

**CONSTITUTION  
OF  
MAPLERIDGE CHURCH  
HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**Adopted April 17, 2016**

**ARTICLE I**

Name and Incorporation

The name of this organization shall be MapleRidge Church. This organization is as a result of a merger of religious corporations in accordance with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, Sections 315.34, 315.35 and 315.36 of Minnesota Statutes, and the merger and consolidation shall be and become effective for all purposes upon the filing for record of the Agreement of Merger and consolidation in the office of the Secretary of State of the State of Minnesota.

**ARTICLE II**

Foundation, Purpose, and Priorities of Ministry

1. The foundation of this church is the Lord Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 3:11), and its code of guidance in all its affairs, the Word of God, and this Church affirms its faith that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of Almighty God (Mark 13:31).
2. The purpose of this church shall be to glorify God by developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ in accordance with the teaching of His Word set forth in the New Testament (Matthew 28:18-20), to sustain its ordinances and doctrines, and to preach and proclaim among all peoples the gospel of salvation which is by personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (Ephesians 2:8-9).
3. The priorities of the ministry of this church flow from the vision of God's glory revealed in Jesus Christ. We exist to make disciples who make disciples through winning the spiritually lost, building the believer in their faith, equipping the worker to do the work of the ministry, and growing spiritual leaders who can shepherd and lead God's people.

**ARTICLE III**

Affiliation

MapleRidge Church participates in membership and activity with Converge North Central of Converge Worldwide for the promotion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## ARTICLE IV

### Church Government and Officers

1. Under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the congregation, led by the Holy Spirit, is the final authority within this local church. The vote of the membership of this Church at a properly called meeting, as provided in the By-Laws, shall be required to effect the following actions:
  - a. Accept members into the Church, and approve recommendations to drop members from the church roll;
  - b. Approve officers of the Church;
  - c. When necessary, discipline members by removing them from membership;
  - d. Approve the annual budget of the Church, authorize any expenditure of the funds of the Church when such expenditure is not covered within the approved budget, and approve any transactions regarding real property;
  - e. Accept, reject, or otherwise dispose of matters submitted to the membership of the church by the Elder Board, or raised by motion at a business meeting;
  - f. Adopt, amend, or repeal the Constitution or By-Laws of this Church;
  - g. Approve the call and job description of vocational pastors and ministers.
2. The officers of the Church shall be Elders and Deacons. The purpose of the officers of the Church is to lovingly lead, care for, and equip the membership to do the work of the ministry.
3. The Elders are responsible for overseeing the Church through, teaching the Word, and tending the flock of God in this Church. The Elders shall be equal in authority and shall specialize in function.
4. The Deacons shall assist the Elders by performing services of advice, administration, and implementation.

## ARTICLE V

### Statement of Faith

#### I. 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, truthful in all it affirms, and is the complete and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct. II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21; Mark 13:31; John 8:31-32; John 20:31; Acts 20:32

#### II. 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

functions in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. Genesis 1:1, 26; John 1:1, 3; Matthew 28:19; John 4:24; Romans 1:19-20

### III. GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe 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. Luke 10:21-22; Matthew 23:9; John 3:16; 6:27; Romans 1:7; I Timothy 1:1, 2; 2:5-6; I Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6

### IV. JESUS CHRIST

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son who is fully God and fully man. We believe in His conception by the Holy Spirit, His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary and atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and His personal visible return to earth. Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1; 20:28; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 2:14-18; Romans 9:5; 8:1-4; II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 2:21-23; John 20:30-31; Matthew 20:28; Ephesians 1:4; Acts 1:11; Romans 5:6-8; 6:9-10; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:28; I Timothy 3:16

### V. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world concerning 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. John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; John 16:7-14; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; Galatians 5:22-26

