



Pleasant View Baptist Church

"Equipping Families For Life!"

Constitution

ADOPTED: March 26, 2014

REVISED: June 29, 2016

REVISED: August 29, 2018

REVISED: March 30, 2022

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the church body in an orderly manner. The Bible admonishes us saying, "But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner (I Corinthians 14:40)." To this end do we, members of the Pleasant View Baptist Church in Oakland, Maryland, having been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, placed our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, having followed Him in believer's baptism, and accepting the Bible as the inspired, authoritative, sufficient, and inerrant Word of God, solemnly and sincerely set forth the following Constitution by which we under God's grace willingly and cheerfully agree to be governed.

ARTICLE I

Name

This body was originally founded April 22, 1906 and chartered under the name Loch Lynn Heights Baptist Church. The name was changed on December 9, 1994 under the charter of Pleasant View Baptist Church, Inc., Oakland, MD.

ARTICLE II

Purpose (I Corinthians 10:31)

Accepting the inspired Word of God, the Holy Bible, as our only standard of faith, we declare that the purpose of this church is to glorify God! We seek to fulfill this purpose through:

1. **Magnifying:** We exist to worship God. We encourage people to exalt God and magnify His worth through teaching and proclaiming Biblical truth, and nurturing heartfelt worship.
2. **Ministry:** Serving others is our ministry. We encourage people to "build up" each other through establishing loving, caring, trusting, and giving relationships.
3. **Mission:** We are on mission with God. God draws people by His Spirit and His Word, through His church. We are commissioned to point others to Him the one true and living God, through a relationship with Jesus Christ, the only way to Him.
4. **Membership:** We encourage membership in the local church. God has called us to make disciples and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Those in God's family are encouraged to become members of our fellowship.
5. **Maturity:** We are to equip the church towards Maturity. To encourage people to serve God and others by teaching them Biblical doctrine, exhorting them to live out the teachings of Jesus, and helping them to recognize and exercise their Holy Spirit given gifts and talents.

ARTICLE III

Statement of Faith of the Pleasant View Baptist Church

(Adopted from The Baptist Faith & Message 2000)

1. **The Scriptures:** The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation. *Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; II Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; I Peter 1:25; II Peter 1:19-21.*
2. **God:** There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.
 - A) **God the Father** - God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men. *Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; I Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; I Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; I Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; I Peter 1:17; I John 5:7.*
 - B) **God the Son** - Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord. *Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; I Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; II Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; I Thessalonians 4:14-18; I Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; I Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; I John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; II John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

C) **God the Holy Spirit** - The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service. *Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; I Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; I Thessalonians 5:19; I Timothy 3:16; 4:1; II Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; II Peter 1:21; I John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

3. **Mankind:** Mankind is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning human beings were innocent of sin and endowed by their Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice and through the temptation of Satan, the first human being, Adam, sinned against God and fell from his original innocence. Accordingly, as offspring of Adam, all mankind inherited a sinful nature and became sinners. Therefore, every human being is now under God's condemnation and in need of a Savior. Only the grace of God can bring human beings into His holy fellowship and enable them to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created mankind in His own image, and in that Christ died for mankind; therefore, every person of every ethnicity possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love. *Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6-21; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; I Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

4. **Salvation:** Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, repentance, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A) **Regeneration**, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

B) **Repentance** is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the receiving of Jesus Christ and His completed work, and commitment of the entire person to Him as Lord and Savior.

C) **Justification** is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

D) **Sanctification** is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

E) **Glorification** is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; I Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; II Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; I Thessalonians 5:23-24; II Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; I Peter 1:2-23; I John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

5. **God's Purpose of Grace:** Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. *Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; I Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; I Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; II Thessalonians 2:13-14; II Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; I Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; I John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.*

6. **The Church:** A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors, elders, and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation. *Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; I Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; I Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; I Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.*

7. **Baptism and the Lord's Supper:** Christian 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 faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to 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 the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming. *Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

8. **The Lord's Day:** The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. *Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.*
9. **The Kingdom:** The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age. *Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; I Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; I Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.*
10. **Last Things:** God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. *Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; I Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; II Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; I Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; II Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; I Timothy 6:14; II Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; II Peter 3:7ff.; I John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.*
11. **Evangelism and Missions:** It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ. *Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; I Thessalonians 1:8; II Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; I Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.*
12. **Education:** Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, founded in scripture and is a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for the knowledge of God and a biblical worldview. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the support of the church. Teaching and discipleship are first and foremost the responsibility of Christian parents and should be established in the Christian home. Biblical training and sound doctrine are essential in the discipleship of Christ's people. The freedom of a teacher is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures. *Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; I Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; I Timothy 1:3-7; II Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.*

