RIDGEWOOD CHURCH
CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I
NAME AND ORGANIZATION

Section l. Name
The name of this organization shall be Ridgewood Church, located in Minnetonka, Minnesota.

Section 2. Organization
This church was first organized on November 28, l882. This church was recognized as a Baptist Church on May 9, l949, and was received into the fellowship of the Minnesota Baptist Conference in l951. The Minnesota Baptist Conference has been renamed Converge North Central.

Section 3. Incorporation
On August 4, l954, the papers of incorporation were amended to provide for the change from an unaffiliated church to a Baptist Church.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSE

This church shall be an autonomous congregation organized for the following purposes:

- **WORSHIP:** Afford its members an opportunity for the collective worship of God and to provide for observance of the ordinances of baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.
- **EVANGELISM:** Prepare our people to give the evangelical witness that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord and provide the leadership, resources, and facilities to support this effort.
- **PREACHING:** Reserve its pulpit for the spiritual ministry of the Bible as the Word of God.
- **MISSIONS:** Obey the Great Commission to go into all the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:** Provide for the teaching of the Word of God through Christian Education.
- **COUNSELING:** Minister to the spiritual needs of individuals and families of its membership and to give such ministry to any person or family of the community as may seek the spiritual help of the church.
- **BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES:** Honor such Baptist distinctives as belief in the competence and responsibility of each individual for his soul, belief in the separation of church and state, and belief that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of obedience and remembrance.
- **CHRISTIAN LIVING:** Encourage believers who confess salvation by grace through faith in Christ to be careful to maintain good lives and good works.

- **DOCTRINE:** Hold and propagate the Converge Worldwide Affirmation of Faith.

Refer to the following supporting, external documents for additional information:

1. Ridgewood Church Mission and Value Statements.
2. Converge Worldwide Affirmation of Faith.

ARTICLE III
CHARACTER AND GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Government

The government of the Church shall be vested in the body of believers who compose its membership. As a self-governing body, the congregation hereby delegates its administrative function and authority to a Board of Stewards, who shall be the trustees of the Church and of this Corporation.

Section 2. Stewards

A. **Role of a Steward**

In conjunction with and as a member of the Board of Stewards, a Steward at Ridgewood Church shall serve as a caretaker manager of the Church affairs, led and empowered by an exemplary relationship with Jesus Christ and expressed through an active participation in the adoption and propagation of the vision for Church ministry.

B. **Responsibilities of a Steward**

1. Meet and maintain the criteria for membership as a member of Ridgewood Church.
    a. A credible testimony of a personal salvation experience in Jesus Christ.
    b. Baptism by immersion upon confession of a personal faith in Jesus Christ.
    c. Agreement with and support of the Affirmation of Faith and Covenant of Membership.

2. Seek and propagate a sound biblical lifestyle congruent with the mission and vision of Ridgewood Church.
    a. Continually seek to grow and mature as a born-again believer in Jesus Christ through study and participation in the regular and special educational and equipping events of the church.
    b. Develop discernment of God's will through prayer and attendance at the services of the Church.
    c. Express stewardship through faithful giving and participation in a ministry of the Church.

3. Be an active participant in all meetings and activities of the Board of Stewards.
    a. Attend all meetings of the Board of Stewards. Notify the Chair when attendance is not possible.
    b. Take an active part in the proceedings of Board of Stewards' meetings.
    c. Seek consensus as found in the will of God for decisions required of the Board of Stewards.
    d. Continually seek the will of God for understanding and clarification of the mission and vision of ministry for Ridgewood Church.

C. **Selection of a Steward Candidate**

1. A Steward shall be a member in good standing, at least 21 years of age, and one whom the body recognizes as a mature and growing Christian.

2. A candidate for Steward may present themselves to the Nominating Committee or be approached by the Nominating Committee for consideration as a Steward.

3. Candidates shall be interviewed by the Nominating Committee and a slate of qualified candidates, equal to the number of positions intended to be filled, shall be presented to the Board of Stewards for approval. The approved slate shall then be presented to the Congregation for confirmation.

4. To be confirmed as a Steward a candidate must receive at least a 75% confirmation of eligible church members submitting written ballots.