### VI. REGENERATION

We believe man was created by God in His own image; that man sinned and thereby incurred physical, spiritual and eternal death, which is separation from God. As a consequence, all human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners by choice and therefore under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and become a new creation. They are delivered from condemnation and receive eternal life. Genesis 1:26; 5:2; Genesis 3; Genesis 2:17; 3:19; Ecclesiastes 2:11; John 3:14-15; 5:24; 8:12; 10:27-28; Romans 9:22; II Thessalonians 1:9; Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:14-15; Psalm 51:7; Jeremiah 17:9; James 1:14; Romans 3:19; 5:19; Proverbs 28:13; I John 1:9; John 3:16; John 1:13; II Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:1

## VII. 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 genuine profession of faith, and associated with one another for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe that God has gifted and is equipping the members of the local church for the primary task of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world. Ephesians 2:19-22; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 5:19-21; Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:23-25; Matthew 28:18-20.

## VIII. CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

We believe Christians should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others and their conduct should be blameless before the world. They should be faithful stewards of what God has given them, and they should seek to realize for themselves and others the full stature of maturity in Christ. I Corinthians 10:31; Romans 12:1-3; Hebrews 12:1-2; John 14:15, 23-24; I John 2:3-6; II Corinthians 9:6-9; I Corinthians 4:2; Colossians 1:9-10

## IX. 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 Christian baptism is by immersion of the believer in water into 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 those who partake of the Lord’s Supper should be believers, walking in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-29

## X. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

We believe that every human being has direct access to God and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith. We believe that each church is independent and must be free from interference by an ecclesiastical or political authority. Therefore, Church and State must be kept separate, each having its different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from the dictation or patronage of the other. I Timothy 2:5; Romans 14:7-9, 12

## XI. CHURCH COOPERATION

We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in a denominational organization. Such an organization, whether a regional or district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Acts 15:36, 41; 16:5; I Corinthians 16:1; Galatians 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4, 10, 11.

## XII. 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. Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20; I Thessalonians 4:15; II Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; I Corinthians 4:5; I Corinthians 15; II Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15

### ARTICLE VI

#### Church Membership

The membership of this Church shall consist of persons who confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, who give evidence of regeneration by living consistently with their profession and with the views of faith, doctrine, and practice of this Church, who have been baptized by immersion, and who have been received into its membership according to the By-Laws of this Church.

The Membership Pledge of MapleRidge Church:

Having received Christ as my Savior and Lord, and having been baptized upon profession of faith, and being in agreement with the Statement of Faith of MapleRidge Church, I now wish to unite with the membership of MapleRidge Church. In so doing, I commit myself to the following:

#### **I will protect the unity of the Church**

- By acting in love toward other members (Romans 14:19, I Peter 1:22)
- By encouraging and building up others (Ephesians 4:15-16)
- By supporting the leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17)

#### **I will share in the responsibilities of the Church**

- By praying for the growth of its members. (I Thessalonians 1:1-2)
- By sharing my faith with those outside the Church. (Luke 14:23)
- By warmly welcoming those who visit the Church. (Romans 15:7)

#### **I will serve the ministry of the Church**

- By discovering my spiritual gifts and talents. (I Peter 4:10)
- By being equipped to serve in the Church. (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- By developing a servant's heart. (Philippians 2:3-4)

#### **I will support the testimony of the Church**

- By attending faithfully. (Hebrews 10:25)
- By living a godly life. (Philippians 1:27)
- By giving regularly to the financial support of the Church. (I Corinthians 16:2)

ARTICLE VII  
The Church Property

In the event of a division of this Church, from which may God in His mercy save us, the property of this Church shall belong to the group that represents the largest portion of the Church membership prior to the division provided such a group is loyal to this constitution; otherwise, it shall belong to the group remaining loyal to this constitution though it may not be the largest group in such division. Should any controversy arise as to whether such loyalty exists, the question shall be submitted to the Ruling Board of Converge North Central for mediation.

In the case the church is ever dissolved, the properties of MapleRidge Church will be transferred to Converge North Central or its successor.

