



# CONSTITUTION

AMENDED AND APPROVED BY THE MEMBERSHIP  
ON AUGUST 21, 2011

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## **ARTICLE 1: Organization/Incorporation/Affiliation/Business**

**SECTION 1. ORGANIZATION.** The name of this body shall be **Gateway Community Church of Mayville, Inc. dba Gateway Community Church** - hereafter referred to as “Gateway,” or “Gateway Community Church.”

**SECTION 2. INCORPORATION.** Gateway Community Church was incorporated in Dodge County, Wisconsin, (No.837246, Vol.905, Pg.116) on December 4, 1996. Subsequent *Restated Articles of Incorporation – Non-stock Corporation* (Sec. 181.1006) were filed with the State of Wisconsin on May 11, 2000, and *Articles of Correction* were filed with the State of Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions on July 06, 2000.

**SECTION 3. AFFILIATION.** Gateway Community Church is affiliated with the Converge Worldwide and the Converge Great Lakes. Affiliation was granted at the annual meeting of Converge Great Lakes on October 8, 1999.

**SECTION 4. BUSINESS.** Congregational business meetings shall be held as necessary, called with two weeks notice in the church program. Time-permitting, non-agenda items (new business) may be discussed at these meetings, and then referred to the Elders for consultation before presentation to the congregation for a vote at a subsequent meeting. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Elders or by written petition signed by a minimum 25% of voting members. Those members present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and called shall constitute a quorum of the membership for the transaction of business. Decisions will be made by a majority unless otherwise noted.

Business meetings shall be held bi-annually. The meetings shall be a time of review of the previous year’s results, including a report of the church finances for the calendar year recently concluded. The meetings shall also focus on the vision, ministry plans, and budget for the coming calendar year. Other business, presented within the guidelines established herein, shall be considered at any duly noticed and called congregational meeting.

Indemnification of any and all persons who may serve or have served at any time at Gateway is outlined in the Articles of Incorporation, as outlined in Section 2 above.

## **ARTICLE 2: Statement of Faith**

**Holy Bible:** The Holy Bible, and only the Bible, is the authoritative Word of God. It alone is the final authority in determining all doctrinal truths. In its original writing, it is inspired, infallible and inerrant. (II Tim 3:16; II Pt 1:20-21; Prov 30:5-6; Rom 16:25-26)

**Trinity:** There is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three are coequal and co-eternal. (Gen 1:26; Mt 3:16-17, 28:19; Lk 1:35)

**God the Father:** We believe in God, the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns

Himself mercifully in the affairs of men\*, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (Is 58:9; Is 64:8; Jer 33:3; Mt 6:9; Mt 7:11; I Jn 1:9) \* “men,” “man,” “mankind” are used in the traditional sense to refer to all of humanity

**Jesus Christ:** Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second person of the Trinity. On earth, Jesus was 100% God and 100% man. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, performed miracles, died on the cross for mankind and thus, atoned for our sins through the shedding of His blood. He rose from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures, ascended to the right hand of the Father, and will return again in power and glory. (Jn 1:1, 14, 20:28; I Tim 3:16; Is 9:6; Phil 2:5-6; I Tim 2:5)

**The Holy Spirit:** We believe in the Holy Spirit who comes forth from the Father and the Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher and guide. (Lk 24:49; Jn 14:26; Jn 16:8; Acts 1:8; Rom 8:9; I Cor 3:16; I Jn 2:27)

**Virgin Birth:** Jesus Christ was conceived by God the Father, through the Holy Spirit (the third person of the Trinity) in the virgin Mary’s womb; therefore, He is the Son of God. (Is 7:14; Mt 1:18, 23-25; Lk 1:27-35)

**Redemption:** Man was created good and upright, but by voluntary transgression he fell; his only hope is in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (Gen 1:26-31, 3:1-7; Rom 3:23; Jn 3:16)

**Regeneration:** We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. For anyone to know God, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. (Jn 6:44, 65; Rom 5:12-21; Jn 3:3; II Cor 5:17)

**Salvation:** We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ; His death, burial, and resurrection. Salvation is a gift from God, not a result of our good works or of any human efforts, and is to be accompanied by genuine repentance. (Jn 3:16; II Cor 7:10; Eph 2:8-9; Gal 2:16, 3:8; Titus 3:5; Rom 10:9-10; Acts 16:31; Heb 9:22)

**Repentance:** Repentance is the commitment to turn away from sin in every area of our lives and to follow Christ. Every believer is called to repentance. (Acts 3:19; II Tim 2:20-22; Jam 4:7-10; I Jn 1:9)

**Sanctification:** Sanctification is the ongoing process of yielding to God’s Word and His Spirit in order to complete the development of Christ’s character in us. It is through the present ministry of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. (I Thes 4:3, 5:23; II Cor 3:18, 6:14-18, Rom 8:29, 12:1-2, Heb 2:11)

