

# THE CONSTITUTION OF THE OVERLAND HILLS CHURCH

Papillion, Nebraska

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## Article I

### Name

The name of this organization shall be the Overland Hills Church of Papillion, Nebraska, whose name is set forth in the Articles of Incorporation, which took place at Papillion, Sarpy County, Nebraska on October 12, 1975, as revised on January 22, 1984.

## Article II

### Purpose and Mission

In obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, the purpose and mission of Overland Hills Church is to lead people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ, and is clearly rooted in the biblical imperatives of the great commandment (Matthew 22:37-40; Mark 12:30-31; Luke 10:27) and the great commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

## Article III

### Denominational Affiliation

This church, remaining as a self-governing body, shall be nationally affiliated with CONVERGE and the local district, CONVERGE HEARTLAND.

## Article IV

### Doctrinal Statement

#### The Word of God

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired, word by word, without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, preserved in its doctrinal purity to the present and that it is the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (Psalms 19:7-10; 119:89; Mark 13:31; Acts 20:32; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:21)

#### The Trinity

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, yet one in nature, equal in every divine Perfection, and that they function distinctly but harmoniously in the work of creation, redemption, and guidance. (Genesis 1:1, 26; John 1:1, 3; Matthew 28:19; John 4:24; Romans 1:19, 20; Ephesians 4:5, 6)

#### Man

We believe man was created in the image of God and in the likeness of God, in innocence and without sin, But in Adam's sin, the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, became spiritually dead and alienated from God, and man, of himself, is incapable of remedying his lost and depraved condition. (Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5, 7, 18-22; 3: 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6, 12, 19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11)

## **God the Father**

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that he hears and answers prayer, and that he saves from sin and spiritual death all those who come to him through Jesus Christ. (Luke 10:21,22; Matthew 23:9; John 3:16; 6:27, 44-46; 1 Timothy 1:1,2; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6)

## **Jesus Christ the Son**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God became fully man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in his virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings, substitutionary death and bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for his people, and personal visible return to earth. (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1; 20:28; Romans 9:5; 8:46; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21-23; John 20:30, 31; Matthew 20:28; Ephesians 1:4; Colossians 1:15-20; Acts 1:11; Romans 5:6-8; 6:9, 10; Hebrews 1:1-4; 7:25; 9:28; 1 Timothy 3:16)

## **The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with the Father and Son and of the same essence and nature, that he convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, bears witness to the truth, is the agent of the new birth, and that he seals and protects, endows with power, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, prepares for ministry and helps the believer, indwells and controls every true child of God from the moment of trusting in Christ as personal Savior. (John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26, 27; John 16:9-14; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; Galatians 5:22-26)

## **Satan**

We believe in the person of Satan. We believe that he is a liar and master deceiver, that he is the accuser of the brethren, opposes all truth, and is destined to eternal judgment in the lake of fire. (Job 1:6-12; Job 2:1-7; Ezekiel 28:12-18; Isaiah 14:12-14; 1 Timothy 3:6; Revelation 12:3-4; Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; John 12:31; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Matthew 12:21-30; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:3-4, 7-8, 10; Revelation 20:1-2, 7-9, 10; John 16:11)

## **Creation**

We accept the Genesis account of creation and believe that all forms of life and matter came by direct creation of God. (Genesis 1, 2; Exodus 20:11)

## **Salvation**

Salvation is the gift of God's grace. It cannot be gained by meritorious works, but is freely bestowed upon all who put their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ at Calvary. All who trust the Savior are forgiven of their sins through the shed blood of Christ and born into the family of God by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit and are called to be agents of salvation. We believe that all the saved, those in whom God has accomplished his transforming work of grace, are kept by his power and are thus secure in Christ forever. It is their privilege to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation. (Genesis 3:15; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21, 36; 5:24; 10:9, 28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18, 29-39; 10:9-10, 13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; Ephesians 1:3-10; 2:8-22; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28, 14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5)

## **Spiritual Gifts**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is active in the world today giving spiritual gifts to all believers, according to his sovereign will. A spiritual gift is a divine enabling to accomplish the spiritual ends the Holy Spirit desires. The gifts are outlined in 1 Corinthians 12-14, Romans 12 and Ephesians 4:10-12. Their primary purpose is for the common good-to build up the body of Christ. They are not signs of spirituality. Spirituality is revealed by the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.

## **The Church**

We believe that the true church, the body of Christ, is a spiritual organism. The church is composed of every person who has trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation being baptized by the Holy Spirit. We believe the local church is a company of believers, who associate for worship, work and fellowship. (Matthew 16:15-19; Acts 1:8, 2:41-42, 47; Ephesians 2:19-22, 3:8-11, 5:19-32; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

## **The Ordinances**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the triune God. We believe that Christian baptism is the outward reenactment of the inward change that took place when the person placed his faith in Jesus Christ-dying to his old life and being raised spiritually to a new life in Christ.

We believe that Christ instituted the Lord's Supper for commemoration of his death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12)

## **Christian Conduct**

We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well being of his fellow man, that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions. He should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ by submitting to Christ as Lord.

