



Pleasant Ridge
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

OUR FAITH AND ORDER

Truths We Treasure &
Principles that Govern Us

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*We are grateful to our other former elders who helped us with putting this constitution together
Jerry Maurer and Tom Obringer.*

OUR FAITH AND ORDER

Section 1: Who We Are

God has chosen to save a people and call them out of the world so that they might for the glory of God assemble themselves together in local congregations or churches. Therefore this gathered church known as Pleasant Ridge Christian Fellowship (Pleasant Ridge) has drawn up this **Faith and Order** as our Confession and Constitution.

1. The Truths We Treasure

The Truths We Treasure is the basic statement of doctrine that must be affirmed and submitted to by all ministry related positions. It is worded simply so as to be accessible to all, including new Christians, and can be affirmed by all with a clear conscience.

2. The Principles that Govern Us

The Principles that Govern Us have been developed to work out how we are to function as a church and community. We have chosen to articulate guiding principles that are necessary to establish order, rather than writing extensive, detailed legislation

The Truths We Treasure does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For the purpose of unified corporate worship policies and practices of doctrine and faith, our elders will give direction to the Bible's meaning and application in regard to the policies and practices of doctrine and faith at Pleasant Ridge.

We believe that as the local body of Christ it is imperative that all persons who serve or attend Pleasant Ridge agree to and abide by this Statement of Faith.

1. The Bible

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit (1) and is God's revelation of Himself to man. This living Word (2) reveals to us God's principles and is the supreme standard by which all authoritative rules of faith and human conduct should be based upon (3).

2. The Eternal Godhead

We believe that there is but one true (4) and living God (LORD Jehovah) (5); maker of heaven and earth (6) and all that is in them (7). We also believe that in the unity of the Godhead there are three distinct persons revealed to us as God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit (8) who are without division of nature, essence, or being. They are coexistent, coeternal, and equal in divine perfection (9).

3. God the Father

We believe that He is holy (10), the Creator of all that is (11) and He is almighty (12) in power (13), wisdom, strength, and glory. We believe God is absolutely holy and perfect in every aspect of His being (eg. love, mercy, justice etc.) (14).

4. Jesus

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God (15), became man without ceasing to be God (16), and is therefore both fully God and fully man (17). He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (18). We believe in His sinless life (19), His miracles, and His teaching. We believe Jesus was crucified on the cross and died as the substitute to pay the penalty for our sin (20); that He physically rose from the dead and ascended into heaven (21).

Scriptures cited: (1) 2 Peter 1:21 (2) Hebrews 4:12; John 6:63 (3) 2 Tim. 3:16-17 (4) Mark 12:29-34; Jer. 10:10 (5) 1 Tim. 4:10 (6) Ps. 115:15 (7) Col. 1:16 (8) Matt. 28:19; I John 5:6-11 (9) John 17:1-26; John 14:9-19 (10) Isa. 6:3 (11) Isa. 44:24; Acts 14:15 (12) Gen. 17:1; Rev 1:8 (13) Rev 19:6 (14) Isa. 6:3; Isa. 43:15; Duet. 32:4 (15) Heb. 1:2 (16) John 17:5,24; John 8:58; I John 4:2; John 1:14 (17) John 1:1,14; John 8:58 (18) Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:34 (19) Heb. 7:26 (20) 2 Cor. 5:21 Gal. 3:13 (21) I Cor. 15:3-8

5. The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God, and He intimately knows the thoughts of God. (22). The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin and regenerates spiritually dead sinners (23). We believe the Holy Spirit indwells and seals every person who believes in Jesus (24). The Holy Spirit's life giving power empowers us to live a godly life and helps us to bear fruit (25). He gives us gifts for the building up of the body of Christ (26).

6. Creation

We believe that "...in six (literal) days LORD Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them ..." (27) And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (28). And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good (29). And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made (30).

7. Humanity

A. Creation

We believe that the first man, Adam, was created by an immediate act of God before whom he walked in holiness and purity, not by a process of evolution. Adam and Eve were created in the image and likeness of God and in their original state Adam and Eve enjoyed sweet fellowship with God (31).

