

# By-Laws



**Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church  
1015 Pleasant Ridge Road  
DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32435**

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# **By-Laws of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church**

## **PREAMBLE**

Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church is a sovereign Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this Church. Therefore, these By-Laws are adopted to facilitate and clarify the way in which this Church carries out its operations and missions.

## **DEFINITIONS**

For clarification

- A. The Church year begins September 1.
- B. The Fiscal year begins January 1.
- C. The annual business meeting will be held at the third quarter Business Meeting.

## **ARTICLE I CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

### **SECTION 1. GENERAL**

- A. The membership of this Church shall consist of all persons who have met the requirements for membership as defined in Article 1, Section 2.A. and have been approved by the congregation, and shall be listed on the membership roll.

### **SECTION 2. CANDIDACY**

- A. Any person may offer himself/herself as a candidate for membership in this Church by one of the following means:
  1. Profession of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior followed by obedience through Scriptural Baptism (Immersion), unless physically incapable of being immersed;
  2. Promise of a letter from another Baptist Church of like faith and practice;
  3. Statement of prior conversion experience and Scriptural Baptism (Immersion);
  4. Scriptural Baptism (Immersion) if coming from another denomination that does not practice immersion unless physically incapable of being immersed;
  5. Restoration as provided in Article 1, Section 7.
- B. Upon presenting one's self to the church for candidacy, all candidates for membership shall consult with a pastor or assigned deacon regarding the requirements and responsibilities of

church membership. All candidates shall receive a copy of the Membership Covenant and Church Covenant for review and agreement.

1. Upon consultation with a pastor or assigned deacon and upon meeting all requirements for membership, candidates for membership will be presented to the Church Body, who may approve their membership by voice vote during any regular service. A Pastor shall counsel all baptismal candidates prior to their Baptism.
2. It is the conviction of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church that church membership is a privilege granted not by the local church but rather by the Holy Spirit and then affirmed by the local church. (Ref. Acts 2:47, “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”) Thus it is the responsibility of the local church not to serve as gatekeepers but rather to trust the work of the Holy Spirit and to nurture and disciple those whom God adds to His church and leads to our body.
3. Any concerns referencing a candidate for membership should be referred to a Pastor and or a Deacon in confidence as soon as possible.

C. All new members are encouraged to take a New Members Class.

### **SECTION 3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS**

In order to be a responsible and active member of this Church in good standing, members should

- A. Be in basic agreement with this Church’s statement of faith, mission, and purpose;
- B. Discover, develop, and deploy their spiritual gifts in the ministries of the Church;
- C. Be diligent to live according to the statements of the Church Covenant;
- D. Be faithful in attendance to Church services and activities;
- E. Become a student of the Word of God and of prayer;
- F. Make a commitment to personal evangelism and discipleship;
- G. Participate in scriptural stewardship of their time and talents;
- H. Support the work of the Church through their faithful tithes and offerings;
- I. Support, honor, and pray for the Church staff, leadership, and Body.

### **SECTION 4. VOTING RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS**

- A. Only active members of the Church who are at least eighteen (18) years of age and older are entitled to vote on matters submitted to the Church in meeting.
- B. Members must be present to vote. Proxy and/or absentee voting are not permitted.
- C. Any questions of eligibility will be referred to the Pastor(s) and Deacon Body.

## **SECTION 5. INACTIVE MEMBERS**

- A. Inactive members are defined as members whose predominant attendance is at another Church or members who have not attended a regular Church worship service in three months, with exception given to those members who are unable to attend worship due to health, military service, mission assignment, or having left the area to further their education with plans on returning to the Church.
- B. If a member becomes inactive, effort will be made by the Pastors and the Deacons to encourage that member to become active once again.
- C. If an inactive member remains inactive for a period of one (1) year, he or she shall be transferred to the Inactive Roll. Members on the Inactive Roll shall be reported as such should a request for a letter of transfer be received. Until such time as membership is terminated in accordance with Article I, Section 6 of this document, members on the Inactive Roll shall remain members of the church but shall be ineligible to vote on matters of church business until they resume active status and will be removed from Deacon Family Ministry listing..
- D. Upon resuming regular worship attendance, a member on the Inactive Roll may be restored to active status upon the member's request and at the recommendation of the Pastor or Deacon Body by a majority vote of the Church Body at any regular business meeting or a special business meeting called for that purpose.

