

**BYLAWS OF  
THE VILLAGE CHURCH  
OF BALDWIN, WI INC.  
A STATE OF WISCONSIN RELIGIOUS  
CORPORATION**

Version 4

Approved by Vote of Be-Leading Partners as per Rules Under Version 1 on March 8, 2026

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THE VILLAGE CHURCH OF BALDWIN, WI INC.  
A STATE OF WISCONSIN RELIGIOUS CORPORATION<sup>1</sup>

## SECTION 1 – AUTHORITY AND FAITH

The Village Church, also referred to as the Church, shall be committed to the historic orthodoxy of Christian faith as outlined below:

### 1. Where is Ultimate Truth Found?

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.

### 2. Who is God?

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.

### 3. Who is 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.

### 4. Who is Jesus?

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.

### 5. Who is the Holy Spirit?

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and 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.

### 6. What is Our Problem and God's Solution?

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.

### 7. What is 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 giving the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

#### 8. What is Life Supposed to Be About?

We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of his fellow men; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions; and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ.

#### 9. Ordinances? Sacraments? What is this all about?

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 the immersion of a 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 these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### 10. What About the Government and Politics?

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; that therefore Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other.

#### 11. What About Other Churches?

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 it is the Conference or a district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary independent basis.

#### 12. The Renewal of All 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 felicity of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked.

Additional exposition of Christian teaching shall be a responsibility of the Senior Pastor.

## SECTION 2 – MISSION OF THE CHURCH

In accordance with the Great Commission recorded in Matthew 28:18-20, this Church shall be committed to an outward focus by placing the needs of those who are not yet followers of Christ ahead of the needs of those who are. While congregational care of regular participants shall not be neglected, outreach to others who are outside or new to the Church shall be given higher priority in the budgeting, staffing, and scheduling of Church activities. Thus the mission of this Church is to make new disciples and welcome them into a congregation that is healthy, growing, and multiplying through the planting of other congregations with the same mission.

The Village Church is a God driven, prayer fueled community, escorting people to center their lives in Jesus.

## SECTION 3 – ASSOCIATION

The Village Church shall be an affiliated member of Converge Great Lakes /GLBC and the Converge Worldwide/BGC.<sup>2</sup> As such this Church shall participate relationally and financially in the various church planting ministries of those church planting organizations. This membership shall be a voluntary, covenant relationship among likeminded congregations that remain legally autonomous while interdependent in mission.

## SECTION 4 – ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

It is the purpose of these Bylaws to provide a stable and effective organizational structure to aid this Church in accomplishing its mission. The sections that follow specify a model that keeps the roles of Lead Pastor (also referred to simply as the Pastor), Elders, Staff, and Congregation distinct and effective for church health, church growth, and church multiplication. These Bylaws may be reviewed for any changes to the structure that may increase the effectiveness of the Pastor and the Church.

- (a) The role of the Congregation is to serve as the primary ministers of the Church.
- (b) The role of the Elders is to oversee the ministries and spiritual health of the Church.
- (c) The role of the Lead Pastor is to lead the Church to accomplish its mission.
- (d) The role of the Staff (volunteer or paid) is to manage the ministries of the Church, directed by the Lead Pastor.

## SECTION 5 – MISSION AND MINISTRY PARTNERS

The congregation of The Village Church will have among its number Partners and Believer-Baptized Partners:

- Partners are adults (>18 years old) who have made a confession of faith in Jesus Christ and support the Mission and Ministry of The Village Church.
- Believer-Baptized Partners are adults (>18 years old) who have made a confession of faith in Jesus Christ, support the Mission and Ministry of The Village Church, and have been baptized as a believer in Jesus Christ.

All Partners and Believer-Baptized Partners will be encouraged to participate in a small group, to have regular attendance at the worship gatherings of the Church, to protect the unity of the Church, to follow the leadership of the Pastor and Elders of the Church, and to be generous with our God-given gifts to be supportive of the mission and ministry of the Church (see Partnership and Believer-Baptized Partners Covenant)

To become a Partner or Believer-Baptized Partners in The Village Church, one must sign the Partnership and Believer-Baptized Partners Covenant and meet with the pastor (or attend classes offered periodically) to discuss the following areas of Partnership and Believer-Baptized Partners:

- The Village Church mission and vision
- The ministries of The Village Church
- The importance and centrality of Scripture
- Conflict resolution

Partnership and Believer-Baptized Partners will be renewed automatically unless removed by one of the following:

- death
- the outcome of the Matthew 18 process
- by request of the Partner or Believer-Baptized Partner.

