

Valley Bible Baptist Church

Constitution and By-Laws



CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Constitution and Bylaws of Valley Bible Baptist Church

Preamble

This Constitution and Bylaws are made to:

1. Preserve and secure the principles of our faith.
2. Preserve the liberties of each individual member of the church.
3. Ensure freedom of action of independence from any religious body or organization.
4. Provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others and of governing church members.

CONSTITUTION

1. Name

The name of this church shall be *Valley Bible Baptist Church*, hereafter referred to as “VBBC” or the “Church”.

2. Business Location

The address of the principal office of the Church shall be: 12937 US Highway 12, Packwood, WA 98361. The mailing address shall be: PO BOX 584, Packwood, WA 98361.

3. Purpose of VBBC

1. To worship and serve God and to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ as set forth in Matthew 28:19-20.
2. To minister to the needs of the members and others as the Church is able to do so.
3. To do any and all things related to and in connection with the carrying out of the objectives and purpose herein above set forth.

4. Articles of Faith

DOCTRINE

1. THE WORD OF GOD: We believe the Holy Bible (66 books) was given by verbal plenary inspiration by God using spirit controlled men. Therefore, it is absolute Truth and is without any error. We accept a literal interpretation and believe the Bible to be relevant for today as the only rule for what we believe and how we live. 2 *Timothy 3:16-17*; 2 *Peter 1:19-21*.

2. ONE GOD: We believe there is one living and true God. He is without beginning or ending, the Creator and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, glorious in Holiness. He alone is worthy of our worship. In the unity of God there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They are equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. *Exodus 20:2-3; Revelation 4:11.*
3. SON OF GOD: We believe that Jesus Christ, was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner and was born of Mary, a virgin. He is both the Son of God and God the Son, fully God and fully man. *John 1:14 & 29-37, Hebrews 4:14-15, Isaiah 7:14, 2 Timothy 2:5, Romans 5:15.*
4. THE HOLY SPIRIT: We believe the Holy Spirit was given as a comforter and teacher to the believer and is the restrainer of evil. Upon trusting Christ as Savior, He indwells, us. He is the agent of our redemption and we are sealed by Him ensuring our Salvation. *John 14:16, Luke 1:35, John 3:5-8, Matthew 28:19, Acts 11:16.*
5. THE DEVIL/SATAN: We believe that Satan exists and that he is the unholy god of this world and the author of all evil and sin. We believe he was once created beautiful and “the Cherub that covereth” and that he sinned against God and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. *Matthew 4:1-3, & 25-41, Revelation 20:10-11 & 12:9-10, 1 Peter 5:8, Isaiah 14:12-15*
6. CREATION: We believe the Genesis account of creation being six literal 24-hour days. We believe that man came by direct creation of God and not evolution. *Genesis 1 & 2, John 1:3, Colossians 1:16-17*
7. SALVATION OF MAN: We believe that man was created in innocence by God, but voluntarily sinned, passing sin to all mankind. Therefore, all have sinned and are totally depraved and in need of a Savior. We believe the salvation of sinners is wholly by grace apart from works. Salvation is through the sacrificial blood, death and resurrection of the perfect Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, who willingly sacrificed Himself, taking the penalty for man’s sin. This satisfied the demands of a Holy God thus justifying the repentant believing sinner. We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition for salvation. *1 John 4:10, Acts 15-11, Romans 3:24-27, 1 Corinthians 15:3, John 3:16*
8. THE LOCAL CHURCH: We believe VBBC is a congregation of baptized (immersed) believers associated by covenant of faith and friendship of the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ (baptism and the Lord’s Supper) that is governed by His laws and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word. We hold the local Church has absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of a hierarchy of individuals or organizations and that its one and only head is Jesus Christ. All decisions made by the local Church will be made in accordance with the Word of God. *Ephesians 1:20-23& 5:23-24, Acts 20-28, 1 Timothy 3:15, Colossians 1:18.*

PRACTICE

1. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: We believe that the local Church body is made up of saved persons who have publicly declared their salvation through baptism. This is not a decision to be taken lightly or rashly and all prospective church members must display a testimony consistent with

the Word of God and also meet with the Pastor and Elders before being presented to the Church body for a vote of acceptance in to membership. *1 Timothy 3:14-16, Ephesians 4:1-32.*

2. **BIBLICAL MARRIAGE:** We believe marriage is the union between a natural man and a natural woman. We believe any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, fornication or adultery are perversions of God's gift of sex. *Romans 1:26-29, Hebrews 13:4, Ephesians 5:22-28, Genesis 2:23-24.*
3. **ABORTION:** We believe human life begins at conception and the unborn child is a living human being and therefore abortion is wrong. Any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, for mental well-being, or for convenience is not acceptable. The wrongful taking of any life of a human being is murder. For those who have had abortions there is forgiveness to be found in Jesus Christ as sin is confessed and repented of. *Job 3:16, Isaiah 44:24 & 49:1-5, Jeremiah 1:5 & 20:15-16, Luke 1:44, 1 Timothy 3:14-16, Ephesians 1:7, 4:1-32.*

BYLAWS

1. Government

The government of VBBC is vested in its members. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization. It recognizes the needs for mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist Churches.