## **Religious Liberty**

We believe that every human being is directly responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any church or political authority; that, therefore, church and state must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other. The individual, however, is both member of this local church and citizen of this community, state, and nation. As such, he/she has Christian responsibilities to pray and work for change in both church and state to the end that he/she reflects the glory of the God who created them both and to whom they are both accountable

## **Last Things**

We believe in the bodily, personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgement, the eternal joy of the righteous and the endless suffering of the wicked. (Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:15; 2 Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20:4-6,11-15)

# **Article V**

## **Membership**

Membership is an expression of one's submission to Christ. Membership is to be seen as a privilege and a responsibility.

### 1. Qualifications

This church shall receive as candidates for membership anyone who has:

- a. Trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior and demonstrates the reality of that relationship in both word and lifestyle.
- b. Been baptized by immersion.
- c. Subscribes to the doctrinal statement as outlined in this document.

- d. Expressed commitment to the mission and mission strategy of Overland Hills Church, as reflected in this document and articulated in Elder board policies.

## 2. Responsibilities

Every member of Overland Hills Church is asked to pray for God's grace and power to submit to the following covenant.

By God's grace, having been buried with Christ in baptism and raised together with him to walk in the newness of life, I desire to place myself under the accountability of the body of believers at Overland Hills Church. As a member, relying on the power of God's Spirit, I will:

- a. Work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3).
- b. Care for the members of this church by walking in brotherly love; attending to others' spiritual and physical needs, bearing others' burdens, encouraging, and admonishing others, and praying regularly for them (Romans 12:10; Ephesians 4:28; Galatians 6:1-2).
- c. Not forsake assembling with fellow believers by regularly attending public services and Members Meetings and participating in the activities and ministries of the church (Hebrews 10:25).
- d. Through submission and prayer, support the God-appointed elders who provide oversight and leadership in the local church (Hebrews 13:17).
- e. Cultivate a personal walk with God through prayer and the study and application of God's Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- f. Seek to live carefully in the world by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts and, as a new creation in Christ, faithfully represent Christ and the gospel in both public and private settings (Ephesians 5:1; Titus 2:12).
- g. Seek to work together with fellow members to continue the gospel ministry in this church by participating in its worship, ordinances, and discipline, and by upholding its doctrines (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:42).
- h. Cheerfully and regularly contribute my time, gifts and abilities, and financial resources to this ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout the nations (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 1 Peter 4:10).
- i. Covenant with another gospel-believing church as soon as possible when I move from this place (Hebrews 10:25; 13:17).

## 3. Application and Procedure

- a. Any interested person can express a desire to become a member.
- b. To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the Elders for admission and accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members.
- c. Every candidate for membership shall have completed the membership class as being conducted at that time, and shall have been provided with a copy of this constitution and any other relevant materials.
- d. At least two Elders shall then interview the prospective member to ensure that the candidate meets all qualifications and understands the implications of membership.
- e. Having satisfied themselves that a candidate for membership meets the foregoing requirements, the Elders shall recommend such a person for membership by public notice given to all locally participating members at least two weeks prior to any regular or special meeting of the members.

- f. Should any objection to a candidate be made by any member in good standing, the Elders must investigate this allegation and the candidate will not be presented to the membership for a vote until the matter is cleared.
- g. The candidate shall sign the membership covenant once he or she has been affirmed by membership vote.

#### 4. Privileges

Every member in good standing, eighteen years of age and over, may vote in any and all business matters that are brought before the church. Only members may serve in official capacities of leadership as referenced in Article VI.

A vote of the membership will be required on the following matters. A simple majority vote will be required to pass:

- a. Confirming of Elders
- b. Calling of the Senior Pastor
- c. Acceptance or removal of members
- d. Changes to the Constitution of the Church
- e. Approval of Operating and Capital Budgets
- f. Approval of any single non-budgeted general fund item greater than 5% of the total projected general fund revenue (i.e., giving) and in cumulative not to exceed annually the total of 10% of the general fund revenue.
- g. Acquisition or sale of real estate property
- h. Commitment of indebtedness

Twenty percent (20%) of the membership shall constitute a quorum at any business meeting of this church not otherwise specified in this constitution.

Special business meetings may be called by the Elder board. Notification of such meeting shall be given at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Reason for the meeting shall be indicated in all notification.

#### 5. Corrective Discipline

- a. Overland Hills Church is governed by the scriptures in the discipline of offending members (Matthew 18:15-17; Hebrews 12:10-11; 1 Timothy 1:3-5; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13).
- b. The discipline of members of the congregation shall, when necessary, be exercised by the Elders on behalf of the membership. In every case their motive will be that of seeing the individual fully restored to fellowship with God and the Church body. Forgiveness and restoration will be the desired goals.
- c. Should a member fail to respond to the efforts of the Elders to reconcile his/her lifestyle or doctrinal error in keeping with God's desire, the Elders shall recommend a termination of membership to the rest of the members at a duly called membership meeting. Subject to a membership vote, terminations are defined as follows:
  - i. A termination of membership may be enacted if the person involved consistently refuses to correct his/her known unbiblical belief or behavior. A termination of membership will result in the loss of voting and ministry rights for the person involved until he/she has been restored to active membership through the accepted membership process.

