

**Constitution and By-Laws of  
Wingfoot Church  
Goodyear Heights, Akron OH**

**Introduction:**

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Wingfoot Church was founded on September 20, 2020 by a community of Jesus followers who sought to renew hope in the neighborhood of Goodyear Heights in the name of Jesus. Our foundational goal as a church is to reach lost people in Goodyear Heights with the gospel, see people renewed in their God-given purpose to follow Jesus and renewing their neighbors and our neighborhood, and reproducing new followers of Jesus in the contexts where we live, work and play.

**Article I: Church Name & Mission**

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**Section 1: Church Name**

The name of this church is **Wingfoot Church**.

**Section 2: Name Meaning**

The wingfoot comes from the original iconography of the Goodyear Rubber Company. According to Goodyear, the symbol was intended to be “regarded as a fleet herald of good news.” For residents of Goodyear Heights, the wingfoot represents the heyday of the neighborhood and the hope that Goodyear offered. Employees of Goodyear got a regular newspaper called “The Wingfoot Clan” highlighting the good news happening at Goodyear and in Goodyear Heights.

We are adopting the symbol as a sign that true good news has come in the person of Jesus. He is the good news the neighborhood is longing for and he calls all of us to become heralds of good news in the corners of the neighborhood where we live, work, and play. Whenever we see the wingfoot, whenever we talk about who we are as a church and what our name means, we think of two things:

**We have good news to share.** No matter how people might think of us or respond to us, the gospel is good news that is worth sharing. It is good news that sets us free from anxiety and into a life of discover that Jesus is our only true hope in life and death.

**We must share it with urgency.** The good news demands a response and people need to hear that there is hope. People around us are dying without the good news and we have been put here in this place and time to share that good news with them.

***To paraphrase Isaiah 52:7: “How beautiful in the Heights are the feet of those who bring good news...”***

**Section 3: Church Mission & Values**

- A. **Church Mission.** Wingfoot Church exists to glorify God and make disciples in the neighborhood of Goodyear Heights by renewing hope in the Heights in Jesus’ name. Our purpose consists of three missional expressions:
1. **Disciplemaking.** Our church will renew hope for individuals, homes, and blocks in the neighborhood as we become disciples who make disciples of Jesus as we share our hope in him with them.
  2. **Community Development.** Our church will work together with our neighbors to address the systemic challenges of our neighborhood in a long-term, sustainable way.

Renewing hope in our neighborhood means addressing the underlying issues that keep people from experiencing life as God intended. We help bring out the best in our neighborhood and work together to create a neighborhood where everyone can flourish.

3. **Church Planting.** Our church will renew hope in neighboring communities through a commitment to be a reproducing church.

**B. Church Values**

1. Make Jesus Central
2. Pray Boldly
3. Value Non-Christians
4. Celebrate Life Change
5. Reproduce Regularly
6. Work Together

**Article II: Articles of Faith**

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1. We believe in one God eternally as one essence and three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, each of whom is fully God, yet there is one God. (Deut. 6:4-9, Matt. 28:19-20, Jn. 15:26-27, Phil. 2:5-11)
2. We believe God has made Himself known to the world most fully in the person of Jesus Christ, through the authority and inspiration of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, and to all people through His work of creation. (Gen. 1:1-31, Ps. 19, Luke 4:27, Rom. 1:20, 2 Cor. 5:17-21, Col. 1:15, 2 Tim 3:16, Heb. 1:1-2)
3. We believe God created the world from nothing and governs all things at all times in all places. (Gen. 1:28-30, Ps. 8:1, Col. 1:17)
4. We believe all humanity is created male and female in the image of God possessing intrinsic dignity and worth. (Gen. 1:27-30, Gen. 2:20-25, Matt. 9:4-6)
5. We believe sin has broken all things, leaving the world in desperate need for salvation and renewal. (Gen. 3, Rom 1:21-32, Rom 3:9-20)
6. We believe salvation and reconciliation to God are by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone, the Son of God who lived a perfect life, died an innocent death on the cross, and physically rose again from the dead to forgive our sins and restore us to life and relationship with God. 1 Cor. 15:3-6, 2 Cor. 5:17-21, Gal. 2:20, Heb. 10:19-25)
7. We believe the Church is the body of Christ empowered by the Holy Spirit and sent into the world to live out the kingdom of God and to shine forth the glory of God by making disciples. (Matt. 28:18-20, 1 Cor. 12:1-31)
8. We believe Jesus Christ is returning to the world in the future to establish his kingdom fully and to judge the living and the dead. (Rev. 20:7-15, Rev. 21:1-5).