**Jesus’ Blood:** The Blood that Jesus Christ shed on the Cross of Calvary was sinless and is 100% sufficient to cleanse mankind of all sin. Jesus allowed Himself to be punished for both our sinfulness and our sins, enabling all those

who believe to be free from the penalty of sin, which is death. (I Jn 1:7; Rev 1:5, 5:9; Col 1:20; Rom 3:10-12, 23, 5:9; Jn 1:29)

**Jesus Christ Indwells All Believers:** Christians are people who have invited the Lord Jesus Christ to come and live inside them by His Holy Spirit. (Jn 1:12; Jn 14:17, 23; Jn 15:4; Rom 8:11; Rev 3:20)

**Baptism in the Holy Spirit:** Given at Pentecost, it is the promise of the Father, sent by Jesus after His Ascension, to empower the Church to preach the Gospel throughout the whole earth. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs at regeneration when the believer is “by one Spirit...baptized into one body... (I Cor 12:13)” (Joel 2:28-29; Mt 3:11; Acts 1:5, 2:1-4, 17, 38-39, 8:14-17, 10:38-47, 11:15-17, 19:1-6)

**The Gifts of the Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit bestows a gift or gifts to every believer, as He wills, to build up and sanctify the Church, demonstrate the validity of the resurrection, and confirms the power of the Gospel. All believers are commanded to earnestly desire the manifestation of the gifts in their lives, and use them appropriately. These gifts always operate in harmony with the Scriptures and should never be used in violation of biblical parameters. (Heb 2:4; Rom 1:11, 12:4-8; Eph 4:16; II Tim 1:5-16, 4:14; I Cor 12:1-31, 14:1-40; I Pt 4:10)

Doctrinal Statement concerning the gift of tongues:

1. We recognize speaking in “tongues” as a legitimate spiritual gift. It is, however, *not* a proof of salvation, the evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit, a sign of maturity, or a universal experience of all believers. (I Cor 12:11)
2. In all things we must strive to demonstrate love toward all regardless of their experience or lack thereof. All persons in the body need to be careful of any prideful or superior attitude that could result in division. (I Cor 14:26)
3. Because of the potential division over this issue, we do not practice “the gift of tongues” in our corporate worship or small groups, unless specific guidelines of I Corinthians 14:27-28 are followed (limited in number, interpretation required). (I Cor 12-14, particularly verses 12:1-14, 27-30; 13:1, 14:1-5, 12, 26-28, 28, 40, Eph 5:18; Gal 5:22-26)

**The Church:** The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, charged with fulfilling Jesus’ great commission. Every person who is born of the Spirit is an integral part of the Church as a member of the body of believers. There is a spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Eph 1:22-23, 2:19-22; Jn 17:11, 20-23).

**Christian Conduct:** We believe that Christians relinquish the authority of their lives over to Jesus Christ, thus making Him “Lord” of their life as well as “Savior.” They put their trust in what Jesus accomplished for them when He died, was buried, and rose again from the dead. We further believe that Christians should live for the glory of God and the well being of their fellow men; that their conduct should be blameless before the world; that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions; and that they should seek for

themselves and for others the full stature of maturity in Christ. (I Cor 6:1-20; 10:31; Eph 4:17- 6:20; Phil 1:9-11; Jam 1:2-4; Col 1:9-12)

**Two Ordinances:**

**Water Baptism by immersion:** Following faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the new convert is commanded by the Word of God to be baptized in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Mt 28:19; Acts 2:38)

**The Lord’s Supper:** A unique time of communion in the presence of God when the elements of bread and the cup (symbolizing the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ) are taken in remembrance of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. (Mt 26:26-29; Mk 16:16; Acts 8:12, 36-38; 10:47-48; I Cor 10:16, 11:23-25)

**Resurrection:** Jesus Christ was physically resurrected from the dead in a glorified body three days after His death on the cross. In addition, both the saved and the lost will be resurrected; they that are saved to the resurrection of life and they that are lost to the resurrection of eternal damnation. (Lk 24:15-16, 36, 39; Jn 2:19-21, 20:26-28, 21:4; Acts 24:15; I Cor 15:42, 44; Phil 1:21-23, 3:21)

**Heaven:** Heaven is the eternal dwelling place for all believers in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (Mt 5:3, 12, 20, 6:20, 19:21, 25:34; Jn 17:24; II Cor 5:1; Heb 11:16; I Pt 1:4)

**Hell:** After living one life on earth, the unbelievers will be judged by God and sent to Hell where they will be eternally tormented with the Devil and the fallen Angels. (Mt 25:41; Mk 9:43-48; Heb 9:27; Rev 14:9-11, 20:12-15, 21:8)

**Second Coming:** Jesus Christ will physically and visibly return to earth for the second time to establish His Kingdom. This will occur at a date undisclosed by the Scriptures. (Mt 24:30, 26:63-64; Acts 1:9-11; I Thes 4:15-17; II Thes 1:6-8; Rev 1:7)

We believe this Statement of Faith to be an accurate summary of what Scripture teaches. All members shall refrain from advocating doctrines that are not included in this Statement of Faith in such a manner as to cause dissensions and divisions.

