

Constitution of

The Valley Gathering Place Church

PREAMBLE

We, the Elders of The Valley Gathering Place Church, in order to more effectively carry out The Great Commission given by Jesus Christ to His Church, do ordain the following Constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this church shall be The Valley Gathering Place Church (referred to herein as the “Church”).

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The Church is organized exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes in accordance with the provisions in Section 501 (c) (3) and Section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as may be amended, or the corresponding provisions of any successor statutes thereto, which includes the specific purpose to distribute funds to various charitable organizations which qualify as tax exempt organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as may be amended, or the corresponding provisions of any successor statute thereto, as may be determined according to the Bylaws of the Church. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Gathering Place Church is organized to act as a church for the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and multiplying disciples and churches through ministry programs, planting churches, educating from and about God’s Word, promoting spiritual fellowship among God’s people on the basis of Biblical faith, promoting religious activities, and to further other religious, educational, and charitable work to that end.

Exclusive Purpose Clause. We exist for the sole purpose of being a religious organization that

expresses our commitment to our Lord and Leader Jesus Christ to fulfill his great commands to love our God, to love our neighbor, and to fulfill his Great Commission. We exist to use all of our donations for the exclusive purposes of bringing restoration to lives and our community.

ARTICLE III – STATEMENT OF FAITH

(We hold to the below as our basic tenants of our Theology)

1. The Word of God. We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

1. The Trinity. We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct, but harmonious, offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption.

1. 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.

1. Jesus Christ. We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.

1. The Holy Spirit. We believe in the Holy Spirit who emanates from the Father and Son to convict the world about 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.

1. 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 and Lord are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

1. The Church. We believe in the universal church, a living, spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible confession of faith, and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

1. The Ordinances. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that the Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The Last Things. We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to Earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal joy of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked.

ARTICLE IV –GOVERNING BOARD

General Powers.

The governance authority of the Church shall be known as the Board of Elders (herein, "Elders"). The Board of Elders is the highest authority, as overseers or shepherds under the headship of Christ, and shall provide for the spiritual leadership of the Church. The Board shall have the ability to make decisions regarding the management, operation, and financial viability of the church. This section shall constitute sufficient authority for their designation as such.

ARTICLE V – PROPERTY

1. This Church shall have the authority to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold such real or personal property as is authorized by the laws of the State of Nebraska, and as is deemed necessary for the business of the church, and shall have the authority to dispose of such property by mortgage, deed or otherwise. All such property shall be held in the name of the Church.

1. In case of dissolution of the Church, the leadership shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the church, dispose of all the assets of the church in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provisions of any later federal tax laws, as the Elders shall determine that conforms with our Statement of Faith.

ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended, altered or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the Elders.

Bylaws of

The Valley Gathering Place Church (herein, "Church")

ARTICLE I – CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Church recognizes that the Bible gives clear instruction about the identity and responsibilities of the leaders of God's church (Acts 20:17-35; Php. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Heb. 13:17). The Bible also gives us some freedom in how to implement these Biblical principles. At this church, the following key leaders will have prominent roles and responsibilities.

Section 1. Board of Elders (herein, "Elders").

A. Composition

The Board of Elders shall consist of only elders. The number serving shall be at least three.

B. Adding and Removing Board Members.

The Board of Elders shall submit recommendations for additional elders to the Board of Deacons, which shall have the authority to add individual s by two-thirds vote.

An elder may be dismissed from serving at any time he is deemed to be disqualified. Any accusation against an elder may be brought to the Elders. (1 Tim. 5:19). The elder with the accusation will be disqualified from voting on his own case, If the remaining elders determine, with majority, that an elder is disqualified, he shall immediately be dismissed from serving as an elder.

C. Qualifications and Selection

The number of elders shall be determined by need and available qualified men.

- 1) A prospective elder must meet the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- 2) Individual elders may submit names of qualified men for consideration of eldership to the Board of Deacons.
- 3) The Elders may designate a nominating committee for the purpose of qualifying potential elder candidates.
- 4) The Board of Deacons shall have the authority to determine whether a prospective elder meets the referenced qualifications. If the Board of Deacons determines that a man is not qualified, he may not be appointed as an elder.

5) The Board of Deacons will make available a process to bring evidence of a disqualifying nature concerning any prospective elder before the Board of Deacons vote.

