



PLEASANT
CITY
CHURCH

CONSTITUTION 
COVENANT 
BYLAWS 

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PREAMBLE

In light of the authority of Scripture over the church, we declare and establish this Constitution, Covenant, and Bylaws to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and practice and to govern our church in an orderly, unified manner. These guiding documents, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves, will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other religious organizations.

CONSTITUTION

NAME

The name of this church corporation shall be PLEASANT CITY CHURCH OF SHELBY, NC, located at 1146 County Home Road, Shelby, Cleveland County, North Carolina. It will be further referred to in these bylaws as “the church” or “PCC”.

CORE BELIEFS

The Bible: God Wrote a Book

Psalm 12:6, 119:105, 160; 2 Timothy 1:13, 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21

We believe that the Bible is God’s authoritative, inspired Word and is without error in all its teachings.

The Trinity: God: 3 in 1

Genesis 1:1, 26, 27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2

We believe in One God, Creator, Redeemer, and Lord of the universe, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Father: God is Great, God is Good

Exodus 3:14; Leviticus 11:44-45, 19:2; Numbers 23:19; Psalm 11:4-6; Malachi 3:6; John 3:16, 4:24, 5:26, 14:1; Acts 17:28; Romans 3:3-4

We believe God is great: He is all powerful, all knowing, ever present, unchanging, completely worthy of our trust, and above all, holy. It is in Him that we live, move, and exist. God is good: He is our Father. He is loving, compassionate, and faithful to His people and His promises.

The Son: God Became Man

Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 1:3-4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Timothy 6:14-15; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 4:14-15

We believe that Jesus Christ, God’s Son, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, died a substitutionary death on the Cross, rose bodily from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, as truly God and truly man. He is the only mediator between God and man.

The Holy Spirit: God is Always Present

John 14:16-17, 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 1:13, 5:18

We believe in the necessity of the Holy Spirit in calling sinners to new birth, being the presence of Christ in believer’s lives and for spiritual growth, and guidance in each believer and the church. Every believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit at salvation and is called to remove all obstacles to the influence of the Holy Spirit in their lives, so they will bear fruit to the glory of God.

Man: God’s Image Bearers

Genesis 1:27; Psalms 8:3-6, 139:13-16; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:23

We believe that people are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God’s creation. Therefore, we believe that all human life is sacred in all its varieties and dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We further assert that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female at birth. These two distinct complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience and rebellion towards God called “sin”. This separates us from God and causes many problems in life. Because of our sins, we are spiritually dead.

Eternity: Somewhere Forever

John 3:16, 14:17; Romans 6:23, 8:17-18; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9; Revelation 20:15

We believe that people were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by our sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is Heaven. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

Salvation: God's Only Way

John 1:12, 14:6; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5

We believe that all people are lost and have no hope outside of salvation. We believe that Salvation is God's free gift to us, but we must receive it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith alone through God's grace alone. The life that comes from this gift of salvation is a permanent possession of the one receiving it.

The Family: God's Design for Legacy

Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18-25, 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32, 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33, 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8, 14; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of people related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the exclusive channel for sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, protect, and lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation. Children are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

The Church: God's Design for Community

Acts 2:40-47; Ephesians 4:11-16

We believe that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church which is made up of believers who are called to be members of His body and instruments of His love to others through sharing His Good News of eternal and abundant life, making disciples, and compassionate service to the needs of people. We believe that Jesus Christ will personally and visibly return to receive His church. He will reveal His triumph over evil, suffering and death; fully manifesting His kingdom and establishing a new heaven and a new earth, in which He will be glorified forever.

PURPOSES

Christ instituted the Church, died for it, and has chosen to extend His Kingdom in this world through His Church. The Church is the body of Christ, made up of God's people. Working collectively and corporately, we blend our differences and gifts for the purpose of glorifying God by fulfilling the Great Commandment in Matthew 28:18-20. The Church will be built upon the spiritual foundation established when a people corporately and boldly profess the lordship of Jesus Christ and lift Him up in faith and practice as the Son of the Living God. As a local church body of believers, we exist to help people come to Jesus Christ by discipling and equipping them to love God, connect with others, and reach the world.

Loving God is expressed through personal worship, family worship, and corporate worship. This God-centered reality is actualized through living for Him each day, building our faith by seeking Him in our daily devotional life, leading our families in discipling and teaching in the home, and gathering each week with other believers. We are passionate about presenting Christ through relevant teaching that inspires, challenges, and transforms; believing the Bible speaks to the hearts of those living in the 21st century. We also believe music is one of the greatest avenues to worship the True and Living God. Another expression of our worship is giving to the advancement of His Kingdom. In each of our Worship Gatherings, our desire is to create an environment in which people can truly experience and encounter Jesus.

