

# **CONSTITUTION**

**Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church**

**2018 Revision**

**Approved September 9, 2018**

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## **ARTICLE I - NAME AND MISSION**

### *Section 1*

The name of this church is The Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church, Inc. It is a non-profit Ohio Corporation.

### *Section 2*

The church mission is to win souls for Jesus Christ and to nurture believers. This church recognizes the Lordship of Jesus Christ, who is the Head of His Body, the church. All those in authority shall continually seek His mind and will, guided by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit in all actions and decisions.

### *Section 3*

This church is autonomous and will not affiliate itself with any other governing body that will have the power to assess funds, assign ministers, or issue supervisory edicts. All assets of the church shall remain in control of the congregation, through the Church Board. Any amendment to Article 1, Section 3 will require the supporting vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the congregation in good standing present at the Annual Congregational Meeting to pass. If this action is carried, it must then pass again by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the congregation present at the next Annual Congregational Meeting to become final.

## **ARTICLE 2 – TENETS OF FAITH**

This Church accepts the Holy Scriptures as the revealed will of God, the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. Hence, this statement of fundamental truths is intended as a basis of fellowship among us (See 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The human wording of these Tenets is supported by scripture (see references that accompany each Tenet). No claim is made that these Tenets contain all Biblical truth, only that they cover our need as to fundamental doctrines.

1) We Affirm: The Old and New Testaments to be inerrant as originally given. The Bible was verbally inspired by God and is a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men. Originating with God, it is sufficient for faith and practice. The Scriptures maintain, and we affirm, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the theme of the Scriptures and that no portion of scripture can be understood until it leads to Christ. We maintain the authority, inerrancy, to

be the fundamental of the fundamentals. I Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:21; John 17:17; Matthew 8:20, 24:35.

2) We Affirm: God is Triune. One God, who is infinitely perfect, just and Holy. That within the nature of the one true God there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who share one nature. The New Testament affirms a distinction of persons in the Godhead. This can be seen by the "I" "thou" relationship between the Father and the Son. The Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Holy Spirit, yet each is fully the deity. This is the foundation of Christian faith and practice. Deuteronomy 6:4, 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:2; 2 Samuel 7:22, 22:32; Nehemiah 9:6; 1 Kings 8:60; 2 Kings 19:15; 1 Chronicles 17:20; Psalms 18:31; Isaiah 43:10, 44:6, 8, 45:18, 21; Isaiah 46:9; Mark 12:32; Galatians 3:20; 1 Corinthians 8:5, 6; 1 Timothy 2:5; James 2:19.

3) We Affirm: Jesus is true God and true man. Before taking on human flesh He is known as the Word or Logos. He was born of a virgin, He died on the cross, the just for the unjust. He rose bodily from the grave. This was done according to the scripture, ascended into heaven and said He would return in like manner. Those who will place all of their trust in Him will pass from death to life, be reconciled and saved from their sins. He is the head of the Church, and is now seated at the right hand of God. Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; Luke 24:37-39; John 1:1, 3:15, 16, 18, 36, 5:18, 24, 6:29, 40, 47, 54, 10:30, 20:28; Acts 1:11; Romans 4:25, 5:6; Colossians 1:19; Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 1:8, 22:7, 12, 20.

4) We Affirm: The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus was raised in the same body that died at Calvary. He showed this body on numerous occasions to validate that it was indeed Him. Luke 24:37-39; John 20:24-29; John 2:19-22; John 10:17-18; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8.

5) We Affirm: The bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said that He will return in the same manner in which He ascended into heaven. Likewise, our resurrection will be bodily. Acts 1:11; Matthew 24:30; Matthew 25:31; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27; John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; Mark 14:62; Hebrews 9:28.