## **SECTION 6. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Membership will be terminated in one of the following ways:
  - 1. Death;
  - 2. Letter of transfer to another Baptist Church of like faith and practice;
    - a. If member is under disciplinary actions, he or she will not be granted a letter of transfer.
  - 3. Statement of good standing issued upon request to an evangelical Christian congregation of non-like faith and practice;
    - a. If member is under disciplinary actions, he or she will not be granted a statement of good standing.
    - b. Statements of good standing will not be issued to organizations that are not explicitly evangelical in nature. Questions regarding the nature of a requesting organization shall be referred to the Pastor(s) and Deacon Body.

4. Disciplinary action of this Church as provided in Article 1, Section 7;
5. Personal written request for name to be removed from Church membership;

### **SECTION 7. DISCIPLINE**

- A. In the event that immorality, heresy, or some serious condition should develop which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the Church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the Pastor(s) and Deacons to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18:15-35, I Corinthians 5:1-13, II Corinthians 2:1-11.
- B. It shall be the basic purpose of this Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The Pastor(s), Deacons, or other members are available for counsel and guidance. Reconciliation rather than punishment should be the guideline that governs the attitude of one member toward another.
- C. A spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance shall pervade all such proceedings. If it is determined that the welfare of the Church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the Church may take this action by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at a special meeting by secret ballot called for this purpose. The Church Body must have prior notification of the meeting place and time of this special called meeting. The Church may then proceed to declare the offender to be no longer a member of the Church.
- D. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any condition which has made it necessary for the Church to exclude him/her may upon his/her request, and upon evidence of his/her repentance and reformation, be restored to membership by the recommendation of the Pastor(s) and Deacon Body and an affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of the Church Body present and voting at a regular meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **OFFICERS**

#### **SECTION 1. GENERAL**

- A. The Scriptural officers of a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ are Pastors and Deacons (Acts 13:2-3; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4). Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church affirms the Scriptural authority of these offices and of the men duly ordained to them.
- B. Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church additionally elects and appoints other persons from within its membership to serve as officers necessary for our operation as an incorporated entity within our civil government (cf. Rom. 13:1-7), namely a treasurer, a clerk, and trustees.
- C. All officers of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church shall be active members in good standing as described in Article I, Section 3.

#### **SECTION 2. THE PASTOR**

- A. The Pastor shall be a man of Baptist faith and convictions who is duly licensed as a minister of the Gospel. Furthermore, he shall either be ordained to the Gospel Ministry or else be eligible for ordination by meeting the Scriptural qualifications for elders (pastors) found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1: 5-9. The Pastor shall be committed to the Lord Jesus Christ, the local Church, and his own spiritual growth. His character shall be evident. He shall have a heart that deeply desires to serve the Lord. His motivation for serving shall be the glory of God and God's calling upon his life to serve Jesus and the Church. He shall have a daily discipline to spend time alone with the Lord in Bible study and prayer. He shall have a high standard of personal holiness. He shall be faithful to tithe as a faithful member of the Church and to give to special offerings when he feels the Spirit leads. He shall strive to have faithful attendance to all Church services and special Church related events. His life must be above reproach. He shall be a man who is teachable and approachable, one who listens well before speaking, and one who is loyal to Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church and the Church Staff. He will fulfill the Biblical requirements set by God for the position of Pastor (1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28).
- B. The Pastor serves as both an officer of the church and as a member of the staff. A complete listing of his duties and the position job description including beginning compensation shall be developed and maintained by the Personnel Committee and recorded in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.