D. **Stewards' Term of Office**

Stewards shall be appointed for one term of up to three years. A Steward may serve one additional term of up to three years, which must be followed by at least one year off the Board. Terms shall be staggered to provide Board continuity.

E. **Affirmation/Termination of a Steward**

1. Congregational affirmation of Stewards shall be an order of business at each Annual Business Meeting.
    a. Affirmation of Stewards shall be by written ballot.
    b. A Steward shall be affirmed by receiving at least 75% of the votes of eligible church members submitting written ballots at the church meeting.

2. Stewards may be terminated for any of the following reasons:
    a. Withdrawal from membership of Ridgewood Church.
    b. Voluntary resignation.
    c. A vote of 75% of the Board of Stewards.
    d. Failure to receive annual affirmation.
    e. Petition of at least 25% of the Church Membership.

Section 3. Board of Stewards

A. **Board of Stewards Role**

The Board of Stewards, as a body of servant leaders working in concert, are Holy Spirit filled visionary leaders and participants of the ministry programs of the

Church. As Trustees and Directors of the corporation, the Board of Stewards is the legal caretaker/manager of the corporation.

B. **Composition and Responsibilities of the Board of Stewards**

1. The Board of Stewards shall consist of eight (8) to twelve (12) confirmed Stewards plus the Senior Pastor.

2. The Board of Stewards shall organize itself as follows:
    a. A Chairperson shall be elected, who shall also serve as Chair of the church.
    b. A Vice-Chair shall be elected to act for Chair when necessary.
    c. A Secretary shall be elected to record the minutes of the meetings.
    d. Neither the Senior Pastor nor any other Staff Member nor their spouses shall serve as an elected member of the Board.
    e. The Chairman, Secretary, and three other Stewards designated by the Board of Stewards shall constitute the LEGAL TRUSTEES of the Church. They shall execute all deeds and other legal documents for and on behalf of the Church.
    f. A Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Church Clerk, and any assistants deemed necessary shall be appointed annually by the Board of Stewards.
    g. The Board of Stewards may choose to create various committees such as Finance, Facilities, and Personnel. A charter, scope, budget, if required, and objectives will be developed for each committee created.

3. The Board of Stewards shall be responsible for the total program of the ministry of Ridgewood Church.
    a. The vision and mission of the ministry shall be the central focus of the Board of Stewards' agenda.
        1. The sought after will of God for the church ministry shall be a Holy Spirit ordained statement of purpose developed by the Board of Stewards with Staff leadership and recommendation.
        2. The theological integrity of the ministry purpose and delivery shall be evaluated and maintained by the Board of Stewards.
    b. The Board of Stewards may delegate specific tasks and responsibilities to staff, congregational members, task forces, and/or committees at their discretion.
    c. The Board of Stewards shall monitor the progress and success of the ministry programs as they strive to fulfill the vision and mission of the Church.
    d. In accordance with Scriptural teaching, the Board of Stewards shall strive to remove constraints to ministry fulfillment through their enabling, equipping and encouraging actions.

4. The Board of Stewards shall direct all business of the church and shall establish policies and procedures for all financial matters.
    a. The Board of Stewards shall propose an annual budget for ratification by the congregation at the annual meeting.
    b. The Board of Stewards shall monitor and manage the budgeted spending in relation to congregational tithing and giving. Expenditures and debt approved by the Board of Stewards shall not

exceed the current operating budget by more than 2% without approval of the membership.

c. The Board of Stewards may create by-laws, which shall provide continuity and process to their decisions.

5. The Board of Stewards shall keep the congregation well informed concerning its work.
   a. Board meetings shall be open to the membership.
   b. At the discretion of the Chair, an executive (closed) session may be called at which designated participants in addition to the Board members may be identified by the Chair.

   c. Regular meetings shall be announced in the regular Church publications. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair.
   d. Minutes of all meetings, except the Personnel Committee and Board meetings defined under Article III, Section 3.B.5.c, may be examined by any member of the congregation upon request to the Board of Stewards' secretary.

Section 4. Nominating Committee

A. This committee shall be an independent committee comprised of three Stewards appointed by the Board of Stewards, one of whom shall be appointed chairperson; and four church members, none of whom is currently a Steward.

