

Constitution of Portage Community Chapel

Article 1. Name

The legal name of this nonprofit organization shall be Portage Community Chapel, herein referred to as “this church.”

Article 2. Incorporation

Founded May 20, 1966, this church is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio.

Article 3. Authority and affiliation

The congregation is the governing body of this church, in the manner described herein.

This church is independent and shall not be affiliated with any organization that might hinder its purpose.

Article 4. Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be to glorify Christ and do what He would do, obeying His Great Command to love and His Great Commission for the world.

Article 5. Statement of Faith

We accept the Scriptures as our authority in matters of faith and practice, and adopt the following Doctrinal Statement as our interpretation of Bible doctrine.

1. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority (Hebrews 1).
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three in one, co-equal, which is the Trinity.
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of God, conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary.
4. We believe in the Holy Spirit, one of the three persons of the Trinity, who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He is the life of every believer, and He empowers the preaching and teaching of the gospel.

5. We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but spiritual death, which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners in thought, word, and deed.
6. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood.
7. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, His ascension into heaven and His present life there as High Priest and Advocate for all believers.
8. We believe in that "blessed hope," the personal, pre-tribulational, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
9. We believe that all who receive salvation by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby they become children of God, and heirs of eternal life. This is a relationship in which the born-again are eternally secure.
10. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost, and the joy and peace of the saved; such beliefs demand a literal heaven and hell.
11. We believe in the existence of Satan who is working in the world to destroy the souls of men and that he and all his angels and all who do not receive Christ as their Savior will perish eternally in hell.
12. We believe in the Church, the Body of Christ, whose mission it is to preach the gospel to all the world with its endeavors being supported by the freewill gifts and offerings of the people, which are in response to the gift of salvation purchased by Christ not from duty or obligation, but from a grateful, obedient, loving heart.
13. We believe that the ordinances of the Church, given by our Lord, are baptism (by immersion following conversion) and the Lord's Supper (communion).
14. We believe that marriage is the union of a man and a woman, as designed by God (Genesis 2), and any other union shall not be condoned in its practice nor celebrated (Romans 1) by Portage Community Chapel. We also believe Christ's grace challenges us to minister and care for anyone outside that description with the love of Christ and pursue the reconciliation of His image in every person's life.

Article 6. Membership

Membership, termination and restoration of membership will be determined by PCC bylaws.

Article 7. Property

Portage Community Chapel shall have the authority to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold such real, personal, or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the United States of America and the State of Ohio and is deemed positive for the purpose of this church, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, deed, or otherwise. All such property shall be held in the name of the church.

In the event of dissolution of the church, the corporate entity shall be dissolved in accordance with state law, and all property shall be donated to, or sold and proceeds donated to, a bible-based church or organization that follows the tenets taught by Portage Community Chapel. In the event the property is sold with the intention of donating the proceeds, all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the property will not be used for any immoral or illicit purposes by the purchaser. Further, in no event will the donation of any assets or the donation of the proceeds of the sale of any assets inure to the personal benefit of any church Board member.

Any dissolution or purchase of the church must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Oversight and a two-thirds vote of church members in good standing that submit votes.

Article 8. Amendments

This church may make any change in the constitution or bylaws which may seem necessary, but such changes must be submitted to the church membership by the Board of Oversight in a written form at least three weeks before the proposed meeting or voting time. Such amendments can be proposed only with a 2/3 vote of the Board and can be adopted only with a 2/3 majority vote of the membership in good standing who submit votes.

Portage Community Chapel Church bylaws

Article 1. Membership

Eligibility: Any person who:

- Confesses faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and follows in New Testament baptism,
- Displays character and conduct that are in accord with his or her confession,
- Subscribes to support the statement of faith,
- Is willing to support this church in attendance, prayer and material means.

Process: The process for joining the official membership shall be prescribed by the Board of Oversight and reviewed annually. It shall be published as necessary.

Conduct: Members are asked to abide by a covenant of membership that includes the following:

- Trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord,
- Commitment to honor our statement of faith and never to teach in contradiction to it,
- Faithfully support the church,
- Maintain a biblical lifestyle that gives a positive picture of faith in Christ.

Discipline and restoration: All members of this church are expected to live in accord with this church's statement of faith and lead a lifestyle that is exemplary of a Christ-follower as presented in scripture. In the event that a member begins to live in a way that brings disrepute upon himself or herself and the church, leaders of the church will follow biblical steps to restore that person to the fellowship in Christ. Those steps will be defined and reviewed each year by the Board. This policy will be made known to each person in the membership process.

Termination:

The church shall dismiss from its membership as follows:

- Upon request, a member in good standing shall be issued a letter of good standing to other churches of like faith and practice.
- The death of one of its members.
- Any member that is not active or cannot be located.
- Any member engaged in sin deemed damaging to Portage Community Chapel or in violation of the covenant vow in good standing after due notice and effort made to reconcile.

Article 2. Government and leadership

The Word of God

Our ultimate authority for the church is the Word of God as revealed in the clear guidelines for the church in the Bible.

Congregational Membership

We are congregational in that our membership as a corporation owns our property and members in good standing vote on the following issues:

- Call of the Lead Pastor.
- Call of the members of the Board of Oversight.
- Purchase or sale of real property and building programs.
- Constitution and bylaws adoption or changes.
- Our annual budget.

All other matters of the church and issues not directly addressed by these bylaws will be conducted under the leadership and supervision of the pastor and the church Board.

Board of Oversight (“Board”)

The Board of Oversight shall include the Lead Pastor and at least four spiritual men affirmed by the congregation by a three-quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority vote of members in good standing for a three-year term beginning at the annual meeting. They shall choose a chairman from among them.