- C. In the event of death, resignation, removal, or other emergencies affecting the pastor's ability to serve, the vacancy in the pastoral office shall be addressed in accordance with the procedure outlined in Section 1 of the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.
1. Until such time as a new pastor is called to serve, the church will elect and call an Interim Pastor to provide leadership and prepare the church for its next pastor. The Interim Pastor shall be a man of Baptist faith and convictions who is duly licensed and ordained as a minister of the Gospel. The Deacons shall be charged with the task of nominating a prospective Interim Pastor and negotiating the terms and scope of his service including any compensation. The election of an Interim Pastor shall be at a special business meeting convened for that purpose after the Church has been given a two (2) week notice. The election shall be by secret ballot with an affirmative vote of 75% (3/4) of the active members present and voting. If the Interim Pastor resigns before a new pastor is called to serve, he must work out a minimum of two (2) weeks' notice.
  2. To ensure continuity of leadership, until an Interim Pastor is elected or else a new Pastor is called to serve, the longest tenured Associate Pastor shall fulfill the pastoral duties within the church. In the event that there is no Associate Pastor, then the Deacon Body shall assume oversight of the administrative affairs of the church and schedule preachers to supply the pulpit, and the Chairman of the Deacons or his designee from the Deacon Body shall act as moderator for church business meetings.
- D. The election of a new Pastor shall be at a special business meeting convened for that purpose after the Church has been given a two (2) week notice. The election shall be by secret ballot with an affirmative vote of 75% (3/4) of the active members present and voting necessary to extend a call. Once elected, the pastor may serve an unlimited tenure of office, to be terminated at his pleasure or the pleasure of the Church. If the Pastor resigns, he must work out a minimum of two (2) weeks' notice.
- E. If circumstances warrant, such as immorality, heresy, preaching false doctrines, or other serious conditions, the Church may remove a Pastor from his office. Such action may be taken upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Deacon Body, who may also immediately suspend the Pastor from all duties, if warranted. A special business meeting shall be convened for this purpose after a notice of two (2) weeks is given to the Church. The Chairman of the Deacons shall act as moderator, and the vote shall be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of a simple majority of the active members present and voting shall



be necessary to remove the Pastor from his office. If the membership votes to remove the Pastor, the termination shall be effective immediately. The Personnel Committee will then make accommodations for the Pastor to vacate church premises in a timely manner that suits both parties. The Church Body, after the vote to remove the Pastor, will determine what, if any, severance package will be given.

### **SECTION 3. ASSOCIATE PASTOR(S)**

- A. An Associate Pastor shall be a man of Baptist faith and convictions who is duly licensed as a minister of the Gospel. Furthermore, he shall either be ordained to the Gospel Ministry or else be eligible for ordination by meeting the Scriptural qualifications for elders (pastors) found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1: 5-9. An Associate Pastor shall be committed to the Lord Jesus Christ, the local Church, and his own spiritual growth. His character shall be evident. He shall have a heart that deeply desires to serve the Lord. His motivation for serving shall be the glory of God and God's calling upon his life to serve Jesus and the Church. He shall have a daily discipline to spend time alone with the Lord in Bible study and prayer. He shall have a high standard of personal holiness. He shall be faithful to tithe as a faithful member of the Church and to give to special offerings when he feels the Spirit leads. He shall strive to have faithful attendance to all Church services and special Church related events. His life must be above reproach. He shall be a man who is teachable and approachable, and one who listens well before speaking. He shall be one who is supportive of the pastor's ministry and vision and is loyal to Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church and the Church Staff. He will fulfill the Biblical requirements set by God for the position of Pastor (1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28).
- B. In response to the current needs within the church and to support the Pastor in his overall ministry to the congregation, an Associate Pastor may be called to serve the Church with specialized focus in a particular area or areas of ministry, and this specialized area shall be reflected in his title (i.e. Associate Pastor of Worship, Associate Pastor of Youth, etc.)
- C. An Associate Pastor serves as both an officer of the church and as a member of the staff. A complete listing of his duties and the position job description and full title including beginning compensation shall be developed and maintained by the Personnel Committee and recorded in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.
- D. In the event of death, resignation, removal, or other emergencies affecting an Associate Pastor's ability to serve, the vacancy in the pastoral office shall be addressed in accordance with the

procedure outlined in Section 1 of the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.

- E. The election of a new Associate Pastor shall be at a special business meeting convened for that purpose after the Church has been given a two (2) week notice. The election shall be by secret ballot with an affirmative vote of 75% (3/4) of the active members present and voting necessary to extend a call. Once elected, the Associate Pastor may serve an unlimited tenure of office, to be terminated at his pleasure or the pleasure of the Church. If the Associate Pastor resigns, he must work out a minimum of two (2) weeks' notice.
  
