



**Pine **Ridge **Bible **Church********

**Constitution and By-Laws**



**Constitution and By-Laws of  
Pine Ridge Bible Church of Elkhart County Indiana, Inc.**

**Preamble**

Whereas, in the providence of God, we believe the time has come to unite in a closer fellowship and cooperation in the defense of the faith and in the proclamation of the gospel of God's grace:

We do therefore form such a bond of fellowship and cooperation as is set forth in the Constitution which follows, into which we heartily invite any and all believers who share with us the same faith and doctrine.

Believing, therefore, that God still calls His Church to work together in fellowship, to promote the proclamation of the gospel and the teaching of the historical doctrines of the faith, to send forth missionaries and to promote the worship of our great God and Savior, we, the members of **Pine Ridge Bible Church of Elkhart County Indiana, Inc.** desiring to faithfully serve the Lord Jesus Christ, to promote good order and to better set forth our position before the world, do ordain and establish the following articles, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

Therefore, BE IT RESOLVED,

That beginning September 1, 2004, we shall be governed by the following constitution and by-laws:

**ARTICLE I**

**Name**

This organization shall be called **Pine Ridge Bible Church of Elkhart County Indiana, Inc.**, (hereafter referred to as **Pine Ridge**) incorporated under the laws of the State of Indiana.

**ARTICLE II**

**Location**

The location of **Pine Ridge** shall be in Elkhart County, Indiana

**ARTICLE III**

**Purpose**

The purpose of **Pine Ridge** is to preach the Gospel of Christ as set forth in the Bible, to labor for the salvation of souls, to administer the ordinances of the church, to instruct children, young people and adults in the Biblical doctrines and standards of conduct, to support world wide missions, to promote the fellowship of the saints in Christ, to provide an atmosphere for the discovery and use of each believer's gift(s) of the Holy Spirit, and to glorify God in all things.

## **Article IV**

### **Statement of Faith and Doctrine**

#### **A. The Scriptures**

We believe the Scriptures; consisting of sixty-six books of the Word of God are verbally inspired and inerrant. We believe this divine inspiration extends fully to all parts of the writings: historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” to write these scriptures. We believe in the infallibility, sufficiency, and final authority of the Scriptures in all matters of conduct and doctrine. II Tim 3:16-17, II Pet 1:21

#### **B. The Holy Trinity**

We believe in one God Who exists as a Triunity called the Holy Trinity. The Trinity consists of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, three persons co-equal and co-eternal, having the same nature and attributes and worthy of precisely the same worship, confidence, and obedience. We believe God is omnipotent, omniscient, eternal, and immutable; full of love, justice, goodness, mercy, and truth. John 14:16, II Cor 13:14, Matt 3:16-17, Matt 28:19, I Pet 1:2, Ps 135:8-9, Dan 4:35, Eph 2:4-5

#### **C. God the Father**

We believe in God the Father, the first person of the Trinity; Who orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. Eph 3:14-15, Mal 2:10, Phil 2:11, 13, I Cor 15:23-28, I Cor 12:6, Heb 13:20-21

#### **D. God the Son**

We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, the Eternal Word manifested in the flesh. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. We believe in His sinless life and ministry on earth, His death on the cross as a substitutionary atonement for our sins through His shed blood, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension to the right hand of God the Father, His advocacy as our High Priest and Mediator, His exaltation, and His coming again. Is 7:14, Luke 1:30-35, John 1:1-2, 14,18, Phil 2:5-8, Heb 4:15, Heb 7:26, I Cor 15:1-3, II Cor 5:21, Heb 2:9, Heb 4:14, Heb 7:25, John 14:1-3, Acts 1:11