13. **Stewardship:** God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a stewardship in their possessions. They are to graciously serve God with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for His glory and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth. *Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; I Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; II Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; I Peter 1:18-19.*
14. **Cooperation:** Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament. *Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; I Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; II Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.*
15. **The Christian and the Social Order:** All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth. *Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; I Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.*
16. **Peace and War:** It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war. The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace. *Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.*

17. **Religious Liberty:** God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power. *Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; I Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; I Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12*
18. **The Family:** God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons 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 reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of 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, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, 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, from the moment of conception, 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. *Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; I Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; I Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; I Timothy 5:8,14; II Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; I Peter 3:1-7.*

ARTICLE IV

Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

Adopted 06-29-2016

We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Therefore, rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that God means for sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4).

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in, outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (1 Cor. 6:17-20; 7:2).

We believe any form of sexual immorality (including, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, polygamy, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe in order to preserve the function and integrity of the Pleasant View Baptist Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to its members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Pleasant View Baptist Church in any capacity, and anyone who is a member or a volunteer, agree to, affirm, and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Thes. 5:22).

We believe God alone, by His grace alone, through faith alone will bring about salvation and truly change a sinner's heart. The one who is truly redeemed and restored will confess, repent of, and forsake sexual sin, seeking God's mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Those who are "in Christ" will walk in the Holy Spirit's power to overcome the practice of sin (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 8:13-15; 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

We believe every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, and human dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). In love therefore, we will obey scripture by rebuking, reproofing, and admonishing against sexual immorality, seeking to lead and/or restore the individual to a proper understanding of the Scriptures and behavior that is honoring to God (Eph. 4:15; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

In accordance with our stated beliefs, The Pleasant View Baptist Church will not hold or allow any meetings, ceremonies, services, or property use that would contradict the above beliefs.

ARTICLE V

Covenant of Membership

Realizing my guilt before God, I have confessed my sins to Him, and received the Lord Jesus Christ, who bore my sins on the cross, as my personal Savior (Romans 3:19, 23; 5:8; John 1:12).

I ACKNOWLEDGE the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord of all my life, and seek to confess Him as such before others by the testimony both of word and deed. (Romans 10:9; II Corinthians 5:14, 15).

I TRUST in the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives in my heart, to keep me, guide me, and lead me in the way of purity and holiness (John 14:26; 16:13; Romans 8:2-4; Galatians 5:22-25).

I ACCEPT the Bible as the inspired Word of God, and my final authority in all matters of faith and practice (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21).

I RECOGNIZE my responsibility by tithes and offerings to extend the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ both at home and abroad (Malachi. 3:8-10; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:7).

I RECOGNIZE my responsibility to pray regularly for the work of this church, for it's pastors, officers, and members, that the witness of all concerned may be to the glory of God and to the salvation of souls (Ephesians 6:18-19; I Thessalonians 5:17, 25).

I RECOGNIZE my responsibility to be regular in attendance at the services of the church, and at the Lord's table (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25; I Corinthians 11:26).

I HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION, in obedience to my Lord's command, thus signifying my union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:4).

I HAVE READ the Articles of faith as contained in this constitution and am in complete agreement therewith (I Timothy 6:12; II Timothy 4:7; Jude 3).

RECOGNIZING MY INABILITY IN MY OWN STRENGTH to adhere to the terms of any covenant, yet believing that my Lord will enable me (by His grace) to fulfill the terms of this Covenant, I hereby attach my signature below, implying the ready assent of my heart to each of the above clauses (Philippians 4:13).

Signature_____

Date_____

ARTICLE VI

Character

1. **In Church Policy.** Under Christ, the government of the church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other body, denominational or otherwise, but it recognizes the relationship with other churches in the Southern Baptist Convention and will cooperate and consider mutual counsel with such as the Holy Spirit leads.
2. **In Church Doctrine.** As indicated in Article III, the Statement of Faith in all matters of faith and practice, this church accepts the Scriptures as its final authority.

ARTICLE VII

Amendment

This constitution may be amended by a two-third (2/3) majority of a quorum of members (as defined in Article I, Section 4 of the By-Laws) present at a special business meeting called specifically for that purpose or at a regular business meeting.