6) We Affirm: The person of the Holy Spirit. We affirm and maintain that the Holy Spirit is a person having emotion, intellect, and will. He is the Paraclete spoken of in John 14:26, the one who is called alongside. He speaks, Acts 8:29, 10:19, 13:2. He is called God in Acts 5:3-5. It is the will of the Father that each believer be filled with (baptized in) the Holy Spirit, thereby receiving power for Holy living and effective service. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6;

Luke 12:10; Matthew 12:31; Mark 3:9; Romans 6:1-13, 12:1-2; Galatians 2:20; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Hebrews 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

7) We Affirm: Man was originally created in the image and likeness of God; he fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death, becoming dead in trespasses and sin. Genesis 1:26, 27, 2:17, 3:1-19; Romans 5:12-19.

8) We Affirm: That salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men; all who will repent of sin and believe (trust and rely upon) in Jesus Christ will be saved, reconciled, redeemed, born again. The new birth of the believer comes only by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. John 3:3; Romans 10:13; Ephesians 2:8-10; John 3:15-18, 36; 5:24; 6:29, 40, 53-58; 1 John 5:10-13.

9) We Affirm: That Water Baptism is the testimony of the believer of his allegiance to Jesus Christ. It is done out of obedience and love for the example that Jesus gave us. We affirm that being baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the power or authority of Jesus' name. Luke 3:16; Act 4:7; 1 Corinthians 1:14; 1 Peter 3:20-22.

10) We Affirm: That the Church is the called out assembly of believers spoken of in Ephesians 1:4-6. We affirm that all who are reconciled to the risen, ascended Son of God are members of His Church, the Body, the Bride of Christ. Those who have placed their trust in Jesus have passed from death to life, regardless of Church affiliation or membership in organized earthly institutions. By the same Spirit all are baptized into Christ. Ephesians 1:22-23; Romans 12:5; Colossians 1:23.

11) We Affirm: The literal Hell (hades) to which the lost are sent. The end result will be that the lost are cast into the lake of fire where there is conscious torment for all those who reject the Savior. Luke 16:24, 25, 28; Matthew 25:46; Daniel 12:2; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 14:10-11; 19:10; 20:10; 21:8.

12) We Affirm: That provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the physical body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil are taught in the scriptures and are the privileges of the Church in this present age. Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 8:16-17; James 5:14-16.

## **ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP**

### *Section 1 - Qualifications*

Membership in this church may be granted to any person who has accepted Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior, and is in agreement with the Mission and Tenets of Faith of this church.

### *Section 2 - The Membership Process*

The membership process involves the following steps:

1. The candidate will approach the Pastor or Elder (or an appointee) to express the desire to pursue membership in the church.
2. The Pastor/Elder will interview the candidate to verify his/her profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and to outline the membership process.
3. Upon Pastor/Elder recommendation, membership classes will be scheduled and must be completed.
4. Upon successful completion of membership classes, the Church Board will vote on the candidate for membership.
5. Upon Board approval, the candidate will take the pledge of membership and be presented to the congregation at a regular Sunday church service. For a suggested order of service, see Appendix A.

### *Section 3 - Rights of Members*

1. Members in good standing, having attained the age of eighteen (18) years, shall have the right to vote at all Congregational Meetings of the church.
2. Men or women members may hold any office in this church. To hold the office of Elder, President, Treasurer, Secretary, or to lead the Finance Committee or the Building & Grounds Committee, a member must be twenty-five (25) years of age.

### *Section 4 - Responsibilities of Members*

A member of this Church should be willing to accept the following responsibilities:

1. Members should be willing to give Christ preeminence in all their lives. Mark 8:34: "Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

2. Members should be willing to render Christian service. Ephesians 2:10: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

3. Members should be willing to support the church with their time, gifts, skills and financial resources. Malachi 3:10: "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." 2 Corinthians 9:7: "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

4. Members should pray regularly for themselves and others. Luke 11:9-10: "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

5. Members should regularly attend the services and functions of this Church, whenever possible. Hebrews 10:24-25 "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

#### *Section 5 - Termination of Membership*

1. Members may withdraw their membership from this Church at any time when written notice of such desire is given to the Church Board.

2. Members in good standing, upon request, are entitled to a letter of recommendation to any church of their choice.

3. Members willfully absenting themselves from the services of worship and/or failing to contribute to its support for a period of one (1) year, may, after a conference and correspondence by mail, have their name dropped from the church roll. A majority vote of the Church Board will be required to take this action.