B. The Fall

By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Because of this voluntary transgression, mankind fell from perfection and thereby incurred upon themselves and their posterity not only physical death, but spiritual death, which is eternal separation from God (32).

C. Redemption through the Gospel

We believe that "...While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (33) and that by the shedding of His own blood He gives us the only hope of redemption. Salvation is a gracious gift from God to anyone who with repentance and faith believes in Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection from the dead. It is not through any righteousness of our own, but solely through the righteousness of Jesus Christ providing atonement to everyone who believes in and submits to Him (34). We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

8. Daily Christian Living

We believe that it is the will of God that we are daily growing in divine grace as a result of our commitment to live for Jesus Christ and partake in His holiness by dying to ourselves⁽³⁵⁾ and living with Christ,⁽³⁶⁾ We should continually grow ⁽³⁷⁾ stronger in faith ⁽³⁸⁾, God's power, prayer, love⁽³⁹⁾, holiness, and service to others ⁽⁴⁰⁾.

9. The Church, Ordinances, and Spiritual Gifts

The church is the body of Christ and is made up of all who have believed in Him ⁽⁴¹⁾. The Church has been given the mission of preaching the gospel to all nations and ⁽⁴²⁾the responsibility of building believers up in Christ, ⁽⁴³⁾. The church is commanded by the Scriptures to regularly fellowship in the context of a local church ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

We believe there are two ordinances that have special significance to our church.

A. The Ordinance of Baptism

Baptism in water is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized ⁽⁴⁵⁾ as a declaration to all believers and the world that they have died with Christ and have also been raised with Him⁽⁴⁶⁾.

B. The Ordinance of Communion

Is to be practiced regularly in fellowship with other believers as a memorial of Christ's suffering, death, atonement, and resurrection until He returns ⁽⁴⁷⁾.

We believe in the gifts and fruit of the Spirit.

C. Spiritual Fruit and Gifts

The fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control, all should be modeled daily as irrefutable evidence of a Spirit-filled life. We believe that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to every believer in the church. Included in these gifts are prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership, mercy, wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues, interpretation of tongues. These gifts are given to every man, as He, the Holy Spirit, wills. These gifts are to be earnestly desired in order that they would be most beneficial to the church, and these gifts should be used in connection with the fruit of the Spirit ⁽⁴⁸⁾.

Scriptures cited: (35) Gal. 2:20; Gal. 5:24 (36) I John 2:24 (37) 2 Pet. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; Col. 1:9-10 (38) 2 Thess. 1:3-4 (39) Eph. 4:16 (40) I Thess. 5:11; 2 Cor. 9:12 (41) I Cor. 12:27; Col. 1:24 (42) Matt. 28:18-20 (43) Heb. 10:24 (44) Heb. 10:25 (45) Acts 2:38-39; Acts 8:36-39 (46) Romans 6:1-10 (47) Matthew 26:26-30; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (48) Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 14:1, Galatians 5:22-23

10. Marriage

We believe that marriage between a man and a woman should be striving to mirror the relationship between Christ and the Church through love and submission (49). We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive and lifelong union (50). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (51). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman.

11. The Family

We believe that the family consists of the human relationships of Husband/Wife or Parent/Child (52). God’s perfect order of the family consists of a husband, wife, and children or the anticipation of children (53). Any combination of these relationships is considered a family.

Parents and particularly fathers, are commanded to love, care for, and raise their children, diligently teaching them to know the commands and precepts of God (54). Children are to love, obey, honor, and listen to their parents in truth (55). Adult children are to care for their elderly parents if the parents are unable to do so themselves (56).

12. Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person in His image as male or female as distinct and complementary genders at conception (57). Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person (58). We believe that any form of sexual immorality, including but not limited to adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, transgenderism, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography is sinful and offensive to God and destructive (59).

13. The Second Coming of Christ and Last Things

We believe that the Second Coming of Christ is personal and imminent (60). In the near future, Jesus will return to earth as King and Judge of the whole world and will bring about the complete fulfillment of the salvation of all believers and punishment of wickedness (61). The dead will rise and those who do not believe will be cast into the lake of fire and away from God’s presence forever. The righteous in Christ will be rewarded and dwell with God forever in the new heaven and the new earth (62).

