

The
BY-LAWS
of
PLYMOUTH COMMUNITY CHURCH
of Plymouth, Indiana



ARTICLE 1: NAME AND PURPOSE

This congregation of believers shall be known as **Plymouth Community Church** (PCC). It is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Indiana.

Plymouth Community Church is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) of 1986, for the purpose of glorifying God by advancing His kingdom through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the making of disciples of all nations.¹ This mission includes, but is not limited to, teaching God’s Word,² obeying Scripture,³ growing in spiritual maturity as the Body of Christ,⁴ evangelizing the lost with the Good News of Jesus,⁵ and meeting the needs of our faith family, community, and the world.⁶

Plymouth Community Church is not formally associated with or affiliated with any organization or denomination.

ARTICLE 2: WHAT WE TEACH

At **Plymouth Community Church**, we recognize the beauty of Christian liberty⁷ in secondary matters and the diversity of faithful believers across the global Church. Yet we also believe that unity in essential truths is vital for the health and direction of our local faith family.

The following section outlines the core biblical convictions that are consistently upheld, taught, and protected by our leadership. While not every person in our faith family may fully align with every point, these are the doctrines that shape our preaching, leadership, and discipleship as we seek to glorify Christ and remain rooted in His Word.

SECTION 2.1: THE TRIUNE GOD

We teach there is one God,⁸ Creator of all things,⁹ and eternally existing¹⁰ in three equally divine¹¹ Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.¹² Each Person of the Trinity accomplishes a distinct, but harmonious, act in the great work of redemption.¹³

¹ Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8

² Matt. 28:18-20; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Eph. 4:11-16; Col. 3:16

³ Matt. 7:24-27; Matt. 28:19-20; John 14:23-24; John 15:10-14; James 1:22

⁴ Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Thess. 3:11-13; 1 Cor. 12:12-31

⁵ Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16; Rom. 10:14-15; Mark 16:15; 1 Pet. 3:15; Col. 1:27-29

⁶ Eph. 2:10; John 13:34-35; James 2:14-17; Matt. 5:42; Gal. 6:2; Luke 6:30; Rom. 15:1; 1 Thess. 5:11

⁷ Rom. 14:1-23

⁸ Deut. 6:4; Is. 45:5-7; John 10:30; John 17:11, 21

⁹ Gen. 1; Ex. 20:11; John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16

¹⁰ Gen. 21:33; Ps. 90:2; John 1:1-2

¹¹ Gen. 18:14; Ps. 33:10-11; Ps. 115:3; Jer. 32:17; Matt. 19:26; Rev. 19:6; Ps. 99:3; Is. 6:3; 1 Peter 1:15-16; John 10:30; 14:9; Deut. 11:12; Ps. 66:7; 94:11; 102:27; 139:2-4, 7-10; 147:5; Prov. 21:1; Is. 7:14; 46:9-10; Mal. 3:6; Matt. 1:23; 28:19; Luke 24:24; John 1:14; 14:1; Acts 2:23; 15:18; Rom. 13:1; Eph. 1:20-22; Heb. 13:8; James 1:17; 1 John 3:20

¹² John 1:1-2; 1 John 1:2; Gen. 1:2; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:4-6

¹³ Eph. 1:17; 4:4-6; John 1:14; 3:16; Phil 2:5-11; 1 Cor. 8:6; 15:27-28

SECTION 2.2: JESUS CHRIST

We teach Jesus Christ is God incarnate—one Person in two natures: fully God and fully man.¹⁴ When the eternal Son united with Jesus’ humanity (John 1:14), He did not cease being God. Rather, Jesus chose to empty Himself of His divine privileges while on earth—living fully empowered through the anointing of the Spirit of God.¹⁵

We teach Jesus is the “Anointed One” (Messiah, Christ, King) promised throughout the Old Testament Scriptures—born into the family heritage of Abraham and the royal line of David.¹⁶ The earthly mission of Jesus was to reveal God,¹⁷ defeat the enemies of God,¹⁸ redeem fallen humanity,¹⁹ and serve as the perfect human ruler over God’s kingdom.²⁰

We teach Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption and triumphed over His enemies through His death on the cross²¹ and any sinner who believes in Jesus as the Promised Messiah of God and in His complete and atoning work is forgiven of sin, declared righteous, gifted eternal life, and adopted into the family of God.²²

SECTION 2.3: THE HOLY SPIRIT

We teach the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity and was active in the creation of the world,²³ the incarnation and resurrection of the Son,²⁴ the written revelation of the Word,²⁵ and the work of salvation.²⁶

We teach the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher whose indwelling work includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment;²⁷ revealing and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ;²⁸ transforming believers into Christlikeness;²⁹ and empowering and equipping believers to live as Christ Jesus.³⁰

We teach the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowment of gifts and that spiritual gifts are dispensed to the church for the building up of the body.³¹

¹⁴ John 1:1-3, 14, 18; Heb. 2:14; Phil. 2:5-8

¹⁵ Phil 2:5-11; Matt. 3:16; 4:1; 12:28; 14:19; Luke 3:21-22; 4:18; John 11:41-43; Acts 1:2

¹⁶ Gen. 3:15; 12:1-4; 1 Chron. 17:11-14; 2 Chron. 6:16; Is. 9:1-7; Matt. 1:1; Luke 3:23-38; Acts 5:42; 8:4-5; 9:22; 17:2-3; 18:5, 28

¹⁷ John 1:29; John 14:7-9; 1 John 1:1-3

¹⁸ 1 John 3:8; Col. 2:14-15

¹⁹ Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; Revelation 5:9

²⁰ Rom 5:12-21; Is. 9:6; 1 Cor. 15:45-49;

