

Bylaws

*City On A Hill Church exists to
invest itself in the lives of others,
live the gospel of Jesus Christ,
and follow Him together.*



ARTICLE 1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 MEMBERSHIP

All persons desiring to unite with City On A Hill (COAH) Church shall complete the required membership process, complete the membership application, sign the COAH *Membership Covenant*, and appear before at least two COAH elders or appointed leaders to personally verbalize their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and their agreement with the Statement of Faith, Constitution, Bylaws, Core Values, as well as the privileges and responsibilities of membership at COAH. Candidates coming in by transfer of letter from another church will follow the same procedure. Upon approval by the Elder Team, the new member(s) shall be welcomed into membership at a subsequent regular worship gathering. Members shall be encouraged to renew their commitment to membership at COAH on a regular basis by reviewing and refreshing the COAH Membership Covenant in their own hearts and lives.

1.2 RESIGNATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Any member who wishes to resign membership from COAH shall so notify the Elder Team in writing. All resignations shall be reported to the church at the next annual business meeting.

1.3 DISCIPLINE AND RESTORATION OF MEMBERS

The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin (1 Corinthians 5), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1).

1. Members of COAH Church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the studied opinion of the COAH Elder Team, shall be subject to church discipline. Each potential case of discipline will be weighed on its own merits and dealt with according to the following Scriptural examples:

- When a Christian sins against another Christian (Matthew 18:15–22)
- When someone is a gossip (Proverbs 16:28; Proverbs 20:19; Corinthians 12:20–21)
- When someone who professes faith lives in sin without repentance (1 Corinthians 5:1–13)
- When someone continually blasphemes God (1 Timothy 1:18–20)
- When a Christian sins and is unrepentant (Galatians 6:1–5)
- When someone encourages false doctrine (Acts 20:25–31; 1 Timothy 1:4–7; 1 Timothy 4:1–8)
- When someone is a habitual doctrinal debater (2 Timothy 2:14–26)
- When someone will only listen to false teachers (2 Timothy 4:1–5)
- When someone is a divisive person (Titus 3:10)
- When someone is sincere but deceived (2 Corinthians 11:3–4, 13–15)
- When a teacher is in moral sin or doctrinal error (James 3:1)
- When an elder is in moral sin or doctrinal error (1 Timothy 5:19–21)

2. Members of COAH Church are not guaranteed confidentiality regarding issues of church discipline, and understand that in submitting themselves to the authority of the church, issues of a sensitive or personal nature may become known to others. This includes, but is not limited to, notification of the authorities if a crime has been committed or if a real threat of someone being endangered exists (Romans 13:1–7), as well as other violations of Scripture that may not result in physical danger.
3. Those who are members of the church or who regularly participate in church activities may be dismissed from the church by the agreement of the Elder Team. The dismissal of a church member may be made known to all church members. If the offense is a publicly known matter the Elder Team has the discretion to determine if the member's discipline should be made known to the entire church (1 Corinthians 5:1–5).
4. A person dismissed from COAH Church for disciplinary reasons may be reinstated to full membership if the person's repentance is accepted as genuine by the elders.
5. Each member of COAH, and every other professing Christian who regularly attends or fellowships with this church, agrees that there shall be no appeal to any court because of a discipline process or dismissal. A member who is under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraphs, forfeits and waives the right to resign from COAH Church. Resignation is possible only by a member who is in good standing and who is not under any disciplinary action.
6. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elder Team, a member, non-member regular participant in church activities, or other individual, may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.
7. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elder Team, members who have not met all of the criteria of church membership for a period of six months or longer may be removed as a member of COAH Church and may be asked to no longer attend COAH.

ARTICLE 2 OFFICERS

2.1 MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM

A Ministry Leadership Team shall consist of the Lead Pastor, members of the Elder Team, and other ministry team leaders as designated by the Elder Board. The Ministry Leadership Team will be responsible for overseeing the ministries necessary to meet the spiritual and physical needs of the church. All COAH Ministry Teams will be accountable to the Ministry Leadership Team.

2.2 LEAD PASTOR

In the event of vacancy in the office of Lead Pastor, the Elder Team shall be responsible to oversee a search for candidates to fill the position.

Once the elders have selected a candidate, evaluated and approved him according to the elder qualifications of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, he will be presented to the congregation as a candidate for the office of Lead Pastor. No candidate may be presented to the congregation who has not first been closely evaluated and approved by the Elder Team. A suitable process of exposure and evaluation by the congregation will be developed by the Elder Team. At the conclusion of the congregational evaluation, a three-fourths (75%) majority affirmation of the members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose, will be required for approval and appointment of the Lead Pastor candidate.

