



THE VALLEY REMNANT CHURCH

Constitution

Adopted by the Members on August 29,, 2021.

Preamble

Whereas Almighty God by His Holy Spirit is pleased to call certain of His servants to unite as Christian, Reformed, and Baptist people in Donora, Pennsylvania for His worship and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and;

Whereas, having under the guidance of the Holy Spirit searched the Scriptures, we recognize the need to constitute ourselves to conform to God's will for His Church in this age and so prepare ourselves for great efforts in His name;

Now therefore we, the Members of the The Valley Remnant Church, do hereby adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ as revealed in God's written Word, commonly called "the Holy Bible," as expressed through those Standards of Faith known as the London Baptist Confession of Faith (LBCF) of 1689. In the event of any conflict between this Constitution and the LBCF, the LBCF will prevail.

Article I. Name

The name of this Church is the The Valley Remnant Church.

Article II. Purpose

This Church exists by the grace of God for the glory of God, which will be its ultimate purpose in all activities. We will glorify God by willing submission to His will in all that He has commanded including:

- Worship only through such means as He has commanded ([Romans 12:1](#), LBCF 1:8, 9, 10; 21:2; 22);
- Instruction for Members of the body in order to equip them for His service and provide instruction for others who seek to know His ways, including children ([1 Tim. 4:13](#); [2 Tim. 3:16](#);; [Col. 3:16](#); LBCF 22);
- Proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching, personal evangelism, and all other means consistent with Scripture ([John 3:16](#); LBCF 1:1, 5, 6, 7);

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

- Administration of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (LBCF 26:1, 2, 3; 28, 29, 30);
- Promotion of biblical fellowship among believers ([Heb. 10:24-25](#); LBCF 26:12, 13, 14; 27:1, 2);
- Ministry to the needs of individuals, families, and other churches in our neighborhood, city, nation, and the world as we may be able to do ([Luke 6:36](#); [Matt. 25:40](#); LBCF 16:1, 2);
- Encouragement and active engagement in the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ locally, domestically, and internationally in missions and church planting ([Heb. 10:24,25](#); [John. 3:16](#); LBCF 20);
- Promotion and active engagement in the training and preparation of men and women for appropriate areas of service in the Church, and ([2 Tim. 2:2](#); [John. 3:16](#); [Col. 3:16](#); LBCF 26:12, 13, 14);
- Exercise of biblical discipline as required and directed by the Scriptures to protect the unity of the body and restore the wayward to proper fellowship with Christ and His Church (LBCF 26:15; 27:1, 2; and Article VI, Section 6 below).

Article III. Associations

As this Church is independent and free from the external control of any denomination, association, elders not appointed by the Church, or any kind of outside religious concern save the rule and reign of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, it is at the same time free to associate with other churches for the purposes of missions, education, fellowship of believers, and giving and receiving counsel on matters of faith and practice among like-minded churches. This Church may choose, on recommendation of the Elders and approval of the Members, to join associations of churches provided that any such affiliation does not conflict with our Standards of Faith. The Church also remains free to separate itself from any association provided that it strives to continually remain in communion with like-minded churches at all times. (LBCF 16:14, 15)

Article IV. Membership

Section 1. Membership Commitments

Any person who wishes to be a Member of this Church must:

- Profess belief and acceptance of Jesus Christ as his or her personal Lord and Savior. ([John 1:12](#), [Rom. 10:9](#))
- Give evidence of regeneration in Him. ([Rom. 6:11-14](#); [1 John 5:1-5](#); LBCF 13)
- Be baptized by immersion or have been baptized by immersion following regeneration in obedience to Christ. ([Mark 16:16](#); [Gal. 3:27](#); LBCF 28, 29)
- Wholeheartedly believe in the Christian faith as revealed in the Holy Bible. ([1 John 5:13](#); [Ps. 51:8-14](#); LBCF 18)

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

- Agree and submit to the teachings of Scripture and our Standards of Faith following any necessary training by the Elders that is needed to understand and agree to them. ([Heb. 13:17](#); [2 Tim. 3:16](#); [John 14:21](#); LBCF 1)
- Sign our Church Covenant, promising to fully keep the commitments it contains.