4. Any member intentionally causing dissention in the church or advocating a departure of faith, after consultation with a Pastor and/or Elder may be recommended for expulsion from membership. A secret ballot requiring a majority vote of the Church Board is needed to pass this action.

5. Any person, whose membership has been terminated, may for good and sufficient reason be restored to membership by a majority vote of the Church Board.

6. The membership roll will be reviewed by the Church Board semi-annually, optimally in the months of March and September.

## **ARTICLE 4 - LEADERSHIP**

### *Section 1 – The Church Board & Officers*

1. The Church Board is the governing body of Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church. The Church Board will oversee and is empowered to delegate the business of the church. All committees, ministries, and organizations within the church are responsible to and under the jurisdiction of the Church Board.

2. To serve on the Church Board, a person must be twenty one (21) years of age and a member in good standing for at least three (3) years. The Church Board consists of nine (9) elected members plus a maximum of four Elders. Both elected members and Elders are voting members. Elected members are voted onto the Board by the membership of the church at the Annual Congregational Meeting. Elected members of the Church Board serve three year terms and may not serve for more than two (2) consecutive full terms. After serving two (2) consecutive full terms, a person must remain off the Board for one full year before being eligible for nomination to serve on the Board again. If an elected Board position is vacated within a term, the Board is empowered to select a replacement to serve until the next regular Board election.

3. The Church Administrator will be a non-voting member of the Board.

4. The Church Board year will run from January 1 to December 31. The Church Board will meet monthly at a consistent time and day to be determined by the Board and announced in the bulletin and from the pulpit. Regular Church Board meetings will be open to all church members. Specially called Church Board meetings may be open and announced at the discretion of the Church Board. Any church member desiring to place an item on the agenda may do so by submitting it to the chairperson (or a

designate) by the close of business one day prior to the regular meeting of the Church Board.

5. In order to constitute a quorum, at least 2/3 of Board members must be present. Although the Board will always strive for unity, a simple majority vote of those present is needed to pass most actions taken by the Church Board. Exceptions are noted in this document.

6. The Church Board cannot authorize the borrowing of funds without majority approval of the membership.

7. The Senior Pastor is the chairperson of the Church Board. The Senior Pastor will vote only in those cases where a tie-breaking vote is needed. The Senior Pastor will chair the board meeting with emphasis on spiritual issues. Business issues will typically be deferred to the Vice-chairperson of the Board or subject matter experts to lead discussion at the monthly Board meeting.

### *Church Officers*

The following details the Officers of the Church Board and the Corporation. Basic responsibilities are described for each Officer. Note that duties in support of these responsibilities may be delegated to church employees or volunteers.

#### 1. President of Corporation & Vice-chairperson of the Board

The Church Board will select a board member to be President of the Corporation and Vice-chairperson of the Board. This will be done at the January Board meeting by a majority vote of the Board. The Vice-chairperson of the Board will work with the Senior Pastor to prepare an agenda for subjects to be discussed at the monthly Board meeting. The Vice-chairperson will serve a one year term with no limitation on the number of terms served.

The vice-chairperson may request that the pastor dismiss himself from any Board meeting, for the following reasons: (1) to discuss compensation, (2) to conduct a pastoral evaluation, (3) to discuss sensitive issues as requested by the Reconciliation Committee, and (4) for other matters deemed necessary by the Church Board and/or Elders.

## 2. Secretary

The Church Board will select a member of the church to serve as the Secretary of the Board. This will be done at the January Board meeting by a majority vote of the Board. The individual selected will also serve as Secretary of the Corporation. It is not required to be a member of the board to serve as Secretary of the Board. The Secretary will serve for a one year term with no limitation on the number of terms served. The Secretary has no vote on the Board unless the Secretary is also an elected Board member. The secretary will take minutes at the monthly Church Board meetings, the Annual Congregational Meeting, and any special business meetings of the church. The Secretary will maintain the church membership roll, be custodian of all legal documents, maintain a roll of all operating ministry councils and carry out other secretarial duties as requested by the Board.