²¹ John 10:17-18; 1 Pet. 2:24; Rom. 3:25; Eph. 1:7; Col. 2:15

²² John 3:16; John 17:3; Rom. 5:1, 8-11; 8:1, 14-17; 1 Pet. 2:24

²³ Genesis 1:2

²⁴ Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:35; Rom. 8:11; Eph. 1:19-20

²⁵ 2 Peter 1:20-21

²⁶ John 3:5-7; Eph 1:13-14

²⁷ John 14:26; John 16:7-8

²⁸ John 16:14

²⁹ 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Gal. 5:22-23

³⁰ Acts 1:8; Eph. 5:18-21; 1 John 4:4; 2 Pet. 1:3-4

³¹ 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 14:22; 2 Cor. 12:12; Rom 12:6-8; Eph. 4:1-12; Heb. 2:3-4; Jude 3

SECTION 2.4: THE WORD OF GOD

We teach God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors—and has preserved His Word for all generations.³² As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged.³³

SECTION 2.5: CREATION, SATAN, AND THE HUMAN CONDITION

We teach that God created the heavens and the earth—and declared His creation “very good.” Human beings, male and female, were created in the image of God³⁴ to glorify Him, enjoy relationship with Him, and steward His creation through work, worship, and community.

We teach that Satan is a real, personal, created being who opposes the purposes of God. Though defeated by Christ, he still deceives and accuses. Believers are called to resist him through faith, prayer, and the Word of God until Christ fully and finally casts him into eternal judgment.

We teach Adam and Eve were created in the image of God, but they sinned when tempted by Satan.³⁵ The penalty for sin is death—eternal separation from God.³⁶ In their sin, humanity is powerless to restore themselves and, therefore, remain under the penalty of sin.³⁷ Because of God’s great love,³⁸ Jesus Christ was sent to rescue, restore, redeem, and renew humanity.³⁹

SECTION 2.6: SALVATION

We teach Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, freely laid down His life for the redemption of humanity.⁴⁰ The shed blood of Christ was the perfect, all-sufficient, and atoning sacrifice that satisfied the justice of sin.⁴¹ Salvation is a free gift of God⁴² received only through one’s faith in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.⁴³ Salvation is fully a work of God on behalf of man and cannot be obtained through any sacraments (religious activities), good works, or human merit.⁴⁴

We teach all who are born again are kept by God’s power alone, secure in Christ forever, and sealed by the Holy Spirit who is the guarantee of our inheritance.⁴⁵

³² Psalm 119:89; Is. 40:8; Matt. 5:18; 1 Pet. 1:24-25

³³ Is. 40:8; Matt. 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Pet. 1:24-25; 2 Pet. 1:21; Rev. 22:18-19

³⁴ Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 5:1; Gen. 9:6; Col. 3:10; James 3:9

³⁵ Gen. 3:1-19; Rom. 5:12

³⁶ Gen. 2:17; John 17:3; John 14:6; John 5:24; Rom. 6:23; 2 Thess. 1:9

³⁷ Eph. 2:1-10; Tit. 3:3-7

³⁸ John 3:16; Rom. 5:7-8; Rom. 8:35; Eph. 2:4-7; Is. 54:10; Lam. 3:22-24

³⁹ John 3:16; Rev. 21:5; Rom 6:4; Is. 43:19; 1 Cor. 15:42-44; Phil. 3:20-21

⁴⁰ 1 John 3:16; John 3:16; Rom. 5:7-8; Eph. 5:1; 2 Cor. 5:21

⁴¹ 1 John 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:24; Eph. 2:13; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 9:14; Rev. 12:11

⁴² Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom 10:9

⁴³ John 20:31; Acts 2:36-38; Acts 5:42; Acts 13:26-41; Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:28; Rom 5:1

⁴⁴ Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5

⁴⁵ Eph. 1:13-14; John 10:28-29; 2 Pet. 1:5; 2 Thess. 3:3; Deut. 33:27; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; John 6:37-40; Rom 6:4-5

SECTION 2.7: THE GOSPEL

We teach the Good News or Gospel of God⁴⁶ is that Jesus eternally existed as God the Son,⁴⁷ was sent by the Father to earth;⁴⁸ was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary;⁴⁹ lived a sinless life;⁵⁰ was crucified under Pontius Pilate;⁵¹ was buried;⁵² arose bodily from the dead on the third day;⁵³ appeared to many witnesses as proof of His bodily resurrection to guarantee a future resurrection for all believers;⁵⁴ ascended to the right hand of God as our Advocate and High Priest and the ruling Christ over all authorities, powers, and dominions;⁵⁵ sent the Holy Spirit to effect His rule in the hearts of His people; and will come again to receive His people unto Himself,⁵⁶ judge believers and unbelievers,⁵⁷ redeem all of Creation,⁵⁸ and turn over all things to the Father.⁵⁹

SECTION 2.8: THE CHURCH

We teach Jesus Christ is the Head of His Church,⁶⁰ and the true Church is comprised of all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone.⁶¹

We teach Jesus instructed His Church with two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both ordinances portray the New Covenant Jesus offered through His life, death, burial, and new life.⁶²

We teach the purpose of the Church is to glorify God⁶³ by having the mindset of Christ Jesus,⁶⁴ following Christ's example in humbly serving⁶⁵ sacrificially loving others,⁶⁶ and obeying the Great Commission of Jesus to make disciples in all the nations.⁶⁷