## ARTICLE 3: Membership

### SECTION 1. RATIONALE

The New Testament pattern for Church membership is: to hear, believe, be baptized, and then identify with and be committed to a local body (church), submitting to the church leadership. (Acts 2:38, 41-47) This pattern facilitates the process of holding each other accountable and spurring one another on to spiritual growth. (Heb 10:24-25) In keeping with this pattern, Gateway Community Church affirms the value of formal membership and the important role it can play in challenging people to continued growth in their relationship with God and others.

### SECTION 2. REQUIREMENTS

Membership at Gateway Community Church is open to any person who has done the following:

- a. become a follower of Jesus Christ by admitting that he is a sinner and separated from God, believing that Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone can save him from his sin and committing himself to Jesus as Savior and Lord.
- b. followed his commitment to Christ with baptism by immersion
- c. read and agreed with our Statement of Faith
- d. completed the appropriate membership classes
- e. signed a statement of agreement
- f. agreed to seek to serve God at Gateway as He has gifted him
- g. completed an interview with a representative of the Elders, demonstrating a grasp of the requirements and responsibilities of membership
- h. Transfers of membership from other like-minded congregations will be accepted upon an interview and favorable recommendation by an Elder.

### **SECTION 3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

Members of Gateway Community Church have the right to vote on congregational business and are eligible for leadership positions. Each member of Gateway will, among other things, strive to:

- a. continue to grow as a believer through obedience to God and His Word (Col 2:6-7)
- b. worship regularly with the Gateway family (Heb 10:24-25)
- c. participate in growth groups in addition to Sunday worship (Acts 2:46-47)
- d. serve the body as gifted by God (I Pt 4:10)
- e. share your faith story with friends, family, co-workers and neighbors (I Pt 3:15)
- f. speak only those things that build up the body of Christ (Eph 4:29)
- g. support the church financially through consistent generous giving (II Cor 9:6-13)
- h. work together in love, submitting to the authority of the leadership (Heb 13:17)
- i. attend business meetings

### **SECTION 4. DISCIPLINE**

Members living unchristian lives or members who habitually neglect the church covenant shall be personally sought out by the Pastor and the Elders and shall be kindly admonished and, in case of continued misconduct or neglect after such admonition, may be excluded from membership by a majority vote of the Elder board. The following guidelines are given for the administration of church discipline:

- a. Personal Grievances. In all cases of grievances between members, the person shall follow the rules set forth in Matthew 18:15-19. If this procedure does not lead to reconciliation, charges in writing shall be submitted to the Elders for consideration, counsel, and appropriate church action if necessary.
- b. Unchristian Behavior. When the actions of a member are deemed to be detrimental to the church or any member thereof, the matter shall be considered by the Elders or its appointed agency. This process shall

include confidential inquiry, counsel to the members involved, and recommendation to the church for appropriate action, if necessary. The spirit of this action is to be supportive and expressive of the acceptance, help and forgiveness of the church. If the member responds favorably to the inquiry by giving evidence of innocence (or repentance if necessary) no further action shall be required. Should the member fail to respond favorably, the Elders shall recommend to the church that his or her name be removed from membership. If possible, the member must be notified of the inquiry and given the opportunity of speaking on his or her own behalf.

### **SECTION 5: REMOVAL**

The Elders will remove members from the membership roll under the following conditions:

- a. assuming a new permanent residence out of the area
- b. transfer to another church
- c. written request for release
- d. after an extended absence of six months and following careful review and inquiry by the Elders; review of the membership role shall be done every six months to evaluate member's status
- e. not responding to church discipline
- f. death

### **SECTION 6: ROLE OF NON-MEMBERS**

While membership is in keeping with the biblical pattern and is encouraged, persons who elect to not become members are vitally important to the church. Those individuals are invited to attend all meetings and services, and may serve in a limited number of positions in the church.

## **ARTICLE 4: Leadership**

### **Christ is the Head of the Church.**

Each action and motive of the Church should be done with the objective of bringing glory to Him, under the direction of the Holy Spirit. (Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:18)

God's plan for the leadership of the Church is a plurality of godly, gifted leaders, responsible to lead, care for and equip its members. (Acts 20:28; Eph 4:11-13; I Pt 5:1-4) Therefore, overall church leadership will be given by the Elders, Deacons, and the Pastoral Staff.