- F. If circumstances warrant, such as immorality, heresy, preaching false doctrines, or other serious conditions, the Church may remove an Associate Pastor from his office. Such action may be taken upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Pastor and Deacon Body, who may immediately suspend the Associate Pastor from all job duties, if warranted. A meeting shall be convened for this purpose after a notice of two (2) weeks is given to the Church. The Pastor shall act as moderator, and the vote shall be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of a simple majority of the active members present and voting shall be necessary to remove the Associate Pastor from his office. If the membership votes to remove the Associate Pastor, the termination shall be effective immediately. The Personnel Committee will then make accommodations for the Associate Pastor to vacate church premises in a timely manner that suits both parties. The Church Body, after the vote to remove the Associate Pastor, will determine what, if any, severance package will be given.

#### **SECTION 4. DEACONS**

- A. A Deacon shall be a man of Baptist faith and conviction, well-grounded in the doctrine of the Church, of honest report, and filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom (Acts 6:3). He shall be either ordained or else eligible for ordination to the office of Deacon according to the Biblical requirements set by God for the office of Deacon found in 1 Timothy 3:8-16. A Deacon shall be committed to the Lord Jesus Christ, the local Church, and his own spiritual growth. His character shall be evident. The following qualities shall characterize a Deacon's life: he shall possess a heart that deeply desires to serve the Lord; his motivation for serving shall be the glory of God and God's calling upon his life to serve Jesus and the Church; he shall have a daily discipline to spend time alone with the Lord in Bible study and prayer; he shall have a high standard of personal holiness; he shall tithe as a faithful member of the Church and give to special offerings when he feels the Spirit leads; he shall strive to have faithful attendance to all Church services and special Church related events. A Deacon's life must be above reproach.

He shall be a man who is teachable and approachable, one who listens well before speaking, and one who is loyal to Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church and supportive of the Pastor and Church Staff.

- B. A Deacon shall have been an active male member of this Church for at least one (1) year, and be at least twenty-one (21) years of age prior to his election to the office of Deacon.
- C. A Deacon's term of service and tenure shall be governed by the following guidelines:
  - 1. Once elected and ordained, a Deacon will remain a Deacon of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church unless removed pursuant to Article II, Section 3,G; however, a Deacon may be considered either Active or Inactive.
  - 2. Deacons shall be elected to serve three year terms on Active Status during which they serve the Church as members of the Deacon Body.
    - a. After three years of active service, a Deacon rotates off the Active Deacon Body and becomes Inactive for a sabbatical term of at least one year. After a year, the Deacon is eligible for reelection to Active Status if he so desires to serve.
    - b. If the church should be unable to ordain a sufficient number of men to serve as deacons in a given year, a Deacon who is scheduled to rotate off of Active status may, at the discretion of the Deacon and the Church Body, forego the sabbatical year and be eligible for immediate reelection to another 3 year term on Active status.
    - c. Inactive Deacons, while not actively serving the church in the roles prescribed for the Deacon Body, retain their ordination and are eligible to participate in ordination councils and services.
    - d. The Church shall maintain a listing of all members who have been ordained as Deacons, both Active and Inactive.
- D. Deacons shall be elected by the procedure outlined in Section 1 of the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.
- E. An active Deacon may be removed from Active status at the will of the Church Body for reasons including failure to lead by example through faithfully fulfilling the responsibilities for membership as outlined in Article I, Section 3 of this document.
  - 1. Deacons of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church are expected to actively engage in joint accountability to ensure that the Deacon Body provides spiritual leadership first and foremost by example.

2. If a Deacon cannot or will not carry out his responsibilities and obligations to the Church Body for whatever reason, he should resign his office by submitting a letter of resignation to the Chairman who will notify the Church Body.
- F. If circumstances warrant, such as immorality, heresy, teaching false doctrines, or other serious conditions, the Church may remove a Deacon from his office. Such action may be taken upon the recommendation of the Pastor and Deacon Body who may immediately suspend the Deacon from all duties, if warranted. A meeting shall be convened for this purpose after a notice of two (2) weeks is given to the Church. The Pastor shall act as moderator, and the vote shall be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of a simple majority of the active members present and voting shall be necessary to remove the Deacon from his office. If the membership votes to remove the Deacon, the termination shall be effective immediately.