## 6. Transfer or Termination

Any member in good standing may, upon request, receive a letter of recommendation to another evangelical church from the Elders, thus terminating membership with Overland Hills Church.

# Article VI

## Governance

### 1. The Members

- a. Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.
- b. In accord with the expectations enumerated in the Membership Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only members shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders or by an excepting policy established by the elders for certain non-leadership roles. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.
- c. An annual meeting shall be called by the Elders no more than 30 days after the beginning of the new fiscal year. Notification of such meeting shall be given at least two weeks prior to the meeting. A simple majority is required to pass all motions at meetings of the members with the exception of the vote of dissolution as referenced in Article IX.

### 2. The Elders

- a. Duties: The Elders shall serve as the governing board of the church and are responsible for the leadership and spiritual oversight of the church (I Timothy 3:1-10; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 20:28). The Elders shall seek to implement policies and ministry strategies in keeping with the mission and purpose as stated in this document. The Elder board shall have authority to act on all matters of business with the exception of those matters requiring a membership vote as listed in Article V. 4.
- b. Term: An Elder may serve in the office for a maximum of a three-year term. At the end of a three-year term the elder must be nominated and confirmed pursuant to the terms in section (d.) Selection
- c. Qualifications: The office of Elder is open only to male church members in good standing who meet the qualifications of I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- d. Selection: The Elder will be nominated by the present Elders and presented to the members for confirmation of appointment. Time will be given before voting to prepare in choosing wisely. During that time, any member may come to the Elders to express a concern as to why that nominated Elder should not be confirmed. The Elders will investigate all such concerns.
- e. Number: The elders shall be comprised of not less than three men.
- f. Officers: The Elders will select those to fill the positions of officers of the corporation. The offices of chairman, first vice-chairman, and secretary shall be selected from the current Elders. The office of treasurer shall be appointed from the members of the church and shall not be an Elder.

- g. Quorum: A majority of Elders shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and the action of a majority of the Elders present at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be the action of the Elder board.
- h. Dismissal: An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two church members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18: 15–17 and I Timothy 5:17–21. Any of the elders may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any duly-called members' meeting of the church

### 3. The Deacons

The deacons will serve as the administrative directors over major areas of ministry as determined by the Elders (Acts 6:1-7; I Timothy 3:11-13). The deacons will be appointed by and accountable to the Elders through the Senior Pastor. The office of deacon is open to either male or female church members in good standing.

### 4. The Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor shall serve as a vocational Elder, leader and equipper and shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees. The Senior Pastor is a voting member of the Elder board. A Senior Pastor may be called after a search committee is established which is comprised of three existing Elders and four members as appointed by the Elder board. This committee will submit recommendations to the Elders who will interview prospective candidates. The Elders will then bring an approved candidate before the church for consideration.

### 5. The Ministry Staff

All ministry staff shall report through the Senior Pastor to the Elders. In close cooperation with the Senior Pastor, the Elders shall be responsible for the selection and retention of the ministry staff, including staff selection and dismissal, when necessary. Staff salaries shall also be determined by the Elders with recommendation by the Senior Pastor and a Compensation Review Committee made up of the non-staff elders and at least three non-staff church members. This committee will review compensation proposals for staff elders before submitting them to the membership at the Annual Meeting for final budget approval.

## **Article VII**

### **Finances**

The primary source of revenue of this congregation is the voluntary offerings of its members and those led to contribute as God has prospered them. In connection with this, the tithing system is recommended as a basis of proportionate giving on the part of each member of the congregation. Other fund-raising activities require the approval of the Elders.

A financial report will be made available for the membership to observe both ministry income and ministry expenses. An annual financial report will be provided for the members.

The organization shall be carried on without purpose of financial gain for its members and any profits or other gains to the organization will be used in promoting its objectives.

Effective January 1, 2017, the fiscal year of the church shall begin January 1 and continue through and include December 31.

The church shall operate on the basis of the previous year's budget until the new budget is approved.

## **Article VIII**

### **Policies**

It shall be the responsibility of the Elder board to set policies and operational procedures for the ongoing management and administration of the church and its ministries. Policies enacted by the Elders within the confines of this document may include but not be limited to interpretation and implementation of the church's mission and purpose, doctrinal clarification and financial matters.

## **Article IX**

### **Division of Church Property**

1. Division: In case of a physical division of the church membership, the church property shall belong to those members who abide by this constitution.
2. Dissolution: Should conditions arise when for any reason the church work cannot continue, the church property shall be transferred to the local district of the Baptist General Conference.
3. Quorum: The quorum for any business meeting within the provisions of this article shall be at least one-half of the total resident eligible members. Action taken on any item relating to the provisions of this article will require at least a 2/3's majority of the secret ballots cast.

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