### **SECTION 1. THE MEMBERS**

The membership of the church has full and final authority in the following areas, by 2/3 majority vote:

- a. ratification of the budget
- b. the calling of a Pastor(s)
- c. amendments to the Constitution
- d. purchase and sale of land / property
- e. major purchases over \$10,000
- f. contracting of debt

## SECTION 2. THE ELDERS

The board of Elders covenants together with the congregation and the Pastoral staff for the development of the *spiritual* life of the church. The functions of the Elders are to support the vision and direction of the Senior Pastor, and to monitor the health and actions of the church body. (Acts 15) The Elders are servants of God and commissioned by God to give biblical direction and spiritual oversight to the church, along with helping to ‘shepherd the flock’ of God. No church in the New Testament was ruled and managed by one person. Plurality of Elders appears to be the norm. (Acts 20:17, 28) It appears that the biblical model is for male leadership, but in the absence of willing and qualified men, God has used women in roles of leadership. As such, Elders will be sought primarily among men first, but women will not be forbidden from the role if qualified and willing men are not available. (Jdg 4-5; Rom 16:1-3)

- a) Biblical qualifications for Elders:
  - i) the qualifications as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9
  - ii) members in good standing for one year or more
  - iii) have a daily prayer life
  - iv) a commitment to regular study of God’s Word (I Tim 5:17)
  - v) financial stewardship (i.e. honoring the Lord with the first fruits of all his increases and displaying his financial commitment to the local church)
- b) Duties and Responsibilities:
  - i) prayer - pray in worship services and upon request, be available to pray with those in need
  - ii) know and guard the body of truth revealed in Scripture
  - iii) preach in worship services when requested by the Senior Pastor
  - iv) be willing to teach equipping and discipleship classes
  - v) be willing to lead a small group Bible study
  - vi) attend various ministry team activities to show support and to monitor the pulse of what is being taught; each ministry team will be assigned to a specific Elder at the first meeting of the new Elder board
  - vii) determine and resolve doctrinal issues as they arise
  - viii) resolve conflicts/disciplinary issues within the church body
  - ix) be available and remain visible to church members and visitors
  - x) recommend and model attendance as much as possible at all of the church services
  - xi) care for the poor, the sick and the needy
  - xii) assist the Pastor(s) in visitation of church members
  - xiii) propose the Pastor’s compensation package, to be approved by the membership within the annual budget at the business meeting
  - xiv) provide protection and accountability for the Pastor(s) and the congregation:
    - (1) support and defend the Pastor and his family
    - (2) oversee the Pastor’s personal and professional growth and conduct
    - (3) ensure integrity within the Pastoral office: morally, theologically, financially and in every other way

- (4) oversee necessary discipline of the Pastoral staff through the following process:
  - (a) personal contact with the Pastor regarding the alleged question or misconduct, with the hope of understanding, correction, restoration or clarification
  - (b) if two or more Elders are dissatisfied with the result of the personal contact outlined in (a) above, the Elders will contact the Overseers (Section 5 below), asking for their intervention, and the Pastor will be placed on paid leave until the issue is resolved
  - (c) contact the Converge Great Lakes District Executive Minister, informing him of the situation, seeking his prayerful consideration, and keeping him informed of the progress of the Overseers
  - (d) if the Overseer’s intervention has failed to satisfactorily resolve the issue, the Elders will contact the District Executive Minister for final resolution of the situation; the decision of the District Executive Minister shall be final and binding
- xv) In the spring of each year, each ministry leader will review the previous year’s ministry results, with an Elder, to evaluate the ministry and the ministry leader’s performance, assess needed personnel or resources, and assist with refining or defining goals for the next ministry plan, to be developed between June 1 and September 1.
- xvi) The addition of new ministries at Gateway Community Church must be approved by the Elders. A new ministry proposal will meet the following guidelines:
  - (1) must advance the vision and mission of the church
  - (2) will have a written ministry plan outlining strategic steps to fulfill the mission
  - (3) will include an annual budget
- c) Selection and Appointments:
  - i) The Elders will determine the number of positions, if any, to be filled in the following year. There will be a minimum of four Elders in addition to the Senior Pastor and a maximum to be determined according to the size of the congregation and the availability of qualified leaders as described above. (Heb 13:7; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5)
  - ii) Throughout the year, the sitting Elders will identify potential Elders and invite them to “apprentice” (i.e., attend meetings, join in discussion, but without voting privileges). During that apprenticeship period, the Elders will observe the potential Elder at meetings, in the home with his spouse and family, in the community, and in the church.
  - iii) The Elders will nominate prospective Elders, based on their observations, to the membership of the church for confirmation at any business meeting.