ARTICLE VIII  
Constitutional Revisions, Additions, and Amendments

Revisions, additions, or amendments of this constitution may be made only in the following manner:

1. at the annual meeting; and
2. with approval by a three-fourths (75%) majority of those members voting, provided at least thirty percent (30%) of the resident membership of the Church is present at such meeting; and
3. after presentation by written motion at a quarterly or special business meeting held at least three months before the annual meeting; and
4. if notice of the proposed change or addition has been given, in writing and from the pulpit on at least two Sundays in the interim period between said meetings.

**BY-LAWS OF  
MAPLERIDGE CHURCH  
HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**ARTICLE I  
Membership**

Section 1. GENERAL PROCEDURE.

- a. Membership candidates shall participate in a membership class. The purpose of this class shall be to thoroughly acquaint the candidate with the foundation, purpose, and priorities of the ministry of MapleRidge Church.
- b. Upon completion of the membership class, a membership interview with the candidate will be scheduled with the Elder Board. The purpose of this interview shall be to allow the candidate to answer questions and give witness to their personal faith in Christ. The Elder Board shall, if they find the candidate eligible, recommend their acceptance to the congregation.
- c. The congregation shall be notified in writing of the recommended candidates for membership. Objections to any candidate must be presented in writing, by any member in good standing, to the Elder Board within two weeks of the written notification. The Elder Board shall inquire into the matter. If the reason is valid, the candidate will not be recommended for membership. If no objections are received, the candidate is then brought before the Church for admission into membership by majority vote at the next business meeting.
- d. All actions regarding admission or dismissal of membership, except matters of church discipline by the Elder Board, shall be by vote of the Church upon recommendation of the Elder Board at any business meeting.
- e. Vocational Elders and Ministers, having been interviewed by the board and called by the congregation, shall, become members upon beginning their ministry in this church.

Section 2. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

- a. Associate membership will be assigned to:
  1. Any member of the church who will be inactive for a period of six months or more in church attendance and involvement for reasons such as school attendance, full-time ministry, or military service.
  2. Those who are under 18 years of age and have fulfilled the requirements and followed the procedures of Article I.

- b. Associate Membership will be subject to all the provisions of Article I.
- c. Associate Members will not be counted for quorum determination.
- d. Associate Members will not have voting privileges.
- e. Associate Members (18 and over) who have become active in church attendance and involvement may receive full membership by majority vote at any business meeting upon recommendation of the Elder Board.

### Section 3. REMOVAL OF MEMBERS

- a. Withdrawal from membership shall be granted upon written request to the Elder Board.
- b. Any member in good standing who moves to another locality is strongly encouraged to join another Bible-believing, evangelical church and shall, upon request, receive a letter of recommendation. Members who join with another church shall be removed from the Church roll.
- c. If a member has been absent from the church for a period of six months, the Elder Board shall direct that an inquiry be made in an effort to renew that member's interest in fellowship. If this attempt does not bring renewal of interest, the Elder Board shall recommend to the congregation that the person be removed from the membership of the church, unless the Elder Board decides to retain them.

### Section 4. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Church discipline is commanded by God and necessary for the local church (Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 5:3-13; II Corinthians 2:8-11; Galatians 6:1). The purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining the integrity of the local church (I Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin (I Timothy 5:20), and to promote spiritual welfare by restoring the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct. Every member and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church should consider it a personal duty to seek restoration of an erring believer.