#### **SECTION 5. THE TREASURER**

- A. The Church Treasurer shall be a faithful member in good standing of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church. The following qualities shall characterize the Treasurer's life: one should have a heart that deeply desires to serve the Lord; one's motivation for serving should be the glory of God and God's calling upon one's life to serve Jesus and the Church; one should have a daily discipline to spend time alone with the Lord in Bible study and prayer; one should tithe as a faithful member of the Church and give to special offerings when one feels the Spirit leads. The Treasurer should be a person who is teachable and approachable, one who listens well before speaking, and one who is loyal to Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church and supportive of the Senior Pastor and the Church Staff.
- B. If the Treasurer resigns or is no longer able to perform his or her duties for whatever reason, the vacancy in the Treasurer's office shall be addressed in accordance with the procedure outlines in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.
- C. The Church Treasurer is a non-paid office of the Church serving as the chief financial officer of the Church providing general oversight regarding all matters, procedures, and policies pertaining to the finances of the Church. The Church Council shall develop and maintain a complete position description and listing of duties to be performed by the Church Treasurer to be recorded in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.

- D If circumstances warrant, such as moral, legal, or other serious conditions, the Church may remove a Treasurer from his/her position. Such action may be taken upon the recommendation of the Pastor and Deacon Body who may immediately suspend the Treasurer from all duties, if warranted. A special business meeting shall be convened for this purpose after a notice of two (2) weeks is given to the Church. The Pastor shall act as moderator, and the vote shall be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of a simple majority of the active members present and voting shall be necessary to remove the Treasurer from his/her office. If the membership votes to remove the Treasurer, the termination shall be effective immediately.

### **SECTION 6. THE CLERK**

- A. The Church Clerk shall be a faithful member in good standing of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church. The following qualities shall characterize the Clerk's life: one should have a heart that deeply desires to serve the Lord; one's motivation for serving should be the glory of God and God's calling upon one's life to serve Jesus and the Church; one should have a daily discipline to spend time alone with the Lord in Bible study and prayer; one should tithe as a faithful member of the Church and give to special offerings when one feels the Spirit leads. The Clerk should be a person who is teachable and approachable, one who listens well before speaking, and one who is loyal to Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church and supportive of the Senior Pastor and the Church Staff.
- B. If the Clerk resigns or is no longer able to perform his or her duties for whatever reason, the vacancy in the Clerk's office shall be addressed in accordance with the procedure outlined in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.
- C. The Church Clerk is a non-paid officer of the Church serving as the chief secretary of the Church providing general oversight regarding all matters of business, membership, and official correspondence of the Church. The Church Council shall develop and maintain a complete position description and listing of duties to be performed by the Church Clerk to be recorded in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.
- D If circumstances warrant, such as moral, legal, or other serious conditions, the Church may remove a Clerk from his/her office. Such action may be taken upon the recommendation of the Pastor and Deacon Body who may immediately suspend the Clerk from all duties, if warranted. A special business meeting shall be convened for this purpose after a notice of two (2) weeks is given to the Church. The Pastor shall act as moderator, and the vote shall be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of a simple majority of the active members present and voting shall be

necessary to remove the Clerk from his/her office. If the membership votes to remove the Clerk, the termination shall be effective immediately.

#### **SECTION 7. THE TRUSTEES**

- A. The Trustees shall serve as non-paid legal officers and fiduciary representatives of the Church. It shall be their function to affix their signatures to any legal documents where the signatures of Trustees are required.
- B. The Trustees shall have no power to buy, sell, make a loan, borrow, mortgage, lease, or transfer any real property without a specific vote of the Church Body authorizing each action.
- C. The active Deacons of the Church will serve as the Church Trustees.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **STAFF**