Scriptures cited: (49) Ephesians 5:22-33 (50) Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 19:3-9 (51) I Cor. 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4 (52) Col. 3:18-21 (53) Gen. 1:28, 2:24 (54) Deut. 6:7; Eph. 6:4 (55) Eph. 6:1-2; Prov. 1:8, 4:1; Matt. 15:4 (56) I Tim. 5:3-4 (57) Gen. 1:27 (58) Romans 1:24-28 (59) 1 Cor. 6:9-13; Gal. 6:7; Eph. 5:3 (60) I Thess. 4:15-18 (61) II Thess. 1:7-10; Hebrews 9:26-28 (62) Rev. 20:6, 11-15; Rev. 21:1-5

14. Heaven and Hell

We believe that Heaven is being in God's presence and is the glorious eternal home of born-again believers (63). We believe that Hell is the place of torment awaiting the final judgement of the lake of fire for those who reject Christ as Savior where the wrath of God abides on them forever (64).

15. The Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is priceless in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death (65). We are therefore called to defend, protect, and have concern for the physical and spiritual needs of all mankind (66). Since man is created in God's image, we believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accordance with Scripture.

Article 1. Our Shared Mission

By God's grace and through His Word, we strive to cultivate in the hearts of God's people a passion for **Desiring His Presence** in our lives, **And Making His Presence Known** to the lives of others.

Article 2. Our Purpose

The church exists to glorify God. We proclaim the supremacy of Jesus over all areas of life and culture. The universal church is the redeemed people of God placed into the Body of Christ. The local church is the people of God gathered together in localities; as a church we are to carry out the Great Commission to preach the Gospel to all people in this world, to meet regularly together in an outward worship that expresses inward and spiritual truths, and to encourage, edify, and build up one another. Therefore, we exist as a church for the following primary purposes:

1. Cultivating Worship

We respond to our salvation and the truth of the Gospel with praise adoration, singing, and the teaching of the Word for the glory of God (67).

2. Creating Community

We pursue spiritual maturity and community through corporate worship, fellowship, Bible study, prayer, and discipleship as we meet together living life together. (68).

3. Living on Mission

We participate in God's plan to redeem the earth and encourage everyone to confess faith in Jesus. We desire to help those who are hurting and seeking answers to life's difficulties by welcoming them into our community and pointing them to Jesus (69).

Scriptures cited: (67) Ps.95; John 4:23-24 (68) Col. 3:16; Heb. 10:24-25; James 5:16 (69) Matt. 28:18-20

Section 3: Order: The Principles that Govern Us Cont.

Article 3: Our Church Government

1. The Lord Jesus Christ– The Head and Chief Shepherd of the Church

We joyfully submit to Christ alone as the Head of His body, the church (70). We acknowledge Him as our Chief Shepherd. In all matters of faith, church order, and discipline, we recognize that Christ works with the Holy Spirit to govern His church through the Holy Scriptures as the full and final authority (71).

2. The Elders–The Servant Leaders in the Church

A plurality of elders appropriate to the size of the congregation shall lead this local church according to the Scriptures (72). These men shall at all times and in all activities stand under the authority of Christ and His Word (73). The elders shall not lord over the flock, but shall shepherd the flock as servant leaders and faithful stewards (74). The church shall lovingly and prayerfully submit to and support the elders' oversight (75).

2.A. Body of Elders

2.A.1. The Equality and Unanimity of the Elders

The elders of Pleasant Ridge shall constitute a body in which all members shall be equal and shall have one vote. In the spirit of unity in the body, we seek to have unanimous decisions among the elders. In the event that the elders are not in agreement on important issues (Eg: doctrine, discipline, etc.) a 2/3 majority is required to determine the issue after a designated time of prayer and discussion. From time to time other matters of business may need immediate attention and may be resolved by not less than 2 elders. The decision shall be communicated to the entire body and reviewed if necessary.