“Jesus said... ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” Matthew 22:37

Connecting with Others is vital to becoming all God desires us to be. Every person desires a sense of purpose and a place to belong. We as Believers are called by God to become a family that is rooted together in Christ as we “share life” together: we belong, we partner, and we love. We believe this is cultivated through small groups that we call “Connect Groups”. These groups are multi-generational and age-graded from the youngest child to the oldest adult.

“that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ...” Colossians 2:2

Reaching the World involves both ministry and mission. **Ministry** is using our gifts and resources to serve in the Body. As a Church Family with hundreds that attend weekly, we have many needs and it is essential for the health of our church for everyone to have a vibrant ministry in some area. We also believe each member should be involved in **Missions**. God's design for missions is both local where we reach out to our community and neighborhoods, as well as global where we extend our partnerships to the ends of the earth. Involvement may include praying, sending, and/or going. Our church encourages members to be active participants in both ministry and mission through “Reach Groups”.

“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them...” Romans 12:4-6a

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:18-20

CULTURE

*Every company, organization, school, church, and family has its unique way of doing things. That's called culture. Since we are a collection of many people from various places, backgrounds and stories, we believe culture-making is essential for unifying our Church family around a shared vision as we carry the message of Jesus to the world. We exist to **Love God, Connect with Others, and Reach the World** by creating a Culture where...*

01. Jesus is our Lead Story

Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 1:15-18, Hebrews 1:1-4

We believe Jesus is unrivaled in History and Eternity. He is glorious both now and forever and His name is the only name that saves. Our goal is to not just come to church for a production or service, our desire is for people to encounter Jesus. We don't want to be identified by anything other than Jesus.

So no matter what is going on locally, globally, economically, or politically; no matter what our theme is or what current events are in our church's life- Jesus is our lead Story and what we want people to remember during the week once they leave our gathering.

02. Scripture & Prayer are Prime

Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 4:18-19; 2 Timothy 2:15; James 5:16-18

God gives us His Word to bring about the Good News of Jesus and that Good News is not that our sin made us bad people and somehow, we might make ourselves better. The Gospel cries out that our sin has made us dead, and that Jesus is our only hope of ever being made alive. To miss this truth is to miss the purpose of life and the purposes of Christ. Therefore, all we do and say is anchored in this Message of the Gospel.

So, when we gather our ultimate purpose is NOT to endorse the ideas, philosophies, or opinions of men, but to exchange them for the transforming truth of God's Word. The Church's purpose is to preach the Gospel, bring healing to the brokenhearted, preach deliverance to those being held captive by sin, bring recovery to the spiritually blind, and facilitate release to those oppressed by the power of sin, all the while heralding the proclamation that this present moment is the accepted time and date of salvation.

When we pray, we are agreeing with the Holy Spirit of our desperate need for His presence, and we are asking for His transforming power to consume and move in us personally and corporately. Ultimately we believe the purpose of prayer is to align ourselves with His will, His ways, and His Word.

So, when we gather our ultimate purpose is NOT to fill empty time or transitions with empty words or phrases and call it "prayer", but to invite the Holy Spirit to meet the deepest needs of those gathered for the advancement of His Kingdom and the Glory of His Name.

03. Worship is a Lifestyle

Psalms 42:1-2, 63:1-11; Isaiah 1:12-17, 6:1-8; Acts 16:25

Worship is more than a song or lyric- it's more than what we do with our mouths. It's what we do with our hearts, heads, and hands as well. When we gather, the intention of our worship is to sing His praises, celebrate what He is doing (our Host Moments), hear and respond to His Word, and give to His compassions.

However, worship is not just an hour that we gather each week. Worship is a lifestyle in which the songs we sing and the message we hear every Sunday echo throughout the week. Worship is magnifying Jesus everywhere, all the time. It is literally expressing the highest value to God through our lives in response to who He is and His love for us.

04. We > Me

Acts 1:14, 2:1, 2:44-47, 4:32-35; Romans 8:15-17; 1 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:19, 4:1-6; Philippians 2:1-4; Hebrews 10:23-25

A believer is identified by baptism as belonging to the fellowship of the family of God. The Church encourages a unified body of Christ. Members pray for, support, and lift up one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, share the common experience of a personal and intimate relationship with God the Father, through Christ Jesus and are joined together by the Holy Spirit of God.

We want to be organized for maximum impact, yet our Church is more than just an organization you join. It is a family to which you belong. It's not about a building you go to, but the people you connect with. The emphasis is not on membership but on relationship. We don't pay membership dues and then expect a certain return. Instead, we give to our family and are rooted together in Christ as we "Share" Life together: belonging, partnering, and loving as Christ. We have many ministries, but one Local Body. So, no ministry seeks to elevate itself over another. Instead, we use our gifts to build one another up and reach out to others for the Glory of His name.