SECTION 2.9: THE KINGDOM OF GOD

⁴⁶ Mark 1:14-15; Luke 4:43; Rom. 1:16

⁴⁷ Ps. 2:7; John 1:1

⁴⁸ John 3:16; John 5:30; 17:3; Phil. 2:5-11

⁴⁹ Luke 1:26-35; Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:25

⁵⁰ 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5; Heb. 4:15

⁵¹ 1 Cor. 15:3; Heb. 7:27

⁵² Mark 15:42-46; Luke 23:49-55; 1 Cor. 15:3-4

⁵³ Matt. 28:6; Luke 24:39-43; John 20:24-29; Heb. 4:14-16; 7:25; 9:24; Eph. 1:20-23

⁵⁴ John 5:28-29; 14:19; Rom. 1:4; 4:25; 6:5; 1 Cor. 15:20, 23

⁵⁵ Acts 1:1-9; Col. 3:1; 1 John 2:1; Matt. 28:6, 18; Eph. 1:20-23; Luke 24:39-43; Heb. 4:14-16; 7:25; 9:24

⁵⁶ John 14:1-6; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 19:11-16; 20:4-6

⁵⁷ Acts 17:30-31

⁵⁸ Rom. 8:22; Acts 3:21; Rev. 21:5; Rev. 22:3

⁵⁹ 1 Cor. 15:24, 28

⁶⁰ Eph. 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18

⁶¹ Ex. 19:5-6 and 1 Pet. 2:9; Deut 7:6; Acts 10:34-36; Rom 9:3-5, 25-26; Rom. 11:16-24

⁶² Matt. 28:19-20; Rom. 6:4-5; Col. 2:12; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26

⁶³ 1 Cor. 10:31

⁶⁴ Phil. 2:5-11

⁶⁵ John 13:12-16

⁶⁶ John 13:31-35

⁶⁷ Matt. 28:18-20

We teach the kingdom of God as “God’s people in God’s place under God’s rule.”⁶⁸ The kingdom of God is both a present experience and a literal future hope.⁶⁹ The realization of the Kingdom is gradual in time and will be ushered in its fullness at the second coming of Jesus.⁷⁰

We teach the kingdom of God was initially commenced on earth in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve living where God placed them and submissive to His instructions.⁷¹ When Adam sinned, the intention of God’s earthly kingdom was disrupted.⁷² When Jesus the Anointed One/Messiah/Christ/King opened His ministry in Galilee, He announced, “The kingdom of God is at hand.”⁷³ Jesus taught His followers to pray, “Thy Kingdom come...on earth as it is in Heaven.”⁷⁴ In Heaven, God rules perfectly. On earth, God’s reign continues to expand—and the gates of hell are not able to withstand the power of the Gospel.⁷⁵

We teach King Jesus will return a second time, eliminate His already-defeated enemies,⁷⁶ establish a new Eden,⁷⁷ and eternally rule over all the redeemed in a Kingdom free from the presence of sin.⁷⁸

SECTION 2.10: THE RETURN OF CHRIST

We teach the personal, bodily, and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁷⁹ Because the second coming of Christ, our blessed hope, will happen at a time known only to God,⁸⁰ believers should remain expectant for the return of King Jesus and committed to a life of godliness, sacrificial service, and kingdom work.⁸¹

SECTION 2.11: THE ETERNAL STATE

We teach believers shall be physically raised in glorified bodies fit for eternal life and unbelievers shall be raised to judgment in the lake of fire and eternal separation from God.⁸²

SECTION 2.12: MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We teach God created the institution of marriage to be between one biological man and one biological woman until death⁸³ and as a display of the covenant relationship between Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom, and His Bride, the Church.⁸⁴

⁶⁸ Matt. 6:33; John 3:3; Heb. 12:28-29; Rev. 21:1-5

⁶⁹ Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Mark 1:15; Acts 28:31; Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:13; Rev. 11:15

⁷⁰ 1 Cor. 15:25; Rev. 21:1-5

⁷¹ Gen. 1:28; 2:15-25

⁷² Gen. 3

⁷³ Mark 1:15; Luke 17:20-21; Rom. 14:17

⁷⁴ Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2

⁷⁵ Matt. 28:18-20; 16:18; Acts 1:8; 13:47; 17:6; Rom. 1:8; Eph. 6:11-12; 1 Pet. 5:8

⁷⁶ Eph. 1: 20-23; Col. 2:14-15; Ps 2:7-12; Rev. 20:10, 14-15

⁷⁷ Rev. 22:1-5; John 14:3

⁷⁸ Rev. 21:27; Rom. 5:18-21; John 3:5

⁷⁹ Acts 1:11; 2 Thess. 1:10; Tit. 2:13; Rev. 22:20

⁸⁰ Mark 13:32-37; Matt. 24:36

⁸¹ Titus 2:12-14; Matt. 25:1-19;

⁸² Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; John 5:28-29, Rev. 20:15

⁸³ Gen. 2:18-24; Matt. 19:3-6

⁸⁴ Gen. 2:24; 19:5; 26:9-10; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; Eph. 5:21-33; Heb. 13:4

We teach that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that intimate sexual activity be engaged only within the bounds of a marriage between a man and a woman. We teach that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.⁸⁵

We teach men and women were created in the image of God and are spiritually equal in position and worth before God.⁸⁶ We respect gender distinction as created by God, and we do not endorse the altering of one's gender by surgery or appearance.