Scriptures cited: (70) Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18 (71) 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; Heb. 13:20 (72) Tit. 1:5 (73) 1 Pet. 5:1-4 (74) Matt. 20:24-28 (75) Heb. 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4

2.B. The Shepherding and Overseeing by the Elders

The elders are charged by God to shepherd and oversee the church (76). Therefore, the elders shall shepherd the flock by:

1. Teaching, discipling, admonishing and exhorting from the Word for the purpose of spiritual growth and maturity (77).
2. Guarding against doctrinal error (78).
3. Using our gifts to equip the members to discover and use their spiritual gifts (79).
4. Sharing openly and transparently the direction of the church with each other and the congregation.
5. Praying for the congregation and the work of God (80).
6. Ensuring that all the ministries of Pleasant Ridge maintain spiritual alignment with Scripture and this document.
7. Appointing those who serve as deacons.
8. Correcting or disciplining those who create dissension that impairs the spiritual unity of the church (81).
9. In matters of public church discipline the elders will lead in the correcting of the erring brother/sister and seek to restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness (82).
10. Reviewing and approving any missionaries or organizations Pleasant Ridge will support, financially or otherwise, and providing opportunities for congregational involvement in support, prayer, communication, and fellowship with them.
11. Ensuring that the finances of Pleasant Ridge are used with integrity and accountability, approving the budget, and receiving regular reports from those appointed (See section 3 Article 6).

Scriptures cited: (76) Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Tim 3:4-5; 5:17 (77) Acts 20:20; Col. 1:28; 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:17; 2 Tim. 4:1 (78) Acts 20:28-31 (79) Eph. 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 2:2 (80) Acts 6:3-4, Acts 15 (81) Tit. 1:9-11; 3:9-11 (82) Gal. 6:1

2.C. The Qualifications for Elders

Elders shall be men who are in agreement with *Our Faith and Order* and are to be an example to the flock by striving to live out the biblical qualifications for elders (83).

- Above reproach
 - Husband of one wife
 - Self-controlled
 - Respectable
 - Hospitable
 - Able to teach
 - Not a drunkard
 - Not violent, but gentle
 - Not quarrelsome
 - Not a lover of money
 - Manages his own household and keeps his children submissive
 - Not a recent convert
 - Well thought of by outsiders
- Children are submissive, faithful and not given to rebellion.
- Not arrogant
 - Not quick tempered
 - Lover of good
 - Upright
 - Holy
 - Disciplined
 - Holds firmly to the trustworthy Word and able to rebuke those who contradict the Word.
 - Willing and eager

2.D. The Terms of Office for Elders

Elders shall be appointed to an indefinite term of office. The term may be ended by an elder choosing to step down or through disqualification. The elders shall arrange for sabbaticals to be taken as needed. An elder may resign from office for reasons sufficient unto himself after giving notice.

2.E. The Appointment of Elders

If another elder is needed, the elders will ask the congregation to cover the process in prayer and fasting. The elders will be responsible to identify men whom meet the biblical qualifications and are fit for the office. They shall meet with the prospective elder to determine affirmation of *Our Faith and Order*. Upon the selection of a perspective elder, the elders will present him to the congregation. The congregation will have at least two weeks to present any issues with the prospective elder regarding his qualifications by meeting with the elders (84).

If an issue is presented that violates the biblical qualifications as listed in 2.C. then the elders will look into the matter, and if confirmed, then the prospective elder shall have an opportunity to respond to the issue with the elders and the member. The elders shall make a final decision concerning the prospective elder.

Upon agreeing to appoint the prospective elder to the office, the elders shall set a date on which the prospective elder will officially begin as an elder. They shall give notice during the worship service at least two weeks before the official start date.

2.E.1 Vocational Elders

When considering the appointment of a vocational elder, the elders should first look among themselves and then if needed they may invite someone from outside the local congregation to come and serve in this capacity. It is essential that any man called from outside the congregation to be a vocational elder must go through the steps of 2.E.