## SECTION 6 – CONGREGATIONAL ROLE

The primary role of the congregation shall be to serve as the ministers of the Church: reaching out to unchurched people and caring for the needs of one another within the Church. The Partners and Believer-Baptized Partners vote in representation of Christ on significant matters in the life of the church.

Section A) The following decisions of the Church shall require the formal approval of the majority of Partners and Believer-Baptized Partners of The Village:

- To approve a proposal for an annual budget
- To approve significant unbudgeted financial decisions (above \$10,000 of the annual budget) including expenditures or debt
- To approve a proposal to purchase church facilities or land
- To accept a proposed offer for selling church facilities or land

Section B) The following decisions of the Church shall require the formal approval of the Believer-Baptized Partners of The Village:

- Calling or dismissing the Lead Pastor (≥75% of Believer-Baptized Partners approving)
- Selecting or dismissing church officers including Elders, Moderator, Treasurer, and members of the Church Management Team (>50% of Believer-Baptized Partners approving)
- Amending the Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws (>50% of Believer-Baptized Partners approving)
- Dissolving the corporation (>50% of Believer-Baptized Partners approving)

The process for communicating formal proposals and voting is as follows:

- 1) Announcement of a meeting for Partners and Believer-Baptized Partners to discuss the business of the church at least seven days prior to the meeting by verbal and electronic means
- 2) Presentation and discussion of the proposal in the meeting
- 3) The final language of the ballot must be sent to the congregation no less than five days prior to the day the ballots are due.
  - a. A vote can occur immediately (prior to the five day's notice) if >75% of the total partners and believer-baptized partners of the church (A above) or total believer-baptized partners of the church (Section B above) agree to vote immediately in the meeting
- 4) The congregation will vote on the proposal by written or electronic means.

Additional items may be proposed to the congregation for informal input as determined by the Elders, Pastor, and/or Church Management Team. While this input may take the form of a vote (either verbal, electronic, or paper ballot), the informal input does not need to follow the formal voting procedures above.

A minimum of fifty percent of the current combined Partners and Believer-Baptized Partners (Section A) or Believer-Baptized Partners (Section B) shall constitute the quorum necessary for a vote to be valid. No abstentions or votes by proxy shall be counted. Voting process and wording of ballots and/or vote questions shall be the responsibility of the Moderator (see Section 9).



## SECTION 7 – ELDER SELECTION

The Elders shall consist of “Be Leading” Mission and Ministry Partners (equivalent to Directors in state law), including the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor shall be the leader of the Elders. The other Elders shall be selected for three year terms by the following process:

- (a) Any active Mission and Ministry Partner of the Church may submit a signed letter to recommend a potential Elder of good character and commitment to the mission of the Church.
- (b) Potential Elders must successfully complete a training course taught by the Lead Pastor covering the mission, vision, and structure of the Church.
- (c) Potential Elders must sign a covenant to uphold the highest standards of participation, service, supportiveness, and tithing with regard to the Church.
- (d) The Lead Pastor shall present to the Congregation for affirmation a selection of candidates that are spiritually qualified to serve as Elders.

Each Elder, with the exception of the Lead Pastor, may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms and may serve again after a break of one year or more.<sup>4</sup> The term of a Elder may be vacated by resignation or by recommendation of the Lead Pastor after consultation with the other Elders (the Lead Pastor shall have the final say). The remainder of a vacated term shall be filled by recommendation of the Lead Pastor after consultation with the other Elders and shall not be counted toward the limit of three consecutive terms.

The number of Elders shall be determined by the Lead Pastor after consultation with the current Elders.

## SECTION 8 – ELDER ROLE

The primary role of the Elders shall be to pray and to oversee the ministries and spiritual health of the congregation. Village Church Elders will affirm a Reformed Theological perspective.

The Elders shall determine the compensation of the Lead Pastor. The Elders shall oversee the construction of the annual ministry budget for the Church.

The Elders will insure that The Village Church commits at 20% of the church’s budget to various mission endeavors outside of its own local ministry (excepting mission trips or benevolence), with church planting as the highest priority, with preference to the ministries of the church planting ministries mentioned in Section 3.

The Elders shall leave the leadership of the Church to the Lead Pastor and shall leave the management of the Church to the Staff under the direction of the Lead Pastor.

In matters that require ‘trustee’ action by law, the Elders shall make such decisions by a simple majority vote.

The Elders may draft guiding principles that give specific and timely direction to the various ministries of the Church.

Elders shall oversee the admission and dismissal of mission and ministry partners. No complaint against mission and ministry partner of the church, staff member or the Lead Pastor shall be received by the Elders until the process outlined by Matthew 18:15-17 has been clearly demonstrated by the person(s) bringing the complaint.