SECTION 2.13: SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

We teach God created all human life in His own image and declares human life to be sacred from conception to death.⁸⁷ Therefore, we value the life of an unborn child as the life of any other living human being.⁸⁸ We oppose the taking of innocent human life, whether by another person through abortion, euthanasia, or assisted suicide—or by oneself through suicide.⁸⁹

SECTION 2.14: SOCIAL ISSUES

We teach that, in the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism and every form of greed,⁹⁰ and should work to provide for the orphaned, widowed, foreigner, needy, abused, sick, and helpless.⁹¹

SECTION 2.15: CHRISTIAN LIVING

We teach that every believer, while waiting expectantly for the return of Jesus, is called to live in a manner worthy of the Gospel—pursuing holiness, cultivating the fruit of the Spirit, engaging in the life of the Church, and loving God and neighbor with humility and joy. By grace, believers are being conformed into the image of Christ as they grow in obedience, service, and love.

ARTICLE 3: THE COVENANT COMMUNITY

At Plymouth Community Church, we recognize and celebrate the broader *faith family*—all who gather, worship, and participate in the life of our church. Within our faith family, the *covenant community* refers to those who have made a formal Covenant Commitment (Section 3.2) to live in shared unity, service, and accountability with PCC's mission and leadership.

⁸⁵ Ex. 20:14; Matt. 5:27-28; Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 18; 7:2; Gal. 5:19; 1 Tim. 1:8-11;

⁸⁶ Gen. 1:26-27; Matt. 19:4; 1 Pet. 3:7

⁸⁷ Gen. 1:27; 5:1-2; 9:6; Jam. 3:9; Ps. 139:3; Jer. 1:5; Job 33:4

⁸⁸ Ps. 22:10; 139:3; Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:15; Job 33:4; Prov. 6:16-19; Gen. 9:5-6;

⁸⁹ Ecc. 8:8; Job 1:21; 30:23; 33:4

⁹⁰ Ex. 20:14; Matt. 5:27-28; Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 18; 7:2; Gal. 5:19; 1 Tim. 1:8-11;

⁹¹ Duet 15:7-11; Matt. 25:35-45; James 1:27; Gal. 2:10; James 2:14-17; Ps. 82:3; Is. 1:17

We affirm that biblical community flourishes not through formal membership status, but through relational commitment, mutual accountability, and Spirit-led participation in the life and mission of the local church. Therefore, individuals and families are invited to enter into this Covenant Commitment—not to gain benefits, but to give themselves wholly to Christ’s work in and through His Church.

SECTION 3.1: PURPOSE

The relationship between God and His people is covenant-based;⁹² therefore, anyone confessing faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, living a life consistent with this confession, aligning with the church’s teachings, and committed to growing in their walk with Christ may enter the covenant community of the PCC faith family.

Members of the covenant community are expected to live to honor and glorify God; regularly gather with the PCC faith family for worship, prayer, and teaching; lovingly walk together in authentic community through mutual encouragement and accountability; actively support the kingdom mission of the PCC faith family with their time, talents, and treasures; cooperate with and submit to spiritual leadership in a spirit of humility; seek reconciliation and restoration whenever conflict arises, and strive to embody a Christ-centered lifestyle as outlined in Scripture, for the glory of God.⁹³

SECTION 3.2: THE COVENANT COMMITMENT

Having received Jesus Christ as my Savior, surrendered my life to Him as King, and been baptized, I desire to join the Plymouth Community Church faith family. Led by the Holy Spirit, and in agreement with the teaching, mission, and structure of PCC, I affirm the following pledges as evidence of my relationship with Jesus Christ and my commitment to His Body at PCC:

WORSHIP: I will live daily for God’s glory by honoring God in all I do, seeking to wholly follow Jesus, praying with gratitude and faith, living a godly life empowered by the Holy Spirit, and making disciples who make disciples.⁹⁴

GROWTH: I will become more like Christ by daily engaging with God’s Word, submitting to His authority, confessing and repenting of sin, pursuing holiness, and participating in Bible study and prayer.⁹⁵

UNITY: I will value our bond in Christ above all else by walking in love, putting others before myself, speaking to bless, investing in and receiving from our faith family, praying for and assuming the best in others, and resolving conflicts with grace and reconciliation.⁹⁶

SERVICE: I will use God’s gifts to bless others by stewarding my time and resources wisely, giving generously to support the Kingdom mission of PCC, and using my spiritual gifts to serve the Body.⁹⁷

⁹² Genesis 9:9; 15:18; Exodus 6:5;19:3-6; Luke 22:20; Heb. 8:7-13

⁹³ Rom. 15:2; Heb. 13:17

⁹⁴ Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 10:31; Heb. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:9; Mat. 28:18-20; John 16:7-15

⁹⁵ Eph. 4:14-15; Col. 1:10; 1 Pet. 2:1-2; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; 3:18

⁹⁶ John 17:20-23; Rom. 14:19; Eph. 4:1-6; 1 Pet. 3:8-9; Heb. 13:17

⁹⁷ Mark 10:43-45; John 13:14; Gal. 5:13-14; Eph. 4:11-12; Phil. 2:3-8; 1 Pet. 4:10; 2 Cor. 9:7; Rom 12:1-8

MISSION: I will make disciples in our community and beyond by sharing Christ with family and friends, reflecting His kingdom in my daily life, regularly gathering with my faith family, inviting the unchurched, and supporting the spread of the gospel through prayer, encouragement, and generosity.⁹⁸

If I leave this covenant community, I will seek another where I can continue living out this covenant in faithfulness to God's Word.