2.F. The Removal of Elders

2.F.1 The process of removal

An Elder shall be removed for any reason listed in 2.F. 3. If necessary, discipline may be administered as outlined on page 14, Article 4.2.

2.F.2. Accusation of an Elder concerning a reason for removal

The elders shall consider any accusation and investigate and verify the charges. No charge will be brought against an elder unless there is **at least two** members having knowledge of the accusation (except in the case of accusation of sexual molestation. See Article 4 2.F). If the charges are verified, the elders shall take appropriate action which may include dismissal from the eldership, and/or public rebuke (85).

2.F.3. Reasons for the removal of an Elder

An elder may be removed from office for the following reasons:

1. Not living out the biblical qualifications as stated in 2.C.
2. Not holding to *Our Faith and Order*
3. If an elder's teaching is consistently false or divisive within PRCF.
4. Unrepentant sin.

2.F.4. When an Elder is unable to discharge the duties of the office

If an elder has physical or mental health issues or outside pressures of life that are making it difficult for the elder to discharge his duties, the elders may request for the elder to resign.

2.G. Restoration of one removed

An elder who has previously been removed from office, after an appropriate time, shall be eligible to be considered for the office by the elders. Care should be taken to preserve the reputation of Christ and the purity of the church in such a restoration to the office.

2.H. The meetings of the Elders

The elders shall meet regularly and as often as is necessary to fulfill their responsibilities.

2.I. The roles among the Elders

The elders shall assign ministry oversight responsibilities among themselves. The elders may also create other roles within the church body to help with the ministry.

2.J. Financial support of Elders

The Pleasant Ridge family is responsible to provide generous financial support, as the church is able, to those men who devote large portions of time and carry the responsibility of the work as vocational elders (86).

3. Deacons—The Servant Ministers in the Church

Deacons are to identify and meet tangible needs, protect and promote church unity, and serve and support the ministry of the elders. The deacon will be accountable to at least one elder overseeing the ministry area in which they are ministering (87).

3.A. When Deacons need to be appointed

Deacons will be appointed when there is a need that is identified that cannot be handled under the current leadership.

3.B. The qualifications for Deacons

Here at Pleasant Ridge deacons shall be men and or husbands along with their wives* who demonstrate a willingness and ability to serve, and are in agreement with *Our Faith and Order* and meet the biblical qualifications (89).

- Dignified
- Not double-tongued
- Not addicted to much wine
- Not greedy for dishonest gain
- Sound in faith and life
- Blameless
- Godly wife
- Husband of one wife
- Manages children and household well

*Qualifications for the wives who serve along with their husbands (90).

- Dignified
- Not slanders
- Sober minded
- Faithful in all things

3.C. The terms of office for Deacons

Deacons shall be appointed to a term of office as long as the need exists or the term may be ended by resignation or disqualification. Sabbaticals can be arranged as needed with the elders. Deacons may resign from office for reasons sufficient unto themselves.

3.D. The selection of Deacons

The elders must carefully consider the needs of the church, and when needed, ask the congregation to prayerfully identify men or couples who meet the qualifications to serve as deacons. The elders will publicly present those qualified to the congregation as deacons.

3.E. The removal of Deacons

3.E.1 The process of removal

A deacon shall be removed for any reason listed in 3.E. 3. If necessary, discipline may be administered as outlined on page 14, Article 4.2.

3.E.2. Accusation of an Deacon concerning a reason for removal

The elders shall consider any accusation and investigate and verify the charges. No charge will be brought against a deacon unless there is **at least two** members having knowledge of the accusation (except in the case of accusation of sexual molestation. See Article 4 2.F). If the charges are verified, the elders shall take appropriate action which may include dismissal from being a deacon, and/or public rebuke.

3.E.3. Reasons for the removal of a Deacon

A deacon may be removed from office for the following reasons:

1. Not living out the biblical qualifications (*see 3.B. for qualifications*)
2. Not holding to *Our Faith and Order*.
3. If a deacon's teaching is consistently false or divisive within PRCF.
4. Unrepentant sin.

