

Who Is Mount Hermon Baptist Church

This is the third of three essays discussing the identity of Mount Hermon Baptist Church. Previously we discussed what it means to be a Christian, particularly the Good News of Jesus Christ and our response. Then we considered what it means to be a Baptist. Here we will consider what it means to be a member of Mount Hermon Baptist Church.

If you want to learn what Mount Hermon Baptist Church is, a natural place to start would be our Constitution and Bylaws, which generally lays out the polity of the church. Regarding articles of faith, Mount Hermon Baptist Church has adopted The Baptist Faith and Message (1963), and a careful perusal of this document would be very helpful. Thirdly, our mission statement is laid out in a three-fold image of sprout, grow, and bear fruit. These are all three very reliable sources to understand Mount Hermon, and I will be referring to them below.

If you want to learn who Mount Hermon Baptist Church is, nothing can substitute time spent with members of the church. Here you will find how well we are living according to our ideals written in our documents. As it is said that things are easier said than done, the way we demonstrate our faith says volumes. In the same way, we worship a God who not only spoke of unfailing love but “demonstrated his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). After you finish reading these essays, have conversations with Mount Hermon members, worship with them on Sunday, and work side by side on various projects together. Then you will know Mount Hermon.

Mount Hermon Baptist Church understands herself as both Christian (lesson 1) and Baptist (lesson 2). Furthermore, we have our particularities. We understand ourselves primarily as a rural church, though our context has been changing rapidly in the last few decades. We are a local church, drawing from our neighbors and encouraging others to be a part of a church with which they can spend more than Sundays together. We are a church who strives to be good neighbors with individuals and organizations around us. We also are a church who enthusiastically reaches out beyond our neighborhood. We are a church who sees herself as part of a larger body, a universal body of believers called out from every nation, tribe, language, and people. Our unity within the local church and the universal Church speaks to the good news that God is “reconciling the world to himself in Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:19).

We often introduce Mount Hermon with the slogan of sprout.grow.bearfruit. We seek to see where God is sprouting new life around us and within us, and we want to get on board. We seek to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18), knowing that we are continually in the process of being conformed into his image. We seek to bear fruit by means of the Holy Spirit, the firstfruits of our inheritance, enabling us to live holy lives as citizen of God’s Kingdom here in this world. These three images help to focus us as we seek to be faithful to our calling as Mount Hermon Baptist Church.



mounthermon
Baptist Church



sprout



grow



bearfruit

How is Mount Hermon Baptist Church organized? To answer this question, I would direct you to our Constitution and Bylaws. I will highlight a few main aspects. In addition to the offices of pastor and deacon, we have two important teams: Outreach and Discipleship. Each team is made up of representatives of each Sunday School class, creating a two-way line of communication between the teams and Sunday School classes. The teams help to mobilize the church in their respective foci while the church through Sunday School classes provide energy, ideas, and improvements. For example, the Outreach Team may gather suggestions from Sunday School classes, propose an idea, have it refined by comments from the classes, and then mobilize the church to execute it. This process, we have found, prevents us from delegating the responsibilities of outreach and discipleship to others, and welcomes fresh ideas to reach leadership.

Mount Hermon has two more teams, Children/Youth and Music, that operates in a similar way. Besides these teams, there are committees that deal with the logistics of finances, property, sanctuary, fellowship hall, and personnel matters. All members are encouraged to participate in at least one position and to explore new areas in which to participate. A church body is healthiest when all members are participating together, discovering their gifts and identifying the gifts of those they are working with together.

There is much more to learn about Mount Hermon that only comes in being a part of the community. I hope through the coming months and years that as you become a part of Mount Hermon, we all become a part of one another in this body of Christ.

In Christ,
Pastor Rich Goodier

Steps to Membership

Perhaps you are interested in becoming a member of Mount Hermon Baptist Church. We want to explore this desire with you. Below is a step-by-step process we walk through with everyone interested in membership. The order by which you complete these steps is not principal.

- 1) Come forward during a Sunday worship service and publicly express your interest in becoming a member. Pastor Rich will ask the members in the congregation to affirm your desire with a vocal Amen.
- 2) Fill out a New Member Form. Pastor Rich or a deacon will provide you one.
- 3) Have a conversation with Pastor Rich. Pastor Rich wants to introduce himself and be introduced by every prospective member.
- 4) Have a conversation with a deacon. Each member is assigned a deacon, and the deacon who would be yours will explain the role of the deacon at Mount Hermon.
- 5) If a profession of faith or baptism has not yet occurred, Pastor Rich and your deacon will guide you through this.
- 6) Complete membership class curriculum. This includes three weeks of classes and their assignments.
- 7) Choose a Sunday School Class. This is the primary way by which we are connected to the church in discipleship, outreach, communication, and governing. It is an essential part of Christian growth.

Once all steps are completed effectively, you will receive a certificate of membership, and the church will welcome you as a member. Congratulations! Let us serve together in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.