SECTION 3.3: INVITATION AND PROCESS

The Covenant Commitment is a voluntary, grace-based affirmation of shared faith, values, and mission. It is not a legal or contractual agreement, but a spiritual act of devotion made in unity with the PCC faith family. This commitment is open to all believers in Jesus Christ who desire to fully participate in the life and ministry of Plymouth Community Church.

The following outlines the process:

1. Twice each calendar year, PCC will provide an opportunity during a scheduled worship service or special gathering for individuals and families to enter into covenant with the faith family.
2. Those desiring to make this commitment will be invited to review and sign the written Covenant Commitment found in Section 3.2.
3. There is no formal vote. This is a spiritual act of commitment initiated by the individual or family—and affirmed by the leadership of PCC.
4. Church leadership will be available to pray with and walk alongside those entering into this covenant with the PCC faith family, providing clarity, encouragement, and shepherding care as needed.

One's Covenant Commitment does not expire, but those who have previously signed the covenant are invited to reaffirm their commitment as desired during future opportunities. Regular reaffirmation is encouraged as a way to spiritually renew one's dedication to Christ and His Church.

A current list of eligible covenant members will be maintained solely for the purpose of communicating church-wide matters and facilitating participation in discussion and leadership roles.

NOTE: Plymouth Community Church does not practice formal membership and therefore does not issue letters of transfer to other churches. If requested, church leadership may provide a personal letter of spiritual encouragement or affirmation regarding an individual's past Covenant Commitment and participation in the life of PCC.

SECTION 3.4: RESTORATION

The goal of restoration at Plymouth Community Church (PCC) is always the same: the glory of Christ, the good of the individual, and the health of the body. Restoration is a redemptive process by which those in persistent sin are lovingly called back to repentance, healing, and fellowship with Christ and His Church.

⁹⁸ *Matt. 28:16-20; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; Rev. 7:9*

This process flows not from judgment, but from love—reflecting Christ's care for His people and the seriousness of unrepentant sin.⁹⁹ The objective is always reconciliation, not removal.

Restoration is pursued when a member of the covenant community persists in clear, unrepentant sin; is promoting division, false teaching, or relational harm; or refuses to reconcile after multiple personal and pastoral appeals.

The following process outlines how PCC seeks to restore members of the covenant community while protecting the integrity of the faith family:

1. One or more believers personally approach the individual in love to address the concern.¹⁰⁰
2. If there is no repentance, two or three others, including a church leader, lovingly confront the issue again.¹⁰¹
3. If the person still refuses to listen, the elders will prayerfully engage—offering counsel, grace, and further opportunity for repentance and healing.
4. If the individual continues in unrepentant sin or divisive behavior, the elders may, as a last resort, remove the person from participation in the covenant community—with the goal of reconciliation always in view. This decision will be made with great humility, clear communication, and a desire for eventual restoration. This removal means the individual is no longer considered a member of the PCC covenant community and will be asked to refrain from any leadership or teaching responsibilities.
5. Should the individual later repent and desire to be restored to fellowship, the elders will prayerfully and joyfully walk with them through a process of healing and reentry, including relational restoration with any affected individuals, renewed understanding of the Gospel and the call to Christlikeness, and reaffirmation of the Covenant Commitment

The ultimate goal is always the restoration of both the relationship with God and the faith family—celebrating the redeeming power of grace.

ARTICLE 4: CHURCH GOVERNANCE

SECTION 4.1: GOVERNMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Jesus Christ is the head of the PCC faith family,¹⁰² and the Word of God is our ultimate authority. PCC strives to reflect God's kingdom priorities in all decisions and actions. While incorporated under state law, no decision shall knowingly contradict the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Spiritual leadership consists of elders and deacons.¹⁰³ Major business matters are presented by the elders during specially called meetings for discussion, clarification, and affirmation. Matters not explicitly addressed in these bylaws are managed under the leadership of the elders.

⁹⁹ *Gal. 6:1; Matt. 18:15–17; 1 Cor. 5; Jam. 5:19–20.*

¹⁰⁰ *Matt. 18:15*

¹⁰¹ *Matt. 18:16*

¹⁰² *Eph. 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18*

¹⁰³ *1 Tim. 3:1–12; Tit. 1:5–9; 1 Pet. 5:1–3; Acts 6:1–7*

SECTION 4.2: MEETINGS

Meetings are solely for the purpose of providing information to the covenant community members and hearing their input regarding the life, direction, and decisions of the church. These meetings are not decision-making forums and do not involve formal votes or require a quorum.

Special meetings may be called by the elders or by petition of 25% of the covenant community members. These meetings must be publicly announced during a Sunday service at least one week in advance.

Special meetings will be held to discuss significant matters such as the annual budget, the calling of a senior pastor, the purchase and/or sale of real property or building programs, and proposed amendments to the church constitution or bylaws.

In these meetings, the leadership will seek the wisdom and discernment of the covenant community, but the final decisions will be made by the elders in accordance with the authority and structure outlined in this Constitution.

Participation in special meetings—including offering input and asking questions—is limited to members of the covenant community, unless the elders invite others to provide counsel or clarification.

ARTICLE 5: CHURCH LEADERSHIP

SECTION 5.1: ELDERS

In alignment with the New Testament concept of eldership, **elders** lead the church, teach and preach the Word, shepherd the flock, safeguard doctrine, guide the mission and vision, visit the sick, lead in discipleship and prayer, wisely steward resources, judge doctrinal issues, and manage church restoration in alignment with the Word.

