

Precision Valley Baptist Church
CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

Preamble

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and so that this body may be governed in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches.

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PURPOSE

We purpose, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and to comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline, to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of this ministry, the expenses of the church and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also purpose to maintain family and private devotions; to educate our children according to the Word of God; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world. To be just in our dealings, faithful in our commitments, and exemplary in our conduct, to avoid all gossip, backbiting, and unrighteous anger, to abstain from all forms of activity which dishonor our Lord Jesus Christ, cause stumbling to a fellow believer or hinder the winning of a soul to Christ and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further purpose to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feelings and Christian courtesy in speech to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We finally purpose that when we leave this church we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE I: NAME

This body shall be known as the PRECISION VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 69, Route 106, North Springfield, VT 05150.

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES

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To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church, which ministers unselfishly, to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.

ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS

The Holy Bible is the inspired inerrant Word of God, embodied as our basis for its integrity (for example) from original manuscripts from the "received text" otherwise known as the Textus Receptus. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. (See Addendum A, which is a copy of The Baptist Faith and Message 2000.) We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. (See Article IV. In the BYLAWS,)

ARTICLE IV. CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

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ARTICLE V: POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (See Article I of the Bylaws.)

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

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Green Mountain Baptist Association, the Baptist Convention of New England, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

(End Constitution)

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BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: Church Membership

Section I. General

This is an autonomous and democratic Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church.

All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular worship service for membership in any of the following ways:

- (a) By profession of faith and upon being baptized according to the policy of this church.
(See Article IV. Section 1.)
- (b) By promise of a letter from another church of like faith and order.
- (c) By statement of previous membership and baptism in a church of like faith and order.
- (d) By restoration (after having been a member at a previous time).
(See Article I, Section 6.)

Section 3. New Member Orientation

New members of this church are expected and encouraged to participate in the church's new member orientation classes.

Section 4. Responsibilities and Privileges of Members

- (a) It is understood that membership in this church involves supporting the church and its mission through the gifts and resources that God has given each member.
- (b) Every active members age 18 and above of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting.

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- (c) Every active member age 18 and above of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church.
- (d) Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- (a) Death of the member,
- (b) Transfer to another church,
- (c) Exclusion by action of this church, or
- (d) Erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another faith or denomination.

Section 6. Discipline

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

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18:15-20:

¹⁵ "If a brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector." ¹⁸ "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ¹⁹ "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." (NIV)

If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present is required; (Voting and Quorum -Article V, section 5.) and the

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church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's taking responsibility for the behavior that was wrong, and acknowledging it was wrong; with evidence of discontinuance of that behavior.

ARTICLE II. Church Officers and Committees

All who serve as officers of the church and those who serve on church committees shall be active members of this church.

Section 1. Church Officers

The officers of this church shall be the **pastor, the church staff, the deacons, a clerk, a treasurer, historian, and trustees.** Church staff may include an office secretary, as well as Youth Pastor, and Music Director.

- (a) The **Pastor** is responsible for the Biblical leadership role, leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks.

The Pastor is the Biblical leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such he works with the deacons and church staff to: lead the church in the achievement of its mission, proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and care for the church's members and other persons in the community. The Pastor is to be an ex-facto member of all church committees and ministries. The Nominating Committee is appointed by the pastor and approved by the church. The committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer members, unless otherwise specified herein. The committee shall present to the church all members that have accepted the invitation to serve.

The Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two week's public notice has been given, as well as written notice in the weekly bulletin for 2 weeks. (Article V, Section 4.)

A Pastoral Search Committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. Any church member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election

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shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for a choice. (Voting and Quorum -Article V, section 5.) The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of this church body, and if so designated may serve as moderator in all business meetings in keeping with the rules of order authorized in these bylaws.

The Pastor may relinquish the office as pastor by giving at least two weeks' notice to the church at the time for resignation. The church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two week's public notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the church council or by written petition signed by not less than one fourth of the active church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be designated by the members present by majority vote, and he shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the active members present being necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor so excluded from office, the church will compensate the pastor with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate and the compensations shall be rendered in not more than thirty days.

(b) The **Ministerial Staff** shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. Those staff members of whom the church requires evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the church by the assigned committee and called by church action. At the time of resignation at least two weeks' notice shall be given to the church. The church may vote to vacate such positions upon recommendation of the assigned committee, such termination being immediate and the compensation conditions being the same as for the pastor, except that the amount shall relate to the individual's compensation.