- 1) Members of this church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Elder Board, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal from fellowship and/or membership, according to Matthew 18:15-18. Before such dismissal, however,



- a) it shall be the duty of any believer of this church who has knowledge of the erring individual's doctrine or misconduct to warn and correct such erring individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring individual does not heed this warning, then
  - b) the warning believer shall again go to the erring individual seeking his or her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that (a) the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and (b) the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then
  - c) it shall be brought to the attention of the Elder Board. If the Elder Board determines - after thorough investigation in accordance with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15 and I Timothy 5:19 - that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, has been appropriately confronted, and has refused to repent, then the Elder Board shall inform the church membership at a regularly scheduled business meeting or worship service. If the erring individual does not repent in response to the church in its collective call to repentance, then
  - d) the erring individual shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of this church and the congregation at a regularly scheduled business meeting or worship service. If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the Elder Board, then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.
- 2) Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Elder Board, in the exercise of their discretion, may proceed directly to the third or fourth stage of church discipline when one or more of the following have occurred:
- 1) Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e. openly and to the offense of the whole church (I Corinthians 5:1-5);
  - 2) Where the erring individual has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the Elder Board, then has chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the Elder Board (Romans 16:17)
  - 3) Where the erring individual has been warned twice by the Elder Board to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10-11).
- 3) Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elder Board, a member, non-member regular attendee, or other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.

- 4) This discipline process applies to members of the church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church who are 18 years of age and over.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Meetings**

#### **Section 1. WORSHIP AND OTHER SERVICES**

Public services shall be held on the Lord's Day. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month or at such times as the Elder Board may determine. Other religious services shall be conducted at such times as deemed appropriate by the Elder Board for the advancement of the work of the church.

#### **Section 2. BUSINESS**

##### **a. Quarterly Meetings**

The quarterly business meetings shall be held within the first month of each quarter of the fiscal year.

##### **b. Annual Meeting**

The Church fiscal year shall close upon the 31<sup>st</sup> of December in each year and the Annual Meeting shall be held during the month of October, the exact time to be set by the Elder Board and announced to the congregation.

- 1) Officers called and approved at the annual business meeting shall assume their duties on January 1. The term of office for Church Clerk, Church Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be from January 1 to December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- 2) The annual budget approved by the congregation at the annual business meeting shall take effect January 1.

##### **c. Special Business Meetings**

Special meetings of the church may be called by the Elder Board. The purpose of the meeting, including an agenda of the meeting, shall be publicly announced to the congregation from the pulpit and in writing at least two Sundays prior to the meeting. No business, other than that announced, will be considered at this meeting.

##### **d. Agendas**

The agendas for all properly called meetings shall be prepared by the Elder Board. New business brought before the congregation from the floor shall be automatically referred to the Elder Board for consideration and further action. Items may be placed on the agenda at a duly called business meeting by a petition of twenty-five (25) members in good standing and personally presented to the Elder Board at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

- e. **Quorum**  
Any number of members shall constitute a quorum at any properly called meetings of the church, except where stipulated in these By-Laws.
- f. **Parliamentary Procedure**  
Ordinarily the business of the congregation shall be conducted informally according to the general pattern for the conduct of meetings contained in Robert's Rules of Order (revised), except that all matters requiring a vote shall be put to the congregation for an explicit vote in the appropriate manner.
- g. **Special Financial Decisions**  
A motion for any non-budgeted financial item(s) or a motion to change either the current or proposed budget cannot be approved by the congregation without prior review by the Elder Board.
- h. **Minutes of Meetings**  
Accurate minutes of all business meetings shall be maintained by the Church Clerk. A permanent record of all congregational meetings of the church must be maintained in the church. Minutes must be made available and publicly posted in writing in the church.
- i. **Absentee Election Ballot**  
When members cannot attend a congregational meeting because of temporary change of address, serious illness, employment or vacations that take them away from this area, they may obtain an absentee ballot from the Church Clerk or the church office. Each valid ballot must be submitted in a sealed envelope, marked "Absentee Ballot," which must be sealed within a second sealed envelope on which is written the members name.
- j. **Meetings of boards and committees**  
The protocol for regular and special meetings is as follows:
  - 1) **Voting rights and procedures.**  
Only full and ex-officio members of that board or committee may vote. When persons other than members are present for any action, final discussions and voting may be carried out with only voting members present at the request of any voting member.
  - 2) **Decisions.**  
Issues shall ordinarily be decided by a majority vote of those present.
  - 3) **Minutes of meetings.**  
Accurate minutes of all meetings must be maintained by the respective secretaries. Copies should be given to the church office and publicly posted.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **Church Government**

#### Section 1. GENERAL STATEMENT

a. Officers.