6) If disqualifying evidence is presented, the Elders shall fully investigate and evaluate the evidence. If the Elders confirm the disqualifying evidence, the prospective elder shall be disqualified from serving.

7) The appointments of new elders shall be finalized by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Deacons. "No" votes may be reviewed for evidence that warrants disqualification.

D. Tenure

1. All non-staff elders will serve no more than two consecutive terms. Each term will be three years. After two terms of service, the elder must step down for at least one year.
2. All non-staff elders will serve on staggered terms ensuring that a majority does not step down in a given year.
3. The Lead Pastor shall serve one-year terms with no limit on consecutive terms.
4. Staff elder positions on the Board of Elders are dependent upon employment. In the event a staff elders' employment is terminated, his position on the Board of Elders is also terminated.

E. Responsibilities

The Elders shall collectively be responsible for overseeing and shepherding the people of the Church. This is accomplished as they:

1. keep watch over themselves and the flock (Acts 20:28);
2. model Christian living (1 Tim. 4:12);
3. provide servant leadership (Matt. 20:26-28);
4. teach, exhort and correct according to Scripture (1 Tim. 4:13, Titus 1:9);
5. guard the spiritual welfare of each individual (Heb. 13:17); and
6. promote the growth in Christ and unity of the body of believers (Eph. 4:12-16).

The Elders shall also approve the annual budget as recommended by the Board of Deacons.

F. Advisors

The Board of Elders can choose at any time and for any term to add advisors to be included in leadership discussions and decisions. Advisors shall not have governance or voting authority.

Section 2. Leading Pastors

- The Church may follow the New Testament pattern of certain men being set aside vocationally to serve as full-time pastors (1 Tim. 5:17).

- The hiring and dismissal of a lead pastor is the responsibility of the Board of Elders. Approval of said activity requires a majority of elders, not including the lead pastor in question.

Section 3. Board of Deacons

- Responsibilities.

Individual deacons are responsible for administering and coordinating specific church operations as delegated by the Elders. Those duties may be, but are not limited to:

1. Church resources (e.g., finances, building, cleaning)
2. Ministry to specific groups or individuals (e.g., benevolence, kids, youth, widows, elderly, care)
3. Communication (e.g., electronic, print, graphic design)
4. Sunday gathering operations (e.g., hospitality, worship, teaching, safety)
5. Spiritual development (e.g., discipleship, small groups, prayer)
6. Outreach (e.g., local, ministry partners)

Deacons will regularly meet as a Board of Deacons to discuss and coordinate church operations and shall recommend the annual budget to the Board of es.

The Board of Deacons also acts on elder nominations received from the Board of Elders. The appointments of new elders shall be finalized by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Deacons.

- Adding and Removing Board Members

To add an individual to the Board of Deacons, a majority of the Board of Deacons will make a recommendation to the Elder Board. Elder Board approval will require a two-thirds vote.

A Deacon may be dismissed from serving at any time he or she is deemed to be disqualified. Any accusation against a Deacon may be brought to the Elders. If the Elders determine, with majority, that a Deacon is disqualified, he or she shall immediately be dismissed from serving as a deacon.

- Qualifications and selection

1. A prospective deacon must meet the qualifications described in I Timothy 3:8-13.
2. Individual Deacons may submit names of qualified individuals to the Elder Board for consideration.
3. The Elders shall have the authority to determine whether a prospective deacon meets the referenced qualifications. If the Elders determine that a person is not qualified, he may not be appointed as a deacon.
4. The appointments of new deacons shall be finalized by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Elders .

- Tenure

Deacons shall serve one-year terms with no limit on consecutive terms.

Section 4. Officers.

The officers of the Church shall be the President, Secretary and Treasurer. Officers shall be appointed by a majority of the Board of Elders.

1. The President shall preside at all business meetings and shall have such additional responsibilities as may be delegated by the Elders.

1. Secretary shall serve in the absence of the President and shall have such additional responsibilities as may be delegated by the Elders. In addition, the Secretary, or designee, shall:
 - a) preserve, in a safe place, all records of the Church, including current contact information for all Elders and Deacons;
 - b) complete any periodic reports required by state or federal agencies or other organizations; and
 - c) perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Elders.