The members of the church must be notified by public announcement of the proposed amendment(s) at least two (2) weeks in advance of the voting.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

Membership

SECTION 1. **QUALIFICATIONS.**

A. The membership of this church shall consist of such persons who have met the qualifications for membership as listed below:

- 1) Have confessed Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior, demonstrating repentance and a regenerate heart toward God, trusting wholly in the finished work of Jesus Christ.
- 2) Have been baptized by immersion since their conversion as an outward testimony of salvation.
- 3) Have completed the church membership class.
- 4) Have committed to abide by the Covenant of Membership (Article V of the Constitution) acknowledged by personal signature, "striving to fulfill, through the grace and power of the Master, the terms of that covenant".
- 5) Have been examined by the elders as to their Christian testimony and received into membership by affirmative vote of the church.

B. A member of another church may be received by letter of recommendation by their former church, and meeting all the requirements listed above (Article I, Section 1, Letter A, of the By-Laws).

C. When there is a qualified candidate for church membership, action shall be taken publically before the church on the recommendation of a pastor, or in the absence of a pastor, one of the elders. Should a negative vote be cast, the case shall be postponed, and the objection inquired into. Upon review of evidence pertaining to the validity of the objection, a person may be received into membership by a two-third (2/3) majority vote.

D. When there is an issue of temporary residency, a member of another church may be received by majority vote into the watch care of this church, during their stay in our community, and meeting all the requirements listed above (Article I, Section 1, Letters A-C, of the By-Laws).

SECTION 2. **DUTIES.**

A. To honor the church covenant as stated in Article V of the Constitution.

B. To walk in covenant relationship with the members, stirring up love and good works, assembling ourselves together, exhorting one another (Hebrews 10:25). To be faithful in attendance to the church's gatherings and pursuant in the fellowship with the members unless hindered by illness or other providential circumstances. To be lax or indifferent toward faithful participation in church life will indicate a sinful attitude towards scripture and need for admonition.

SECTION 3. **PRIVILEGES.**

Members who fulfill the above duties (Article I, Sections 1 and 2, of the By-Laws) are afforded the following privileges:

- A. Participation in the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41-42; I Corinthians 11:18-26, 33).
- B. Voting privileges and participation at church business meetings (at age 16) (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:13-14; 6:1-6; I Corinthians 1:2; 5:4-7; 13).
- C. Serving together to extend God's Kingdom in ministries of the church (as one's gifts, graces and calling make appropriate) (I Corinthians 12:4-27, Ephesians 4:7; 11-12; 16; I Peter 4:10-11).
- D. Reception of the oversight and care of the elders/deacons of the church (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2-3).
- E. Reception of the care, accountability, and discipline (as needed) of the membership of the church (Acts 6:1-2; 5:13-14; 9:26; I Corinthians 5:4-5; Galatians 6:10).

SECTION 4. **QUORUM.**

- A. Ten (10) percent of the active membership shall constitute a quorum at any regular business meeting.
- B. Fifteen (15) percent, for the election of elders, deacons, officers and teachers.
- C. Twenty-five (25) percent shall be necessary for the call of a pastor or for amendments to the Constitution, or By-Laws, or termination of membership.
- D. In no case, however, shall a quorum consist of less than ten (10) members.

SECTION 5. **TERMINATION.**

Termination of membership is warranted as follows:

- A. Termination by death.
- B. Any member in good standing, who desires a letter of transfer and recommendation to any other church, is entitled to receive it upon request of that church.
- C. Upon becoming a member of another church, one's membership shall be terminated by public announcement, except in the case of dual membership as indicated by Article I, Section 7, of the By-Laws.
- D. Should a member become an offense to the church, and to its good name, by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his covenant vows, or non-support of the church, church discipline will be exercised according to Article VI, Section 3, of the By-Laws of this constitution, and his membership may be terminated, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment, and upon affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those present and eligible to vote.
- E. A member of this church who shall willfully and without biblical reason continue to demonstrate a lack of commitment to the church and her gatherings, will be dealt with according to Article VI, Section 3, of the By-Laws. The elders and deacons will give oversight to this process and determine what constitutes lack of faithfulness regarding church membership.

SECTION 6. RESTORATION.

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by affirmative vote of the church, upon evidence of his repentance and reformation.

SECTION 7. DUAL MEMBERSHIPS.

- A. An active member who takes up temporary residency in another area may upon approval by this membership join with another congregation and carry a dual membership if: (1) They have been faithful members while occupying residency here; (2) The fellowship is another church of like faith, doctrines, and order; (3) They accept the covenant of membership for each respective church and place themselves under the watch care of the specific local church of residency during their stay in that community.
- B. An active member of another congregation who takes up temporary residency here may upon approval by this membership join this membership and carry a dual membership if: (1) They have been faithful members while occupying residency there; (2) The fellowship where they are currently members is another church of like faith, doctrines, and order; (3) They accept the covenant of membership for each respective church and place themselves under the watch care of the specific local church of residency during their stay in that community.