The Elders will interview every prospective member in order to determine his or her biblical qualifications for membership. In doing so they may rely on the person's own confession of faith, a letter from a prior church, completion of a new member's class or other classes required by the Elders themselves, and any other information they consider appropriate. No person will be barred from membership on the basis of his or her race, creed, gender, or ethnic background; however, any person who openly opposes the teachings of the Word of God expressed through our Standards of Faith including public display of unrepentant sin (including, but not limited to, open practice of homosexuality, cohabitation without benefit of marriage, or fornication) shall not be admitted as members. The Elders may waive the requirement for baptism by full immersion in water in extraordinary circumstances such as physical disability, but in accordance with our Standards of Faith no person will be admitted to membership without baptism following regeneration (as opposed to "infant baptism," which we affirm is contrary to the teaching of Scripture).

Section 2. Admission of Members

Upon approval, the Elders will recommend the candidate to the Members at any called service for the worship of God. If accepted by the Members present, the new member will at that time give up his/her membership in any and all other churches and the Church Clerk will be directed to notify the Member's prior church(es) as soon as possible.

Section 3. Duties and Privileges of Membership

Each Member as required by Scripture will be privileged and required to participate in and contribute meaningfully to the life and ministry of the Church in a manner consistent with God's leading, and with the gifts, time, and material resources received from Him. Only Members may fully serve in the ministries of this Church, though the Elders may permit non-Members to serve in an occasional or short-term capacity. (Non-members may serve the Church in administrative and professional capacities as employees or consultants with the condition that they submit to the authority of the Elders and/or Deacons.)

Members have the privilege and responsibility for attending all Members' meetings and participating in the discussion of matters of concern to the body such as the selection of Officers, decisions regarding Membership status, and any other matters the Elders submit to the Members for consideration.

Each member of the Church is called to tithe and not to forsake gathering together with believers for the worship of God. For this reason, regular giving and attendance

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

at worship are prerequisites for attendance and participation in Members' meetings. Members who reside in other areas for extended periods (such as winter residence) will be required by the Elders to demonstrate active attendance and participation in a church local to their area, preferably of similar biblical convictions to this Church. By doing so, the Elders will consider them to be in compliance with the membership requirements of this Church. Members are encouraged while traveling even for short periods to make every reasonable effort to attend a church of that area to participate in the public worship of God on each and every Lord's Day.

Section 4. Visiting Membership

Those visiting the Donora area for extended periods as students, temporary employees, or for other reasons who wish to participate in the life of this Church may apply for Visiting Member status. The requirements are the same as for regular membership except that Visiting Members do not give up membership in their home churches. The Clerk will contact the home church to confirm membership and active participation.

Visiting Members are privileged and expected to follow the same requirements as regular Members except that during periods in which they return to their home churches, they are released from the attendance requirements of this Church. While Visiting Members are encouraged to participate in Members' meetings, they are ineligible to stand for office or participate by vote on any decisions requiring the action of the Membership.

Visiting membership may be terminated as a result of church discipline in the same way as for regular Members, except that the Elders will notify the leadership of the home church of the reason for termination. Visiting membership will automatically end when the person's period of temporary residence in the Donora area ends.

Section 5. Youth Members

All those who meet the qualifications in Section 1 above are to be admitted to the Church as Members. However, Members under the age of eighteen years (age of majority) will be considered as Youth Members and are ineligible to hold office or vote on any matter before the Church. Youth membership will automatically convert to regular Membership when the individual reaches the legal age of majority.

Section 6. Church Discipline

Any Member who consistently neglects his or her duties or is guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is dishonored opposes the welfare of this Church. The Elders may be required by Scripture to admonish In order to restore that person to a right relationship with the Lord and His church. If the Member continues in disobedience, he or she will be subject to the discipline of the Church, following our Lord's instruction in Matthew 18:15-17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline will only be considered when individual, private admonition and attempts at restoration have failed.