The Officers of the Church shall be an Elder Board and a Board of Deacons. Officers shall be called to office by a vote of the membership of the Church as provided for in Article III, Sections 4 and 5 of these By-Laws. All officers of the Church shall be members in good standing. The Elder Board and the Board of Deacons are the only bodies and positions created by these By-Laws, except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) below.

b. Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.

The Church, upon nomination by the Elder Board, shall elect at the annual meeting, members to the positions of Church Clerk, Treasurer and Financial Secretary. They shall be called by the Church for a normal term of three (3) years and be eligible for one (1) additional three-year term after which they shall be ineligible to serve in that position for one year. The position of Financial Secretary may remain unfilled if the Financial Secretary's duties are contracted to an outside accounting firm. The functions of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall not be performed by one member. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be bonded by the church in a suitable amount. The Elders shall provide a written description of duties to the Clerk, Treasurer and Financial Secretary.

c. Committees and Appointees.

The Elder Board has the authority to create committees and positions to which it may delegate any specified aspect of its responsibility. The Elder Board has the authority to dissolve any committee or position that it created. The Elder Board has the authority to appoint elders, deacons or other members of the Church to serve as members of such committees and to act as its agents in such positions. The Deacon Board may nominate candidates for any committee or position, under the direction of the Elder Board. Every committee shall have a chairperson, responsible for the overall operation of the committee.

#### Section 2. VOCATIONAL PASTORS AND MINISTERS

a. Definition.

- 1) Vocational Pastors are the ordained Elders of the Church, who in response to God's call, have devoted their vocational lives to the ministry of the Word and to prayer in the service of the church of Christ.
- 2) Vocational Ministers are the non-ordained ministers of the church who, in response to God's call, serve the church of Christ as their primary vocation.
- 3) Both Vocational Pastors and Vocational Ministers are supported financially by the church in return for their vocational labors.

b. Duties.

In addition to the duties of their offices described in Sections 4 and 5 below, Vocational Pastors and Ministers shall perform the duties determined by the Elder Board and approved by the congregation. The duties shall be in writing at the time of the call to service, and substantial changes shall be approved by the church.

- 1) The church's call of a Vocational Pastor is a call to the eldership of the church. Therefore Vocational Pastors shall be members of the Elder Board and have all the Biblical qualifications of an elder.
- 2) Vocational Ministers are not necessarily called to eldership, but as assisting partners in the ministry. Vocational Ministers shall be deacons. Vocational Ministers may, when appropriate, be ordained by the church and moved to the Elder Board.

c. Vocational Call by the Church.

A Calling Committee shall be activated for the calling of a Vocational Pastor. The Committee shall consist of at least five (5) active church members in good standing and the chair, vice-chair and secretary of the Elder Board. The Calling Committee shall be appointed by the Elder Board and approved by the church. The work of the Calling Committee shall be to find a candidate and bring its recommendation to the Elders for approval.

The members shall call Vocational Pastors and Ministers (1) by ballot upon recommendation of the Elder Board and (2) by at least a 75% majority of those members voting at the meeting with at least twenty-percent (20%) of the membership of the Church. Generally, this shall be done at the annual business meeting of the Church. If a special business meeting is needed, oral notice of such meeting, stating its purpose, shall be given from the pulpit on the two successive Sundays preceding the meeting. Notice shall be given to the resident, voting membership at least one week before the meeting.

d. Vocational Pastors and Ministers shall undergo an annual job performance review by the Elder Board.

e. Termination of a Vocational Call.