2. Nonprofit Status and Liquidation

VBBC is not organized for profit. In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the Church, all its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be paid over and transferred, in no set proportion or guarantee, at the direction of the trustees to the currently supported missionaries, directed nonprofits, local churches, and/or organizations of like belief.

3. Amendment

The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended provided the proposed draft amendment shall have been presented in writing with the Church business meeting notification to the membership and voted at a properly called Church business meeting. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws shall require approval by a two thirds (2/3) vote of qualified members of VBBC who are present at the business meeting to discuss, modify, and vote the matter.

4. Church Membership

A. Qualifications

Membership of VBBC shall consist of people who have:

1. Made a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
2. Have been baptized as a believer by immersion.
3. Agree with the Articles of Faith.

4. Are at least 18 years of age.
5. Are recommended for membership by the Pastor/Elders.
6. Have been presented to and affirmed by the Church body.

B. Membership Privileges and Responsibilities

Candidates for membership need to meet with the Pastor/Elders to learn and understand the privileges and responsibilities of members to God and the Church.

Each member of VBBC in good standing (not under any disciplinary action), is a qualified member and shall:

1. Be entitled to a voice and vote in Church matters and shall have the right and privileges to full participation in the life and work of the Church.
2. Have the duty to uphold the Articles of Faith and Constitution and Bylaws of the Church.
3. Shall pursue the unity of the faith in cooperation with the other members of the Church, and shall purpose to serve in consideration of the other members.
4. Submit suggestions and ideas concerning the church to the elders for consideration.

C. Reception

Membership in the Church may be affirmed by majority vote of the Church body at any of its business meetings or Sunday Church services by recommendation of the Pastor/Elders and in one of the following manners.

1. By scriptural baptism by immersion after profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
2. By transfer of church letter from another Biblical church.
3. By statement of faith of prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism by immersion in another evangelical church of like faith and practice.
4. By restoration of Church membership after having been removed.

D. Removal

Membership in the Church shall be terminated when a member:

1. Requests a letter of transfer to join another church.
2. Becomes known they have joined another church or have moved from the area reasonably served by the Church. A letter or request for letter of transfer is not necessary.
3. Dies
4. Lacks regular attendance in a worship service for a period of six months or longer; unless due to reasons acceptable to the Pastor/Elders. The elders will be in contact with absent

members to encourage them to resume attendance seeking to draw them back into the fellowship. If lack of involvement then continues, after efforts have been made to reestablish such members, they will then be removed from membership.

5. Is dismissed by a vote of the Church due to reasons and circumstances provided in the Church discipline. The Pastor/Elders will do all they can to counsel the member for restoration prior to action of dismissal or a request of the member to be dismissed from the Church membership.

Members can withdraw their membership at any time through a written request to the Pastor/Elders. If the request comes due to Church discipline, the request will be denied until such time as the discipline process has been completed.

The Church must properly and lovingly exercise discipline upon those members who, in the judgment of the Pastor/Elders, have persisted in sinful behavior without demonstration of godly repentance (2 Corinthians 7:9-10). Article 6 herein details discipline.

5. Church Officers

The Biblical officers of the Church are Elders and Deacons. The Elders are the spiritual and legal directors of the Church. Elders and Deacons shall be called to office by vote of the membership of the Church as described in these Bylaws. The Church also recognizes the administrative positions of Moderator, Treasurer, and Secretary. All Church officers must be members of the Church in good standing.

A. The Pastor:

1. The qualifications for pastor shall be consistent with those listed in Titus 1:7-16, 1 Peter 5, 1 Timothy 3:1-7. His training, skills and experiences are needed in this area of leadership.
2. His responsibilities:
 - a. These generally fall into the following areas: Preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.
 - b. He shall lead the Church, the organizations, and all leaders of the Church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.
 - c. The pastor shall be an ex officio member of all Church standing committees, except the pastor selection committee.
 - d. He shall assist the other Elders in securing pulpit supply for time in his absence.
3. Call:
 - a. A Pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs.