ARTICLE II

Supported Pastors/ Staff

SECTION 1. SENIOR PASTOR.

The senior pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Article III, Sections 2 and 3, of the By-Laws, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the specific ministry of preaching and teaching. A senior pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice shall be given. A pastoral search team shall be appointed by the elders and approved by the church to work in conjunction with the elders to seek out a suitable pastor, and their recommendation will constitute a nomination. The team shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those present being necessary to a choice. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by mutual consent of both parties, or after sixty-day notice in writing by either party. Twenty five percent of the active membership shall be present to vote upon the dismissal of a pastor, and he may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any business meeting of the church. If a pastor's conduct causes him to be disqualified according to the biblical qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, he will immediately step down from his role and responsibilities. Further action will be determined at the discretion of the elders. The pastor shall have charge of the welfare and oversight of the church. He shall preside at all meetings of the church, except as hereinafter provided.

SECTION 2. SENIOR PASTOR DUTIES.

- A. The senior pastor's first and foremost duty is to give himself to the study of scripture and prayer so he may lead and shepherd the church according to the scriptures and be able to 'rightly divide the word of truth'. He will provide the majority of the preaching and teaching during Sunday morning worship services (I Timothy 4:13).

- B. The senior pastor will give direction and oversight in all worship services and meetings as he discerns. He will promote the spiritual welfare of the church. He shall serve as ex-officio member of any special task teams at his discretion.
- C. The senior pastor will provide guidance, as needed, to the elders and deacons concerning church business and spiritual concerns within the body.
- D. The senior pastor, in accordance with the elders, shall make the necessary arrangements for filling the pulpit with a supply during his absences.
- E. The senior pastor shall supervise the supported church staff (associate pastors, secretaries, etc.)
- F. The senior pastor will coordinate with the elders and deacons the times and administration of the ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper).
- G. The senior pastor shall be the moderator at church business meetings. In his absence, an associate pastor may preside. In the absence of a pastor, one of the elders shall preside. In the absence of any, the clerk shall call to order and a moderator pro tem shall be elected.

SECTION 3. ASSOCIATE PASTORAL STAFF AND PAID STAFF.

The need for financially supported associate pastors and other paid staff to assist in meeting the needs of the flock may be recognized by the church body or leadership. An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall meet the qualifications for elder and perform the duties of an elder described in Article III, Sections 2 and 3, of the By-Laws. The need for additional compensated associate pastors and staff must be agreed on by the active elders before action is taken. The need for this expenditure should be discussed with the flock. The procedure for hiring and supporting associate pastoral staff shall be the same as for a senior pastor. The senior pastor will automatically head the search team for any associate staff. An associate pastor thus called, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by mutual consent of both parties, or after sixty-day notice in writing by either party. Twenty five percent of the active membership shall be present to vote upon the dismissal of an associate pastor, and he may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any business meeting of the church. If a pastor's conduct causes him to be disqualified according to the biblical qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, he will immediately step down from his role and responsibilities. Further action will be determined at the discretion of the elders.

SECTION 4. ASSOCIATE PASTORAL STAFF DUTIES

- A. All associate pastoral staff and other paid staff will assist the elders and deacons in whatever needs arise in the general oversight and discipleship of the church. They will look to the elders for supervision of their duties and for periodic reviews of their performance.
- B. A written job description will be prepared for all financially supported staff members and reviewed annually by the senior pastor and elders.
- C. This description will be prepared by the existing elders.
- D. The elders may modify the duties or redirect the efforts of any associate pastor or paid staff member, but only after appropriate consultation with such a one, and after clear communication with the membership about such changes has been exercised.

SECTION 5. SECRETARY/ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT DUTIES

- A. It shall be the duty of the secretary to keep a suitable record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The secretary shall keep a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismission, or death, together with a record of baptisms. The secretary shall also notify all members of their election or appointment. They shall issue letters of dismission voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these By-Laws. The church secretary shall consider it a part of their responsibility to promote loyalty in church life.
- B. To assist the pastoral staff in whatever way be needed to carry out the discipleship, administration, and care for the flock at Pleasant View Baptist Church.

ARTICLE III

Elders/Deacons

SECTION 1. SUMMARY

The Biblical offices in the church are elders (which include pastors) and deacons. For administrative purposes we also recognize the offices of trustee, clerk, teacher, treasurer and finance team. We acknowledge that these fall under the oversight and authority of the biblical office of elder.