- 1) By resignation.  
The resignation of a Vocational Pastor or Minister may be accepted at any time by the Elder Board.
- 2) Grievance.  
Where a grievance exists against a Pastor or Minister, either due to their preaching or teaching contrary to the beliefs of the Church as set forth in Article V of its Constitution or to alleged conduct on their part unfitting an Elder or Deacon, such grievance may be brought before the Elder Board by any two members in good standing, following the procedure prescribed

in Article I, Section 4, paragraph a-c of these By-Laws. If the Elder Board, after thorough investigation and consideration, believes the grievance to be true and substantial, then the vocational call of the Pastor or Minister may be terminated following the procedure prescribed in Article III, Section 2, paragraph e, number 4.

3) Lack of Reaffirmation.

If a Vocational Pastor or Minister fails to be reaffirmed to the office of Elder or Deacon as provided in Article II, Section 2, paragraph d above, then a special business meeting shall be called to consider the question of terminating the vocational call with that Pastor or Minister. The vocational call shall be terminated only if supported by closed ballot of a majority of those members of the Church voting with at least twenty percent (20%) of the membership of the Church present. Public notice of any such meeting, stating its purpose, shall be given on two successive Sundays preceding the meeting. Notice shall also be given to the resident, voting membership at least one week before the meeting. Removal from office and termination of the vocational call by this means shall not be considered a disciplinary action of these by-laws.

4) Termination

The vocational call of a vocational pastor or minister may be terminated at any time by a unanimous vote of the Elder Board. A vocational pastor is excluded from voting on the matter of their own termination.

d. Ordination.

The church, upon recommendation by the Elder Board, has the power to recommend any person for ordination to gospel ministry with Converge North Central by a seventy-five (75%) vote of the Church members voting with at least twenty percent (20%) of the membership of the Church present.

Section 3. LAY OFFICERS

a. Definition.

Lay officers are non-vocational elders and deacons of the Church.

b. Duties.

Lay elders and deacons shall have the duties of their offices as described in Article III, Sections 4 and 5 of these by-laws.

c. Calling.

The Elder Board shall recognize, interview, and investigate potential candidates for lay elder and deacon. The Elder Board shall provide for individual members of the Church either to nominate potential candidates or to present themselves to the Elder Board as potential candidates for office and for the Elder Board's further investigation. In no instances shall any individual be considered a

nominee for office without the nominee's consent. If the Elder Board concludes that a nominee is not qualified for office, then they shall so inform the nominee stating the reasons for this conclusion.

The Elder Board shall present a ballot of candidates for calling or reaffirmation as elders or deacons to the congregation at the quarterly business meeting prior to the annual meeting and shall assume their duties on January 1. The Elder Board may also nominate candidates for election to office at any quarterly or special meeting, provided that the written ballot of nominees is available for review in the church office at least two weeks in advance of the meeting and is announced publicly to the church in the Sunday morning worship at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Lay Elders and Deacons shall be called by the Church for a normal term of three (3) years and be eligible for reaffirmation to one (1) additional three-year term after which they shall be ineligible to serve for one year. Six months or more of serving during an elective church year constitutes one year for purposes of this restriction. Calling or reaffirmation of a lay Elder or Deacon shall be by seventy-five percent (75%) of those members voting at the meeting with at least twenty percent (20%) of the membership of the Church present.

d. Removal.

An officer may resign their office at any time if they find they are no longer able to discharge the duties of the office.

Where a grievance exists against an officer of the Church either due to the adherence to and propagation of beliefs contrary to the beliefs of the Church as set forth in Article V of its Constitution or to alleged conduct or non-performance on their part unfitting an Elder or Deacon, such grievance may be brought before the Elder Board by any two members in good standing, following the procedure prescribed in Article I, Section 4 of the By-Laws of this Church. If the Elder Board, after thorough investigation and consideration, believes the grievance to be true and substantial, then the officer may be removed from office upon recommendation of the Elder Board when supported by closed ballot of a majority of those members of the Church voting at any annual, quarterly, or special meeting with at least twenty percent (20%) of the membership of the church present at such meeting. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given from the pulpit on the two successive Sundays preceding the meeting. Notice shall also be given to the voting, resident membership at least one week before the meeting.