We believe that as the Body of Christ, we are growing to be a part of something greater than ourselves. The "Me" mentality fragments and dilutes the story of Christ that we are privileged to tell. We believe that **"we" is greater than "me"**. We believe everyone has a role to play and a story to tell. And we don't always have to get credit for everything we do because of the One who sees it all rewards us all.

For us, there is no they ... as in, "I don't know who decided that, but 'they' must not have thought about us when 'they' did." In most organizations, "they" is simply code for the people we don't know, can't see, or don't like. We are just "we"- that's why our first response is to assume the best of those who are leading and attempting to follow God's direction for our Church family. We support. We trust. We unite. We squash gossip and encourage those around us. We don't always get everything right, so when needed we talk to the proper people in the proper ways so that our "we" can become as strong as it can be.

Because Jesus is our lead story, we do not elevate ourselves above Him or one another. The truth is we are nothing apart from Christ, but because we are His, we also don't cheat ourselves and live like we are nobodies. We are humbly confident in who God has made us to be. We believe humility and honor are the path to living out a culture of We > Me. It is God who rewards humility and honors people. Because He has honored us, we honor each other as we are becoming something greater than ourselves.

We believe the practical implications of "We>Me" are best lived and demonstrated through being involved in a small group (Connect Groups). These groups offer us the ability to do life together as we become all God desires us to be as a Church family while creating a culture where "We>Me".

05. We Get to Serve

Mark 12:31; Romans 12:1-21; Ephesians 2:1-1; James 2:26; 1Peter 4:10-11

We believe serving in the local Body of Christ is not optional for those who follow Jesus, because our service is worship when it's done in a way that brings honor to Him. The Church lifts Jesus Christ up as the perfect model for ministry and service and seeks to follow His example in daily service, thus fulfilling the second commandment, which is to "love your neighbor as yourself." The Church must not see itself as the served, but as the servers. The Church exists to serve unselfishly in the name of Jesus, to meet the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of those in the Church, community, and world.

However, when it comes to serving God and people, obligation should NOT be our motivation. We were lost & dead when the love of God came and found us. Now we are alive & free. We don't serve because we have to or "got" to. We serve because we "get" to.

We want to exceed expectations while serving in the power of God's Spirit and with the joy that He gives. We are followers of Jesus, therefore no "ask" is too big and no role is too small. Serving in His Kingdom is not a pain, it's a privilege. We bring our best, we are proactive, and we take initiative.

Because Jesus brings change, we embrace flexibility. We may not be in control of every environment, but we want to inject positivity and life into every situation. We rise above feelings, choose joy, and lead from a source greater than ourselves.

06. Transformation > Tradition

Genesis 1:26-28, 2:19; Exodus 35:33; Proverbs 14:15; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Colossians 3:23
Our church had its beginning in 1949 when believers came together on County Home Road to plant a church. From those early days to the present, we have endeavored to continue to follow the Holy Spirit as He leads. We have been blessed through the years to have leaders and laymen who appreciate our traditions but are not bound by them. We know that as the culture changes around us we are challenged to consider changing ourselves. Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, our methods, creativity, and presentation of the Gospel require us at times to reach beyond our traditions for the greater cause of lives being transformed by a never changing message. Therefore, the greater emphasis of our ministry is not placed on the restrictions of our traditions but on the unlimited possibilities of the transformation that can take place in an individual's life. It is with this value in mind, that we are constantly striving for transformative intentionality.

We are intentional in our words. We believe words matter- with them we create the culture in which we live. That's why we try not to use clichés and do not feel bound by standard terminology. For instance, we call our times together on Sundays, "gatherings" instead of "services" realizing that when we are together it's more like a family "get together". We refer to those leading in worship as "Worship Leaders". They are not a band performing a gig or a choir singing presentations of music. They are leading us to join them in glorifying Christ. Rather than "Sunday School", we believe that "Connect Groups" better convey what we are trying to accomplish- a small group connected to the heart of God, while connecting with one another through, prayer, studying God's Word and sharing life together. We seek to create and shape our culture by using words and phrases that accurately reflect the people we want to be and the things we endeavor to do.

We are intentional in our planning. Each ministry team here at Pleasant City Church takes time to plan and pray as we prepare. We realize that God's Spirit is ultimately directing us. Therefore, our planning intentionally follows the vision He has given. Regular, ordinary, and usual are not on our list of values. We believe creativity and excellence are a big part of the process of engaging the hearts and minds of people. Excellence is defined for us, as "removing distractions so people can see Jesus." From the words spoken from the stage to the smallest audio or lighting transition, we want to be excellent and give our best so that people can focus on Christ. We value creativity because it points people in a culturally relevant way to the Ultimate Creator. Whether we use a video, prop, song, event, or illustration- all are carefully planned and intentionally designed to bring people to Christ.

