trellis fulfilling its purpose? If a trellis’ one goal in life is to support a healthy, vibrant vine, then every structure our church employs must be in place only to support a healthy, vibrant, and growing church body. We need Wednesday night classes only if they teach us how to make disciples, Connection Classes only if they teach us how to know our Lord and each other better, and special events only if they are equipping us to go and love God, his Word, one another, and the world in more visible and impactful ways. All structures that do not grow our disciple-making, whether they are rooted in tradition or trendy technique, are a waste of time.

Though they look beautiful on paper, they look purposeless and lifeless in the eyes of the Lord, who is the creator and head of our church.

If the true measure of growth is in how the vine looks, it is also pertinent that we, the church, are vigilant in watching our vine and in evaluating if our simple trellis is effective in its work. Are our members' love for one another growing? Are more and more people knocking on our doors or ringing in our phones? Are we seeking to invite a work friend to a game night with church members? Is compassion building in our hearts for the homeless, disabled, and abused? Do we find less joy in the things of this world and more joy in knowing Jesus personally? The more time we spend consuming formal church events, the less time we are able to engage in this Christ-exalting work.

By God's grace, our vine is vibrant with disciple-making. We love the opportunity to come alongside people in their walks with Christ, whether they are still standing at the starting line or have walked for years and years. We pray that we may continually glorify God in loving not our own programs, but his people. This is a culture of disciple-making. Won't you join in?

*Note: For more in-depth study of this topic, read *The Trellis and the Vine* by Colin Marshall and Tony Payne.*

Appendix 7

Fellow College Students, Please Join a Local Church

A Gospel Coalition Online Article

What would you do if you saw a nose strutting down the street? You'd cry out, "Why are you not joined to a body?"

We should have the same reaction to Christian college students who are not joined to a local church.

In my early years of college, I lived like a detached nose. But when I learned the importance of church membership and joined a local congregation, I finally found where I belonged. I tasted the security of having pastors shepherd me and feed me God's Word. I gained wisdom as older, faithful women disciplined me. I felt the pleasure of serving others with my gifts and resources. Most of all, I was humbled by the truth that the church is the bride for whom Christ shed his blood.

How could I claim to love Christ while neglecting his treasured bride?

To my fellow college students, here are four biblical reasons you should join a local church where you're currently living.

1. To be watched over by church leaders.

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account" (Heb. 13:17).

College is a prime time to mature spiritually, but we cannot properly grow if we do not submit to church leaders who feed, shepherd, and protect us.

Many college students excuse themselves from church membership, believing the local church can be replaced by a parachurch ministry. However, a campus ministry (or a Christian university, for that matter) is not equivalent to the local church because God has not given it the same authority. Church leaders possess a special authority that involves guarding, guiding, and giving an account for souls. By not joining a church, we disregard God's wise plan for us.

2. To be disciplined by older church members.

"Older women likewise are . . . to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled" (Titus 2:3–5).

My favorite memories of college life so far include sipping boba tea and chatting with older church members about marriage and family. There are few contexts for students to develop relationships with people in a different life stage. College is a formative and transitional season where we learn how to be adults. Trying to figure out adult life by only talking to other 20-year-olds will leave us unprepared for life and ministry. We need the advice and wisdom of older church members to help us learn and grow as we walk down paths they've already traveled.

Trying to figure out adult life by only talking to other 20-year-olds will leave us unprepared for life and ministry.

3. To build up the church.

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:11–13).

College students have gifts and abilities that are uniquely suited to serve a local church. As the younger members of a congregation, we are energetic and innovative. We have artistic, athletic, and musical talents. We make good Ramen! We have a unique platform for evangelism, since we interact regularly with non-Christian students. We can find countless ways to contribute to the life of the church and build up the body of Christ.

4. To learn to love those Jesus loved.

“Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Eph. 5:25).

Some students shy away from pursuing church membership because they can't find a church that meets their needs and wants. This consumer mindset is foreign to the Bible. Scripture teaches that the church is a group of people we prioritize and commit to. Instead of only looking for a church that meets our needs, we ought to look for a group of people we envision giving our lives for, just as Christ gave his life for the church.

God is glorified when the power of the gospel unites people who have little in common.

Part of this commitment involves giving ourselves to people we aren't naturally inclined to know. It's a beautiful glimpse of heaven when an 80-year-old Costa Rican grandmother and a 23-year-old Chinese-American student sit in the same pew, sing the same songs, pray for one another, and eat around the same table. God is glorified when the power of the gospel unites people who have little in common.

These are just four of many reasons to join a local church in college. May the Lord grant you a fresh love for his bride—both for your good and also for his glory.

What a profound kingdom impact there would be if more college students were committed to serving, loving, and treasuring the bride of Christ.

Lee, Caroline. “Fellow College Students, Please Join a Local Church”. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/fellow-college-students-please-join-local-church>. Accessed 15 September 2017.

Appendix 8

Application for Church Membership

We are thrilled you are interested in becoming a part of the Church on Mill family! Please complete the information below. A member of the Elder Team will contact you to schedule a Membership Interview at your convenience.

Today's date _____

Name (Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr.) _____ Birthday _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Male or female (circle one)

Single or Married (circle one)

Cell Phone _____ Work phone _____

Email _____ Facebook _____

How would you prefer we contact you? _____

Please sign me up for the church's weekly news blog. Yes No (circle one)

I have read Church on Mill's Membership Class materials and believe God has led me to join this church family. By relying on God's constant work in and through me, I will joyfully support the church as outlined in the membership class.

_____ (Please Sign)

<p>Date of Membership Interview: _____</p> <p>Interviewed by: _____ (Please Sign and Print Name)</p> <p>Areas of Planned Follow-up: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Return completed Membership Application to Katie Binns</p>



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