If a Lay Elder or Deacon stands for reaffirmation and fails to be reaffirmed, the Elder or Deacon shall be removed from office. Removal from office by this means shall not be considered disciplinary action.

## Section 4. ELDER BOARD

### a. Composition and Calling.

The congregation governs the church through the Elder Board. The Elder Board shall be composed of both Lay Elders and Vocational Elders. The Elder Board shall be composed of the number of Elders determined by the needs of the ministry and by call and qualification of those who have been prepared to become elders in the church. There shall be at least three times as many Lay Elders as Vocational Elders. Candidates for Eldership may present themselves to the Elder Board through any elder, or may be approached by the Elder Board. The Elder Board shall meet with each candidate to discuss their preparedness, qualifications and the duties of elders. If the candidate and Elder Board agree that they should be considered for this office, their name shall be submitted to the congregation for its approval.

### b. Qualifications.

Elders and candidates for the Elder Board shall be qualified for the office as specified in the Bible. Relevant texts include I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and I Peter 5:1-4.

### c. Responsibilities.

The fundamental responsibility of the elders is to devote themselves to prayer and the Word. The Elder Board is responsible for governing the Church, overseeing the teaching of the Word, and tending the flock of God in this Church. Other responsibilities of the Elder Board shall include: examining prospective members, overseeing the process of Church discipline, examining potential candidates for office, scheduling and providing a moderator for business meetings, providing for reporting and recording of official Church business, overseeing the work of the Deacon Board by empowering and appointing church agents and committees, overseeing the ordinances of the Gospel, equipping the membership for the work of the ministry, casting vision and teaching the whole counsel of God.

### d. Organization.

The Elder Board shall organize itself however it determines to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The elders shall be equal in authority but may specialize in function. The elders must meet at least once per month. Meetings of the Elder Board may be held at any location and may be conducted by means of electronic communication in which the elders may simultaneously hear each other. Other meetings of the Elder Board may be held immediately upon notice. A quorum for meetings of the Elder Board is defined as at least one-half of the Lay Elders plus one-half of the Vocational Elders. The Elder Board shall annually select its Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary from among its Lay Elders.



Section 5. DEACON BOARD

- a. Composition and Calling.  
The Deacon Board may be both Vocational Ministers and Lay Ministers. The number of deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by their call and qualification in the Church. The call and reaffirmation shall be conducted as provided in Article III, Sections 2 and 3 of these By-Laws.
- b. Qualifications.  
Deacons and nominees for the Deacon Board shall be qualified for the office as specified in the Bible. Relevant texts include I Timothy 3:8-12, and Romans 16:1-2.
- c. Responsibilities.  
Deacons shall chair the essential ministries of the Church as directed by the Elder Board to advise and be ready to assist the Elders in any service that shall support and promote the ministry of the Word.
- d. Organization.  
The deacons shall organize themselves however the Elder Board determines to be the best way to achieve the mission of the Church. The elders and deacons may designate any specific deacon or group of deacons to specialize in some particular deacon function. Meetings of the deacons and their ministry committees shall be held as needed to best fulfill the responsibilities of the deacon.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**Church Employees**

In addition to Vocational Pastors and Ministers, the Church may employ additional personnel. The monies for such personnel must be approved by the congregation at a properly called business meeting. The Elder Board shall be responsible for determining the duties and employment of such personnel.

**ARTICLE V**  
**Church Finances**

Section 1. IN GENERAL

No method of raising funds shall be entertained which is in conflict with the Scriptural ideals of the Church. All funds donated for missions and organization of the Church shall pass through the Church Financial Secretary and the Church Treasurer in order that due record may be made.