Actions of the Elders shall be by simple majority of all the Elders, whether or not present and voting.

Elder meetings shall occur at least monthly and at other special times as needed when called by the Lead Pastor. All Elders shall be sent at least 24 hours notice of every meeting by electronic, verbal, or written means. However, such notice may be waived by unanimous consent.

#### SECTION 9 – CHURCH OFFICERS

Each year the Elders shall appoint a Moderator and Treasurer. The Treasurer shall lead the financial management of the Church overseeing the receipt and disbursement of funds. Any Elder may co-sign checks and sign legal documents on behalf of the corporation if so directed by the Lead Pastor and subject to congregational approval when required by Section 6 of these Bylaws.

The Moderator shall lead the business meetings of the church and oversee any church voting (see section 6 above).

The Moderator and Treasurer may or may not be Elders.

A Management Team, appointed by the Elders, may oversee the financial operations of the church.

#### SECTION 10 – LEAD PASTOR CALL AND DISMISSAL

When a Lead Pastor is dismissed or resigns, the Board shall provide a severance package in consultation with Converge Great Lakes based on the outgoing Lead Pastor's past service, reason for leaving, and cooperative spirit. Severance shall not continue for less than one month or more than nine months. In the case of death or retirement, a parting gift comparable to severance shall be given to the Lead Pastor or the Lead Pastor's family.

The resignation of the Lead Pastor must be submitted in writing, first to the Elders and then to the congregation. The resignation must be given at least 30 days prior to the completion of pastoral duties at the Church.

Dismissing a Lead Pastor shall require a vote by the Elders to propose the action, nonbinding consultation by the Converge Great Lakes/GLBC with the Elders and Congregation, and final approval by 75% of the Congregation present and eligible to vote.

In the event of a vacancy in the position of Lead Pastor, the Elders shall invite the Converge Great Lakes/GLBC to guide the Elders in the process of finding and calling a new Lead Pastor who has demonstrated the ability to lead this Church to the next level of effectiveness in the achievement of its mission. Unless a clear transition has been adopted by the congregation's membership the

Elders shall call an Interim Pastor, from recommendations by Converge Great Lakes/GLBC leadership or other sources, to fulfill the role of the Lead Pastor until a permanent Lead Pastor is in place. In the absence of Lead Pastor, the Elders will be responsible for executing or delegating responsibilities that are ascribed to the Lead Pastor.

A search committee, appointed by the Elders but not made up of only Elders, will lead the search process and make a recommendation to the Elders of one candidate for the role of Lead Pastor. Calling a new Senior Pastor shall require a vote by the Elders to propose the candidate and approval by 75% of the Congregation present and eligible to vote to call the candidate.

#### SECTION 11 – LEAD PASTOR ROLE

The role of the Lead Pastor is to lead the Church to accomplish its mission. The primary responsibilities of the pastor shall be to pray, study and give spiritual direction. The Lead Pastor shall also lead the Congregation by teaching biblical truth from a Reformed Theological perspective, casting vision, and advancing the mission.

The Lead Pastor shall lead the Elders as they oversee the mission and ministry of the Church. The Pastor shall hire, direct, compensate, and fire any and all Church Staff in compliance with any principles established by the Elders.

The Pastor shall lead the Staff by directing them in their management of all Church operations. With regard to compensation, the Lead Pastor shall be accountable to the Elders. With regard to job retention and approval of major decisions, the Pastor shall be accountable to the Congregation. The Pastor shall hire, direct, compensate, and fire any and all Church Staff in compliance with any principles established by the Elders.

The Lead Pastor shall be offered a paid, three-month sabbatical after every five years of service at the Church. A plan for the sabbatical must be submitted to the Elders for their approval.

#### SECTION 12 – CHURCH STAFF

A Staff person presented by the Lead Pastor shall be approved by the Church Management Team and affirmed by the Elders.

The term “Staff” shall apply to all paid ministry leaders hired for a management purpose, whether they are part-time or full-time with regard to compensation. All staff shall demonstrate a commitment to Jesus Christ and the mission of the church. Staff involved in the functions of teaching and/or corporate worship shall be or become a partner.

Staff positions shall be created, filled, vacated, or discontinued based on how effectively they accomplish designated parts of the church values and mission. All such decisions are the responsibility and prerogative of the Lead Pastor, in consultation with the Elders and the Church Management Team. However, if a majority of the Elders and the Church Management Team are not in agreement with the Lead Pastor in matters of staff hiring or dismissal, then no action shall be taken until a greater unity is obtained.