We are intentional in our environment. Because the beauty of God outshines everything, beauty matters in all we do. When it comes to our environments, we want to reflect this beauty. Intentional design affirms that we are current and helps us usher His unchanging message to a rapidly changing world. That's why we put so much thought and energy into the spaces we invite people into. We are passionate about the physical and emotional safety of our church family during our time together. Therefore, we want to hope for the best and plan for the worst. We desire that people feel welcome and not threatened in our gatherings. We also have created age-appropriate spaces for our ministries. We have carefully crafted a Worship center, Children's center, Student center, and adult center with each generational mindset involved. Before most people hear us, they see us. We want what they see to be inviting, interesting, inspiring, excellent, and compelling.

07. Generosity is Common

Proverbs 11:25; Malachi 3:10; Matthew 6:1-4; 2 Corinthians 9:7

We are the recipients of the greatest gift the world has ever known, the gift of Jesus Christ that brings about life, grace, mercy, and freedom: at no cost to us- yet at the highest cost to Him. Because we have been freely given all of this, our only right response is to freely give. Therefore, giving out of obligation is the wrong response and unbiblical. We want people to understand that we don't "take" the offering, we create an opportunity to "give" an offering.

Giving is a part of our worship. Our response is not to calculate how little we can return to Him, but to realize that we are mere managers of all that He has entrusted us. Generosity is not about our wealth as much as it is about our hearts and our confidence in God.

08. Multiplication > Addition

Matthew 28:16-20, Ephesians 4:11-16, Deuteronomy 6:5-7

When a Church adds a member, they are adding to their family but when that Church discipled a member they are multiplying the Kingdom of God. Discipleship is the process of becoming more like Christ in one's thoughts, feelings, and actions. It is a process which begins at regeneration, continues throughout sanctification, and culminates at the believer's glorification when he stands before Christ face to face. In life, discipleship is the ongoing pursuit of becoming a mature, fruit-bearing part of the body of Christ. A disciple counts the costs, acknowledges the sacrifice, and abandons all else for the sake of the high and holy calling of God placed in his life at new birth (Luke 14:25-33). The Church exists to equip believers in spiritual maturity (Ephesians 4:12b-13). The result of true discipleship is when there is multiplication. When people are transformed by the gospel, then are discipled, then those who are discipled lead others to Christ--that is multiplication.

We desire to do more than just invite others to church so a pastor can share Christ with them. It is our call, command, and privilege to carry the name of Christ to our workplaces, our schools, our homes, and our communities. Making disciples is not a calling for a few but a command to all.

We also believe that discipleship does not originate in the church. Discipleship begins in the home. God created the family to be the primary center for discipleship--not the children's ministry, the student ministry, or the church in general. In the context of discipleship, the Church and its ministries are in place to equip and enhance discipleship in the home. When a family has a child, they are adding to their family but when a family discipled a child they are multiplying the Kingdom of God.

09. We are Kingdom Focused

Isaiah 58:6-7; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; James 1:27

We realize that every Bible-believing church doesn't look and feel the same, nor should it. We should celebrate not only our own accomplishments but also the accomplishments of other Bible-believing churches in our community. Competition distracts and divides in a city where a hundred Gospel-centered churches could emerge tomorrow and there still would be a need for more. So, our desire is not to compete with these churches, but rather to complete one another as we share in this united vision to reach the world for the sake of His Kingdom.

We also believe in supporting Kingdom-focused causes like meeting the needs of the poor, the victimized, the unborn, the widow, the orphan, and the marginalized of society.

We love our Church family here at Pleasant City Church, but we also understand that we are just a small part of the Universal Church Jesus died for and is building in every nation of the earth and across our city. And because His Church will prevail, we will join Jesus in planting and building His Church among all people. As a church, we take Jesus' command seriously to be on mission. Each of the Gospels and the Book of Acts expresses the Great Commission of Christ (*Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-49;*

John 20:21; Acts 1:8). Further, they mandate to all Christians, for all times, the urgency of promoting the person and message of Jesus Christ (*Matthew 9:35-38; 2 Corinthians 5:7*). Thus our mission is to broadcast the Good News of Jesus Christ to all people, all over the world. As the Lord gives direction, the Church shall seek to reach out with the Word of God to the lost. We shall also support and establish churches both at home and abroad.

Therefore, we not only pray and give, but strategically partner with those the Holy Spirit has sovereignly led us to. We believe in empowering our church family through prayer, financial support, and “hands on training” as we send them on mission. As a church, we are not just focused on the local mission and vision of God, but we join Him in His global vision to reach the world.