Notice will be given to all members at least two weeks prior to a meeting to be held for the purpose of voting on a Lead Pastor. It should be understood that a congregational affirmation does not constitute a call from God but gives indication of a desire and willingness to follow the leadership of this man and affirms his role as an elder.

Upon acceptance of his position, the Lead Pastor (and his wife if applicable) shall be added to the active membership of the church.

The Lead Pastor, upon the Lord's leading to another ministry, shall give the Elder Team thirty days notice via a written resignation. Should spiritual conditions arise necessitating consideration of pastoral termination, the principles of 1 Timothy 5:19-20, Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1-2 and any other relevant Scriptures must be exercised, prayerfully and lovingly, by the Elder Team.

2.3 ELDER TEAM

While sharing equally in the blessings of salvation, men and women are given distinctive, complementary roles by God as part of his created order. The primary shepherding and spiritual authority of the local church is to be entrusted to men who meet the standards of godliness and maturity described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

The Elder Team shall consist of, if possible, at least two spiritually qualified male members in addition to the Lead Pastor. Additional staff members or Elders may be added to the Elder Team at the discretion of the existing elders.

The elders are responsible for overseeing the spiritual health of the church body. They are responsible for the protection of the flock from doctrinal and moral impurity, first of all in their own lives, and then in the lives of the members of COAH. They are also to apply the Scriptures pertaining to the development of vision and ministry direction for the various ministry functions of the church. They are to minister the Word of God faithfully, and to devote themselves to an active prayer ministry (Acts 6:4).

God's Word also calls elders to shepherd the flock voluntarily with eagerness (1 Peter 5:1-4). They are thus to minister to the spiritual and emotional needs of believers. They are called upon to do this by way of example in a sacrificial manner if necessary.

All policy, staff, budgeting and ministry plans are ultimately the responsibility of the Elder Team. The Elder Team may appoint individuals or special teams for limited periods of service to complete assigned tasks when the Elder Team determines delegation to be the most appropriate method.

The Elder Team shall approve and accept the proposed annual church budgets and any changes in or additions to such budgets, as well as authorize any expenditure of the funds by the church Treasurer for any budgeted purpose.

The approved annual budget may include a contingency amount available at the Elder's discretion.

2.4 QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS

Elders must be:

- Above reproach – 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7
- A “one-woman man” – 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6
- Temperate, self-controlled – 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6
- Prudent, sensible, and just – 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8
- Respectable – 1 Timothy 3:2
- Hospitable – 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8
- Able to teach – 1 Timothy 3:2
- Not addicted to wine – 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7
- Non-contentious – 1 Timothy 3:3
- Free from the love of money – 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7
- Not a novice – 1 Timothy 3:6
- Has a good reputation with unbelievers – 1 Timothy 3:7
- Not self-willed – Titus 1:7
- Not quick-tempered – Titus 1:7
- Loves what is good – Titus 1:8
- Devout – Titus 1:8
- Holds fast to sound doctrine – Titus 1:9
- Exhorts others to sound doctrine – Titus 1:9
- Refutes those not holding to sound doctrine – Titus 1:9
- A husband, or a man who manages his household well – 1 Timothy 3:4
- One who manages his children well – 1 Timothy 3:4; Eph. 6:4

The demands for elders in the New Testament show the importance of the home. Good service will tender a respected confidence from the congregation.

2.5 SELECTION AND AFFIRMATION OF ELDERS

The process of becoming an elder at COAH involves at least the following steps:

1. The name of any potential elder candidate who senses God's call and meets the biblical qualifications for eldership may be placed before the Elder Team by any member of the congregation.
2. The potential elder candidate must be a member in good standing at COAH Church.
3. At least two elders will interview the man to provide an initial determination of desire, qualifications, calling, as well as a gift mix and personality that will strengthen and compliment the Elder Team.
4. Upon the unanimous agreement of the Elder Team, the man will be announced to the congregation as an elder candidate and will begin a period of training and testing. Training, prior to becoming an elder, will include whatever is deemed necessary to enhance the nominee's understanding of an elder's responsibilities as outlined in Scripture.
5. If after the candidacy, the candidate still believes God is calling him to serve as an elder and upon a unanimous confirmation of the Elder Team, the candidate's name will be formally presented to the congregation as a nominee to the office of elder.
6. Any member of COAH may present concerns in writing to the Elder Team of any nominee's suitability for a period of thirty days following nomination. If any concerns are raised, issues will be evaluated by the Elder Team in light of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
7. Following the thirty-day nomination period, with all concerns resolved, the name of the elder nominee will be considered by the Elder Team.
8. Upon unanimous confirmation of the Elder Team, the nominee shall be presented to the members of COAH for approval at the annual business meeting of the church. The elder nominee must receive at least a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting in order to be affirmed as an official elder of COAH.
9. This process may be discontinued at any point by the candidate, or by unanimous agreement of the Elder Team.