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

The purpose of such discipline will be for:

- Repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual being disciplined
([1 Cor. 4:14](#); [Matt. 18:15-17](#); [Luke 17:3](#));
- Instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them
([Prov. 13:20](#); [Rom. 15:14](#); [Heb. 10:24-25](#));
- Purity of the church as a whole ([1 Cor. 5:6-7](#); [Eph. 5:27](#); [2 John 1:10](#));
- The good of our corporate witness to non-Christians ([Matt. 5:13-16](#); [John 13:35](#); [1 Tim. 3:7](#)); and,
- The glory of God by reflecting His holy character ([Matt. 5:16](#); [John 15:8](#); [Rom. 15:5-6](#); [1 Pet. 2:12](#)).

Section 7. Termination of Membership

The Church recognizes termination of membership following the death of a Member, transfer to another church by letter, notice that the member has joined another church body, or termination as a result of Church discipline. However, the Church is not a social club that a person joins and later renounces; to simply resign from the Church is to repudiate the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. For this reason, the Church does not accept voluntary resignations of its Members unless they join another church body. Membership may be terminated by the Church as a result of discipline by action of the Elders and agreement of the Members at any stated meeting of the Members. Any person whose membership is terminated must reapply if he or she wishes to later rejoin this Church.

Article V. Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

The Church will meet for public worship each Lord's Day in the morning at times determined by the Elders. Public worship will include the preached Word of God, prayer, singing, and all other means of grace along with the ordinance of the Lord's Supper each Lord's Day morning and the ordinance of Baptism when scheduled by the Elders. Evening services, if scheduled, will consist of a format determined by the Elders. If public worship cannot be held on any Lord's Day morning because of unforeseen circumstances (such as severe winter weather), the Elders will make every effort to schedule an alternative service. The Elders may not fail to call services for God's public worship on a Lord's Day morning solely because of the secular affairs of others or the convenience of the Members. (Evening services, if scheduled, may be canceled if necessary, though this should also occur rarely.)

In addition to worship services, the Elders are to make sure that times are set aside for instruction of the Church in all matters of faith and practice and must prepare and provide qualified instructors for this purpose.

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

Section 2. Members' Meetings

Members will meet together as necessary to carry out the spiritual and business affairs of the Church. Members will act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ whenever they meet together. In general:

- Regular member's meetings will be held at least every six months, at separate times from worship services as determined by the Elders with the general agreement of the Members.
- One Elder will preside as moderator at all Member's meetings. The Elders as a body will make sure that the stated meetings of the Church are regularly held in accordance with this Constitution and that anyone required to submit reports to the Church Clerk does so with enough time to have materials prepared and distributed to the Members before or during the meeting as appropriate.
- The Members present will constitute a quorum, provided that all provisions for notification of the meeting in this Constitution have been met.
- One Member's meeting will be designated the Annual Meeting at which Officers are selected, positions filled, and the annual budget is approved by the Membership. The Annual Meeting will be held at least one month but not more than three months prior to the start of the fiscal year in January, generally in October.
- Special Members' meetings may be called by the Elders (or by the Deacons with approval of the Elders) at any time needed to conduct the spiritual or business affairs of the Church. The Elders must call a special meeting upon the written request of at least five (5) percent of the voting Members of the Church. In this case, the special meeting will be held within one month of the date the Elders receive the request.

Article VI. Marriage and Weddings

Section 1. Biblical Definition of Marriage

The Bible defines marriage as the union between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24, Matt. 19:5-6), which is acknowledged by our Standards of Faith (LBCF 25). This Church shall recognize no marriage that deviates from that biblical pattern. The Church will not recognize marriages that have not been solemnized (even if between one man and one woman) and marriages that include any other combination of persons than one man united with one woman.