#### **E. God the Holy Spirit**

We believe in the person and deity of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit convicts men of sin, regenerates, indwells, baptizes, seals, and sets believers apart to a holy life. We believe that on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was sent to begin a new work, the Church. He accomplishes this by permanently indwelling each believer at the moment of salvation and endowing them with spiritual gift(s) for the building up of the Church. We believe certain supernatural gifts of the Spirit were given to the early church for signs to confirm the gospel message and apostolic authority: these are the gifts of prophecy, tongues (foreign languages given to evangelize Acts 2:4-12), and knowledge. These were temporary gifts and ceased as the New Testament was completed and its authority established. Heb 2:3-4, John 14:16-17, Acts 5:30-32, Rom 8:14, I Cor 3:16, Eph 1:13, Eph 4:30, I Pet 1:2, Rom 12:4-8, Rom 12:1-11

#### **F. The Church**

We believe in the Church, the bride of Christ, and that it is the body of which Christ is the head, and that all who are united by faith to Christ are members of the same. Having been baptized by one spirit into one body which is Christ's and having thus become members one of another, it is our solemn and covenant duty to fellowship with one another with a pure and fervent heart. Matt 16:18, Eph 1:22-23

## **G. The Ordinances**

We believe in the holy ordinances of communion and of water baptism by immersion. We believe these ordinances are not essential to salvation but should be observed by all true believers in obedience to God. Matt 28:19, Acts 8:34-39, I Cor 11:23-36

## **H. Satan**

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, the Christian's adversary, a created being, who was originally the anointed cherub, but who sinned, losing his estate and thus became the father of lies and that his destiny is the lake of fire. I Pet 5:8, Is 14:12-15, Ezek 28:12-19, Rev 20:10

## **I. Man and the Fall**

We believe that man was originally created in the image of God, and that he fell through sin. As a consequence of this he became dead in trespasses and sin and became subject to the power of Satan. We also believe that this spiritual death and total depravity of human nature has been transmitted to the entire human race. Therefore, every child of Adam is born into the world with a sin nature and is hopelessly lost apart from divine grace. Gen 1:26, Gen 2:17, Gen 6:5, Ps 14:1-3, Ps 51:5, Jer 17:9, John 3:6, John 5:40, Rom 3:10-19, Rom 8:6-7, Eph 1-3, I Tim 5:6, I John 3:8

## **J. Salvation**

We believe that the salvation of man, who is sinful and lost, is instantaneous and accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the word of God when the repentant sinner, enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith. This salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redeeming work of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works. All of the redeemed are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ from the moment of conversion and throughout all eternity. Matt 26:28, Rom 5:6-9, Gal 3:13, Titus 3:5, I Pet 1:18-19

## **K. Assurance**

We believe that believers can enjoy the assurance of their salvation (I John 5:13); full security in Christ forever (I John 3:36, John 5:24); the inheritance of incorruptible things (I Pet 1:4); redemption (Gal 3:13); justification (Rom 5:1); adoption (Gal 4:5-7); reconciliation (II Cor 5:18-19); sanctification (I Cor 1:30); and glorification (Phil 3:20-21); and that they are partakers of the divine nature (II Pet 1:4).

## **L. Resurrection**

We believe in the resurrection of the dead. The righteous dead shall be raised at the appearance of Christ at the rapture of the church and the revelation of Christ at His second coming; but the wicked dead shall not be raised until after the millennium and then face the judgment of God at the Great White Throne. Dan 12:2, I Thess 4:13-18, Rev 4:13-18, Rev 20:11-15

## **M. The Second Coming**

We believe in the imminent personal return of Christ in the air for His saints at the rapture of the church. The church saints include both living believers who are translated and the righteous dead who are resurrected. This will end the church age on earth just prior to the seven year tribulation period. We believe in the personal, pre-millennial return of Christ to the earth with His saints. He will return in power and great glory. He will then judge the nations and inaugurate His millennial Kingdom on earth. Dan 9:25-27, I Thess 4:13-18, I Cor 15:51-54, Matt 25:31-46, Rev 19:8-16