## 3. Treasurer

The Church Board will recommend a member of the church to serve as Treasurer. The Treasurer will be selected by a majority vote of the Church Board. The individual selected will be the Treasurer of the Corporation. The Treasurer will serve for a one year term with no limitation on the number of terms served. The Treasurer must be at least twenty five (25) years old and a member in good standing for at least three (3) years. The Treasurer must be capable of efficiently discharging the duties of the office.

To insure checks and balances, it is recommended that the Treasurer not be a member of the church Board. However, if the church has difficulty identifying a candidate with the required skill set, an exception may be granted. The Treasurer has no vote on the Board unless the Treasurer is also an elected Board member.

The Treasurer is responsible for managing all the finances of the church. This includes the banking and dispersing of all monies, an itemized accounting of all receipts and disbursements, maintaining a record of all giving by the congregation, and facilitating the annual budgeting process. The Treasurer will give a financial report at monthly Church Board meetings and at the Annual Congregational Meeting. For the Annual Meeting, financial reports will cover the previous twelve (12) months of income and expenditures.

## Finance Committee

1. A Finance Committee will be established to provide oversight of projected spending guidelines for all areas of the church based on prior and anticipated needs of the church. Committee members will serve for one year. Members

will be selected by a majority vote of the board. There is no limitation on the number of terms that can be served.

2. The Finance Committee will work with the Church Board and Treasurer to prioritize spending within the capability of the church's resources.

### *Section 2 - The Senior Pastor*

1. The Senior Pastor will be the spiritual leader of the church and be responsible for the spiritual well-being of the church. He will act as chairperson at Church Board meetings, deferring topics to subject matter experts as appropriate. He will be an ex-officio member of every ministry council and committee in the church.

2. The Senior Pastor's life must be above reproach as becoming a minister of the gospel. He will have the scriptural qualifications of an elder (1 Timothy 3:2-7; 2 Timothy 4:1-4; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:2, 3). He will have clear evidence of a call to the ministry, practical experience in preaching, teaching and Christian work with the evident purpose to devote his life to this calling.

3. No person will be invited to minister in church services without his approval. The pastor will make every effort to inform the Church Board whenever there is a special speaker or minister.

4. The Senior Pastor will give a report of the year's work at the Annual Congregational Meeting. He will uphold the doctrinal tenets of faith of the church, and will uphold the Constitution of the church.

5. The Pastor may, with the approval of the Church Board, appoint such committees as necessary to assist him in promoting the spiritual well-being of the church.

6. In the event of the office of Senior Pastor being vacated, the Church Board will initiate procedures outlined in the policy regarding pastoral replacement.

7. The Senior Pastor must be approved by at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at a Congregational Meeting. This Congregational Meeting will be announced from the pulpit and published in the church bulletin on the two (2) Sundays preceding the meeting.

8. If ever the Senior Pastor himself desires to dissolve the pastoral relationship, he will notify the Church Board in writing at least 30 days in advance of his departure date.

9. If at any time there should arise any dissatisfaction among the members of the Church toward the Senior Pastor, the Church Board will carefully and honorably examine the causes mentioned for the dissatisfaction. If just cause appears, they will confer with the Senior Pastor, and by mutual understanding endeavor to remove the difficulty. Should the best interest of the church at any time demand it, the Board is empowered to dissolve the pastoral relationship immediately. It will require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the board to take this action.

### *Section 3-The Elder(s)*

1. The Elders will serve along with the Senior Pastor as the spiritual leaders and overseers of the church. They will fill the role of Elder as defined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 and have demonstrated the qualities of a member as outlined in Article 3, Section 4 (Responsibilities of Members). They will advise the Church Board, serve on various committees, and along with the Church Board be responsible for pulpit supply.

2. Candidates for eldership are to be nominated by the Pastor with unanimous approval by the current eldership. Once approved by the eldership, the candidate(s) will be presented to the Church Board of Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church for approval. A two-thirds favorable vote (by ballot) of those present at a regular Board meeting is required for their approval. Once approved, the candidates are to be presented at a Congregational Meeting, where a two-thirds affirmation "vote" of the membership in attendance is needed for approval. Those approved for the position will be presented to the congregation.