COVENANT

Throughout the Old Testament and New Testament, there is a clearly defined community of God. God creates a covenant relationship with His people. This covenant was first established with the people of Israel through Abraham, and then God established a new covenant with His people, the Church, through Jesus Christ. The Christian life is fundamentally relational in nature. Relationships require commitment to flourish. Our church covenant is the commitment we make to one another as a church. As members of God's covenant family at Pleasant City Church, we commit to Christ and to each other, as well as God's vision for our Church and our lives. Therefore:

We covenant to **Love God** both personally and corporately...

- by professing Christ as our Lord and Savior, (*Romans 10:9-11*)
- by surrendering to the Holy Spirit's leadings in our lives, (*Galatians 5:16-18*)
- by submitting to the authority of God's Word through regular study personally, corporately, and with our families. (*2 Timothy 3:16-17*)
- by declaring publicly our faith through Biblical believer's baptism, (*Acts 2:38, 8:36-38*)
- by striving to live a godly life that models and pleases Christ, (*Philippians 2:12-15*)
- by affirming the Core Beliefs Biblically outlined by our Church, (*pages 4-5*)

We covenant to **Connect with Others** within our Church...

- by loving one another as Christ loves us, (*Ephesians 5:1-2*)
- by seeking unity in our church through abstaining from gossip, slander, bitterness, unforgiveness or anything that causes divisiveness, (*Ephesians 4:29-32*)
- by rejoicing with those that rejoice and by mourning with those that mourn, (*Romans 12:15*)
- by restoring gently those that have fallen into sin, (*Galatians 6:1-2*)
- by praying for one another, (*James 5:13-16*)
- by following church leadership, (*Hebrews 13:17*)
- by participating faithfully in worship gatherings and Connect Groups to share life and grow in faith together. (*Acts 2:42-47*)

We covenant to **Reach the World** together with our Church...

- by fulfilling the Great Commandment to make disciples, (*Matthew 28:18-20*)
- by making the Gospel our priority through selfless good works and evangelism, (*Romans 1:16-17*)
- by giving generously to the work of our Church, (*2 Corinthians 9:7*)
- by using our spiritual gifts as a means of ministry to edify and serve our church, (*1 Peter 4:10*)
- by engaging both the local and global vision of Jesus through going ourselves or sending others on mission, (*Acts 1:8*)
- by committing to be an active member of a local Bible-believing church wherever we live. (*Hebrews 10:25*)

BYLAWS

AFFILIATIONS

The government of the church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the church shall constitute the membership.

All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church unless otherwise specified by church action.

The church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist churches. Insofar as practical and desirable, the church will cooperate with and support the Greater Cleveland County Baptist Association, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

MEMBERSHIP

The New Testament presents a picture of definable groups of people who, once committed to the Lord, identified themselves with and committed themselves to a particular local body of believers. (*Acts 2:42-46, 11:26; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Philippians 1:1*) Membership in Pleasant City Church is open to any person who desires to be committed to the church as a local body of believers.

Membership Qualifications

Membership in the Church shall consist of persons who have met all the qualifications for membership:

- a. A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation
- b. Believer's baptism as a testimony of salvation
 - Baptism is **the immersion** of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his/her faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership. *Matthew 3:13-17, 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; Acts 2:41-42, 8:35-39; 16:30-33; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12*
- c. Completion of our church's new member classes
 - New member classes are required for member candidates who are 15 or older
 - Anyone under 15 years old who has fulfilled the first two listed qualifications of membership will be considered a candidate for membership until they can attend the new member classes once they are close to turning the appropriate age of 15.
- d. A commitment to abide by our Church Covenant
- e. Currently attending a PCC Connect Group or serving in a PCC ministry

*Membership and Baptism Exceptions: We recognize that there are at times, special extenuating circumstances that may prohibit a person from certain portions of the membership qualifications. On the recommendation of the church leadership, certain qualifications for membership may be excused in cases of physical inability, sickness, severe hardship, mission deployment, military service, or those providentially hindered.

Membership Privileges

Active Membership is not a prerequisite for involvement in every ministry of the church, but is required for:

- Holding church leadership positions such as Pastors, Deacons, or adult Connect Leaders
- Presenting before the Missions Council and receiving mission funds
 - o This excludes anyone under the age of 15 who is actively attending our church.
- Participating in congregational decision making and voting.
 - o Voting by proxy is prohibited; members must be physically present to vote.
- Accessing church facilities as outlined in the church policy handbook
- Obtaining access to the principal records of the church including minutes of its governing body and principal financial reports.
 - o This excludes the right to review individual donor records, personnel files, or individual employee salaries.