#### **SECTION 1. THE CHURCH STAFF**

- A. Staff positions are those that are paid a compensation package for their job performances.
- B. Staff positions shall be created or terminated according to the current needs of the Church.
- C. Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church recognizes three categories of staff positions: Ministerial Staff, Program Staff, and Support Staff.
  - a. Ministerial Staff consists of those ordained as pastors and called to serve as Pastor or Associate Pastor for the church and who also serve as officers of the Church. Ministerial Staff shall be or shall become active members of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in good standing.
  - b. Program Staff consists of those individuals hired to provide leadership and service within one of our ministry program areas (e.g. youth ministry, children's ministry, music ministry, etc.) Program Staff shall be or shall become active members of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in good standing.
  - c. Support Staff consists of those individuals hired to provide clerical or practical support to the ministry of the Church (e.g. ministry assistants, office staff, custodians, etc.) Support staff shall be professing Christians and active members in good standing of a local evangelical Christian congregation.
- D. The Personnel Committee shall develop and maintain current job descriptions, including beginning compensation and benefit packages, for all staff positions, subject to approval by the Church Body. These shall be maintained in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.
- E. When the need for a staff position is determined and approved by the Church Body, the Personnel Committee will be responsible for developing a process for selection of a candidate and making a recommendation to the Church Body for filling the position. Excepted from this are Ministerial Staff whose selection and election procedures are outlined in Section 1 of the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.

- F. Candidates recommended for Program Staff and Support Staff positions shall be subject to approval by the Church Body. Such voting shall be conducted either at a regular business meeting or at a special business meeting called for that purpose. An affirmative vote of 75% (3/4) of active members present and voting shall be necessary to approve the hire. Once hired, staff members may serve an unlimited tenure, to be terminated at his/her pleasure or the pleasure of the Church. If a staff person resigns, he/she must work out two (2) weeks' notice.
- G. If circumstances warrant, such as moral, legal, or other serious conditions, the Church may remove a staff member from his/her position. Such action may be taken upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Pastor and Deacon Body, who may immediately suspend the staff member from all job duties, if warranted. A special business meeting shall be convened for this purpose after a notice of two (2) weeks is given to the Church. The Pastor shall act as moderator, and the vote shall be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of a simple majority of the active members present and voting shall be necessary to remove the staff member from his/her position. If the membership votes to remove the staff member, the termination shall be effective immediately. The Church Body will determine after the vote to remove the staff member what sort of severance package, if any, will be given.



## **ARTICLE IV** **COMMITTEES**

### **SECTION 1. GENERAL**

- A. In order to effectively involve members of the congregation in the work of ministry and to efficiently carry out the mission of the church, Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church shall maintain a system of committees to oversee the various aspects of the church's life and mission.
- B. Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church shall recognize two types of committees: standing (or permanent) committees and special (or *ad hoc*) committees.
- C. Committees will be responsible for nominating their own committee members to the Body for approval with the exception of the Church Council and the Personnel Committee; see Article IV, Section 2 and the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual, Section 3.
- D. At the beginning of the Church year, committees will meet within thirty (30) days for the purpose of electing their chairperson who will also serve on the Church Council. These elections will require a majority of the committee members to be present to ratify the vote. An individual may serve consecutive terms. The previous chairperson will retain Church Council responsibilities until this election is complete.
- E. Each committee shall prepare a written report of activities, if any, to be made available to the Church membership during regularly scheduled business meetings.
  - 1. Committees that have actionable items or proposals that require church approval are encouraged to submit their motions in written form for the record prior to bringing the motion to the floor during business.
- F. Any committee that requires Church funds shall submit its proposed budget to the Church Council by October 1 prior to the start of a new Fiscal year.
- G. Committee members will be elected to serve one (1) year terms unless otherwise specified.
- H. Committees are required to have a regularly scheduled meeting a minimum of every three (3) months, but can meet as often as needed. Special meetings may be called by the elected chairperson or any active member of that committee with a minimum one-week notice unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical, and the committee member who

calls the meeting is responsible for making an attempt to notify each committee member about the meeting.

- I. The elected chairperson of the committee is to serve as moderator of committee meetings, and the Pastor will moderate the Church Council meetings.
- J. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member on all committees but shall only be allowed to cast a vote in the Church Council.
- K. Documents detailing the duties, requirements, scope of responsibilities, and approved policies or guidelines for each committee are found in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.