The **team of elders** shall consist of the lead pastor and at least five spiritually qualified men¹⁰⁴ affirmed by the covenant community. The **pastoral elder** holds no greater authority than the remaining elders other than that of influence—but is to be regarded as the "first among equals." All organizations within or affiliated with PCC are subject to this constitution and the spiritual oversight of the covenant community's appointed elders.

5.1.1 OVERSIGHT OF ELDERS

The elders serve as the corporate board for the church and are responsible for leading and shepherding the faith family in all decision-making matters. This means that, at times, the elders will gather the entire covenant community for open discussion, recommendations, proposals, information, and prayer.¹⁰⁵ At other times, decisions will be made solely by the elders.¹⁰⁶ Input and affirmation from the covenant community will be sought before the elders reach a consensus on the selection of elders and deacons, the annual budget, any acquisition or disposition of real estate, and the incurring of any indebtedness.

¹⁰⁴ 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Pet. 5:1-3

¹⁰⁵ Acts 6:1-7; Acts 13:1-3; Acts 15:1-12

¹⁰⁶ Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13

The elders are responsible for overseeing and promoting a high level of financial accountability through such means as the presentation of the annual budget and regular financial business reports. All financial records, except individual giving records, shall be available upon request within a reasonable time. The elders will provide an annual ministry and financial update to highlight areas of growth, need, vision, and faithfulness in the mission of PCC.

At all times, **members of the covenant community**, including ministry leaders, are responsible for exercising their God-given privilege to communicate their thinking on any issue to the elders for the purpose of together discovering the truth as revealed in God's Word. At all times, the elders are responsible to help promote and develop an educated, involved, and sufficiently informed faith family. In this manner, every individual of the faith family participates in the life and discernment of the church—although not all are called to lead.

The elders may appoint various **ministry teams** from within the covenant community to efficiently manage church matters. These teams shall carry out tasks in alignment with the duties and authority delegated by the elders.

Subject to the limitations of the bylaws, articles, and the relevant provisions of the Corporations Code of the State of Indiana, all activities and affairs of PCC shall be conducted under the direction of the elders. In addition to their general authority, and subject to the same limitations, the elders shall have the following powers:

1. To select and remove all officers, trustees, pastors, staff, and employees of the church.
2. To determine their duties and compensation.
3. To establish policies and practices consistent with the purposes outlined in Article 1.
4. To borrow money and incur debt for the purposes of the church.
5. To act as legal agents of the church in business matters and fulfill duties required by the laws of the State of Indiana.

5.1.2 SELECTION OF ELDERS

Any man desiring the office of elder¹⁰⁷ may submit an application to the elders, who will prayerfully assess whether he meets the biblical qualifications. If the application is accepted, an initial interview will be scheduled with the **applicant**, followed by additional interviews and discussions with the applicant and his wife.

If the elders approve the applicant, he will be invited to serve as an **elder-in-training** for a minimum of six months. During this time, he will attend elder meetings, engage in discipleship, complete a theology course, and preach a Sunday morning message.

Between six to twelve months of serving as an elder-in-training, the elders will reach a consensus decision to either:

1. Present the candidate to the covenant community,
2. Extend the elder-in-training period, or
3. Discontinue the candidate's consideration for the present time.

Once the candidate is presented to the covenant community, a period of examination will begin—lasting no less than three Sundays. During this time, members of the covenant community may raise concerns with the elders, but

¹⁰⁷ 1 Tim. 3:1

all concerns must be presented in person (not anonymously). Those raising concerns may be asked to clarify or participate in a meeting with the elders and the candidate in order to ensure that any questions are addressed in a spirit of unity and discernment.

After the examination period, and in light of the feedback received, the existing elders—by consensus—are responsible for the final decision and installation of new elders.

5.1.3 ORDINATION OF ELDERS

Ordination is the mutual recognition by the elders of a call to ministry and the qualifications to serve. Upon completing the examination phase, the new elder will be ordained during a Sunday morning worship service. Ordination is conferred for life, as long as the elder continues to demonstrate the qualifications for the office.

5.1.4 TERM OF SERVICE FOR ELDERS

Elders commit to serving the Body for a term of three years. After two consecutive terms, an elder is recommended to take a sabbatical of at least one year; however, he may be invited to extend his tenure for justified reasons.

5.1.5 REMOVAL OF ELDERS

An elder may be removed from office if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or if his inability to serve is established by the remaining elders. An elder may also request temporary removal from office for reasons other than disqualification, such as the need for rest from oversight responsibilities, a time to reevaluate his spiritual walk or personal priorities, or due to family illness or other causes. The process of reinstatement will be determined by the elders based on his circumstances, qualifications, and desire to return to service.

A vacancy resulting from dismissal or death may be filled by a unanimous vote of the remaining elders. No more than one member of an immediate family shall serve concurrently as a voting member.

5.1.6 MEETINGS OF ELDERS

Regular meetings of the elders shall be held as scheduled, without the need for call or notice, as determined by the elders. Special meetings may be called at any time by the chairman, vice-chairman, or a quorum of the members. A quorum shall consist of at least two-thirds of the elders.

The elders will elect officers (president, secretary, and treasurer) at the first regular meeting of each calendar year. Minutes will be recorded by a designated member of the team.

Decisions shall be made after prayerful consideration, through consensus, in a spirit of humility, with each elder honoring one another above himself.

5.1.7 COMPENSATION OF ELDERS

Elders shall not receive a stated or fixed salary for their services. However, nothing in this section prevents an elder from serving PCC in another capacity and receiving compensation for those services.

Any individual receiving compensation, directly or indirectly, from PCC shall not have a role in determining the amount of compensation.