- iv) Members will have thirty days to notify any Elder or Senior Pastor with information that would disqualify a potential Elder. Notifications must be in writing and signed. Proper notice must be given two weeks prior to the business meeting. Elders will investigate any allegations or concerns and make a final determination regarding the eligibility of the nominee.
  - v) The Elders shall, after a time of fasting and prayer, draw names by lot in accordance with the number of vacancies on the board. (Acts 1:23-26)
  - vi) In the event that an Elder does not fulfill his term for any reason, the Senior Pastor and/or Elder Board can appoint when needed, on a temporary basis, a member that meets the requirements of an Elder to serve the vacated term.
- d) Terms of Service
- i) Each Elder will serve for at least two years. After that period, each Elder, with the other Elders present, will determine their renewable commitment for the following two years. This renewable commitment will occur every two years and shall be reconfirmed by the membership.
  - ii) Elders will take a sabbatical of at least one year after each six years of service, as long as the minimum number of Elders is met as stated above.
- e) Removal
- i) If an Elder is unable to perform his duties, including failure to attend monthly meetings, lack of communication with the Elder team, lack of availability for ministry, or is living in disharmony with biblical principles, the Elder may be suspended or dismissed by a majority vote of all other Elders.
  - ii) An Elder may resign voluntarily by filing a written resignation with the Elders.
- f) Officers
- i) The Elders will select a Chairman at the first meeting of the new board.
  - ii) The Elders will also appoint a Trustee(s). The Trustee(s) will serve alongside the Deacon Board and possible financial team, depending on the current structure of the church.
  - iii) The Elders will select an individual who will serve as facilitator at the church business meetings. Said person must be a member of the church.
  - iv) The Elders will select an individual to perform duties as the Clerk of the corporation at church business meetings. Said person must be a member of the church.
  - v) The Senior Pastor will function as the Chief Executive Officer of the corporation.
- g) Elder Meetings
- i) Elder meetings will be held monthly; time and place at the discretion of the Elders. Meetings are open to members of the

church. At the discretion of the Elders, meetings may move into closed session for discussion of matters that legally require confidentiality.

- ii) Public notice of meetings will be made two weeks in advance.
- iii) Any Elder, by proper notice to all Elders, may call special meetings, if necessary.
- iv) Telephone communication and/or electronic communication such as email or fax are acceptable for business matters. Decisions made via electronic means shall be reviewed and included in the agenda of the next meeting of the Elder board.
- v) A quorum will be a majority of the Elders.

### **SECTION 3. THE DEACONS**

“Deacons” are literally “servants” - men and women who covenant together with the congregation, to assist the Elders and the Pastoral staff in the *Ministry* of the church. The functions of the Deacons are to support the vision and direction of the church, managing the physical and financial aspects of the church ministries. (Acts 6, I Tim 3:8-13)

- a) Deacon Board Members
  - The Deacon board will consist of the Elder-ratified leaders of Gateway Community Church.
- b) Biblical qualifications for Deacons - Ministry leaders shall be expected to meet the following qualifications and fulfill the following requirements:
  - i) the qualifications of a leader as found in I Timothy 3:8-12
  - ii) must be members in good standing and not be new believers
  - iii) must have been “tested” by previous service in the church (I Tim 3:10)
  - iv) have a daily prayer life
  - v) a commitment to regular study of God’s Word (I Tim 5:17)
  - vi) financial stewardship (i.e. honoring the Lord with the first fruits of all his increases and displaying his financial commitment to the local church)
- c) Duties and Responsibilities of Deacons:
  - i) prayer – for the greater ministry of the church
  - ii) manage Gateway’s ministry to widows and orphans, the physical care of what God has entrusted to Gateway, our financial resources, and other ministries as assigned by the Elder team
  - iii) attend various ministry team activities to show support and unity with the other ministries of the church
  - iv) recruit and train people, equipping them to step into a leadership role when ready
  - v) prior to September 1, work with the ministry leaders to review any vision or mission changes and plan strategy for the next year; also communicate their budget needs and desires for the following year to the Financial Team

- vi) Attend Deacon board meetings, to discuss ministry updates on a regular basis to the board, including upcoming opportunities, and requests for funds in excess of an amount set by the Deacons.
    - funding requests should be sent to the members of the Deacon board and the Elder board at least one week in advance of the meeting
  - vii) be available and remain visible to church members and visitors regarding their responsibilities within the church as a whole
  - viii) recommend and model attendance as much as possible at all church services and activities
- d) Selection and Term of Service:  
Deacons shall be ratified by the Elders. They shall serve as long as the majority of Elders determine they qualify and are willing to perform their duties.
- e) Removal:
- i) If a Deacon is unable to perform their duties, including failure to attend monthly meetings, lack of communication with church leadership, lack of availability for ministry, or is living in disharmony with biblical principles, the Deacon may be suspended or dismissed by a vote of the Deacons and Elders.
  - ii) A Deacon may resign voluntarily, with two weeks notice, by filing a written resignation with the Elders.
- f) Officers:
- i) The Deacons shall select a Head Deacon at the first meeting of the Deacon board.
  - ii) The Deacons shall select a Clerk, who shall keep reliable minutes of the meetings to be made available to the board, Elders, and congregation within one week of each meeting. Said Clerk shall be a Deacon.
- g) Meetings:
- i) The Deacon board shall meet monthly to review, discuss, and pray for the various ministries of the church. The time and place shall be determined by the Deacons, with adequate communication made to the Elders and the congregation. Public notice of meetings will be made two weeks in advance. Minutes will be made available one week following a meeting. Elders may attend Deacon Board meetings. Meetings are open to members of the church. At the discretion of the Deacons, meetings may move into closed session for discussion of matters that legally require confidentiality.
  - ii) Special meetings may be called, if necessary, by request to an Elder by proper notice to the Deacons, Elders and the congregation.
  - iii) The Deacon board shall, during the course of their meetings, approve spending requests from the various ministries based on the vision and mission of the church, the proper presentation of the request, the approved budget for the ministry involved, and the