3. Elders will serve 5-year terms, such term ending at the conclusion of the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) calendar year (for example: if the Elder is approved in April 2018, that Elder's term will end at the conclusion of the calendar year 2023). At the end of each term, the Elder may choose to serve for another 5-year term. There will be no limitation to the number of terms served. For every additional term served, the Elder must receive the approval of the Senior Pastor, unanimous approval of the other elders and a two-thirds favorable vote by ballot of the Church Board.

### *Section 4 - The Ministry Councils*

1. Ministry Councils may be established for areas of ministry at Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church. Ministry Councils will function as leadership teams for their subject ministries. All Ministry Councils will be established and

approved by the Senior Pastor and the Church Board. The Secretary of the Church Board will maintain a roll of all operating Ministry Councils.

2. Ministry Councils are empowered to name any member of Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church in good standing to their council, subject to the approval of the Church Board. Anyone, a church member or non-member, may volunteer to serve within a ministry if that person has demonstrated an active and supportive role in that area of ministry.

#### *Section 5 - The Reconciliation Committee*

1. A Reconciliation Committee shall be established by the Church Board to facilitate communication and reconciliation between church members or members and pastoral staff whenever there is an issue of conflict.

2. The Reconciliation Committee will consist of three people with at least one being a presiding Elder appointed by the Church Board. The other members will be selected by the presiding Elder based on the circumstances of the conflict with approval of the Church Board.

3. The process of reconciliation will follow the exhortation of scripture (found in Matthew 18:15-17). The Reconciliation Committee shall be activated as follows:

a. Whenever a conflict arises, the offended party must go to the one who has offended and attempt to communicate towards the end of reconciliation. The Church Board will not initiate the Reconciliation Committee unless this first step is taken.

b. If the offended party has gone to the one who has offended and has not been received, then he/she may request of the Church Board for the Reconciliation Committee to be initiated.

c. The Reconciliation Committee will attempt to facilitate communication and reconciliation between the offended party and the one who has offended. If reconciliation occurs, then the process is completed.

d. If the one who has offended is the Senior Pastor, and he does not respond to the actions of the Reconciliation Committee, then the committee may request the Church Board Vice-chairperson to convene a meeting of the Board to discuss the offense without the Senior Pastor in attendance. If the one who has offended is a church member, then the committee may request to bring the matter before the Church Board.

e. If a conflict appears irreconcilable, the Reconciliation Committee will present the facts of the dispute to the Church Board, and the Church Board may take whatever action is deemed necessary to assure the ongoing health of the church and the restoration of those who are affected by the dispute.

### *Section 6 - The Church Administrator*

The need for the position of Church Administrator will be determined by the Church Board, and will be established with the following guidelines:

1. The Church Administrator will serve on the Church Board as a non-voting member and be accountable for all matters of church administration as established and delegated by the Church Board.
2. The Church Administrator cannot serve in any other capacity that would make him/her a voting member of the Church Board.
3. The Church Administrator will be employed by the Church Board.
4. The Administrator will assist the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson in developing and coordinating Board Meeting agendas.

### *Section 7 - Associate Pastoral Staff and Directors*

The need for associate pastoral staff or directors will be determined by the agreement of the Senior Pastor and the Church Board, and be established with the following guidelines:

1. The Senior Pastor, with the approval of the elders and the Church Board, hires associate pastors and directors at Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church.
2. Job descriptions of associate pastors and directors are to be established by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Church Board.
3. Associate pastors are not to be regular members of the Church Board, but may be invited to participate or to report to the Church Board when deemed necessary.

### *Section 8 - Custodial/Maintenance Staff*

The need for custodial and maintenance staff will be determined by the agreement of the Church Board, and be established with the following guidelines:

1. The Church Administrator, upon the recommendation and approval of the Finance Committee and the Church Board, will hire custodial and maintenance staff. In the absence of a Church Administrator, the Church Board will do the hiring.