- b. The Elders will serve as the pastor selection committee. In the absence of elders, a pastor selection committee shall be appointed by the Church to seek out a suitable pastor and this committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination.
- c. The pastor selection committee will recommend only one candidate at a time.
- d. The pastor's election shall take place at a special business meeting called for that purpose, of which at least a 10 day notice shall be given to the members. An affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of the qualified members present is required.

4. Terms of Service:

- a. The chosen pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the Church. In either case, at least sixty (60) days 'notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.
- b. There shall be a written mutual contract/agreement made between the Pastor and the Church.

B. Church staff:

The Church shall employ or call staff as needed.

- 1. Staff members other than that of the Pastor shall be recommended for employment by the elders or by a special committee.
- 2. A written job description and mutual contract/agreement will be prepared when the need for the Church staff is determined.

C. Elders and Deacons:

The spiritual leadership of the Church, under the headship of Christ, shall be provided by the Elders and Deacons. The Elders and Deacons will consist of a plurality of biblically qualified men, elected by the members of the Church. The number shall be determined by need and the availability of qualified men. They will work together to serve and care for the Church.

Elders:

1. Term of office:

Elders shall be elected for a term of service of three (3) years or longer as voted upon at a business meeting of the Church and may serve continuously if reaffirmed after each term. Position terms will be staggered with one third (1/3) to be voted each year. Candidates affirmed by the Church members, shall assume office immediately. The elected Elders will appoint a Chairman from within the Elders to serve that position for one year. The one year term will be from the conclusion of the annual business meeting to the conclusion of the following annual business meeting. The Elders/Pastor will be responsible for qualifying candidates for the position of Elder..

2. Qualifications:

- a. A church Elder must meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
 - b. An Elder shall demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life; a committed Christian leader and partner of the pastor; supporter and promoter of the church faith, practice, programs, and ministries.
3. Election:
 - a. Elder positions will be filled by election at a church business meeting.
 - b. Recommendations can be made for the position of elder by members of the church. The Elders shall evaluate the prospective elder concerning their fitness to serve in that role.
 - c. Once approved by the elders the candidate may be presented to the Church for vote consideration at the specified Church business meeting.
4. Duties:
 - a. Elected Elders shall elect their Chairman.
 - b. Serve as a committee of counsel to assist the Pastor concerning the progress and welfare of the Church.
 - c. Assist the Pastor in ministering to the members through pastoral and family care.
 - d. Seek to solve any fellowship problems of the Church.
 - e. Assist the Pastor in administering the Church ordinances.
 - f. Serve as Church membership committee.
 - g. In the absence of the Pastor, the Chairman of the Elders shall serve as an advisory member to all organizations and committees of the Church.

Deacons:

1. The Elders may appoint Deacons, consisting of members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, to be in charge of specific ministries and functions of the Church. These appointments shall be affirmed by members at the annual business meeting. Deacons shall serve for a term of three (3) years and may serve continuously if reaffirmed after each term. Deacons shall be accountable to the Elders for the discharge of their responsibilities.

Removal of Elder or Deacon:

An Elder or Deacon may be removed from office at any meeting of the Elders or a two thirds (2/3) vote of the Church qualified membership at any business meeting, if, after thorough investigation by the Elders (or a duly appointed committee), in accordance with the procedures prescribed by Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19, he is found to be spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scriptures, including 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus

1:5-9), as applicable, or physically or mentally unable to perform the responsibilities of an Elder or Deacon.

D. Secretary and Assistant Secretary:

1. The Secretary shall be elected at the annual business meeting and be responsible for keeping an accurate record of all business meeting transactions of the Church and preparing the annual report to the congregation. The term shall be one (1) year and may serve continuously if reaffirmed by members after each term.
2. He or she shall keep a register of the names and addresses of the Church members, with dates of admission, dismissal, baptisms, marriages, dedication of children, and deaths of members of the Church family.
3. He or she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the Church and write letters of transfer of membership, prepare written reports of the Church and keep an accurate history of the Church.
4. The Assistant Secretary, if the Church elects to fill the position, shall be elected at the annual business meeting and shall perform the duties of Secretary during the absence or disability of the Secretary, and at other times may perform such duties as are directed by the Pastor/Elders. The term shall be one (1) year and may serve continuously if reaffirmed by members after each term.

E. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer:

1. The Treasurer shall be elected at the annual business meeting as the custodian of all moneys of the Church and shall disburse these moneys by checks or other approved method as authorized by the Church. The term shall be one (1) year and may serve continuously if reaffirmed by members after each term.
2. He or she shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render monthly and annual written reports of this account to the Pastor/Elders and in annual summary to the Church.
3. The treasurer's report shall be audited annually by the Pastor/Elders.
4. He or she shall be responsible for seeing that the offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the Church's bank account.
5. He or she shall properly credit each contributor and their offerings.
6. He or she shall be responsible for preparation and distribution of annual records of contributions to donors.
7. The Assistant Treasurer, if the Church elects to fill the position, shall be elected at the annual business meeting and shall perform the duties of Treasurer during the absence or disability of the Treasurer, and at other times may perform such duties as are directed by the Pastor/Elders. The term shall be one (1) year and may serve continuously if reaffirmed by members after each term.

F. Trustees:

1. The elders shall serve as trustees for the Church. If there are less than three (3) elders, deacons can fill the role, or members recommended by the Elders and approved by the congregation.
2. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property of the Church without a specific vote of the Church authorizing each action.
3. It shall be the function of the trustees to sign any and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase or lease of Church property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the trustees for and on behalf of the Church.

G. Vacancies:

In case of vacancy in any office, except that of the pastor and staff members, the vacancy shall be filled by the Church at a business meeting as soon as reasonably possible after such vacancy has occurred.

6. Church Committees

The Pastor/Elders by their desire, or in response to a reasonably interested number of Deacons or members, a committee may be formed from within the Church at large on a temporary or semi-permanent basis to perform various Church functions. The members, duties, powers, and responsibilities of this committee will be assigned and overseen by the Pastor/Elders. Any permanent committees, standing committees, along with their duties, powers, and responsibilities will be approved by the Church at a properly called business meeting. No committee shall have the authority to enter into any agreement or represent the Church in a manner that has not been preauthorized by the Pastor/Elders.

7. Church Meetings

A. Worship Services:

VBBC shall meet regularly each Sunday for the worship of God, for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and at other designated times throughout the week for preaching, prayer, and Bible study. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the Church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of an Elder or another male member of the Church as designated by the Elders. Other regular Church centered focused meetings such as Men's Bible study, Women's Bible study, and similar meetings are public meetings to be attended by the appropriate focus group and led by the Pastor/Elder or their designated appointee with their responsible oversight.

B. Business Meetings:

Reference to a business meeting refers either to the annual business meeting or a special or urgent business meeting. All meetings will be led by one of the Elders.

Annual Business Meeting: The annual business meeting of Church members shall be held on the 3rd Sunday in January of each year. This meeting will include reports of the affairs of the Church

including: a summary of Church activities; summary of Church financials; and the proposed annual budget, elect or affirm Elders, Deacons, and officers, and transact such other business as may be properly brought before the membership.

C. Special Business Meeting:

A special business meeting may be called by the Pastor, Chairman of the Elders, by other Church officers or by action of the Church to consider special matters of a significant nature.

D. Urgent Business Meeting:

In the case of an urgent situation that requires membership approval, formal notification is waived, however, an attempt should be made to give members prior notice (telephone, email, text, in person, etc. as appropriate) if time permits. The urgent business meeting may only address the matter of urgency and should be conducted at the next Church wide worship service. At least fifty percent (50%) of the qualified members should be present and two thirds (2/3) approval vote of those members present is required. Only the Pastor or Chairman of the Elders may call an urgent business meeting.

E. Notification:

Notice of all annual or special business meetings shall be announced from the pulpit for two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. The notification shall include the date, time, location, and nature of the business meeting.

F. Quorum:

The quorum consists of those qualified members who attend the business meeting that has been properly called. At least one-fourth (1/4) of the qualified members shall constitute a quorum unless specified different herein.

G. Proxies:

Proxies will not be allowed unless the use of proxies has been subject to prior approval by Pastor/Elders for a specific business meeting and such note included in the notification. If proxies are permitted the member should provide their written proxy to the Pastor, Elder, Deacon, or another qualified member and they shall be considered as if present for quorum and voting.

H. Parliamentary Rules:

Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition) is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church and for all other meetings that demand voting of the Church membership, including committee meetings.

I. Passage of any matter submitted to vote at a meeting where a quorum is present shall require the affirmation vote of a majority of the voting power present, unless otherwise specified in these by-laws.

8. Church Discipline

- A. Should any unhappy difference arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.
- B. Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the deacons shall endeavor to resolve the conflict. If this effort fails, they shall report the case to the Church.
- C. All such proceeding shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the Church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the Church.
- D. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the Church, upon evidence of his repentance and reformation, or if an account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation.

9. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the Church and other Christians, baptized believers, through partaking of bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ who died for our sins.

- A. The Church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least quarterly.
- B. The Pastor, Elders, and Deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

Ratified by action of the Church in its business meeting on (day/date): June 23, 2021.

Elder leading the meeting: Jim Edgell _____

Church Secretary: Lloyd Cade _____