availability of funds. Requests are to be presented to the Deacons in writing two weeks in advance of the monthly meeting in order to be included in the agenda.

- iv) Should there be any indecision or conflict regarding the allocation of available funds, the matter shall be forwarded to the Elders, whose decision shall be final.
- v) Telephone communication and/or electronic communication such as email or fax are acceptable for business matters pertaining to agenda and submission of funding requests. Decision-making (i.e., votes, approval of motions, etc.) shall be done only in the course of a duly called and notified meeting of the board.
- vi) A quorum will be a majority of Deacons in attendance.

#### **SECTION 4. THE PASTORAL STAFF**

##### **A. SENIOR PASTOR**

The Senior Pastor is responsible to seek and discern God's vision for the church, and provide leadership and biblical instruction toward that vision.

The Senior Pastor shall perform all the scriptural duties of his office, and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, shall have freedom of the pulpit. The Senior Pastor shall be a member of the Elder board and an ex-officio member of all committees of the church.

Because the church is both a spiritual body and a legal corporation, the Senior Pastor is primarily responsible for the spiritual life of the church and serves as the corporate leader to ensure that financial strength is directed toward appropriate ministries.

- a) Biblical qualifications for the Pastor:
  - i) A Pastor will possess the qualifications of an Elder as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, and will demonstrate one or more of the gifts outlined in Ephesians 4:11-12.
  - ii) Qualifications of a Pastor are found in I Timothy 4:6-15:
    - (1) teach the body (vs. 6)
    - (2) self discipline toward godliness (vs. 7)
    - (3) trust in God (vs. 9)
    - (4) command and teach (vs. 11)
    - (5) set an example in speech, life, love and purity (vs. 12)
    - (6) total commitment (vs. 15)
  - iii) Have a daily prayer life. (I Tim 2:1)
  - iv) Be committed to regular study of God's Word. (I Tim 5:17)
- b) Duties and Responsibilities of the Senior Pastor:
  - i) The Pastoral job description shall be developed and approved by the Elders.
  - ii) Provide biblical vision and direction for the congregation.
  - iii) Define and communicate the church purpose.
  - iv) Oversee and coordinate the day-to-day ministry of the congregation and administration of the church.