Non-ministerial Staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. Our building and grounds committee, after clearing with the church council, may seek to employ or terminate services of non-ministerial staff. (Example: janitorial, snow removal, etc)

(c) The church shall elect **Deacons** annually by ballot at a regular business meeting of the church. Deacons shall be elected from the membership of the church according to the qualifications and teachings of the New Testament. (I Timothy 3:8-13)

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Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. Each year the assigned term of office of one third of the number of deacons shall expire, and election shall be held to fill vacancies and to add to the deacons such numbers as the church size warrants. In case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three years' assignment, a deacon shall be eligible for re-election only after a lapse of at least one year. There shall be no obligation to constitute as an assigned deacon one who has been a deacon in another church; but in such instances as one might be chosen by this church for assignment as a deacon, his previous ordination by another church of like faith and order shall suffice for this church.

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing the pastoral ministries such as leading the church in the achievement of its mission, proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and caring for the church's members and other persons in the community.

- (d) The pastor shall preside as **Moderator** at all business meetings. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator.

- (e) The church shall elect annually a **Clerk** and an **Assistant Clerk** as its clerical officers. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, transfer, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of transfer voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the church to the association. The assistant clerk shall assist the clerk in all designated duties and in the absence of the clerk shall assume the full role of the clerk.

The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.

- (f) The church shall elect annually a **Church Treasurer** and an **Assistant Treasurer** as its financial officers. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things

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of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. The treasurer's report and records shall be subject to audit by an auditing committee or public accountant. The treasurer shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

In the absence of the treasurer the assistant treasurer will assume all of the duties of the treasurer as stated above.

- (g) The church shall elect three or more **Trustees** to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, by a $\frac{3}{4}$ quorum vote, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of Trustees are required, all Trustees shall sign documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase or rental of property or other legal documents related to church matters. No one (1) Trustee may sign to make a binding document. All elected Trustee signatures will be required to make a binding document.

Trustees shall serve for a five year term of office with vacancies filled for the remainder of the term.

- (h) The church shall elect a **Church Historian** to assist in making and keeping accurate, comprehensive records of its life and work. This person shall gather and safeguard historical records of the church, to help the church understand and learn from its own history and to help church members know and appreciate their larger heritage as Baptists.

Section 2: Church Committees

The committees of the church are listed below. All committees will be directed through the ultimate work of our Mission Statement: *"To Know Christ and To Make Him Known."* Committees should be added only to continue this mission and may be added to the bylaws following the amendment procedure as prescribed within these bylaws. As needed, special committees may be authorized by the church. All committee members shall be recommended by the nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise specified in these bylaws. Committee members shall serve on a three year rotation basis with one-third to be

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elected each year. Vacancies that arise before a term expires shall be filled for the remainder of the vacator's term. Committee members shall include men and women.

A. Worship Committee

The Worship committee's function is designed to be planned for God's pleasure and worship of Him through the membership corporately. Our Worship will be designed to draw hearts to know Christ greater as we lift worship to Him. It also makes Him known as others share in our worship services. Responsibilities of this committee may include the following:

1. Music in all services
2. Special Services such as Christmas/Easter etc.
3. Oversight of Sound System
4. The Weekly Bulletin
5. The Power Point Presentations

B. Fellowship Committee

The Fellowship committee's function is for the church family. Its purpose is that of nurturing, broadening and deepening members love and relationship with each other. One of the ways we "*Make Christ Known*" is by our love for one another. This committee may publicize the church's ministry to members, prospects, and the public. It shall arrange meals and lodging for functions of the church such as revivals, workshops, missionaries and visiting speakers. It may also arrange for appropriate decorations to enhance the worship services in the sanctuary. This committee may arrange for the sending of floral arrangements or cards to church members in cases of sympathy or illness. It may organize meals for the sick. Responsibilities of this committee may include the following:

1. Fellowship Suppers (Wednesdays)
2. Receptions
3. Game Nights
4. Special Events
5. Lodging – visiting speakers and missionaries
6. General Benevolence – as directed by the Pastor

C. Discipleship Committee

The Discipleship committee's purpose is to help grow and mature its members to become like Christ. This committee serves both aspects of our mission, "*To Know Christ and To Make Him Known.*" Discipleship is accomplished through the study of God's Word and his Truth for all believers. The discipleship committee seeks to disciple all believers in part to fulfill the Great Commission given in the Gospels. Responsibilities of this committee may include the following:

1. Sunday School – all ages
2. Kids Church
3. Youth Group
4. Women's Ministry
5. Small Group Studies

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6. New Members' Class
7. New Members Mentoring
8. Vacation Bible School

D. Ministry Committee

The Ministry committee will serve to meet needs within the church. It includes a goal of involving others in opportunities of practically serving our Lord. In this respect, this committee will serve with a united effort *"To Know Christ and To Make Him Known."*

Responsibilities of this committee may include the following:

1. Deacons
 - a. Deacons will serve in areas such as Benevolence, Serving in preparation of ordinances, Training of Ushers,
 - b. All other areas of service of deacons, (widows etc.) as described in the New Testament.
2. Budget and finance
 - a. Treasurer – Treasurer will work with ushers in overseeing offering counters (2 unrelated members) each service
 - b. Assistant Treasurer,
3. Clerk –
4. Historian
5. A Nominating Committee - is appointed by the pastor and approved by the church. The committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer members, unless otherwise specified herein. The committee shall present to the church all members that have accepted the invitation to serve. This committee serves a short term and dissolves after they have fulfilled their responsibilities.
6. Funerals
7. Prayer groups/chain
8. Nursery
9. Trustees
 - a. Building and grounds – Physical plant,
 - b. Church Vehicles
 - c. Usher – Welcome guest, maintain order, count and record attendance, receive and count offerings.

E. Outreach Committee

The Outreach committee will serve to help the church share God's love in our community, country and world. This committee plays a vital role in our mission: *"...To Make Christ Known."* The outreach committees' responsibilities may include the following areas:

1. Audio visual outreach - will be the resource center for the church. Its personnel will seek to provide and promote the use of printed and audiovisual resources. They also will

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provide consultation to church leaders and members in the use of printed and audiovisual resources.

2. Special Offerings for outreach
3. International and National Mission Education
4. Local Ministries
5. Community Volunteers

Article III. Church Council

The Church Council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

The primary functions of the Church Council shall be to recommend to the church suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate ministry and program plans recommended to the church officers, and committees; to recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to our mission, and to evaluate achievements in terms of church objectives and goals.

Regular members of the Church Council shall be the pastor, other church staff members, chairmen of deacons, church officers, and chairmen of church committees.

All matters agreed upon by the council which call for action, not already approved, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

Article IV. Church Ordinances

Section I. Baptism

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

- a. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- b. The pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. The Ministry Committee shall assist in the preparation for, and the observance of, baptism.
- c. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.
- d. A person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or deacons. If a negative interest is ascertained on the part of the candidate, he shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

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Section 2. The Lord's Supper

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least quarterly, the first Sunday of the quarter, unless otherwise scheduled by the church. The observance shall take place at the morning or evening worship service. The pastor shall administer the Lord's Supper Ordinance.

Article V. Church Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday, and Wednesday for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The pastor shall direct the services for all the church members and for all others who may choose to attend.

Section 2. Special Services

Revival services and any other church meetings essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be placed on the church calendar.

Section 3. Church Council Meetings

The church shall hold regular Church Council meetings monthly on a designated evening.

Section 4. Special Business Meetings

The church may conduct special called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A two-week notice must be given for the specially called meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and the time and place; and it must be given in such manner that all active members have opportunity to know of the meeting.

Section 5. Voting and Quorum

Voting: As a general rule, voting is to be by secret ballot, with item by item listed individually, unless otherwise stipulated.

Quorum: The quorum consists of those members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Section 6. Parliamentary Rules

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Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

Article VI. Church Finances

Section 1. Budget

The finance committee, in consultation with the church council, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses.

Section 2. Accounting Procedures

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. Those who have responsibility that involves actual handling of funds shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond. (See Article II, Section 1, and F - regarding church treasurer.)

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handing of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer, * Ministry/Finance Committee. (BYLAWS Article II, Section 1 F and -Ministry/Finance committee – see D. 2.)

Section 3. Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year shall begin January 1 and end on December 31.

Note The PVBC Organizational Flow chart for Offices to be filled annually.

Article VII. Amendments

Changes in the constitution and bylaws may be made at a specially called business meeting of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member requesting a copy. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of church members present. Amendments to the bylaws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting.

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