- 3) The Treasurer, or designee, shall:
 - a) oversee receipt and disbursement of funds of the Church in accordance with the annual budget and these Bylaws;
 - b) oversee the preparation of a proposed annual budget and, after review by the Elders, present to the Church.
 - c) ensure the maintenance of accurate records of the Church's financial affairs and shall report on its financial standing at regular Deacon meetings;
 - d) supply all records during audits and all financial reports required by government authorities; and
 - e) perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Elders.

Officers and Elders shall perform the duties prescribed by these Bylaws or by the laws of the State of Nebraska governing non-profit corporations.

ARTICLE II -- Church Discipline

“If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he won’t listen, take one or two more with you, so that ‘by the testimony of two or three witnesses every fact may be established.’ If he pays no attention to them, tell the church. But if he doesn’t pay attention even to the church, let him be like an unbeliever and a tax collector to you.” (Matt. 18:15-17 HCSB)

Church discipline is a biblical process that is to be followed by the Church when a regular attender is found to be consistently in violation of clear biblical truth. The purpose of church discipline is not to punish; its goal is the repentance and restoration of the erring individual to a spiritually healthy condition and full participation in the Church. In progressing through the stages of church discipline, ample time for repentance should be allowed at each step.

A. Steps of church discipline according to Matthew 18:15-17:

1. Private confrontation. The erring individual should be directly approached in private by a concerned and informed individual and confronted with his (her) sin. If repentance does not follow, the church discipline process proceeds to the next step.

1. Private conference. The erring individual will be confronted about his (her) sin by two or three believers, including at least one elder. If repentance does not follow, church discipline process proceeds to the next step.

1. Public meeting. After the second step, and no significant repentance/change is evident, then the Elders should be made aware of the situation and will determine whether or not the Biblical ideals of discipline, love and concern have been appropriately communicated to the erring individual. If the Elders are so convinced, the matter may be presented to a public meeting of the church. If repentance still does not follow, the church discipline process proceeds to the final step.

1. Public exclusion. When the Elders and congregation have made consistent efforts to bring the erring individual to repentance without results, the erring individual shall be asked to stay away from all church activities.

B. At any point of the discipline process, if the allegations are found to be false, the case shall be dismissed and the Elders shall clear the name of the accused individual in a manner appropriate to the situation.

C. If the Elders determine it to be appropriate, the erring individual may be removed from any role of leadership or any other role of service in the church until the disciplinary issue is resolved according to the above steps.

D. An individual under discipline may be restored to active fellowship if the Elders determine that he (she) has repented of the offense(s) for which discipline was exercised.

ARTICLE III -- AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed by a two-thirds vote of Board of Elders.

Supplement: 2026 Elder Terms and Officers, 2026 Deacons

2026 Elder Terms (to be approved by the Elders, then Deacons)

- Todd Baker (Staff elder). One-year term. No limit on consecutive terms.
- Brian Urban (Non-staff elder). Third year of first three-year term.
- Mike Higgins (Non-staff elder). Second year of first three-year term.

2026 Officers (to be approved by the Elders)

- President: Todd Baker
- Secretary: Mike Higgins
- Treasurer: Rachael Urban

2026 Deacons (to be approved by Deacons, then Elders)

Todd and Amy Baker

Paul and Renee Berger

Mike and Tara Higgins

Ethan and Maria McClain

Josiah and Keely Pagel

Brian and Rachel Urban

Loy and Kitt Watley

Ron and Mel York

Moderator: Keely

Scribe: Mel

- 1.
2. **Church resources:**
 - a. Finances: Rachael, Ron
 - b. Building: Ethan
 - c. Cleaning: Tara

1. **Ministry to specific groups or individuals**

- a. Benevolence: Kitt
- b. Kids: Keely
- c. Youth: Keely
- d. Widows: Kitt
- e. Care: Amy, Mel

1. **Communication:**

- a. Electronic: Keely
- b. Print: Keely
- c. Graphic design: Keely, Paul

1. **Sunday gathering operations**

- a. Hospitality: Paul and Renee
- b. Worship: Loy
- c. AV: Keely
- d. Teaching: Brian
- e. Safety: Josiah

1. **Spiritual development**

- a. Discipleship: Mike
- b. Small groups: Mike
- c. Prayer: Todd
- d. Library: Mariah

1. **Outreach: Todd**

- a. Local
- b. Ministry partners