SECTION 2. ELDERS.

A majority of the active eldership shall be composed of church members not in the regular pay of the church, and no elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure.

A. Qualifications for Elders:

- 1) Be scripturally qualified according to I Timothy 3: 1–7 and Titus 1: 6–9.
- 2) Willingness to perform service to the body as outlined with these By-Laws.
- 3) Before any man shall be considered for the office of an elder:
 - a. He shall be a member in good standing of Pleasant View Baptist Church for a minimum of three (3) years or
 - b. He shall have been a member in good standing of a church of like faith and doctrine for a minimum of three (3) years and a current member in good standing of Pleasant View Baptist Church.

B. Necessity and procedure

- 1) The acting elders shall decide if the need for more elder(s) exists.
- 2) When there is a need, the acting elders shall notify the congregation of the need and ask them to pray to the Lord to provide men who meet the scriptural qualifications. Only qualified and willing men will be considered. If no qualified men are available, or if those qualified are unable or unwilling to serve, no recommendations will be made. The church shall wait on the Lord to provide a qualified man or men to meet the need.
- 3) The elders will approach men they believe to be qualified.
- 4) Each name will be carefully and prayerfully considered and reviewed according to their biblical qualifications, doctrinal beliefs, ability to teach, testimony among the people, spiritual gifts, and the individual's willingness to serve.
- 5) The elders will approach the men whom they believe to be able and qualified. These men will be carefully examined. If they are found to be fit for elder ministry, and biblically qualified to serve, they will be recommended to the congregation to be approved by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote at a special or quarterly business meeting.
- 6) The names of prospective elders will be submitted to the congregation at least two weeks before they will be voted on.
- 7) Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry, direction, and teaching of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6: 1–6 and I Peter 5: 1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching, encouraging, and guarding sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock.

C. Appointment

The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. Any time an elder is called to serve, he must be appointed by 3/4 majority vote according to the constitutional provisions on elections at any business meeting. This applies to the initial appointment and to any reappointment thereafter. After an elder, other than the senior or associate pastor(s), has served a three-year term, his name shall be brought before the church at any business meeting to be reaffirmed and approved for another three years. This process shall take place every three years as long as he is scripturally qualified and willing to serve the church. He may choose to serve consecutive terms or take a sabbatical after giving due notice. An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. If an elder's conduct causes him to be disqualified according to the biblical qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, he will immediately step down from his role and responsibilities. Further action will be determined at the discretion of the elders. Any two members with biblical reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the other elders and then, if need be, the elders will bring these concerns to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and I Timothy 5:17–21. Twenty five percent of the active membership shall be present to vote upon the dismissal of an elder, and he may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any business meeting of the church.

SECTION 3. **DUTIES of ELDERS.**

- A. The elders shall meet regularly to oversee the ministry, direction, and teaching of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6: 1–6 and I Peter 5: 1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching, encouraging, and guarding sound doctrine), and shepherding God’s flock.
- B. The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions.
- C. Oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, oversee the ordinances of baptism and communion (along with the deacons).
- D. Equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage and guard sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and oversee, exhort, and mobilize the church for world missions.
- E. The elders may establish ministry positions or teams and committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of senior and associate pastor(s) as outlined in these By-Laws. The scope and approval of ministry descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of the elders. The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.
- F. In case of absence or inability of the pastor, subject to advice from and conference with him, the elders will provide for pulpit supplies. In any period when the church is without a pastor, unless the church shall otherwise provide, the elders will arrange the temporary ministry and take counsel with reference to securing a pastor.
- G. The elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our doctrinal beliefs and fundamental convictions.
- H. The elders shall have the general oversight of the financial welfare of the church at all times, and they shall consider it to be a part of their responsibility to promote in every proper way scriptural giving on the part of the entire membership.
- I. Each year the elders, after consultation with the deacons, the finance team, and the membership, shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for approval by majority vote at a business meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.
- J. The elders shall elect one of their number to serve as chairman for the purpose of administration.
- K. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Maryland, the elders shall elect one of their number to serve as the president of the corporation.

SECTION 4. **DEACONS.**

A. Qualifications for Deacons:

- 1) Be scripturally qualified according to I Timothy 3:8-13
- 2) Willingness to perform service to the body as outlined with these By-Laws.
- 3) Before any man shall be considered for the office of a deacon:
 - a. He shall be a member in good standing of Pleasant View Baptist Church for a minimum of three (3) years or
 - b. He shall have been a member in good standing of a church of like faith and doctrine for a minimum of three (3) years and a current member in good standing of Pleasant View Baptist Church.