A member of the Board may serve only two consecutive terms. Terms shall be staggered so that about one-third of the Board begins terms each fiduciary year of the church.

The responsibilities of the Board as the guardian of the ministry policies of the church include these areas, which make up four boundaries of any ministry field:

1. *Foundations*: Statement of faith, constitution, bylaws, discipline process.

Any changes in these areas shall first be approved by a two-thirds vote of this Board and then, except for the discipline process, the same percentage of the membership at a duly-called membership meeting.

2. *Resources*: Finances, buildings and property or capital, volunteers, missions dollars, and salaries.

As a part of this area, the Board will present an annual budget for approval by the congregation. They will also appoint a finance committee that reports to them and that monitors and gives advice on all financial procedures and reports. This committee will include at least two from the Board.

They will also appoint a building-capital team of volunteers to make recommendations for purchases of more than \$1,000 to the church Board and to help with policies and procedures for the care and maintenance of the building and properties.

3. *Guidelines*: Church-wide ministry policies, pertaining to all people and staff of the church.

The Board and staff shall keep a policy book for all procedures and values to be followed by the church and its staff and volunteers.

4. *Goals*: Mission, long-term vision, culture of the church, with an emphasis on core values.

The Board has oversight over these four sides of this ministry. The pastors have oversight of the Sunday and weekday ministries, always following guidelines, policies, and goals approved by the Board.

The Lead Pastor

- A. The pastor must be of irreproachable Christian character (I Timothy 3:1-3).
- B. After recommendation by a search committee and with approval of the Board of Oversight, a person will be presented to the membership with a recommendation to call him as Lead Pastor of Portage Community Chapel. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of submitted ballots by members in good standing is required. Voting will take place by ballot, either in a congregational meeting or by mail.
- C. The pastor and pastor's spouse, if any, shall become members of this church by virtue of acceptance of the call.
- D. The Lead Pastor shall be the spiritual and ministry leader of the church, serving within the four boundaries set by the Board of Oversight. He shall be a member of all of the ministry teams, the leader of the pulpit ministry, and an example to the people by serving and representing the church with grace and truth. The Lead Pastor shall institute plans of discipleship and pastoral care to meet the needs of the church. He also shall be a member of all committees and a voting member of the Board.
- E. The Lead Pastor shall represent the church in the community.
- F. The pastor shall be chosen by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote by members in good standing at any regular or special business meeting of this church or by paper ballot. He shall be called for an indefinite period of time and two months' notice must be given by the pastor or by this church for the termination of his ministry.
- G. A meeting of the members of good standing to consider the resignation or dismissal of the pastor may be called by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board. The announcement of this meeting must be given no less than ten days prior to the meeting and must specify the purpose of the meeting when the matter of dismissal is considered. The church members in good standing shall vote by written ballot, and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of confidence by those present and voting is required to retain the pastor.

Pastoral Assistants

Full-time ministry positions shall be chosen by the Lead Pastor and the Board by means of a procedure reviewed annually.

Full-time pastors must also receive a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership in good standing.

Both full-time ministry positions and full-time pastors may be dismissed by the Board by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote at the recommendation of the Lead Pastor.

Position descriptions should be approved by the Board before filling any position. This description should become part of the policy and procedures.

All full-time ministry positions shall work under the supervision of the Lead Pastor or his designee with a clear system of reporting to the Lead Pastor. They shall be called for an indefinite period of time.

Interim Pastor

In the absence of the Lead Pastor, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the Board at their discretion for an agreed-upon period of time to perform specific functions or duties identified by the Board subject to the congregation-approved budget allocation. The congregation shall be informed of any such appointment(s).

Other Staff

All non-pastoral staff positions, including support staff and interns, shall be established by the Board, provided the budget is not increased in full. Positions requiring an increase in the total budget of this church shall require approval by the members at a regular or special meeting. All non-pastoral staff shall be chosen and dismissed by the pastor, with two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority approval of the Board.

Position descriptions should be written and approved by the Board before filling any position. This description should become part of the policy and procedures.

All other staff shall work under the supervision of the Lead Pastor or his designee. They shall serve until such time as they resign or are dismissed. The Lead Pastor, or his designee, shall provide an annual written review of performance for each staff person.

Treasurer

A treasurer will be selected and appointed by the Board to evaluate and review monthly financial reports, confirm the final annual financial report, and to present these reports to the finance committee. The treasurer also will confer with the Lead Pastor or his designee and with external accountants, as selected by the Lead Pastor or his designee, to help the Finance Committee prepare the annual budget to be presented to the Board.

Volunteer Member-Ministers

The Lead Pastor or those he designates may appoint teachers, leaders, and teams for the various ministries of the church. Teachers of the Bible and leaders of ministry teams shall sign and live by a leaders agreement that is part of the approved policies of the church and adopted by the Board.

Board Lead Pastor Search Committee

When there is the need for a Lead Pastor, a search committee of at least seven (7) shall be appointed by the Board to search for the pastor with the goal of presenting the best candidate to the Board. This candidate must then be approved by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote by the Board. Upon approval by the Board, the candidate will then be presented to the church at least two Sundays before the congregational vote of approval. A three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) vote of the membership in good standing shall be needed for the call, for an indefinite period.

Board Nominating Committee

The Lead Pastor shall chair a nominating committee of at least seven (7) — one or two current Board members in addition to four to six congregational members of good standing, as selected by the Board.

Any man nominated by the committee to fill a three-year term must be approved by a three-

fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority vote of members in good standing.

Article 3. Members Meetings

The annual members meeting to adopt the budget, affirm Board members, and care for any matters that need congregational approval shall be held at approximately the same time each year and always have at least a month of notifications including mailings and Sunday announcements.

Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the Board with at least two weeks notice.