### SECTION 13 – LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

- (a) Trustees, Elders, Pastors or Staff shall not be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or other obligations of the Church.
- (b) To the extent that a person who is, or was, a Trustee, officer, employee or other agent of this Church has been successful on the merits in defense of any civil, criminal, administrative or investigative proceeding brought to procure a judgment against such person by reason of the fact that he or she is, or was, an agent of the Church, or has been successful in defense of any claim, issue or matter, therein, such person shall be indemnified against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with such proceeding.
- (c) If such person either settles any such claim or sustains a judgment against him or her, then indemnification against expenses, judgments, fines, settlements and other amounts reasonably incurred in connection with such proceedings shall be provided by this Church but only to the extent allowed by, and in accordance with state law.
- (d) The Board may adopt a policy in the Guiding Principles authorizing the purchase and maintenance of insurance on behalf of any agent of the Church against any liability other than for violating provisions of law relating to self-dealing asserted against or incurred by the agent in such capacity or arising out of the agent's status as such, whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify the agent against such liability under the provisions of state law.

### SECTION 14 – AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS OR ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

The Bylaws or the Articles of Incorporation may be amended in whole or in part if the following requirements are met:

- (a) The amendment is proposed by the Lead Pastor, the Elders, or a petition signed by one-third of the combined number of partners.

### SECTION 15 DISSOLUTION

The Village Church of Baldwin Wisconsin, Inc. is affiliated with Converge Great Lakes / GLBC of Converge Worldwide/BGC, the parent religious organization. Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the leadership body shall, after paying and making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the corporation in such manner, to the CONVERGE GREAT LAKES, Incorporated, or its successor.

Division. In 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 question shall be submitted to the Overseers of Converge Great Lakes/GLBC, and their decision shall be final.

Disaffiliation. Should The Village Church decide to dissolve its affiliation with the organizations mentioned in Section 3 above within the first five years of its existence from the adoption from this document, Converge Great Lakes / GLBC has the right to request and receive full reimbursement for any district monies and services dispensed during that time. The amount of those monies, services, etc. must be documented by the records of the Church and the District.



# THE VILLAGE CHURCH PARTNERSHIP AND BELIEVER-BAPTIZED PARTNERS COVENANT

I desire to partner with others in The Village Church for a unified witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In doing so I commit myself to God and to others at The Village Church to do the following:

**1. I will protect the unity of my church**

- ...by acting in love toward others at The Village Church
  - ...by refusing to gossip or listen to gossip
  - ...by following the leaders as they lead in ways that support the Village Church's Statement of faith and values
- (Romans 14:19; 1 Peter 1:22; Ephesians 4:29; Hebrews 13:17)

**2. I will share the responsibility of my church**

- ...by praying for its growth
  - ...by inviting the unchurched to attend
  - ...by warmly welcoming all who attend
- (1 Thessalonians 1:1-2; Luke 14:23; Romans 15:7)

<p>I would like to talk with the Pastor/Elder about Partnership in more detail:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Become a Partner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Renew Partnership</p> <p>Your contact number/e-mail: _____</p>
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**3. I will serve the mission and ministry of my church**

- ...by developing a servant's heart
  - ...by discovering my gifts and talents
  - ...by being equipped to serve by ministry leaders
- (1 Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:11-12; Philippians 2:3-4, 7)

**4. I will support the testimony of my church**

- ...by attending faithfully
  - ...by living a godly life
  - ...by giving regularly
- (Hebrews 10:25; Philippians 1:27; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Leviticus 27:30)

**5. At this point in my spiritual journey I covenant to be a (choose one):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Partner who has made a confession of faith in Jesus Christ and supports the Mission and Ministry of The Village Church.

\_\_\_\_\_ Believer-Baptized Partners who has made a confession of faith in Jesus Christ, supports the Mission and Ministry of The Village Church, and has been baptized as a believer in Jesus Christ.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

WRITTEN CONSENT OF DIRECTORS ADOPTING BYLAWS. We, the undersigned, are all of the persons named as the directors in the Articles of Incorporation of the Village Church of Baldwin Wisconsin, Inc., a Wisconsin nonprofit corporation, and, pursuant to the authority granted to the directors by these Bylaws to take action by unanimous written consent without a meeting, consent to, and hereby do, adopt the foregoing Bylaws, consisting of ten pages and one appendix (The Village Church Partnership and Believer-Baptized Partnership Covenant), as the Bylaws of this corporation.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, Director

\_\_\_\_\_, Director

\_\_\_\_\_, Director

\_\_\_\_\_, Director

\_\_\_\_\_, Director

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Bylaws of the corporation named in the title thereto and that such Bylaws were adopted after due process by the Board of Trustees of said corporation on the date set forth below.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, Secretary