*Above all, members receive the Biblically distinct spiritual benefit of joining a local people of God that functions as a faith family where love, care, accountability, mercy, and truth harmoniously exist. Members have covenanted together to belong to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ that make up our local church. *For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.* -Romans 12:4-5

Inactive Membership Status

A member is determined inactive if he has not attended worship gatherings or been a part of a Connect Group for one year. The pastoral staff is responsible for making this determination. An inactive member does not lose membership, only the privileges of membership.

If a member is absent one year from the church and fails to support the work of the church, the Church Leadership will contact the member. Due consideration will always be given to those that qualify for the "Membership Exceptions" (page 13). Those members who are inactive for one year will be placed on an inactive list and will automatically forfeit their membership privileges.

Those inactive members who will show themselves active by abiding by the Membership Qualifications as given in this document will be reinstated to active membership status by recommendation of the Church Leadership.

Termination of Membership

Membership in the church may be terminated in any of the following ways:

A. By Death:

The name of any member shall be removed from the church membership rolls upon the death of that member.

B. By Request:

A letter of transfer/recommendation to unite with another church may be issued upon request of the church which the member is planning to join.

C. By Erasure:

Upon receipt of reliable information that a member has joined another church, the name of the person shall be removed from the membership rolls of the church.

D. For Cause:

The Church, after due notice and opportunity for hearing, and every effort to make such action unnecessary, may upon majority vote by Church Leadership, terminate the membership of persons whose conduct is of such nature that it hinders the work of the church and Christ's Kingdom.

Discipline and Restoration

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The lead pastor, other members of the pastoral staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist that would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, Church Leadership will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17. Thereafter the Church Leadership acting on behalf of the church may terminate membership of a member for cause.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation, according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:6-8.

MEETINGS

Worship Gatherings

The church shall hold regular gatherings of worship on Sundays. These gatherings are profitable for corporate worship, Biblical teaching and training, and outreach to visitors of the church.

Connect Groups

The church shall offer throughout the week, opportunities for people to attend a Connect Group. A Connect Group is an intentional small gathering of church attenders that has direct oversight from the church leadership. The purpose of these groups is to learn and fellowship together to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Business Meetings

Business meetings may be called by the Lead Pastor or Chairman of the Deacons at such time as they may be needed, with reasonable notice of the time and place of meeting given to the congregation. The purpose for which a meeting is being called will be stated along with the notice of the meeting.

Notice Requirements for Business Meetings

Notice shall be given to members no less than two weeks prior to a business meeting. The notification shall be given in any of the following manners which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method of calling a meeting:

- A. Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at a Sunday morning gathering.
- B. Announcement of the meeting through various appropriate forms of church communication.
- C. Oral announcement to the congregation at a Sunday morning gathering.
- D. A Q&A meeting preceding the business meeting within the two-week notice.

Quorum

Those members present and voting at a business meeting that has been duly noticed and called shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Majority Percentage

A minimum affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present is required for all votes.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

I. General

The leadership structure of Pleasant City Church is based upon the nature of the church as revealed in Scripture, as well as the necessary legal requirements for a recognized religious organization. The leadership structure of the Church is intentionally designed to accommodate simplicity, growth, unity, and Biblical teaching. The leadership structure of this church involves the pastoral staff and deacons.

II. Pastors

On the Pastoral Role - Jesus often described the church as a “flock”. Because the church is a flock, it is cared for and led by shepherds. (Matthew 25:22, 26:31; John 10:1-30, 21:16-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3)

Christ alone is the Head of the Church. Yet for the purpose of order, and in accordance with the Word of God, certain individuals have been charged with leadership according to their spiritual giftedness. Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same church leader(s): “poimen” (pastor), “presbuteros” (elder), and “episcopos” (bishop). These terms are used interchangeably and reflect the different functions of the same office. The New Testament Church had a plurality of pastors in each local church setting. The primary Shepherd is Jesus, and then by extension the under-shepherds, or pastors. (Acts 20:17-18; Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:11-13; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:57-7; 1 Peter 5:1-2)

It is impossible for one individual or group of individuals to provide primary spiritual care for a growing church. To burden the Pastors with functions unrelated to their primary areas of responsibility is to rob them of study time and devotion to the Word and force them to function in areas other than their primary calling and responsibility. This can lead to watered down, inaccurate teaching and leadership, which in turn weakens the body. Therefore, the Pastors are to be liberated and equipped to devote themselves to the teaching of the Word of God and the leadership of the church. (Exodus 18; Acts 6; Romans 12:6-7; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Thessalonians 2:4-5, 10-12; 1 Timothy 1:13, 2:15; Titus 1:7; James 2:22)

Requirements for Pastoral Offices - The requirements for these offices are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9. Once appointed to office, these men shall join and become members of the Church, if they are not already members.