SECTION 5.2: DEACONS

The **team of deacons** shall consist of spiritually qualified individuals¹⁰⁸ affirmed by the covenant community and shall serve the faith family by overseeing volunteer ministries and leading in ministry. In partnership with and under the direction of the elders, the deacons are responsible for providing care and assistance to the people, properties, and resources of PCC.

5.2.1 SELECTION OF DEACONS

Members of the covenant community are encouraged to nominate deacons for consideration by the elders. The elders will prayerfully assess each nominee to determine whether they meet the biblical qualifications for a deacon. This process may include a written application, interviews, and other conversations as needed.

The elders will make decisions about new deacons by consensus, not by formal vote, seeking the Spirit's guidance in unity and mutual submission. Once affirmed through this process, new deacons will be installed and introduced to the faith family.

5.2.2 ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Ordination refers to the mutual recognition by the elders of a call to ministry and the qualifications to serve. Upon completing the examination phase, the new deacon will be ordained during a Sunday morning worship service. Ordination is conferred for life, as long as the deacon continues to meet the qualifications for the office.

5.2.3 TERM OF SERVICE FOR DEACONS

Deacons commit to serving the Body for a term of two years. The deacon may continue in office for successive terms as long as they continue to meet the qualifications. A deacon who intends to step down at the end of their two-year term should notify the elders to allow for the appointment of a successor.

5.2.4 REMOVAL OF DEACONS

A deacon may be removed from office if they become physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or if their inability to serve is recognized by the elders. This includes the inability to regularly participate in the service and activities of the church. A deacon may also request temporary removal for reasons such as rest from oversight responsibilities, a time to reevaluate their spiritual walk or personal priorities, or due to family illness or other causes.

The process for reinstatement will be determined by the elders based on the deacon's circumstances, qualifications, and desire to serve again. The elders may request a meeting with the deacon to discuss their circumstances and determine their readiness and fitness for future service.

¹⁰⁸ Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:8-13

5.2.5 MEETINGS OF DEACONS

The deacons shall meet periodically as needed and annually select a chairman responsible for reporting their activities to the elders.

SECTION 5.3: PASTOR/TEACHER

A **Pastor** is to function as a living demonstration of the reality of Christ to the Body through a growing heart for God, a growing heart for people, and a firm commitment to the Scriptures. A Pastor should agree with the teaching of PCC as outlined in Article 4, fully embrace the ministry values and philosophies of PCC, and be capable of physically serving the local Body of PCC and the local community.

A Pastor must possess a reputation that is “above reproach” and fit the qualifications of Christian character in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. As an under-shepherd of the church who follows Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, he will display servant-leadership in caring for the spiritual and physical needs of the church with the elders and deacons, in faithfully proclaiming the Word of God, in stirring hearts toward discipleship, and in representing the grace and truth of Jesus to the church and community.

5.3.1 SELECTION OF LEAD PASTOR

When a **Lead Pastor** vacancy arises, the elders will approve a description of the new Lead Pastor's responsibilities. The elders will then appoint a **Pastoral Search Team**, consisting of at least one elder and a minimum of four respected, active members of the covenant community—recognized for their strong prayer life and spiritual maturity—to search for prospective candidates.

Upon completing their search for candidates, the Pastoral Search Team will recommend a single candidate to the elders. If the elders accept the recommendation, the candidate will be presented to the covenant community at a properly noticed meeting. Once the candidate is presented to the covenant members, a period of examination will begin—lasting no less than three Sundays. During this time, members of the covenant community may raise concerns with the elders, but all concerns must be presented in person (not anonymously). Those with concerns may be asked to clarify their statements or meet with the elders to resolve any questions about the candidate's qualifications.

After the examination period, the elders will reach a consensus decision regarding the final call and installation of the pastor.

A Lead Pastor and his spouse, if any, shall become members of the covenant community by acceptance of the call.

5.3.2 OVERSIGHT OF LEAD PASTOR

The Lead Pastor shall regularly report to, be accountable to, and serve alongside the elders. The Lead Pastor shares joint responsibility with the elders for ministry functions. The Lead Pastor serves as a voting elder and as an ex-officio member of all church teams, without voting rights, attending meetings at his discretion.

As the representative head of the local church (with Jesus as the true Head), the Lead Pastor is responsible for overseeing the public services, leading the pulpit ministry, and managing the general oversight of the church. The Lead Pastor, or his designee, is also responsible for shepherding the church staff—including their employment and dismissal in consultation with the elders.

5.3.3 SELECTION OF ASSOCIATE PASTOR

If the need for an Associate Pastor arises, the elders will approve a description of the responsibilities of the new Associate Pastor. The elders will appoint at least five respected, active members of the covenant community to serve alongside the Lead Pastor to search for prospective candidates.

Upon completion of the search, the candidate will be presented to the elders. If the elders accept the recommendation, the candidate will be presented to the covenant community at a properly noticed meeting. Once the candidate is presented, a period of examination will begin—lasting no less than three Sundays.

During this time, members of the covenant community may raise concerns with the elders, but all concerns must be presented in person (not anonymously). Those with concerns may be asked to clarify their statements or meet with the elders to resolve any questions about the candidate's qualifications.

After the examination period, the elders will reach a consensus decision regarding the final call and installation of the associate pastor.

The Associate Pastor will report directly and be accountable to the Lead Pastor while serving alongside the elders. An Associate Pastor and his spouse, if any, shall become covenant members of this church by acceptance of the call.