## **N. The Eternal State**

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory. The spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment at the Great White Throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. Luke 16:19-26, Luke 23:42, II Cor 5:8, Phil 1:23, II Thess 1:7-9, Jude 6-7, Rev 20:11-15

## **ARTICLE V**

### ***Government***

#### **A. Church Authority**

1. Ultimate authority in **Pine Ridge Bible Church** shall reside in the membership of the congregation under the teaching of Jesus Christ, the whole of Scripture, and within the structure of this constitution.
2. **Pine Ridge** is autonomous and self-governing in all matters.
3. **Pine Ridge** will not be under the jurisdiction of any other ecclesiastical body and never will be.
4. The government of **Pine Ridge** is vested in its membership.

#### **B. Governing Bodies**

1. Elder Board
  - a. To oversee church ministries and spirituality
  - b. To teach and train spiritual leaders of **Pine Ridge**
2. Deacon Board
  - a. To serve in an administrative capacity over the property of **Pine Ridge**
  - b. To direct efforts to meet needs of those in **Pine Ridge** body

#### **C. Officers**

##### **1. Pastor**

- a. **Requirements:** meet the Scriptural qualifications of an Elder from I Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9
- b. **Duties, Responsibilities, and Selection**
  - i. The pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God, direct the worship, administer the ordinances, and exercise the spiritual oversight of the ministry together with the Elder Board.
  - ii. The pastor shall be a regular member of the Elder Board
  - iii. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all other boards and committees connected with **Pine Ridge**.
  - iv. No pastor shall serve as the Chairman of the Elder Board.
  - v. The pastor(s) shall be elected or dismissed upon the recommendation of the Elder Board or by a petition signed by a majority of the membership at a Congregational Meeting for that purpose. Three-fourths of all votes cast shall be required for election or dismissal
  - vi. Thirty days notice shall be given by either party to terminate the agreement.
  - vii. There will be an annual review of the pastor(s) by the Elder Board

##### **2. Elders**

###### **a. Requirements**

- i. Must meet the Scriptural qualifications of an elder in I Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9
- ii. No man is eligible to serve as an elder who has been divorced or whose wife has been divorced.

###### **b. Duties, Responsibilities, and Selection**

- i. Shall constitute a board and elect annually their own Chairman and Secretary. The Chairman of the Elder Board shall serve as the Moderator of **Pine Ridge**
- ii. Shall be responsible with the pastor for spiritual leadership of **Pine Ridge**, which includes oversight of all ministries in **Pine Ridge**.
- iii. Shall assist in serving communion
- iv. Shall examine in person all applicants for membership in **Pine Ridge** and make recommendations to the congregation concerning acceptance of new members.
- v. Shall serve as the Nominating Committee for **Pine Ridge** officers which are to be elected at the Fourth Quarter Congregational Business Meeting
- vi. Shall be responsible to determine membership requirements for any position in **Pine Ridge** not specifically stated in the Constitution.
- vii. Shall approve speakers and/or groups from outside **Pine Ridge** for ministry within **Pine Ridge**.

**c. *Composition and Term***

- i. The elders will form a board of up to 6 (six) men. The number of elders may be increased as need arises by a majority vote of the Congregation.
- ii. Elders will be elected for three year terms in rotation. After serving two consecutive terms, and Elder will be given at least one year off the board to allow ministry in different capacities.
- iii. Elders will be elected by a majority vote of the Congregation at the Fourth Quarter Congregational Business Meeting.
- iv. A man may not serve as an Elder and a Deacon at the same time.
- v. Any Elder who strays from sound doctrine or from godly conduct while in office is to be warned by the other Elders. If he does not correct the problem, he may be removed from office by a majority vote of the Elder Board or by a majority vote of the Congregation.