- v) Daily oversight of the support staff for the church, including annual performance reviews and subsequent pay rate adjustments, each September.
  - vi) Participate as a voting member of the Elder board. He is “the first among equals” on the team, providing strong leadership, but holding only one vote.
  - vii) Determine the times, order and leadership of services, with Elder oversight. No person shall be invited to speak, teach or minister at a service held in church-owned facilities, or in the name of the church, without the approval of the Pastor and the Elders. Visiting speakers will be asked to review and affirm the Gateway Community Church Statement of Faith.
- c) Selection and Appointments:
- i. A Pastoral Search Committee shall be established consisting of a minimum of one current Elder and a minimum of two at large members of the church and one alternate at large member. Nominations will be accepted from the congregation at an appropriately called congregational meeting. Nominees will be presented to the congregation for prayer and consideration. Members will have seven days to notify any Elder with information that would disqualify a potential Search Committee member. Notifications must be in writing and signed. Elders will investigate any allegations or concerns, and make a final determination regarding the eligibility of the nominee. The Elders shall, after a time of fasting and prayer, draw names by lot in accordance with the number of vacancies on the Search Committee. (Acts 1:23-26)
  - ii. The Pastoral Search Committee, working with the GLBC District Executive Minister, and independently, will solicit résumés for the position. Based on these résumés, interviews will be conducted by the committee. The best three candidates will be interviewed by the Search Committee and the Elder board, and if possible their current church will be visited.
  - iii. The best available candidate as determined by the Pastoral Search Committee and Elders will be presented to the membership. The candidate will be given a variety of interaction opportunities with members of the congregation, including preaching at a worship service. Then at a special business meeting the congregation will vote whether to extend a call to the candidate. A three-fourths majority of the voting members present will be required to call the candidate. Should that candidate not be called, or accept an offer, the next of the three will be presented to the membership.
- d) Terms of Service:
- The Senior Pastor may serve indefinitely; the relationship may be terminated as follows:
- (1) By action of the Senior Pastor through a letter of resignation submitted to the Elders two months in advance.
  - (2) By action of the Elder board as outlined in Article (4), Section (2)(xiv).
  - (3) By action of the church membership, if a written petition requesting the Senior Pastor’s resignation, signed by at least 25% of the voting membership is submitted to the Elder board. The Elder board will review the request and respond in accordance with Section (2)(xiv)(4).
- e) Compensation:
- The Elders shall propose a Pastoral compensation package to be approved annually by the members, which shall outline the salary, housing, taxation, reimbursement, vacation, sick, sabbatical, holiday, bereavement, retirement, insurance, termination and severance policies of the church.
- f) Annual Review:
- Each September, the Elders shall conduct an annual review of the Senior Pastor’s performance and subsequent salary adjustments, for inclusion in the budget submitted to the congregation for approval.
- B. ASSOCIATE PASTORS**
- Associate pastors shall work with the Senior Pastor as a ministry team to seek and discern God’s vision for the church, and provide leadership and biblical instruction toward that vision, with special emphasis on their area of responsibility (i.e., youth, worship arts, visitation, evangelism, Christian education, etc.).
- Associate Pastors shall perform all the scriptural duties of their office, and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, shall have freedom of ministry under the leadership of the Senior Pastor and Elders. Associate Pastors may attend meetings of the Elder board, as deemed necessary, and may serve as voting members, but the Pastoral staff shall not constitute more than 20% of the voting members of the Elder board.
- a) Biblical qualifications for the Associate Pastor(s):
    - i) A Pastor will possess the qualifications of an Elder as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, and will demonstrate one or more of the gifts outlined in Ephesians 4:11-12.
    - ii) Qualifications of a Pastor are found in I Timothy 4:6-15:
      - (1) teach the body (vs. 6)
      - (2) self discipline toward godliness (vs. 7)
      - (3) trust in God (vs. 9)
      - (4) command and teach (vs. 11)
      - (5) set an example in speech, life, love and purity (vs. 12)
      - (6) total commitment (vs. 15)
    - iii) Have a daily prayer life. (I Tim 2:1)
    - iv) Be committed to regular study of God’s Word. (I Tim 5:17)
  - b) Duties and Responsibilities of Associate Pastors:
    - i) Fulfill the responsibilities as outlined in the Associate Pastor job description, as developed and approved by the Elders.

- ii) Assist the Senior Pastor in providing biblical vision and direction for the congregation, particularly in the area of their specialization.
  - iii) Review and agree with the ministry purpose and philosophy of ministry of the church. Assist the Pastor and Elders in reviewing, refining, and communicating that purpose.
  - iv) Assist in the day-to-day ministry of the congregation and administration of the church office and facilities.
  - v) Attend meetings of the Elder board and Deacon board as required.
- c) Selection and Appointments:
- i) An Associate Pastoral Search Committee shall be established consisting of a minimum of one current Elder, a minimum of two at large members of the church, and one alternate at large member. Nominations will be accepted from the congregation at an appropriately called congregational meeting. Nominees will be presented to the congregation for prayer and consideration. Members will have seven days to notify any Elder with information that would disqualify a potential Search Committee member. Notifications must be in writing and signed. Elders will investigate any allegations or concerns, and make a final determination regarding the eligibility of the nominee. The Elders shall, after a time of fasting and prayer, draw names by lot in accordance with the number of vacancies on the Search Committee. (Acts 1:23-26)
  - ii) The Associate Pastoral Search Committee, working with the Converge Great Lakes district office, and other sources, will solicit résumés from perspective candidates. Based on these résumés, interviews will be conducted by the committee.
  - iii) The best available candidate as determined by the Pastoral Search Committee will be presented to the membership. The candidate will be given a variety of interaction opportunities with members of the congregation, especially in their field of specialization, including preaching at a worship service, if appropriate. Then at a special business meeting the congregation will vote whether to extend a call to the candidate. A three-fourths majority of the voting members present will be required to call the candidate.
- d) Terms of Service:
- Associate Pastors may serve indefinitely. The relationship may be terminated as follows:
- (1) By action of the Pastor through a letter of resignation submitted to the Elders two (2) months in advance.
  - (2) By action of the Elder board as outlined in Article (4), Section (2)(xiv).
  - (3) By action of the church membership, if a written petition requesting the Pastor's resignation, signed by at least 25% of the voting membership is submitted to the Elder board. The Elder board will review the request and respond in accordance with Section (2)(xiv)(4).

- e) Compensation:  
The Elders shall propose a Pastoral compensation package to be approved annually by the members, which shall outline the salary, housing, taxation, reimbursement, vacation, sick, sabbatical, holiday, bereavement, retirement, insurance, termination and severance policies of the church.
- f) Annual Review:  
Each September, the Senior Pastor shall conduct an annual review of the Associate Pastor's performance and subsequent salary adjustments, for inclusion in the budget submitted to the congregation for approval.