B. Necessity and procedure

- 1) The acting deacons along with the elders shall decide if the need for more deacon(s) exists. As in the New Testament church, both the church leaders and the flock played an important role in choosing deacons (Acts 6:1-6). Such will be the practice of the Pleasant View Baptist Church.
- 2) When there is a need, the acting elders shall notify the congregation of the need and ask them to pray and to recommend men whom they believe meet the scriptural qualifications. Only qualified and willing men will be considered. If no qualified men are available, or if those qualified are unable or unwilling to serve, no recommendations will be made. The church shall wait on the Lord to provide a qualified man or men to meet the need.
- 3) The elders and acting deacons will review the names submitted to them along with any additional names of men they believe to be qualified.
- 4) Each name submitted will be carefully and prayerfully considered and reviewed according to their biblical qualifications, testimony among the people, spiritual gifts, and the individual's willingness to serve.
- 5) The elders and acting deacons will approach the men whom they believe to be able and qualified. These men will be carefully examined. If they are found to be fit for deacon ministry, and biblically qualified to serve, they will be recommended to the congregation to be approved by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote at a special or quarterly business meeting.
- 6) The names of prospective deacons will be submitted to the congregation at least two weeks before they will be voted on.

C. Appointment

- 1) Deacons shall be recognized and appointed to serve for a period of three (3) years. Any time a deacon is called to serve, he must be elected by a 3/4 majority vote according to the constitutional provisions on elections at any business meeting. This applies to the initial appointment and to any reappointment thereafter. After the third year his name shall be brought before the church at any business meeting to be reaffirmed and approved to serve another three years. This process shall take place every three years as long as he is scripturally qualified and willing to serve the church. He may choose to serve consecutive terms or take a sabbatical at any time after giving due notice.
- 2) Deacons are to be tested. The primary means of testing is to evaluate a man's commitment to the Lord, his qualifications according to I Timothy 3:8-12, his doctrinal understanding and his willingness to serve the local body.
- 3) Deacons shall be ordained in a public meeting by the laying on of hands by other ordained men. This should take place as soon as they are examined, approved, and elected by the church.

SECTION 5. DUTIES OF DEACONS.

In accordance with the meaning of the word and practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church.

- A. They are to be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the church in the bonds of peace.
- B. They shall serve as a council of advice and conference with the elders in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. With the elders, they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the church in all matters pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians, and the extension and growth of the kingdom of God.
- C. They shall assist the pastor in the administration of the ordinances.
- D. By proper organization and method among themselves, they are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations with, and inspiring oversight of, all the membership of the church. They should seek to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the brothers and sisters; and to serve the whole church in relieving, encouraging, and developing all who are in need.
- E. The deacons shall have the general oversight of the benevolence fund of the church. They shall decide how and to whom financial assistance may be given in order to display the provision and compassion of Christ.

SECTION 6. METHOD OF PROCEDURE.

- A. The fellowship of deacons shall be organized as a unit and shall meet regularly to discuss the welfare of the church body, giving particular attention to widow/ers and those with spiritual and physical needs.
- B. They shall apportion the membership and attending church families among themselves, or make plans whereby the entire membership of the church may have the benefit of the oversight in Christ of their brothers.
- C. Each deacon shall hold in strict confidence all personal matters that are discussed so that the unity and welfare of the church is maintained.
- D. A deacon may voluntarily step down from his position at any time he so chooses. The deacon should prayerfully reflect on his decision and seek counsel from the acting deacons and elders before making a final decision.
- E. Involuntary dismissal of a deacon shall be in accordance with the procedures for church discipline according to Matthew 18:15-18 when a brother is caught in an offense. If the deacon is no longer "beyond reproach" and dismissal from office is necessary, the elders and deacons may suggest voluntary resignation. If he refuses, he may be removed from office, but only after prayerful consideration and a majority consensus from the active elders and deacons.

ARTICLE IV Church Officers

All church positions are to be held by church members of one year, except members who have actively held that position in a church of like faith for one year previously. Church officers include: trustees, clerk, superintendent, teachers, treasurer, and finance team.