**d. *Meetings***

- i. The Elder Board shall meet on a regular, published basis. Elder Board meetings shall be open meetings with the exception of matters of discipline or other sensitive items.
- ii. A quorum shall consist of at least fifty percent of the total number of Elders.
- iii. The Chairman of the Elder Board shall preside at Elder Board meetings. In his absence his designee shall preside.
- iv. The Secretary shall record the minutes of the meeting. A copy of the minutes shall be available to the Congregation
- v. A summary of the minutes of the Elder Board meetings shall be presented at the Quarterly Congregational Business Meetings.

**3. Deacons**

**a. *Requirements***

- i. Meet the qualifications of a Deacon in I Tim 3:8-13
- ii. No man is eligible to serve as a Deacon who has been divorced or whose wife has been divorced.

**b. *Duties, Responsibilities, and Selection***

- i. Shall constitute a Board and shall elect annually their own Chairman and Secretary
- ii. Shall be responsible for the oversight and maintenance of all church property and finances.
- iii. Shall assist in the administration of Communion, aid in the Baptismal Services, and oversee ushers.
- iv. Shall oversee the receiving and depositing of all funds of **Pine Ridge** in a designated financial institution.
- v. Shall oversee the dispersal of funds as needed.

- vi. In compliance with Indiana law and solely for legal purposes, the Deacon Board will be called Trustees in matters pertaining to **Pine Ridge Bible Church** real property. As a Board of Trustees their power is limited solely to that of holding real property in trust, and they can take no action but such as is ordered by the Congregation. The Chairman of the Deacon Board will be known as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for legal purposes.
- c. **Composition and Term**
    - i. The Deacons will form a board composed of up to six (6) men. The number of deacons may be increased as need arises by a majority vote of the Congregation.
    - ii. Deacons will be elected for three year terms in rotation. After serving two consecutive terms, a Deacon will be given at least one year off the Board of Deacons to allow ministry in different capacities.
    - iii. A man may not serve as a Deacon and an Elder at the same time.
    - iv. Deacons are elected by a majority vote of the Congregation at the Fourth Quarter Congregational Business Meeting.
    - v. Any Deacon who strays from sound doctrine or from godly conduct while in office is to be warned by the other Deacons. If he does not correct the problem he may be removed from office by a majority vote of the Elder Board, or by a majority vote of the Congregation.
  - d. **Meetings**
    - i. The Deacon Board shall meet on a regular published basis. Deacon Board meetings shall be open meetings with the exception of sensitive matters.
    - ii. A quorum shall consist of at least fifty percent of the total number of Deacons.
    - iii. The Chairman of the Deacon Board shall preside at all meetings of the Deacon Board. In his absence his designee shall preside.
    - iv. The Secretary of the Deacon Board shall record the minutes of the meeting. A copy of the minutes shall be available to the Congregation.
    - v. A summary of the minutes of the Deacon Board meetings shall be presented at the Quarterly Business Meeting of the Congregation of **Pine Ridge**.
4. **Treasurer**
- a. **Requirements:** a member in good standing of **Pine Ridge**
  - b. **Duties, Responsibilities, and Selection**
    - i. Shall oversee record keeping of all church finances and give written reports at Quarterly Congregational Business Meetings
    - ii. The Treasurer and any assistants will be advisors to the Deacon Board and may be asked to assist in financial planning.
    - iii. Shall oversee writing disbursement checks.
    - iv. Shall be elected by a majority vote of the Congregation for a term of one year.
5. **Clerk**
- a. **Requirements:** a member in good standing of **Pine Ridge**.
  - b. **Duties, Responsibilities, and Selection**
    - i. Shall keep minutes of all Business meetings of **Pine Ridge**
    - ii. Shall maintain a permanent record of all minutes.
    - iii. Shall be elected by a majority vote of the Congregation for a term of one year.
6. **Dismissal:** Any officer who strays from sound doctrine or from godly conduct while in office is to be warned by the Elder Board. If he or she does not correct the problem, the officer may be removed from office by a majority vote of the Elder Board or by a majority vote of the Congregation.