On Pastoral Leadership - Understanding that the Word of God calls for pastors to lead the church, many decisions and responsibilities regarding the life and direction of the Church are left to their spiritual oversight. The pastors are the administrators of the Church, equipping and overseeing the ministries of the Church. In response to the Biblical patterns of leadership, members are taught in Scripture to lovingly support their leaders and to submit to their leadership in accordance with God’s Word. The shepherding of this Church is led by the Lead Pastor and assisted by Pastors, Deacons, and Connect leaders. (Exodus 18:17-18; John 21:16-17; Acts 11:30, 14:23, 20:17, 28; 1 Corinthians 16:16, Ephesians 4:11-12; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5-7; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-2)

The Lead Pastor - The Lead Pastor has ultimate responsibility for the oversight of the Church body and the shepherding of its members. The Lead Pastor is to actively set goals for the congregation according to the will of God, obtain goal ownership from the people, and encourage each church member to be properly motivated and equipped to do his or her part in accomplishing the mission of the church. The calling and dismissal of pastoral staff, church leaders, and employees is under the direction of the Lead Pastor and the Deacons. The supervision of pastoral staff, church leaders, and employees is under the direction of the Lead Pastor. (Acts 14:23, 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

The Lead Pastor shall continue to serve as Lead Pastor until the relationship is ended by death, resignation, or termination by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of those present and voting at a special business meeting of the church called for such purposes. Upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the role of Lead Pastor, the Deacons shall initiate procedures leading to the adoption by the Church of a process to select a new Lead Pastor

III. Deacons

The second ministerial role mentioned in the Word of God is the role of the deacon, which in the New Testament was a servant-leader charged with the function of giving care to those in need. These servant-leaders liberated the apostles from direct oversight of pastoral ministries in order that they might be free to teach and to lead. Deacons are given the freedom and authority to lead in their area of ministry under the supervision and leadership of the pastoral staff. Deacons are active members that have fully committed to the vision and membership qualifications of our church and are living above reproach in their personal lives.

Deacons are elected annually by the church body. The congregation will be given an opportunity to submit names of those they feel have proven themselves to have scriptural qualifications according to I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. These nominations will be reviewed by the Pastoral staff and Deacons, and a slate of candidates will be selected, interviewed, and presented to the church. Each candidate will be given an opportunity to present his testimony to the congregation. A business meeting will be scheduled to take place after all testimonies have been given for the purpose of electing deacons.

Deacons shall serve on a rotating basis. Each year the term of office for one third of the deacons shall expire, and an election shall be held to fill vacancies and to add to the deacons such numbers as the church size warrants. After serving a term of three years, a deacon shall be eligible for reelection only after the lapse of at least one year.

The Chairman of the Deacons shall serve as the official representative of the church in terms of business contracts and other legal matters. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, the Deacon Chairman, with the Corporate Secretary attesting, may sign to borrow money and incur indebtedness on behalf of the Church and cause to be executed and delivered for the Church's purposes and in the Church's name, promissory notes and other evidences of debt and securities.

The Deacons shall appoint and direct necessary sub-committees to help assist in executing the business of the church. These committees are but not limited to: Finance Committee, Personnel Committee, Construction Committee, and Missions Council.

SUPPORT STAFF

Support staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The church personnel committee shall make recommendations to the Pastoral Staff and Deacons regarding employment, hours, salaries, and termination of services of non-pastoral staff members. Such recommendations shall be coordinated with the supervising staff member.

CORPORATE OFFICERS

Corporate Officers shall include the executive, moderator, secretary, and financial officer. The Corporate Officers shall serve whenever required by law or practice as the Officers of the Corporation, having however, only such express powers as are granted by the congregation, and having no power absent such express authorization to bind the Corporation in any manner or act for it.

I. Executive

The lead pastor serves as the Executive of the Church.

II. Moderator

The Chairman of the Deacons serves as Moderator of the Church. He shall preside at all business meetings of the Church consistent with the guidelines for a presiding officer in the latest published edition of Robert's Rules of Order. In the absence of or at the moderators request, his appointed substitute, someone other than pastoral staff, shall carry out the moderator's duties.

III. Secretary

The secretary is appointed by the deacons and shall be responsible for maintaining an accurate roll of the Church membership with dates of admission and dismissal and other pertinent information and issuing letters of dismissal as authorized by the pastors and these bylaws. The secretary shall be responsible for maintaining accurate and complete minutes of all business meetings of the Church, keeping record of all official documents of the Church and serving notice of all meetings as indicated in these bylaws.

IV. Financial Officer

The financial officer is appointed by the deacons. It shall be the duty of the Financial Officer to receive and pay out, upon proper internal procedure and control as determined by the Board of Directors, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Upon adoption of these Bylaws, the persons serving as active Deacons shall, meeting and acting together, constitute the Board of Directors of Pleasant City Church. The Board of Directors shall have the duties and responsibilities attendant to Directors, subject to the limitations outlined in these Bylaws.