B. This committee shall be elected by the membership to serve a period of one year. The existing Nominating Committee shall present a slate of at least seven candidates to fill the four church member positions on the committee.

C. Members of this committee, with the exception of the representatives from the Board of Steward, shall not be eligible to succeed themselves or to be nominated for the Board of Stewards. It shall be the duty of this committee to present to the Board of Stewards for its approval candidates to serve on the Board of Stewards. The approved slate shall then be presented to the congregation for confirmation.

D. The approved slate of the Nominating Committee shall be posted at least two weeks prior to the congregation's confirmation.

Section 5. Constitutional Revision

The Board of Stewards may appoint a committee of three or more persons to consider amendments to the constitution, at such times as it deems appropriate.

Section 6. Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on the first day of January and close on the last day of December.

Section 7. Business Meetings

A. **Annual Business Meeting**

1. Timing

   The annual business meeting shall be held not later than the fourth Sunday of January. Notice of the annual business meeting, together with the recommended financial budget, shall be mailed to Church members not later than two weeks prior to the date of the annual business meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be given from the pulpit, printed in the church bulletin, posted at the meeting place and distributed using common communication technology currently available.

1. Quorum

   A quorum shall consist of ten percent (10%) of the "members in good standing" qualified to vote for any business meeting of the Church except that for the calling or dismissal of the Senior pastor, for which a quorum shall consist of thirty percent (30%).

2. Special Business Meetings

   Special business meetings of the Church may be held at any time by order of the Board of Stewards. Notice of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting shall be given by announcement from the pulpit and by posting at the meeting place. At least three days must elapse between such notice and the meeting.

Section 8. Notices and Voting

A. **Steward Confirmation.**

Notice of the date of Steward confirmation shall be not later than two weeks prior to the confirmation. Notice shall be printed in the Church bulletin and posted near the Church entrances and on the Church bulletin board.

B. **Steward Affirmation.**

Affirmation, by ballot, of all Board members shall be held at the Annual Business Meeting in January. Notice of such action shall be incorporated with the general announcement of the Annual Business Meeting.

C. **Proxy Voting.**

There shall be no voting by proxy.

D. **Absentee Ballot.**

"Members in good standing" may vote by absentee ballot provided they have submitted their ballot to the Church Clerk or designee by the close of the voting period.

E. **Ballot Box.**

When used, the Ballot Box shall be monitored by the Church Clerk or designee. A membership check-off list shall be maintained by the monitor to keep a record of each voter.

Section 9. Parliamentary Procedure

In all matters not covered in this Constitution and at all business meetings, the most recent revision of ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER shall be our guide.

Section 10. Cooperation

The Church recognizes the obligation of mutual counsel and cooperation between churches and to that end shall maintain fellowship with Converge North Central Converge Worldwide and such other organizations in substantial agreement with our affirmation of faith.

ARTICLE IV
MEMBERSHIP

Section l. Agreement

Any candidate for membership must state their agreement with the Purpose and supporting documents as set forth in Article II and Responsibilities and Rights as set forth in Article IV, Section 4.

Section 2. Admission

A. Membership in the Church may be acquired upon a vote by the Board of Stewards.

B. Qualifications for Membership
1. Personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord
2. Baptism by immersion upon profession of faith
3. Agreement with the Affirmation of Faith
4. Active participation in the mission and ministry of Ridgewood Church.
5. A signed "Covenant of Membership"

Section 3. Status

A. "Members in Good Standing"
Shall include all members regularly received into the membership who have not been dismissed or placed on the inactive list.

B. "Inactive Members"
Those who have been absent from the Church for a period of one year without manifesting interest shall be placed on the "Inactive Roll" through a vote of the Board of Stewards. Those on the "Inactive Roll" shall have no rights of membership.

Section 4. Responsibilities and Rights

A. Every member of the Church is expected to attend its meetings, work for its growth, fittingly represent the Lord and Church in the community, and contribute regularly and according to his/her ability to its work, both locally and in its outreach ministry.