## **SECTION 2. STANDING COMMITTEES**

- A. **Church Council** -- The Church Council will consist of the Ministerial Staff, Program Staff, Church Treasurer, and the elected leaders of the Building and Grounds, Children's Ministry, Deacon Body, Education, Missions/Evangelism, Personnel, Social, Worship, and Youth Ministry Committees. The Ministry Assistant shall serve as an advisory but non-voting member of the Church Council and shall serve as the recording secretary for council meetings. Comprised of the representative leadership of the church, the Church Council is charged with general oversight and joint communication regarding all church activities and ministries in order to report to the Body and make such recommendations as needed for church approval. The Church Council shall also have limited authority to make emergency decisions concerning the well-being and operations of the church.
- B. **Building & Grounds Committee** – This committee is charged with the general oversight of the care, maintenance, and use of all church owned property and facilities.
- C. **Children's Ministry Committee** – This committee is charged with the development, planning, and implementation of a comprehensive ministry serving the discipleship needs of the children (Birth – Grade 5) in our congregation and community.
- D. **Deacon Body** – This committee consists of duly elected active deacons of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church and is charged with providing spiritual leadership as well as helping to care for the physical and temporal needs of the members of the church body.

- E. **Education Committee** – This committee is charged with the development, planning, and implementation of a comprehensive program of discipleship and Christian education for the congregation.
- F. **Missions Committee** – This committee is charged with leadership in the administration and promotion of a program of missionary initiatives aimed to help Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church meet its aim of being a Great Commission congregation.
- G. **Personnel Committee** – This committee is charged with the responsibility of serving to liaise between the paid church staff and the church body through communication and policies that encourage joint accountability.
- H. **Social Committee** – This committee is charged with giving leadership to the development, planning, and implementation of a comprehensive ministry of fellowship and congregational care among the church body.
- I. **Stewardship Committee** – This committee is charged with providing general oversight regarding the financial matters of the church, developing and maintaining sound financial policies that foster Biblical stewardship of church resources, and with developing a program of education and promotion of Biblical stewardship within the church Body.
- J. **Worship Committee** – This committee is charged with providing leadership in the development, planning, and implementation of comprehensive programs involving music, technology, the arts, and more in serving the needs and desires of the church in creating meaningful worship experiences.
- K. **Youth Ministry Committee** -- This committee is charged with the development, planning, and implementation of a comprehensive ministry serving the discipleship needs of the youth (Grades 6-12) in our congregation and community.

### **SECTION 3. SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

- A. The Church Council or Church Body shall call for the formation of special committees whenever necessary to attend to any situations requiring special attention that does not fall within the scope of any existing committee. Policies governing the formation of special committees are found in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **CHURCH MEETINGS**

- A. Regular Meetings for worship, preaching, and instruction are scheduled for Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. Sunday evening meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the Pastor. These meetings are under the leadership of the Pastor and may be canceled by him upon consultation and agreement with the Deacon Body. The Pastor may also call for special meetings such as revival services, etc.
- B. Business Meetings
- a. Business meetings of the church will be held on a quarterly basis.
  - b. The active members present at a business meeting shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business and voting.
  - c. The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of a special nature or significance. Unless otherwise specified in these by-laws regarding specific matters of church business, a one-week notice must be given for the called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice will include the subject, the date, and the time and place.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW MINISTRIES**

- A. Church members are always free to do whatever they believe God has led them to do in the way of ministry. In the context of the Church program, they are encouraged to initiate discussion of new ministries they believe will meet needs that are not being met by existing ministries. If they feel the ministry should become a recognized part of the program of the Church, certain guidelines need to be followed.
- B. Guidelines
1. The proposed ministry must be approved by the Church Body if it will involve any of the following:
    - a. publicity through any of the standard Church publications;
    - b. the use of Church facilities for meetings and activities;
    - c. the involvement of Church finances.