3.E.4. When a Deacon is unable to discharge the duties of the office

If a deacon has physical or mental health issues, or outside pressures of life that are making it difficult for the deacon to discharge his duties, the elders may request for the deacon to resign.

3.F Restoration of one removed

In restoration care should be taken to preserve the reputation of Christ and the purity of the church. After an appropriate time, if the person is eligible to serve as a deacon they can be considered if there is a need.

Article 4. Church Membership

1. Definition and function

Here at Pleasant Ridge we do not have “formal church membership”. We believe that by participating at Pleasant Ridge through our worship, ministry, giving and prayer you are identifying with the on-going work of Jesus Christ and have joined us as we seek to do Christ’s work through His Spirit. As the local body of Christ, Scripture commands us to love one another by:

- Serving one another
- Praying for one another
- Caring for one another
- Equipping one another for service
- Encouraging one another

We recognize that all those who have been born of the Holy Spirit, having put their faith in Jesus Christ, are immediately placed into the universal church, the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. Therefore, every believer is a member of the universal Church (90).

2. Handling of Church Discipline

Church discipline is needed for those who name the name of Christ in cases where their teaching or behavior violates Scripture. The Scriptures require us to implement the loving biblical steps for those who know Christ and confess Him as their Savior. The primary aim of all steps of loving discipline is the repentance and restoration of the Christian brother/sister. The aim is to preserve the purity of the church and the reputation of Christ.

The goal of corrective discipline is always to glorify God, the welfare and purity of the church, and the restoration and spiritual growth of the erring Christian (91). All parties involved in church discipline should proceed carefully with self-examination and prayer.

We understand that there are times where one or more of the elders must be involved to reach the goal of the repentance process. Therefore we encourage that if you find yourself in a place where following these guidelines is difficult, please prayerfully reach out to an elder for advice in handling the situation. Our desire is that we limit the uninvolved parties.

Scriptures cited: (90) 1 Cor. 12:12-20; Eph. 1:22 (91) 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 2:5-8; 1 Tim. 5:20

2.A. One-on-One Attempt to Restore

Within the body of Pleasant Ridge any believer having factual knowledge of a fellow believer's sin should approach that person in private, loving confrontation and seek his or her restoration (92).

2.B. One or Two Witnesses Attempt to Restore

If the accused Christian refuses to be restored then the warning brother/sister should return, privately, with one or two witnesses. These witnesses should judge the matter and seek to reconcile the parties and/or to restore the erring Christian (93).

2.C. Christian Brother/Sister's Attempt to Restore

2.C.1. Stage 1- Report to The Elders

To ensure grace and truth are applied, if the witnesses believe that the issue is not reconciled, they should report the matter to the elders (94). The elders should examine the matter with prayerful examination and seek to reconcile the parties (95). In the case where an incident or sin is public and widely known, the elders will seek to examine the matter and restore the individual (96).

2.C.2. Stage 2–Report to the Church

If the erring Christian continues to refuse to be restored, the elders will report the matter to the believers who attend Pleasant Ridge (97).

2.D. Treatment for the Unrepentant Christian

The elders will instruct the church to only associate with the erring Christian for the purpose of restoring him or her from their error. During this time, the erring Christian will be excluded from participation in the ordinances and any volunteer or leadership positions according to the guidelines of Scripture (98).

In the event that the unrepentant Christian begins attending another church, the elders would be obligated to share the results with that church's leadership in our effort to restore that person if that church were to contact us.

2.E. Restoration of the Erring Christian

2.E.1. Informal and Private Level of Discipline

If an erring Christian repents of the sin and the sin is not known publicly, then repentance, confession, and restoration shall be private as outlined in(Section 3:Article 4.2.A and Section 3:Article 4.2.B) (99).

Scriptures cited: (92) Matt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1-2 (93) Matt. 18:16, 19-20 (94) Heb. 13:17; Matt. 18:16, 19-20 (95) 1 Cor. 5:1-13 (96) Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:9-11 (97) 2 Thess. 3:6, 14- 15 (98) Matt. 18:15-16; Luke 17:3-4; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13 (99) Matt. 18:15-16, 19-20; Gal. 6:1-2

2.E.2. Formal and Public Level of Discipline

If an erring Christian repents of sin and the sin was known publicly then the repentance, confession, and restoration must also be public (100).