B. Members shall strive, with God's help, to uphold the doctrine of this Church. They shall be supportive of their Pastors and pray for them as well as for other Church staff and officers, and assist them in properly carrying out the ministry and outreach of the Church.

C. Members shall endeavor to preserve the unity of the Church. If at any time they find themselves opposed to the fundamental doctrine of this Church and the Baptist denomination to which we belong, they shall not seek to disrupt its fellowship but shall withdraw from its membership.

D. "Members in Good Standing" shall be voting members and shall have equal rights, except that those under sixteen (16) years of age shall be ineligible to vote.

Section 5. Discipline

A. The Board of Stewards shall be the committee on discipline. They shall seek to interview all members violating their Christian obligation or conducting themselves in such manner as to bring reproach upon the Name and Church of Jesus Christ and shall endeavor to restore them to the path of fellowship. Failing to receive satisfactory evidence or repentance and reformation, they shall report the offenders to the Church together with a recommendation of action to be taken.

B. In all cases of grievances between members, the offender shall be dealt with according to the guidelines laid down in the 18th chapter of Matthew. No public complaints shall be presented unless this course shall have been pursued. Complaints, when made, shall be in writing and shall be presented in person to the Board of Stewards for proper recommendation to the Church.

Section 6. Termination of Membership

A. Any member desiring to sever their membership shall be dismissed upon request to the Board of Stewards.

B. The Board of Stewards shall determine any member who has become inactive (as set forth in Article IV, Section 3.B). Those members shall be contacted by the Board of Stewards in an effort to determine their present intentions regarding membership. A member shall be placed on the "Inactive membership roll" upon a vote of the Board of Stewards. A member may be changed from inactive status to an active member status upon a vote of the Board of Stewards.

C. After one year of "Inactive member" status (as defined in Article IV, Section 3.B), those on the inactive roll may be removed from church membership upon a vote of the Board of Stewards.

D. Members who persist in violating their Christian obligation or conduct (as referred to in Article IV, Section 5.A) may be dismissed from membership upon a vote of the Board of Stewards.

ARTICLE V
THE SENIOR PASTOR

Section 1. Establishment of the Pastoral Relationship

The Senior Pastor is responsible to provide leadership and oversee the vision, direction, and Ministry of the entire church, including its priorities and spiritual vitality. The Senior Pastor shall also have overall responsibility for setting strategy, goals, objectives, and ministry plans. The Senior Pastor is the spiritual leader of the church, and shall preach and teach the Word, lead the public church services, and model a practical Christian life.

The senior pastor shall also:

- Be characterized by the qualifications for office stated in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, and the spirit of humility and servanthood called for in passages such as Matthew 20:25-28 and I Peter 5:1-4.
- Subscribe to our Affirmation of Faith and be supportive of the church's association with Converge Worldwide.
- Be a voting member of the Board.
- Be an ex-officio member of all Boards, ministry teams, and special committees of the church.
- Assist the Chair of the Board to establish agendas for meetings of the Board and business meetings of the church.
- Be accountable to the Board and their Guiding Principles.
- Be responsible for leading, managing, and overseeing all church staff and ministry. All staff is responsible to the Senior Pastor either directly or through another staff member he shall delegate.
- Perform common supervisory functions including identifying, managing, hiring and terminating paid staff.
- Lead an annual evaluation of the work of paid staff personnel as described in this constitution.

Section 2. The Search Committee

A. Composition and Formation of the Search Committee

To call the Senior Pastor, a committee shall be formed consisting of the Chair of the Church, two members from the Board of Stewards selected by the Board and ratified by the congregation, and two to four members at large elected by the Church, selected from a slate of no less than twice as many candidates as representatives desired.

B. Duties of the Search Committee

1. This committee shall seek a suitable candidate by consulting the denominational leaders and considering suggestions from members and friends of the Church. In determining a candidate's fitness for the pastorate, the committee shall consider character, education, ministerial record, preaching ability and spiritual qualifications.
2. Prior to recommending a call, this committee shall arrange for the Church to become acquainted with the candidate.
3. Following a review of the Search Committee's recommendations by the Board of Stewards, and the approval by the Board of Stewards of the terms of the call, the Search Committee recommendations shall be presented to the Church at a special business meeting. Notice of such meeting and its purpose shall be read and published on two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting.
4. The Search Committee shall not recommend any candidate until it has in its possession a signed affirmation that the candidate is familiar with the faith and purpose of the Church and that, if called to become the Senior Pastor they would support, defend and foster this faith and purpose.