2. After determining that other members are interested in having such a ministry, the concept should be interactively developed and a written proposal prepared. Then the members should present the idea to the committee responsible for the existing area of ministry of a similar type, e.g., education, music, missions, children, etc.
3. The committee will help the group determine whether the proposed ministry might readily become an integral part of the existing ministry. If so, then it should be presented to the leaders of the existing ministry for discussion, approval by the church, and implementation.
4. After discussion with the committee, if there is agreement that the goals of the proposed ministry cannot be reached by integrating it with an existing ministry, the member will present the proposal to the Church Council for its review. The Church Council will review the proposal and recommend one of the following:
  - a. forwarding it to the Church Body for approval;
  - b. dropping consideration of the proposal as an approved program of the Church.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **LICENSING AND ORDINATION**

A. It is our hope that Spirit-filled men will be called out from among us to proclaim the Gospel. When such men are evident, the church can commission such men by giving a license that expresses the conviction to other churches that the bearer possesses graces, gifts, and capabilities which indicate a call to the Gospel Ministry. When there is a prospective candidate (i.e., licensee) for ordination to the Ministry, the Pastor shall guide that person in his theological studies and ministerial preparation. If one of our licensees, in the exercising of his ministerial gifts, is called by another Church to be its Pastor, the said Church may request this Church to ordain the licensee. Whether for another Church or our own, the Pastor shall then call a council of ordained men to examine the qualifications of the candidate. It shall examine the soundness of his conversion, the godliness of his walk, the soundness of his doctrine, the degree of his graces and gifts, the extent of his training, and the blessing of God upon his labors for Christ. If the council heartily recommends that the candidate be ordained, the Church may approve the recommendation by an affirmative vote of 75% (3/4) of the active members present and voting at a called congregational meeting. The Church Body retains the right to remove an issued ordination or license from a candidate if circumstances warrant, such as immorality, heresy, preaching false doctrines, or other serious conditions.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **CHURCH FACILITIES**

- A. The Church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of Church members. The Church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and always to God's glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-member persons and groups as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

However, facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs, or advancing, advocating, or engaging in practices that conflict with the Church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in the *Baptist Faith & Message 2000* and in the Church's Constitution. Nor may facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed by the Pastor as inconsistent with, or contrary to the Church's faith or moral teachings. The Pastor or his official designee is the final decision-maker on whether a person or group is allowed to use church facilities.

- B. This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons.
1. First, the Church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the Church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the Church's faith and religious practice. (See 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)
  2. Second, it is very important to the Church that it presents a consistent message to the community which the Church staff and members conscientiously maintain as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To allow facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the Church's faith would have a severe negative impact on the message that the Church strives to promote. It could also be a source of confusion and scandal to Church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the Church is in agreement with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using Church facilities.
- C. This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the Church's sanctuary, because the Church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. (See Colossians 3:17.)

D. Approved Users and Priority of Use

1. The Pastor or his official designee must approve all uses of Church facilities. Priority shall generally be given to members of the Church, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the Church. Church facilities and equipment will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:
  - a. Groups or persons requesting facility use must affirm that their beliefs and practices and planned uses of the facilities are in harmony with the Church's faith and practice.
  - b. The group or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form.
  - c. The group or person seeking facility use must be willing to take responsibility for the facilities and equipment used.
  - d. The group must agree to abide by the Church's rules of conduct for facility use.

- E. Detailed policies and guidelines governing the use of church property and facilities shall be developed and maintained under the direction of the Church Council and, upon approval by the church, recorded in the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Reference Manual.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **BY-LAWS REVIEW**

In an effort to keep these By-Laws relevant and effective for Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church the Church Council must form a Special Committee (see Article IV, Section 3) at least every five (5) years to review these By-Laws and recommend any additions to, removal of, or changes to the By-Laws.

## ARTICLE X

### AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

- A. These By-Laws may be altered, amended, or repealed, and new By-Laws may be adopted at any regular business meeting or at any special business meeting called for that purpose, provided the following requirements have been met:
1. The prepared changes have been submitted to the Church Council for their review prior to bringing it before the Church for action. The Church Council may express approval or disapproval, but final action is subject to the vote of the Church Body
  2. Copies of the proposed changes have been made available to the Church membership.
  3. The membership is given thirty (30) days written and verbal notice before proposed changes are to be acted upon by the Church
- B. To become effective, the proposed changes must receive an affirmative vote of 75% (3/4) of the active members present and voting.