They shall execute all contracts, deeds, mortgages or other instruments when authorized to do so by the church at business meetings. The person serving as Chairman of the Deacons shall be the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

CHURCH FINANCES

I. Annual Budget

The Church shall have an annual budget, voted on by the Church, to serve as the normative guide for the financial operation of the Church. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for receiving inputs from the Church staff and leadership regarding annual financial requirements and preparing the annual budget according to the process described in Section II.

II. Development of Annual Budget

The annual Church budget shall be established through the following process:

- A. All individuals involved in ministry leadership submit their ministry plans and expected financial needs to the Pastoral staff.
- B. The lead pastor, other pastoral staff, and support staff submit their inputs and financial needs to the Finance Committee according to their areas of responsibility.
- C. The Finance Committee utilizes the submissions noted above along with the Finance Committee's assessment of overall Church financial requirements to prepare the annual budget.
- D. The Finance Committee submits the proposed budget to the Deacons for review, approval and for final amendments if necessary.
- E. The final proposed budget is made available to the Church membership at least two weeks prior to voting on the budget.
- F. Prior to voting on the budget, a Q&A is made available to allow any Church member to obtain explanation and discussion concerning the budget. The Finance Committee can also answer questions on an informal basis at any time.
- G. The budget is submitted to the Church at a business meeting called for the purpose of voting on the budget and a vote will be taken without discussion.

III. Budget Management

The budget is to be managed and periodically reviewed by the Pastoral staff and Deacons according to their area of responsibility. Minor modifications within the budget can be made by the Pastoral staff and Deacons if extenuating circumstances in the life of the Church mandate such a change. The budget should, however, be the normative guide for the financial operation of the Church.

IV. Audit

The Finance Committee shall conduct or arrange for an audit as deemed appropriate.

V. Fiscal Year

The Church's fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

VI. Accounting Procedures

Internal controls are maintained to provide a high level of integrity concerning accounting procedures and are monitored by the deacons.

ORDINATION

Request for ordination to the ministry shall come jointly from the candidate for ordination and from a congregation of “like faith and practice” which will affirm the sense of call in the life of the candidate to a particular position of service. Pleasant City Church may affirm the call if it so deems.

The procedure shall be as follows:

- A. The candidate for ordination shall make his request for ordination to the Pastors upon giving his testimony of salvation and his call to ministry.
- B. If affirmed, the pastors will make a recommendation to the deacons.
- C. If affirmed, the pastors and deacons will interview the candidate.
- D. If affirmed, the pastors and deacons will make a recommendation to the church for the candidate’s ordination. The recommendation will be made at a gathering where the candidate will give their testimony of salvation and call to ministry.
- E. Two weeks later, there will be a public vote by the church to affirm or not affirm the calling of the candidate. If affirmed by the church, at that time church leaders will pray over the candidate and a certificate of ordination will be given to the candidate.

CHURCH ORDINANCES

I. Baptism

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship gathering, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ.

- A. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- B. A pastor, or whomever the church authorizes, shall administer baptism.
- C. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship gathering of the church.
- D. A person who professes Christ and is not baptized shall be counseled by a pastor. If negative interest is evidenced on the part of the candidate, he/she shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

II. The Lord’s Supper

The Lord’s Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.

A pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord’s Supper, the deacons being responsible for the physical preparations. All who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and have examined themselves according to Scripture (1 Corinthians 11:27-29) are invited to participate.

AMENDMENTS

All requests for amendments to these Bylaws must be in writing and shall be submitted to the Church Leadership for study and consideration. The Church Leadership shall issue a timely response to the proposed amendment, alteration, or revision to these Bylaws. It is up to the Church Leadership whether to propose such amendment to the Church for adoption.

Suppose the decision is made to present the proposed amendment to the Church. In that case, copies of such amendment will be made available to those church members at the meeting which had been called for this purpose according to these Bylaws. Vote on the proposed amendment will be taken at a meeting called for that purpose to be held no sooner than two weeks after the first meeting.

An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present will be required for passage of the amendment.

A copy of these Bylaws shall, at all times, be kept in the Church Office. All amendments to or revisions thereof shall, after passage by the Church, be prepared by the Secretary, posted in the official copy of the Bylaws, and made available upon request.

POLICIES MANUAL

The Church shall assure the creation and maintenance of a Policies Manual which shall contain all currently controlling policies and procedures governing any aspect of the church's affairs, including committee task descriptions, job descriptions, policies regarding the handling of funds, use of facilities, and employment policies and practices.

A current copy of the Policies Manual shall, at all times, be maintained and available at the church office.