## ARTICLE VI

### *Organization*

#### A. Regular Congregational Meetings

1. Worship: Meetings for worship shall be on Sunday and other days as arranged by the Elder Board.
2. Communion shall be commemorated as determined by the Elder Board.
3. Baptism services shall be held as determined by the Elder Board

B. **Annual Congregational Meeting:** The Annual Meeting of **Pine Ridge** shall be held during the first calendar quarter each year, the exact date to be determined by the Elder Board, and as early as is consistent with the preparation of the reports to be submitted at the meeting.

#### C. Congregational Business Meetings

1. There shall be a Congregational Business Meeting during each quarter of the fiscal year. The Elder Board shall set the date and time of this meeting and shall publish it at least two weeks in advance.
2. The annual election of officers and the presentation of the annual budget shall take place in the fourth quarter of each fiscal year.
3. The Annual Meeting of **Pine Ridge** may be held in conjunction with the first quarter Congregational Business Meeting.

#### D. Special Business Meetings

1. Special Business Meetings of **Pine Ridge** may be called by the Pastor or the Elder Board provided that notice of such meeting and the agenda shall have been given publicly by insertion in the bulletin and by announcement in **Pine Ridge** at two consecutive regular Sunday meetings.
2. Special business meetings may be called via a petition signed by a majority of **Pine Ridge** membership.
3. The business to be transacted must be stated in the call for the meeting. No business shall be transacted at a special meeting except as specified in the call for the meeting.

#### E. Calendar and Fiscal Year

1. The calendar and fiscal year of **Pine Ridge** shall begin on the first day of January.
2. All officers elected shall take office at the beginning of the calendar year, and all terms of office shall run until the next calendar year, or in the case of three-year terms, the calendar year concurrent with the end of the three year period.

F. **Reports:** At each Congregational Business Meeting and Annual Congregational meeting all officers, boards, and committees shall make reports on their activities during the period between scheduled meetings.

#### G. Voting

1. Any active member of **Pine Ridge** shall be eligible to vote.
2. Members in attendance at any meeting will constitute a quorum.

H. **Parliamentary Procedure:** All business meetings shall be conducted according to guidelines put forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

## ARTICLE VII

### *Membership*

A. **Requirements:** any person 16 years of age and older who

1. Has confessed Jesus Christ as personal Savior
2. Has been baptized or is willing to be baptized.
3. Willingly agrees with the Articles of Faith and Doctrine and the Constitution of **Pine Ridge**.
4. Is recommended by the Elder Board.

#### **B. Privileges**

1. Active members are eligible to vote in all Business Meetings of **Pine Ridge**.
2. Active members shall be eligible to serve in the regular public ministries of **Pine Ridge**.

#### **C. Discipline**

1. Church discipline will be carried out in accordance with Scriptural guidelines (Matt 18:15-17, II Cor 2:6-9, Gal 6:1-2, I Cor 5).
2. The member may be subject to disciplinary action or removal from membership.
3. The Elder Board will be responsible for the administration of church discipline.

#### **D. Termination**

1. Membership may be terminated by death, by letter of request, or by disciplinary removal.
2. Members who have been inactive for 12 months may be removed from membership if recommended by the Elder Board and so approved by a majority vote of those present at a Congregational Business Meeting.

### **ARTICLE VIII**

#### *Nominations and Elections*

##### **A. Nominations and Elections**

1. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the Elder Board.
2. When the Congregation has accepted the Nominating Committee's ballot, the elections shall be conducted as provided for in Section B- Election of Officers

##### **B. Election of Officers**

1. The election of officers for **Pine Ridge** shall be made by a majority vote of the members present and voting.
2. The vote shall be by ballot, and the nominee(s) receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected.
3. After the completion of two consecutive terms of office, an Elder or Deacon will not be eligible for re-election for an additional term of office until one year has passed.