Section 2. Performance of Marriage Ceremonies (Weddings)

In keeping with Section 1 above, this Church prohibits its Pastors and Elders from authorizing, witnessing, or solemnizing any marriage of persons other than a union of one man and one woman (based on gender at birth), whether within or outside premises owned or rented by the Church. No Pastor or Elder may utilize the facilities of any other venue to solemnize a marriage involving any others than one man and

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

one woman as defined above. Any Pastor or Elder who violates this section shall be dismissed from office and may also be dismissed from membership in the Church.

Section 3. Weddings Held in Church Premises

The Deacons may not permit any persons (whether Members, non-members, or some combination of Members and non-members) to hold wedding services or ceremonies on Church-owned or rented premises without the advance written permission of the Elders. The Elders shall determine whether the proposed union conforms to the provisions of the Standards of Faith before granting approval. Any services to be conducted on Church-owned or rented premises must be conducted by a Pastor (generally the Pastor-teacher) of the Church or the pastor of a like-minded church if written approval is granted in advance by the Elders.

Article VII. Officers

Section 1. Summary

This Church recognizes the biblical office of Elder and Deacon as they are given in Scripture. Two additional offices are also recognized: a Clerk who maintains all Church records, and a Treasurer to manage Church funds. All Officers must be Members.

Section 2. Elders

The Elders shall generally be no fewer than two and no more than five men who meet the biblical qualifications for this office as set forth in [1 Tim 3:1-7](#) and [Titus 1:6-9](#). The majority of the Elders will consist of Members not in the regular pay of the Church. Elders may not hold any other office at the same time (one Elder may have the title of Pastor-teacher as described in Section 3 below).

The Church will consider the calling of men to serve as Elders and recognize those gifted and desiring to serve in this capacity in accordance with the provisions of Article VII, Selection of Officers. These men will be received as gifts of Christ to His Church and set apart as Elders by the laying on of hands (LBCF 26:8).

An Elder's term of office may end by his resignation or dismissal. An Elder should voluntarily resign in the event of sin of such a serious nature that he no longer conforms to the biblical qualifications for his office. If he refuses to do so, the other Elders will call upon him to resign and, if necessary, dismiss him. Any two Members with reason to believe that an Elder should be dismissed must notify the Elders and, if need be, the Members. Any discipline or removal will be carried out in accordance with the instructions of our Lord ([Matt. 18:15-17](#) and [1 Tim. 5:17-21](#)). An Elder may be dismissed by the unanimous agreement of the remaining Elders. Any Elder or group of Elders may be dismissed by the unanimous agreement of the Members (excluding Elders) at any Members' meeting of the Church.

The Elders will take careful responsibility to examine and instruct prospective Members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions; oversee the work of the Deacons and all appointed agents and

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

committees of the Church; call and ensure the orderly conduct of services for the worship of God; oversee all aspects of teaching to include ensuring the provision of training for teachers of men, women, and children; and mobilize the Church for local, national, and world missions. One elder, most often the Pastor-teacher, will preach the Word of God at each Lord's Day service (allowing for guest speakers as the Elders deem appropriate). The Elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation in any way, including outside speakers, share the fundamental convictions of this Church.

The Elders may establish voluntary ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. They may also propose paid staff positions by presenting a full job description and evidence of Church's financial ability to support the position to the Members for approval. The Members as a body retain the sole authority to approve the posting of paid positions within the Church.

The Elders will have primary authority to hire, supervise, evaluate, and if necessary, terminate the employment of all staff members (save the Pastor-teacher as described in Section 3 following). The Elders may delegate any or all of this authority to the Deacons or another staff member (e.g., for a custodian or office assistant).