SECTION 1. **TRUSTEES.**

In accordance with the meaning of the word, trustees are to be servants of the church. The elders and active trustees will compile a nomination list of qualified men to be elected for position. Of these nominations, six (6) shall be elected by the church to serve for a period of three (3) years. After the third year they will rotate off for at least a one year sabbatical. After the sabbatical they may be approached, if they are willing, to serve again for a three year term, as long as they are still members in good standing (as defined by the church covenant), able to serve, and are approved by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote at a business meeting.

SECTION 2. **DUTIES OF THE TRUSTEES.**

- A. The trustees will hold in trust all property of the church. They have actual care of the place of worship and all physical assets of the church but have no authority to sell, buy, transfer, borrow, lease, or transfer property without direct authority of the church.
- B. As soon as possible after election, the trustees shall meet and elect one of their number as chairman. They shall meet as the need arises at the time and place selected by the majority. They may organize themselves, form task teams and so divide their work in a manner as their own wisdom may direct.
- C. The trustees shall make careful studies of the essential equipment and facilities of the church and oversee the upkeep of the buildings and grounds, and make proper recommendations to the church. The chairman of the board of trustees shall be a member of the finance team and work in conjunction with the elders and deacons.

SECTION 3. **CLERK.**

The church shall elect annually a church clerk. It shall be the duty of the clerk to keep minutes at the business meetings of the church. The clerk may use the services of the church secretary at any time he/she feels it necessary in carrying out the responsibilities of this office. The clerk shall consider it a part of his/her responsibility to promote loyalty in church life.

SECTION 4. **TEACHERS.**

All ministries of the church shall be under the oversight of the elders. It is understood that the senior pastor is ex-officio head of all the ministries named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them all.

- A. **Superintendent.** A church superintendent shall be elected annually. The superintendent shall help to administrate and work alongside the elders to help oversee the teaching of the church. They shall help take record of attendance in the classes, and assist in ordering literature and curriculum. The active superintendent may be approached three months prior to the quarterly business meeting in August about continuing to serve. Whenever a vacancy occurs, the elders will search out as they see fit, a qualified candidate. When a qualified candidate is found he/she shall be voted on and elected by the church at the third quarterly business meeting.

B. Teachers. All regular teachers in the church shall be elected annually. Prior to the quarterly business meeting in August, those currently teaching may be approached about continuing in their teaching position for another year. Whenever a vacancy occurs, the elders will search out as they see fit, a qualified candidate. When a qualified candidate is found he/she shall be voted on and approved by the church at the third quarterly business meeting.

SECTION 5. TREASURER.

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive; preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved by the finance team, all money or things of value paid or given by the church. Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and approval and acceptance by the church, the same shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall preserve it as a part of permanent records of the church. The treasurer shall, upon election of a successor, at the completion of his fiscal report, promptly deliver to the finance team all books, records, and accounts in his hands pertaining or relating to, in any manner, the duties of the office which he is relinquishing.

SECTION 6. FINANCE TEAM.

This team shall be selected and appointed by the elders annually. They shall be chosen based upon their spiritual maturity, faithfulness to the church, attendance to the meetings, commitment to regular giving, availability, dedication to the stewardship of the church, and a gifted interest in budgeting and financial matters. The team shall consist of five members, which should include the treasurer. The elders may attend any or all meetings and should give counsel and leadership as needed. It shall be the duty of this team to make sure the financial reports of the church are in order and up to date.

This team will have no final power or authority in matters of the church finances but shall act as a resource team and a liaison between the church body and her ministries on financial matters. The treasurer will submit a report at each quarterly business meeting of the church and printed copies will be made available.

SECTION 7. DUTIES OF FINANCE TEAM

This team will be responsible to:

- A. Gather from the leadership team of the church projected expenditures to help prepare an annual budget. Then to refine and submit to the church for approval at its annual business meeting, or at such other time as may be better for the church, a unified budget, indicating by items the amount needed for all expenses.
- B. Make sure receipts from all sources are kept in one account, except building fund receipts. All funds, for any and all purposes, will be properly recorded on the books of the church. The expenses of all ministries, as approved by the church, shall be paid from this account. The finance team will keep watch over the actual income of the church as compared to the budgeted income and raise concerns to the elders if necessary.
- C. Make recommendations to the elders the need for special offerings as necessary.
- D. Meet as needed to consistently perform such responsibilities as are listed above.

ARTICLE V

Church Meetings

SECTION 1. **WORSHIP.**

- A. Public worship shall be scheduled on each Sunday and at any other appropriate time determined by the church.
- B. The Lord's Supper shall be observed monthly or at such time as the church may determine.