5.3.4: TERM OF SERVICE OF PASTORS

The term of a Pastor shall be for an indefinite period of time.

5.3.5: REMOVAL OF PASTORS

A Pastor may resign at any time and for any reason by giving written notification at least 30 days in advance.

A Pastor may be removed from service for failing to live above reproach acting inconsistently with the biblical qualifications of an elder,¹⁰⁹ teaching false doctrine,¹¹⁰ or conducting oneself in a manner that discredits the gospel or the witness of PCC. No accusation shall be entertained against the Lead Pastor unless confirmed by two or more witnesses.¹¹¹

A Pastor will be deemed unfit to serve by a 75% vote of the elders. The Lead Pastor shall be entitled to a 30-day notice, with pay, upon his dismissal. In the event of immorality, false teaching, or criminal activity, the elders may rescind the 30-day notice and terminate his employment without pay.

¹⁰⁹ 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9

¹¹⁰ Gal. 1:6-9; Tit. 1:9-11; Jude 1:3

¹¹¹ 1 Tim. 5:19

SECTION 5.4: CHURCH STAFF

All non-pastoral staff positions, including support staff and interns, shall be employed and dismissed by the Lead Pastor, with the consultation of the elders. All staff are expected to respect and work in alignment with the teaching and values of PCC as outlined in Article 4.

Position descriptions should be written and approved by the elders before filling any position. This description shall 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.

SECTION 5.5: VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers serve a vital role in the ministry of Plymouth Community Church by using their time, talents, and spiritual gifts to build up the Body of Christ. While not every volunteer holds a formal leadership title, each is expected to serve in a manner that reflects the character of Christ and the values of PCC.

All volunteers are accountable to the spiritual leadership of the church and are expected to align with the mission, teaching, and covenant commitments of PCC. Volunteers may be placed under the oversight of the elders, deacons, or designated ministry leaders.

SECTION 5.6: ADDRESSING LEADERSHIP CONCERNS

Plymouth Community Church encourages a culture of open, gracious, and respectful communication. If a member of the covenant community has a concern regarding the character, conduct, or teaching of an elder or pastor, the following process should be followed:

1. **Personal Approach:** The individual is encouraged to first speak directly with the leader involved, in humility and love, seeking clarity, repentance, or resolution.¹¹²
2. **Witness and Confirmation:** If the concern is serious and remains unresolved, the individual may approach the elders accompanied by one or two others. Concerns must be made in person—not anonymously—and supported by clear evidence or witness.¹¹³
3. **Elder Review:** The remaining elders will prayerfully consider the concern, investigate as needed, and respond appropriately, guided by Scripture and the values of PCC.
4. **Response and Follow-up:** If warranted, further steps—including correction, restoration, or removal from leadership—will follow the appropriate process outlined in these by-laws. The covenant community will be informed when appropriate, with discretion and unity always in view.

¹¹² Matt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1

¹¹³ 1 Tim. 5:19

This process protects both the integrity of church leadership and the voice of the faith family, aiming at truth, reconciliation, and the glory of Christ.

ARTICLE 6: ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

Contributions: As part of its mission to glorify God through gospel-centered ministry, PCC may establish specific funds to support particular areas of church life and outreach. When individuals give toward a designated purpose, the church will seek to honor that intent whenever possible. At the same time, all contributions are ultimately received as gifts to the Lord and entrusted to the spiritual leadership of the church, who are committed to prayerfully stewarding all resources with integrity and discernment in alignment with PCC's gospel mission and values as outlined in Article 1.

Dissolution: Upon the dissolution of this corporation, the elders shall ensure that all assets are distributed exclusively to ministries or organizations whose purposes align with those outlined in Article 2 of this constitution and that are recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax code.

Non-Discrimination: As a Christ-centered faith family, PCC welcomes all people as image-bearers of God and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, or ethnic background. We celebrate the unity and diversity found in the Body of Christ. At the same time, as a gospel-driven church, we uphold biblical convictions regarding faith and conduct. Therefore, we reserve the right to make decisions about leadership, employment, and participation based on alignment with our statement of faith, covenant commitments, and core values. We do this not out of judgment, but out of a desire to remain faithful to the calling of King Jesus and the integrity of His Church.

Stewardship: PCC exists to glorify God, not to enrich individuals. No part of the church's financial resources will be used to personally benefit members, leaders, or staff beyond what is appropriate for faithful ministry support. Reasonable compensation may be given for services rendered, and all resources will be used to advance the mission and purposes outlined in Article 1. Our goal is to handle all finances with integrity, generosity, and accountability as we seek first the kingdom of God.

ARTICLE 7: AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended upon the recommendation of the elders and affirmed by the covenant community through a period of public presentation, prayerful discussion, and spiritual consensus. No formal vote is required, but leadership will receive and consider feedback before proceeding. Any proposed amendments must be clearly posted and/or distributed at least three Sundays prior to the meeting and publicly announced from the pulpit.

Positional Statements are created and compiled by the elders to further clarify and define what PCC teaches. These statements shall be presented and affirmed by the covenant community through a period of public presentation, prayerful discussion, and spiritual consensus. No formal vote is required, but leadership will receive and consider feedback before proceeding. Positional statements must be posted and/or distributed at least three Sundays prior to the meeting and publicly announced from the pulpit.

Policies and Procedures are established by the elders to provide management protocols for all areas of church leadership and may be added, modified, or removed by the elders without requiring affirmation.

AFFIRMATION

As elders, we hereby affirm these By-Laws of Plymouth Community Church on December 17, 2025.