2.6 TERMS OF OFFICE

Once selected and affirmed, an Elder may serve as long as they are willing to do so and are individually reaffirmed every two years by a simple majority vote of "yes" by members present and voting at the COAH annual business meeting. This will be done in a manner so that the entire Elder Team is not up for reaffirmation in the same year. Those voting "no" are required to meet with the Lead Pastor and one other Elder to give a confidential explanation regarding their concerns.

If a vacancy occurs on the Elder Team, the Elder Team can appoint a qualified replacement for the balance of the year until the voting members of COAH can affirm a replacement at the annual meeting of the church.

2.7 CHURCH CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

Annually, the Elder Team shall appoint a Chairman and Vice Chairman from among their number. The function of the Chairman will be to lead the Elder Team meetings and business meetings of the congregation. The Vice Chairman will fill in for the Chairman as requested.

2.8 CHURCH TREASURER

The Treasurer shall be appointed annually by the Leadership Team and affirmed by the Elder Team. The treasurer must meet the qualifications biblically of a deacon or deaconess and is required to serve on the leadership team. He or she must be a member in good standing of COAH Church. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the oversight of all monetary disbursements, and associated record keeping. The Treasurer will also provide financial reports upon request to the Leadership Team or Elder Team.

2.9 FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary shall be appointed annually by the Leadership Team and affirmed by the Elder Team. The Financial Secretary must meet the qualifications biblically of a deacon or deaconess and is required to serve on the leadership team. He or she must be a member in good standing of COAH Church. The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the oversight of all monetary deposits, yearend giving statements, and associated record keeping. The Financial Secretary will also provide financial reports upon request to the Leadership Team or Elder Team.

2.10 OTHER COMPENSATED POSITIONS

In accordance with New Testament principles of leadership, paid ministry staff are not to be selected solely on the basis of performance or professional credentials. Rather, we acknowledge the following criteria for the selection of ministry staff partners:

- A consistent and abiding relationship with the Lord
- A specific commitment to the COAH Church body and leadership
- Gifts, abilities, and credentials that qualify this individual for the ministry responsibilities, as well as a personal style that will strengthen and compliment the ministry staff of COAH.
- Any ministry staff person not called as an Elder will be expected to meet deacon qualifications. Ministry staff partners serve as role models for other believers. Therefore, spiritual qualifications and lifestyle are of the utmost importance.

The Elder Team shall be responsible for the oversight of ministry staff, including staff selection and dismissal, when necessary. Each ministry staff partner will be accountable to one supervisor. The roles and job descriptions for ministry staff

require approval from their immediate supervisor and the Elder Team. Staff salaries shall be affirmed annually by the Elder Team.

Should any person holding a ministry staff position choose to resign, notice shall be given in writing to the Elder Team. Should conditions arise necessitating consideration of termination of a compensated position, the principles of Galatians 6:1-2 should be exercised prayerfully and lovingly by the Elder Team.

ARTICLE 3 MEETINGS

3.1 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The annual business meeting of the church (fiscal year ending December 31) shall be held in February. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be to celebrate God's work in the ministry over the past year, cast vision for the next year of ministry, and conduct any necessary business.

3.2 BUSINESS MEETINGS

The annual and all business meetings shall be conducted by closed agenda. Any member wishing to submit a business item shall submit in writing such items to the Elder Team for approval at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

A business meeting shall be held in November for the purpose of approving the budget. The proposed church budget will be made available to the membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the business meeting.

3.3 SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special business meetings may be called by the Lead Pastor or Elder Team. Such meetings shall be announced to all the church members at least three (3) days prior to the meeting. Such notice shall include the purpose of the special business meeting and only this purpose shall be discussed at the meeting.

ARTICLE 4 QUORUM

Quorum shall be defined as those members present and voting at a business meeting. A quorum for calling a Lead Pastor will be 60% of active members.

ARTICLE 5 AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of a quorum present and voting at any annual or special business meeting of the church, providing notification of the proposed amendment has been made to the membership at least two weeks prior to such meeting. The proposed amendment shall be available in writing. Such announcement shall be made by the Elder Team.