2.E.3. Responsibility of Christians

At whatever level restoration occurs, Christians must forgive and reaffirm their love for the offender upon his or her confession and repentance (101).

2.F. Accusation of Sexual Molestation

Any accusation of sexual molestation will be dealt with immediately using biblical principles and civil laws.

Article 5. Ordinances

We believe there are two ordinances that have special significance to our church body as we observe them together. No ordinance has saving power, but and are deep, meaningful outward symbols of spiritual realities.

1. The Ordinance of Baptism

Baptism is the ordinance of the church whereby believers publicly confess their saving faith in Christ. We practice baptism by immersion in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (102). Any person who wants to publicly profess faith in Christ or who has not been biblically baptized may ask to be baptized by asking any of the elders.

2. The Ordinance of Communion

The Lord's Table is the ordinance of the church whereby believers look back to remember the Lord's death, look inward for self examination, look outward in proclaiming the Gospel, and look forward until the Lord returns for His people. The Lord's Table shall be scheduled as often as the elders decide. All believers and only believers present at its serving shall be invited to participate, being reminded of its biblical characteristics and waiting on one another for all to be served (103).

Article 6. Stewardship and Finances

1. Financial Oversight

The elders are ultimately responsible for the financial oversight of the church.

2. Financial Support

Pleasant Ridge shall be supported by free - will offerings and sacrificial giving. We believe that every believer should be a cheerful giver (104).

Scriptures cited: (100) 2 Cor. 2:5-11 (101) Luke 17:3-4; 2 Cor. 2:5 - 11; Eph. 4:32 (102) Mark 1:9-11; Matthew 28:19; Act 2:38-41 (103) Mark 14:22 - 23; 1 Corinthians 11:23-33 (104) I Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7

3. Financial Indebtedness

It is the intention of Pleasant Ridge to finance its growth as God provides and not to incur debt. Any exception to this it would require 100% agreement amongst the elders.

4. Benevolence

As a church family we desire to help those who are in need, especially those who are are of the household of faith. With discretion and wisdom we will seek to do good to everyone (105).

5. Finance Management

The elders will appoint individuals to see that the finances are properly received, expended, and recorded.

5.A Responsibilities

Those whom the elders appoint will create an annual budget. They are to properly account for all financial transactions. At a minimum we will seek to have a segregation of the giving function and expenditure function.

All offerings given will be counted by at least two people.

Article 7. Meetings

1. Regular Meetings

The elders shall set the frequency and times of the regular meetings of Pleasant Ridge, including worship on the Lord's Day and other services as desired to best fulfill the Mission and Purpose of Pleasant Ridge.

2. Other Meetings

At the elders discretion they may communicate major decisions such as those relating to finances, budget, and major capital improvements, as well as any other issues affecting the Pleasant Ridge family. The elders will receive input and carefully consider the responses and counsel of those who are part of Pleasant Ridge in their final decision (106).

3. The Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Pleasant Ridge shall be held each year at a time set by the elders for the presentation of a vision, mission, goals and adoption of a budget, giving of ministry reports, and any other business scheduled by the elders.

Scriptures cited:(105) Gal. 6:10; 2 Thess. 3:6-11 (106) Acts 6:5; 15:22; 1 Peter 5:1-4

Article 8. Children’s Workers

Anyone working with minors must adhere to the “Children’s Policy and Procedures” of Pleasant Ridge.

Article 9. Building Use

For building use please refer to the “Building Use Policy” for guidelines and procedures.

Article 10. Amendments

Pleasant Ridge’s Faith and Order may be amended. Any amendments proposed must be unanimously-approved by the elders.

Article 11. Dissolution

1. The Process of Dissolution

Only the Principles of the Corporation, acting upon the recommendation of the elders, may dissolve this corporation.

2. The Responsibilities at Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of this corporation, all legal requirements will be followed. If there is a surplus of assets they are to be distributed to another entity with similar purposes.