2. All job descriptions are to be established by the Church Administrator in consultation with the Church Board.

#### *Section 9 - The Board Candidate Nominating Committee*

A Nominating Committee will be formed in August to prepare a slate of candidates for Church Board to be voted upon at the Annual Congregational Meeting. The committee will present this slate to the Church Board in October for its approval before the Annual Congregational Meeting is announced. The Board will elect a member to coordinate this activity and the Senior Pastor will also serve on the committee. The Church Board will appoint four (4) others making a total of six (6) persons serving on the nominating committee. The Committee will elect their own chairperson. The Senior Pastor cannot serve as chairperson.

#### *Section 10 - Annual Congregational Meeting*

There will be an Annual Congregational meeting held in November. It will be open to all members of the church in good standing. Notice of this meeting shall be read publicly and published in the bulletin on the two (2) Sundays prior to the Congregational Meeting.

In order to call a special Congregational Meeting, or to change the date of the regularly scheduled Annual Congregational Meeting, the Church Board will give written notice two (2) weeks in advance of the meeting and announce it publicly on the two (2) Sundays prior to the meeting.

#### *Section 11 - Amendments*

Any amendment to this constitution will require a 2/3 majority ballot vote of members present at a duly called Congregational Meeting.

### **ARTICLE 5 - DISSOLUTION**

#### *Section 1 - Payment of Liability*

Upon the dissolution of the Church, the Church Board will, after the payment of all the liabilities of the Church, dispose of all of the assets of the Church exclusively for the purposes of the Church in such manner, or to such

organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for the purpose of the Church in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious or scientific purposes as shall qualify as an exempt corporation or organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or of the corresponding provisions of any future United States Revenue Law) as the Church Board shall determine.

*Section 2 - 501 (c) (3) Corporation Distribution*

No part of the net earnings of the Church will inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, officers, directors, or any person except that the Church will be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered, and to make payments in the furtherance of the Church. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws of the Church, the Church will not carry on any activity not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax, under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, (or by the corresponding section of any future Revenue Code of the United States of America) or (b) by a corporation, contributions of which are deductible under Section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or the corresponding section of any future United States Revenue Law).

## Appendices

### Appendix A: New Member Induction suggested order of service:

In order that the family of God at Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church may know your purpose and may rejoice at your decision to enter into membership in this church family, we invite you to respond to the following questions:

1. Do you believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, and that the only way to salvation is revealed in it, and do you take this Word of God to be your rule for faith, belief, doctrine, and conduct? If so, answer "I do."
2. Have you received Jesus Christ as your Savior and do you now acknowledge Him as the Lord of your life? If so, answer "I have and I do."
3. Do you promise to renounce all ungodliness, to follow Christ, to make diligent use of the means of grace, and to seek the advancement of the Kingdom of God? If so, answer "I do."
4. Will you faithfully endeavor to know your privileges and responsibilities as a Christian, and as a member of this church, and will you sustain it by your regular attendance, your earnest prayers, your service, and your tithes and offerings? If so, answer "I will."

Welcome into Fellowship:

While the members of the church stand, the pastor (or his appointee) will address the candidates as follows:

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we welcome you into this expression of the Body of Christ, the family of believers at Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church. We pray God's richest blessing upon you and your family as you grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and commit ourselves to loving you unconditionally, praying for you earnestly, and honoring you as a member of Christ's holy church by serving you when needed. We will receive no charge against you except as provided for in scripture (Matthew 18:15-17), and we will honor the command of Christ to forgive you (Matthew 18:21, 22; 1John 1:9) and seek to restore you should you stumble in your faith (Galatians 6:1-2). As a symbol of our love and confidence, I extend to you the right hand of fellowship of Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church."

Charge to the Congregation:

While the members remain standing, the pastor will address them saying:

"Members of Pleasant Valley Evangelical Church, I commend to your love and care these persons who we have this day received into the fellowship of our church. Will you promise to cherish them in brotherly love and kindness as one with us in the Lord? If so, answer. "By the grace of God, we will."