Section 3. The Pastor-teacher

The Pastor-teacher (who may also be called the Lead or Senior Pastor) will be an Elder and will serve as moderator at all Elders' meetings. He will perform the duties of Elder as described in Section 2 above, but will also be recognized by the Church as particularly gifted for, and called and set apart to, the full-time ministry of preaching the Word of God, teaching, and shepherding the flock. (LBCF 26.8-11)

The Pastor-teacher will be in the pay of the Church at a salary determined by recommendation of the Deacons and Elders with the approval of the Members (LBCF 26:10). Ordinarily, the Pastor-teacher will be paid a salary sufficient to enable him to lay aside secular employment, maintaining his close walk with the Lord and his giftedness for the position. In situations where the Church is unable to pay a full-time salary agreeable to the Pastor, the Pastor-teacher may choose to hold additional employment sufficient to meet the needs of his family. In addition to salary, the Church will provide such other reasonable support the Pastor requires (including study leaves, materials, and continuing education).

The Elders will evaluate the Pastor-teacher annually in order to assure the Church that he remains qualified for the position. The Pastor-teacher may resign at any time by providing no less than thirty (30) days written notice to the Elders and Members. Should difficulty arise between the Pastor-teacher and the other Elders or the Pastor-teacher and the Church, the Elders shall make every effort to resolve the issues, including seeking the advice and counsel from the elders of like-minded churches regarding mediation. The Pastor-teacher may be dismissed upon the recommendation of the Elders (save the Pastor-teacher) and unanimous approval of the Members (save the Pastor-teacher). A motion for dismissal must be presented to

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

the Membership for consideration and approval at a special Member's meeting held no less than thirty (30) days prior to the Members' meeting at which the vote for dismissal is to be taken. All special Member's meetings held for this purpose must be announced from the pulpit by an Elder other than the Pastor-teacher at all services on two successive Lord's Days before the meeting is to be held. The Pastor-teacher, as an Elder, is subject to all provisions of this Constitution pertaining to that office save dismissal except as described above in this section.

Section 4. Deacons

The office of Deacon is described in [1 Tim. 3:8-13](#), [Acts 6:1-7](#) and LBCF 26:10. The Church recognizes, in accordance with Article VII on Selection of Officers, men who give of themselves in service to the Church, who possess the gifts of leadership and mercy, and who are called to further service in order to preserve the Elders for their tasks as described in Sections 2 and 3 above.

The number of Deacons shall be determined by the Members upon recommendation of the Elders. There must be at least one Deacon in office at any given time. A Deacon's term in office may be ended by his resignation or dismissal. A Deacon may be dismissed by the unanimous agreement of the Elders at any time, and any Deacon or group of Deacons may be dismissed by the unanimous agreement of the Members (excluding Deacons) at any Members' meeting of the Church.

The Deacons will be responsible for providing for the temporal needs of Members, relief for them and others by mercy of the Church in the Lord's name, attending to all accommodations for the called and public worship of God, oversight of the financial activities and properties belonging to the Church, and encouraging and supporting those able to help others such as those with gifts of administration.

Each year the Deacons will, with approval of the Elders, present to the Church an itemized budget for discussion at a Members' meeting to be held not less than one month prior to the Annual Meeting. The final budget will be called up for approval by the Members at the Annual Meeting. Once approved, the budget will take effect at the start of the next fiscal year (January 1). Spending in any major budget category will not exceed the budgeted amount by more than five (5) percent without explicit approval from the Members present at a Members' meeting. No money will be solicited by or on behalf of the Church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Deacons and Elders.

The Deacons will present reports of all Church accounts --- including revenues and expenses --- to the Elders each month who will make these reports available in full to the Members. The Deacons will receive and hold in an account that is separate from any Church business account, a fund solely for benevolence and mercy, reporting on its use to the Elders upon request, and reporting to the Members its total receipts and disbursements only. The Deacons will also maintain records of the tithes and

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

offerings of individual Member and prepare annual giving reports for all Members by the end of January in any given year.

The Deacons, with the consent of the Elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions or committees of Members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the Church.