C. Vote Requirements

A vote of three-fourths (3/4ths) of the "members in good standing" present and qualified to vote shall be necessary to extend a call to anyone under consideration. The vote shall be by written ballot, and there shall be no absentee ballots. Only one candidate shall be presented to the Church at one time.

Section 3. Extension of the Call

D. Formal Notice of the Call

When the call has been approved by the Church, it shall immediately be sent, in writing, to the candidate by the Chair of the Search Committee. The candidate's written acceptance shall establish the pastoral relationship as of the date agreed upon by the Search Committee and the candidate.

F. Terms of the Call

The Senior Pastor's salary, housing arrangement, provisions for vacation and participation in opportunities for service and growth, such as the various conference annual meetings and any outside meetings, shall be determined at the time of the call. However, the Board of Stewards may be authorized to modify the terms of the call, if necessary, to establish the pastoral relationship. Thereafter, the terms shall be annually reviewed by the Board of Stewards.

G. Term of Office

The Senior Pastor shall serve for an indefinite term.

Section 4. Dissolution of the Senior Pastor Relationship
Senior Pastoral relationship may be discontinued or dissolved by:

A. Resignation

1. The Senior Pastor may resign by presenting to the Board of Stewards a statement, in writing, of intent to resign. The statement shall then be presented to the Church at a time agreed upon by the Senior Pastor and the Board of Stewards. The Church shall be given a minimum of a thirty day notice of the pending resignation.

B. Dismissal

1. The Board of Stewards may initiate dismissal of the Senior Pastor by its written recommendation to the Church signed by at least three-fourths (3/4ths) of the members of the Board.
2. The Church may initiate dismissal of the Senior Pastor by presenting to the Board of Stewards a petition for dismissal, which must be signed by at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the "members in good standing" qualified to vote at elections. The Board of Stewards shall be required to present such petition to the Church no later than fifteen days following its receipt by the Board.
3. Any dismissal action may be presented to the Church at a regular or special business meeting. The Chair of the Church shall be responsible for notifying by mail the "members in good standing" of the date and purpose of the meeting at least seven days in advance.
4. The vote of the Church shall be by written ballot, with a majority vote of the "members in good standing" present and qualified to vote to carry the recommendation.
5. In the event that the Senior Pastor wins a vote of confidence, all elected officers who have signed the petition for dismissal shall forfeit their offices.

C. Terms of Termination

1. If in the judgment of the Board of Stewards following a resignation of the Senior Pastor, a continuation of the Pastor's ministry is undesirable, the relationship may be discontinued immediately. In such cases, a minimum of thirty days compensation shall be paid.
2. In all cases of dismissal, compensation after the date of termination shall be determined by the Board of Stewards.

D. Administrative Management

1. The Senior Pastor is the administrative manager of the pastoral staff. Should the employment relationship with the Senior Pastor be discontinued, the administrative management of the staff shall be assumed by a designated person recommended by the Board of Stewards and approved by the church membership.

ARTICLE VI
OTHER STAFF

Section 1. All Staff

1. Staff includes full-time, part-time, interns, temporary and unpaid ministry managers that head up every major ministry, team, or area in the church.
2. All Staff shall be hired by the Senior Pastor (or the Senior Pastor's designate) in positions determined by the Board of Stewards. The Senior Pastor shall employ hiring processes and methods appropriate for the positions and as may be recommended by the Board of Stewards.
3. All Staff will serve as a support to the Senior Pastor and manage their respective area of ministry with excellence of execution.
4. All Staff are accountable to the Senior Pastor or his designate to carry out specific areas of responsibility.