SECTION 2. **BUSINESS.**

- A. At any regular meetings of the church, the church may, without special notice, act upon reception of members, the dismissal of members to other churches; or any other business that the moderator in consultation with the elders deems necessary to be acted upon.
- B. The pastor may, and shall when requested by the elders, deacons, trustees, or leadership team, call business meetings, clearly stating in the notices the particular purposes of the meeting.
- C. The business meetings of the church will be held on a quarterly basis. The specified day of the meeting will be announced publicly at least two weeks prior to the meeting. One quarterly business meeting each year shall be designated as the annual meeting by the leadership team of the church.
- D. All business meetings shall be governed according to Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE VI

Church Discipline

SECTION 1. **PURPOSE.**

The purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by:

- A. Maintaining purity in the local church (I Corinthians 5:6).
- B. Edifying believers by deterring sin (I Timothy 5:20).
- C. Promoting the spiritual welfare of the offending member by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1).

SECTION 2. **FORMATIVE DISCIPLINE.**

Members are to be disciples (learners, followers, disciplined ones) of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are to walk under the discipline of the Lord Jesus and His Word. Mutual submission to one another in the reverence of Christ (Ephesians 5:21) is a part of that discipline. Along with that, God has called the church to submission and obedience (I Peter 5:5; Hebrews 13:17) to the elders and leaders that He has placed over His church. This formative discipline is part of the holy walk that God has commanded for each true believer. God readily supplies His grace to those who are submissive and obedient to Him and He resists those who proudly resist His leadership (I Peter 5:5; James 4:6). Part of His work is both formative and corrective discipline within His church.

SECTION 3. **CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE.**

When a member of Pleasant View Baptist Church becomes unrepentant in sinful, disorderly, immoral, or scandalous conduct or attitudes, and/or promotes heretical doctrine and false teachings contrary to the Bible, it is necessary for the elders and this church body to apply corrective discipline as instructed by God in His Word. All corrective discipline will be considered and exercised according to the scriptures in Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2; I Thessalonians 3:6-15; I Corinthians 5:1-13; Matthew 7:1-5.

A. When a member is caught in a sin:

- 1) He/she should be confronted first of all privately (Matthew 18:15).
- 2) He/she should be confronted in the spirit of meekness and humility (Galatians 6:1-3).
- 3) If the member does not repent he/she should be confronted again in the presence of one or two other members for the purpose of witness (Matthew 18:16).
- 4) If it is determined by the "one or two" others that an actual trespass/sin has occurred and the member is still unrepentant, the issue should be taken to the church elders (Matthew 18:17).
- 5) After every attempt has been made towards repentance and reconciliation, the elders will determine whether a matter is to be brought before the church body for action (Matthew 18:17).
- 6) Steps of action to be taken:
 - a) Public reproof of unrepentant member (Matthew 18:17-20).
 - b) Suspension of rights, privileges, positions, meetings, serving, that is afforded a member in good standing, until fruits of repentance are observed. (II Corinthians 7:8-12, Galatians 6:1-5)
 - c) Dismissal/Excommunication of unrepentant member and withdrawal of membership and intimate fellowship by other members, except for reasons of repentance and restoration (I Corinthians 5:1-12).
- 7) If at any point, during the process of corrective discipline, a member demonstrates the fruits of repentance, steps toward restoration will begin. (II Corinthians 7:8-12).

B. The early churches were subject to confrontation for reasons such as:

- 1) Unwillingness to become reconciled to an offended brother (Matthew 18:15-17).
- 2) Unwillingness to engage in sufficient work (II Thessalonians 3:6-15).
- 3) Divisiveness in the church (Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-10)
- 4) Sexual immorality or habitual covetousness, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness, or swindling (I Corinthians 5:1-13).
- 5) False Teaching (I Timothy 1; II Timothy 2:17-18).
- 6) Sinful conduct (Galatians 6:1).
- 7) Broken fellowship, idleness, indifference (Hebrews 10:19-25)

ARTICLE VII

Leadership Team

The Leadership Team, shall be composed of the senior pastor, associate pastors, chairman of the elders, clerk, treasurer, finance team, superintendent, chairman of the deacons, chairman of trustees, and heads from any other bona fide ministries within the church.

The leadership team shall meet as needs of the church demand, and shall seek to make plans for the coordination and cooperation of all the ministries of the church. All matters agreed upon by the leadership team shall be presented to the church for action.

ARTICLE VIII

Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast at any regular or specially called business meeting, such proposed amendments having been given in writing at least two weeks prior and a quorum is met as outlined in Article I, Section 4, of the By-Laws.