Section 5. Clerk

The official records of the Church will be maintained by the volunteer Clerk selected by the Members on the basis of giftedness in administration. The Clerk will prepare and maintain minutes of all Members' meetings of the Church: regular, special, and annual. The Clerk will maintain the official roll-book of Church Members, including date(s) of valid baptism, membership, transfer to another congregation, or dismissal. The Clerk will prepare and submit such reports as may be required by the Pastor-teacher, Elders, Deacons, or Members acting as a body.

The Clerk will maintain the official minute-books of the Church, recording attendance and all motions and decisions of same. The Clerk will also maintain the official minute-books of the Deacons and Elders, receiving and recording minutes of each of those bodies.

The Clerk's term of office will end with his or her resignation or dismissal. The Elders may dismiss the Clerk for reasons of church discipline or recommend for dismissal by the Members due to unsatisfactory performance in office.

Section 6. Treasurer

The Treasurer, who will be a Member not in the pay of the Church for service in any capacity, will work with the Deacons to ensure that all funds and securities of the Church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as the Deacons designate. The Treasurer will also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the Church, and shall advise on adequate controls to be implemented by the Deacons to guarantee that all funds belonging to the Church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the Church. In the event of any financial irregularity, the Treasurer will immediately alert the Deacons and Elders so that appropriate action may be taken. The Treasurer will report to the Elders as often as they require, but not less than annually an account of all records and transactions made as Treasurer, and of the financial condition of the Church.

The Treasurer will be bonded or insured as required and may be dismissed on the recommendation of the Deacons with approval of the Elders for failure to maintain church funds and accounts according to generally accepted accounting principles. The Treasurer may be suspended by the Elders pending an outside audit of Church books, accounts, and practices by an independent auditor. The Treasurer may select, with approval of the Deacons and Elders, any qualified unpaid person to assist in the performance of his or her duties.

Article VIII. Selection of Officers

Section 1. Principles

The process for selection of Officers will be interpreted and carried out according to the following principles:

- Substantial prayer, individually and corporately by the Members, for the Lord's wisdom and discernment in the selection of Officers.
- Granting of grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate to the evaluation of fellow Members to all prospective Office-holders.
- Expression of that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ by all parties involved.

Section 2. Procedure

The Elders will prepare a list of upcoming vacancies and seek recommendations and involvement in the selection process from the Officers and Members beginning at least three months prior to the Annual Meeting. The Elders will take care to examine those recommended, particularly men desiring to hold office as Elder or Deacon, to determine their willingness and suitability for office as described in Scripture (see Article VI, Sections 2-4). The Elders will also consider the qualifications of a member nominated for Clerk or Treasurer. Having completed such assessments and examinations as may be necessary, the Elders will prepare a slate of candidates for review by the Members. Any Member having reason to believe a nominee is unqualified for office must express that concern to the Elders in writing.

The Elders will schedule a Members' meeting no less than one month in advance of the Annual Meeting to present the slate of candidates to the Members. (This may be the same meeting as that scheduled to review the annual budget prior to the Annual Meeting.) Any Member who wishes to speak in opposition to a candidate must notify the Elders no less than one week in advance of the first Member's meeting. Any Member who does so will be heard with the expectation that the principles identified in Section 1 above are followed. The selection of Officers will be held at the Annual Meeting of the Church, selection proceeding according to the direction of the moderator.

The moderator of the Annual Meeting will declare the selection of all persons receiving the affirmation of the Members in attendance. No votes yea, nay, or abstaining may be submitted by absentee ballot or proxy. Each member present will have one and only one vote.

Section 3. Calling of the Pastor-teacher

The same basic processes of calling an Elder must be followed in calling the Pastor-teacher. In addition, however, the Church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gift of any potential Pastor-teacher. Prior to being asked to express judgment, the Church must receive assurance from the Elders that, having

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Bible as the holy, inerrant, and sufficient Word of God; to the Standards of Faith in their entirety without exception or modification; and to the Church Covenant; as well as to his personal qualifications for the office of Elder, and gifts for preaching and teaching the Word of God. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to Membership, to the office of Elder, and to be called as Pastor-teacher must be given at all services on two consecutive Lord's Days following his nomination, prior to presentation for approval at a Member's meeting (which the nominee is expected to attend).