#### **SECTION 5. THE OVERSEERS.**

The board of Overseers is established to provide external guidance to the leadership of Gateway Community Church as necessary. The members of the board of Overseers must be active Pastors of recognized local congregations (BGC or other denomination), who know and love Gateway Community Church, are equally committed to its vision and purpose, and seek foremost the advancement of the Kingdom of God. They must make themselves available at their own expense to serve Gateway Community Church if requested by the Elders or the Senior Pastor, and must be willing to provide spiritual protection to the church through prayer and discernment.

#### **Biblical qualifications for Overseers:**

"Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap." (I Tim 3: 2-7)

- a) Selection of Overseers
  - i) The board of Overseers will consist of a minimum of three Pastors of recognized congregations as nominated by the Senior Pastor and confirmed by the Elders.
  - ii) Members of the board of Overseers will serve as long as they continue to meet the qualifications of an Overseer. Each year the Senior Pastor and the Elders may replace one of the Overseers and enter that change into the minutes of an Elders meeting. If a member of the board of Overseers resigns, the Senior Pastor may nominate a new member immediately.
  - iii) If disciplinary action is being considered, removal of an Overseer by the board of Elders or the Senior Pastor may not be made until the work of the Overseers is completed.

- b) Function of Overseers
  - i) In the event of alleged moral failure, theological disagreement, or other dispute within the leadership of the church, if personal confrontation and internal efforts have failed to resolve the situation, either the Pastor or Elders shall contact the Overseers as a first line of appeal and guidance.
  - ii) The Overseers shall gather as soon as practical, meet separately with the parties involved, and endeavor to bring understanding, clarity, guidance or discipline as needed.
  - iii) The Overseers shall keep the District Executive Minister informed of the situation, and seek his guidance as part of their intervention.
  - iv) The recommendation of the Overseers shall not be binding.
  - v) Should the intervention of the Overseers fail to resolve the issue, the decision of the Converge Great Lakes Executive Minister shall be final and binding.

## **Article 5: Support Staff**

Support staff may consist of volunteer or paid personnel. Support positions will be established by the Elders and Deacons to assist in the ministry of the church. All applicants for paid or volunteer staffing of Gateway Community Church will be asked to sign a release for an annual background check. (I Tim. 3:10)

### **GENERAL POLICIES**

- a. The Personnel Policies and Ministry Guidelines of the church, as approved by the Elders, shall govern paid and volunteer support staff.
- b. During a Pastoral transition period, members of the church staff are to continue in their positions. Should staff or financial problems arise, the Elders have authority to alter the roles of staff members, including dismissal if necessary. A new Senior Pastor, if he should choose, may work with the Elders to select his own staff, replace existing staff members in accordance with the dismissal and severance policies outlined in the Personnel Policies and Ministry Guidelines of the church.

## **Article 6: Auxiliary Ministries**

### **SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT**

No organization shall be formed or considered a part of the church's activities unless the sponsors have first submitted their plans to the Elders for approval. (Art 4, Sec.3, Para d.)

### **SECTION 2. SUPPORT**

Para-church organizations (various Youth Ministries, Crisis Pregnancy Center, Food Pantry, etc.) may be supported by Gateway after review and approval of the Elders, but that support shall not constitute any responsibility by Gateway for the actions or liabilities of those organizations.

## **Article 7: Amendment Procedure**

### **SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths majority of the voting members present at an Annual Meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose: written notification of which is given at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

### **SECTION 2. INTERPRETATION**

The Elders shall serve as interpreters of this Constitution. Appeals in interpretation may be made in accordance with Article 4, Section 5, Paragraph b.

### **SECTION 3. EXCEPTIONS**

Procedures not requiring congregational approval:

1. minor revisions not affecting a change in theology
2. revisions not effecting overall structure of church government
3. corrections and clarifications (grammar, spelling, additional scriptural support)

### **SECTION 4: REVIEW**

The Elders shall review this Constitution, and present a subsequent report to the congregation every five years.

### **SECTION 5: HISTORY OF REVISION**

This document was revised/amended in accordance with the terms contained herein on the following dates: September 19, 1999, September 06, 2001, February 11, 2007, November 15, 2009 and August 21, 2011.

## **Article 8: Disposition of Church Property**

### **SECTION 1. DIVISION**

In the case of organic division of the church membership, the church property shall belong to those members who abide by this Constitution. Should any controversy arise as to who is abiding by this Constitution, the questions shall be submitted to the leadership of Converge Great Lakes and their decision shall be final.

### **SECTION 2. DISSOLUTION**

Should conditions arise when, for any reason, the church work cannot continue, all church property and holdings shall be transferred to Converge Great Lakes.

## **Article 9: Ratification**

The members of Gateway Community Church, gathered at their business meeting, do hereby ratify this Constitution, declare our reliance on God for the ministry and outreach of this church, and affirm our dependence on Him for its future.