Section 2. CONTRIBUTIONS

It is understood that membership in this Church involves financial obligations to support the Church and its causes with regular and proportionate giving. Each member shall be encouraged in scriptural giving. All regular giving shall flow to the general fund of the

church and be used according to the terms of the annual budget. The Elder Board may, from time to time, establish special funds to which amounts above and beyond regular giving can be designated. Individuals may ask the Elder Board to approve new designated funds to meet perceived needs in the body of Christ that are not addressed by the general fund. Gifts designated to funds that are not pre-approved by the Elder Board will be returned to the donor or, in consultation with the donor, be reassigned to another fund: anonymous gifts will be added to the general fund.

### Section 3. FINANCIAL PLANNING

The financial planning of the Church shall be carried out through annual budgets for carrying out the various programs of its work. Annual budgets shall be adopted by the Church upon recommendation of the Elder Board, or, if authorized by the Elder Board, the Deacon Board, or other committees. Matters involving staff compensation shall be the responsibility of the lay members of the Elder Board.

### Section 4. ACCOUNTS

Financial receipts from all sources shall be accounted for by the Financial Secretary according to the purposes for which contributions are designated. The Church Treasurer shall disperse these funds promptly according to the financial program of the Church as detailed in the budget or other authorized designations. All monies for missions shall be remitted in accordance with the mission's budget of the Church or as otherwise designated.

### Section 5. AUTHORITY TO BIND THE CHURCH

The Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary of the Elder Board are the only officers who have authority, at the direction of the Elder Board and in accordance with these By-Laws, the Church Constitution, and any applicable laws, to execute legal documents relating to real estate, church property and church finances.

### Section 6. AUDITS

An external audit to review the financial records of the church shall be conducted every three years or at other times as the Elder Board may direct. A written report of its findings shall be submitted to the church at a quarterly business meeting.

## **ARTICLE VI Amendments**

Amendment to these By-Laws may be introduced through written motion at any quarterly meeting, but shall not be acted upon until the following quarterly or annual meeting, at which time an affirmative vote of three-fourths (75%) majority of those members voting shall be required for acceptance; provided, however, that at least twenty percent (20%) of the membership of the Church be present at such meeting, and that notice of the proposed change or amendment be given from the pulpit on at least two Sundays and in writing to the voting and resident membership in the interim period between meetings.

# Glossary of Terms

**Affiliation** (p. 1)

The historical relationship MapleRidge Church has chosen to have with a larger group of baptistic churches worldwide and in our region. This worldwide denominational entity was originally known as Swedish Baptist, then Baptist General Conference and currently known as Converge Worldwide. The regional denominational entity was known as the Minnesota/Iowa Baptist Conference and currently is known as Converge North Central.

**Church**

The capitalization of this word throughout this document is a shorthanded reference for “MapleRidge Church”.

**Pastor** (p. 13, 14)

A title that is used interchangeably with and is synonymous with the title “elder”.

Pastor = Elder

Elder = Pastor

**Minister** (p. 13, 14)

A title that is used interchangeably with and is synonymous with the title “deacon”.

Minister = Deacon

Deacon = Minister

**Vocational pastor** (p. 2, 7, 12, 13, 14, 17)

An Elder who is paid by the congregation and they are ordained.

**Vocational minister** (p. 12, 13, 16)

A Deacon who is paid by the congregation and they are not ordained.

**Lay elder** (p. 14, 15, 16)

An Elder who volunteers from within the congregation.

**Lay ministers** (p. 16)

A Deacon who volunteers from within the congregation.

**Ordained/Ordination** (p. 12, 13, 14)

A member of MapleRidge Church who has gone through the official process of ordination whereby their conversion to Christ, their call to ministry, and their written statement of faith has been publically tested and examined by representatives of other local Converge churches. Upon the recommendation of these churches, the congregation of MapleRidge Church has the authority to ordain this candidate as fit for gospel ministry. Anyone who is ordained becomes an Elder of the church, is a member of the Elder Board and is given the title “Pastor”.