Section 2. Responsibilities of Pastoral Staff

1. All Pastoral Staff will work in conjunction with the Senior Pastor and the Board of Stewards to plan, organize, lead, and evaluate the overall ministries of the church.
2. Specific titles and duties of Pastoral Staff members shall be determined at the time of the hire by the Senior Pastor or his designate in consultation with the Board of Stewards.
3. They shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor or his designate to carry out specific areas of ministry which will be reviewed annually by the Senior Pastor in conjunction with the Board of Stewards.
4. Each Pastoral Staff member may be designated as an ex-officio member or leader of one or more church organizations and ministries by the Senior Pastor.

Section 3. Qualifications of Pastoral Staff

1. Demonstrate a consistent Christian lifestyle and be of service to the body of Christ.
2. Subscribe to and be committed to the Purpose, Mission, Values, Affirmation of Faith and supporting documentation, set forth in Article II of this church constitution.
3. Shall meet the biblical character standards for church leaders (elders or deacons) found in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1:6-9.
4. Be a firm believer in the vision and core values of our church.
5. Be a Covenant Member.
6. Give proportionately, with tithing as a norm.
7. Have attained age 18.
8. Have experience, education, and demonstrated leadership abilities as deemed appropriate by the Senior Pastor or his designated overseer.

Section 4. Hiring and Removal of Pastoral Staff

1. The Senior Pastor shall hire other Pastoral Staff in positions designated by the Board of Stewards.
2. The hiring (as provided for by the budget), or removal of Pastoral Staff members shall be made by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Board of Stewards. The Board of Stewards shall determine the aspects and nature of any severance packages.
3. A Pastoral Staff Position may be dissolved by action of the Board of Stewards at the recommendation of the Senior Pastor.
4. Resignations of Pastoral Staff members shall be received by the Senior Pastor or his designate. There shall be at least a thirty (30) day notice unless the Lead Pastor and staff member agree otherwise.

Section 5. Responsibilities of Support Staff

1. The titles and duties of the Support Staff shall be determined at the time of hiring by the Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Board of Stewards.

Section 6. Qualifications for Support Staff

1. Subscribe to the Purpose, Mission, Values and Affirmation of Faith, set forth in Article II of this church constitution.
2. Must possess experience, education and abilities as deemed appropriate for the position by the Senior Pastor or his designate.

Section 7. Hiring and Removal of Support Staff

1. The Senior Pastor (or his designate) shall hire Support Staff in positions deemed necessary by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Board of Stewards.
2. A Support Staff person may be dismissed by the Senior Pastor. The terms of dismissal shall be established by the Senior Pastor and Board of Stewards.
3. Resignations of Support Staff members shall be received by the Senior Pastor or his designate. There shall be at least a two week notice unless the Senior Pastor shall agree otherwise.

ARTICLE VII
DISPOSITION OF CHURCH PROPERTY

Section 1. Division
In case of organic division of the Church membership, the Church property shall belong to those members who abide by this Constitution.

Section 2. Dissolution
Should conditions arise where, for any reason, the church work cannot continue, the church property shall be transferred to Converge North Central.

Section 3. Consolidation
Should conditions arise where a consolidation with another church of the same denomination be advisable, the Board of Stewards shall be authorized by the Church to negotiate the terms of such consolidation insofar as the property is concerned. A report of such agreement must be made to the Church and approval granted by the Church before any legal papers are signed.

ARTICLE VIII
ORDAINING AND LICENSING

Section 1. Ordination
It is the privilege of the Church to ordain qualified persons to the Gospel Ministry. Ordination shall be granted by vote of the Church upon recommendation of the Board of Stewards, and shall follow the recognized procedure of Converge Worldwide on examination and ordination.

Section 2. Licensing
License to preach shall be granted to qualified persons by vote of the Church upon recommendation of the Board of Stewards.

ARTICLE IX
AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be altered or amended by a vote of three-fourths (3/4) majority of the "members in good standing" present at any business meeting, providing notice of such meeting and of the proposed amendment shall have been given by public announcement two Sundays preceding the meeting. At no time can any amendment be adopted that would be contrary to our stated purpose in Article II.

ARTICLE X
LIABILITY

No officer or member of any committee appointed by this Church shall be personally or individually liable for error or mistake, act or omission for or on behalf of the Church, occurring within the scope of his/her official authority or in line of his/her duty as such officer or committee member, excepting only for his/her own willful misconduct or violation of the law.