### **ARTICLE IX**

#### *Financial, Property, and Legal*

##### **A. Financial**

1. Offerings

- a. All offerings must be voluntary
- b. All funds received by **Pine Ridge** shall be promptly deposited only in accounts maintained in the name of **Pine Ridge**.
2. No financial obligation shall be placed upon **Pine Ridge** either as a mortgage, note, or any other form except by a two-thirds (2/3) approval of the Congregation during a Congregational Business Meeting or Special Business meeting.
3. The Elder Board shall determine and annually review pastoral staff employment stipulations.
4. An annual review of the financial records and procedures of **Pine Ridge** will be performed by a committee comprised of one Elder, one Deacon, and a member of **Pine Ridge** qualified to complete such a review. A report of the findings shall be included as part of the financial report at the Annual Meeting.
5. The fiscal reporting year will be from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.
6. A budget will be prepared each year by the Deacon Board, and after approval by the Elder Board, will be presented to the congregation at the fourth quarter Congregational Business Meeting for acceptance by a majority vote of the Congregation.
7. The Deacon Board will have authority to operate the ministry of **Pine Ridge** within the approved budget.
8. Any expenditure not in the budget and exceeding \$1,000 must have a majority approval of the Congregation.

## **B. Property**

1. **Pine Ridge** shall have the right to own, buy, or sell tangible properties both real and personal in its name as directed by the Deacon Board and approved by a 2/3 vote of the congregation.
2. None of the assets or holdings of **Pine Ridge** shall be divided among the members or other individuals, but shall be irrevocably designated prior to dissolution to World Missionary Press, and in conformity with the requirements of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1954 Section 501 (c)(3).
3. No funds shall be dispersed to the designee above in the event of dissolution until all of the debts of **Pine Ridge** shall be fully satisfied.

## **ARTICLE X**

### ***Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws.***

- A. Article IV of this constitution of **Pine Ridge** may not be changed or amended in any way.
- B. The remaining Articles of this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any Congregational or Special Business Meeting, providing the proposed Amendment has been announced to the congregation in a previous Business Meeting, and which allows for at least 30 days for membership review.
- C. A quorum for a Constitutional Amendment will be the members present at the scheduled Business Meeting according to the guidelines in Article V.
- D. Any amendment to the Constitution or to the By-laws adopted under this article will take effect upon its adoption.

## **By-Laws to the Constitution of Pine Ridge Bible Church of Elkhart County Indiana, Inc.**

### **I Membership Procedure**

- A. Any person who desires to be a member of this church shall make application to a member of the Elder Board.
- B. The Elder Board will review all applications, and at least two Elders will interview the applicant(s).
- C. The applicant(s) will be recommended to **Pine Ridge** for membership if approved by the Elder Board.
- D. An applicant will be considered a member after approval by the members present at any Congregational Business Meeting.

## II Reports to the Congregation

- A. Reports from officers, boards, or committees shall be made on their activities between scheduled Congregational Business Meetings.
- B. All reports shall be submitted in writing two weeks prior to the meeting for incorporation into the meeting agenda.
- C. Any of the boards, committees, or individuals shall make such interim reports as requested of them by the Elder Board. These reports shall be in writing and incorporated into the minutes of the Elder Board.

## III. Financial

- A. Gifts designated for special activities of **Pine Ridge** or for use by other institutions or projects shall be deposited in the accounts of **Pine Ridge** and used for the purpose intended by the donor.
- B. The Elder Board may authorize the establishment of special funds for deposit of designated gifts or special activities of **Pine Ridge**.
- C. Any gift given for a purpose not approved by the Elder Board or Deacon Board shall be applied to the General Fund or be returned to the donor.

## IV. Administration

- A. Detailed information of deposits, disbursements, and minutes of all business shall be recorded and kept at the location of record for **Pine Ridge**.
- B. Records shall be available for inspection by any member of **Pine Ridge** during normal office periods or meeting days.
- C. The chairman of the Elder Board will act as Moderator of the church and will preside at all church business meetings. In his absence his designee shall preside.