Section 4. Calling of an Associate Pastor

An Associate Pastor is a man called by the church, either paid or volunteer as the Church desires, to assist the Pastor-teacher in carrying out those duties of his special calling to preach, teach, and proclaim the Word of God.

Growth is a natural expectation of any healthy church, and the Church may experience at times such growth that the calling of one or more Associate Pastors may be of great benefit. Before calling a man to serve in this capacity, the Church must determine the following:

- Has such growth occurred that the Church should consider planting a new congregation instead?
- Has the Lord raised up a man within the congregation who may be able to lead a new church plant as its Pastor?
- Is the desire for an Associate Pastor actually a desire for a paid staff member with administrative gifts? If so, would a different staff position better suit the need?
- How is having an Associate Pastor expected to build up the Church?
- Is the desire for an Associate Pastor due to the reluctance of the Members to dismiss the current Pastor-teacher and call a new man to office?

Following a season of prayer and seeking God's wisdom in the examination of their reasoning, the Elders may propose the addition of a new staff member as described in Article VI, Section 2 if the Associate Pastor is to be in the pay of the church. In either case, upon approval of the Members, the Elders may proceed with the selection and nomination of the associate pastor, following the same process as the calling of a Pastor-teacher with the same congregational assurances and opportunities to assess his preaching gifts if applicable. Upon his call by the Members, the Associate Pastor will at the same time be elected as a member (if not already). An Associate Pastor is not automatically elected as an Elder upon his call, but may be separately elected to this Office if the Members so desire and such election does not violate Article VI, Section 2 regarding the ratio of paid to volunteer Elders.

Article IX. Indemnification

Section 1. Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the Church, the Church will provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the Elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinary prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

Section 2. Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the Elders, the Church may also indemnify any person who they determine has acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the Church's best interests and not unlawful or the result of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

Section 3. Procedure

If a quorum of the Elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of Elders seeking indemnification, a determination may be made by the Members or by special legal counsel appointed by the Members.

Article X. Resolution of Disputes

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see [Matt. 18:15-20](#) and [1 Cor. 6:1-8](#) as examples), the Church will require its Members to resolve conflicts among themselves according to biblical principles without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the Church will encourage the use of biblical principles and the avoidance of lawsuits to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the Church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities. The Elders will serve as the court of the Church in resolving disputes among Members; however, the Church recognizes no case or canon law governing the actions of its Officers or Members. If any dispute involves the Elders, then the Members will seek advice from the elders of like-minded churches.

Article XI. Safe Church Policy

In order to maintain a safe and secure environment for all Members, attenders, and other participants in this Congregation, and especially children, youth, and the most vulnerable, the Church shall establish and maintain a separate Safe Church Policy. This policy will be kept current to ensure that the Church remains in compliance with applicable laws concerning abuse, and child abuse in particular.

Constitution of the The Valley Remnant Church

All members shall receive a copy of the Safe Church Policy and a copy will be maintained in the lobby at all times for anyone to view. Procedures will be established for the certification and approval of church leadership and other adults (particularly Sabbath School volunteers) to work with children.

The Elders are responsible and specifically charged with oversight and maintenance of the Safe Church Policy and any cooperative agreements with churches from which this Church rents space, or cooperates with in any significant way.

Article XII. Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution may be made on recommendation of the Elders and affirmation of the Members at a Members' meeting, provided that any such amendment has been presented to the Members in writing at a prior Members' meeting and has been announced from the pulpit at all called services for the worship of God on two successive Lord's Days prior to the meeting for approval by the Members.

The Church, whether acting through the Elders or Members, may make no amendments to our Statements of Faith, to which we hold in full.

The amended version of this Constitution will be made available to all Members by the Clerk as soon as possible after such amendments have been made.