**Article III: Leadership**

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The officers of this church will consist of the lead pastor and the elders forming the elder team.

**Section 1: The Lead Pastor**

**A. Qualifications**

The qualifications for the lead pastor are laid out in the New Testament in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9. Our understanding as a church of these qualifications are as follows:

1. Possesses a thorough understanding of the gospel and Christian doctrine as laid out in the Articles of Faith
2. Demonstrates a healthy family life
3. Demonstrates generosity with his time, talents, and table
4. Able to teach others how to know and follow Jesus and Christian doctrine
5. Demonstrates a record of patience and integrity in dealing with others
6. Maintains good relationships with non-Christians

#### **B. Selection**

1. As often as it may become necessary to call a lead pastor, the elder team will form a search committee, of which more than half of the committee members must not be currently serving as elders or pastors. A staff pastor may not serve on the elder team while he is a candidate for the position of lead pastor.
2. The search committee will vet candidates and recommend a lead pastor candidate to the elder team.
3. Upon the unanimous consent of the elder team, the elder team will submit the lead pastor candidate to the membership for approval.
4. The candidate, before he is called, shall be required to state his acceptance of and adherence to the Constitution and Articles of Faith of this church.
5. The lead pastor candidate must be approved by at least a three-fourths (3/4) of the members voting at a members' meeting called for this purpose.
6. Final confirmation of the call of the lead pastor candidate requires a unanimous vote of the elders. Following this vote, the elders will offer the candidate the position of Lead Pastor.

#### **C. Responsibilities**

The lead pastor shall be in charge of the spiritual and missional welfare of the congregation. He shall direct the congregation and staff in all mission appropriate endeavors of the church and shall oversee the hiring, retention, and dismissal of pastoral, ministerial and administrative staff.

#### **D. Termination**

The lead pastor shall give thirty (30) days written notice of resignation to the elders. The elders will notify the congregation when the lead pastor resigns.

Removal due to immorality, infidelity to the Scriptures or the Articles of Faith requires a vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the elders and a vote of three-fourths (3/4) of membership at a membership meeting called for this purpose.

### **Section 2: Elders**

#### **A. Qualifications**

The qualifications for elders are laid out in the New Testament in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9. Our understanding as a church of these qualifications are as follows:

1. Thorough understanding of the gospel and Christian doctrine as outlined in the Articles of Faith.
2. Demonstrates a healthy family life
3. Demonstrates generosity with his time, talents, and table
4. Able to teach others how to know and follow Jesus and Christian doctrine

5. Demonstrates a record of patience and integrity in dealing with others
6. Maintains good relationships with non-Christians
7. A man of at least 25 years of age who has been a member of the church for at least one year.

#### **B. Number of Elders**

The elder team will consist of at least three members at all times. The majority of the elder team must be non-staff, non-paid lay elders.

#### **C. Responsibilities**

The elder team shall be responsible for guarding the faithfulness of the church and the lead pastor to the gospel of Jesus and the mission of the church. The elder team functions as the governing board of the church with the Lead Pastor serving as first among equals.

The elder team oversees all church matters, including the spiritual discernment, shepherding, and financial and legal obligations of the church. The elder team has the authority to create committees and appoint advisors to carry out the work of the church.

#### **D. Officers**

Chair. The lead pastor will hold the position of chair for the elder team. He will be responsible for organizing and leading elder team meetings, building consensus among the team, and ensuring that decisions made by the team are carried out.

Vice-Chair. The vice-chair of the elder team will be selected by a majority vote of the elders. He may not be a pastor or paid employee of the church. He assumes the duties of chairman in the absence of the chair. He will work in coordination with the lead pastor to set the agenda for regular elder team meetings and building consensus among the elder team.

Secretary. The elder team will select a secretary to keep records of all proceedings at the elder team and to manage all appropriate documents of the church.

#### **E. Conduct of Meetings**

Regularly scheduled meetings. The elder team shall meet monthly at a time scheduled by the Lead Pastor and at the convenience of the team. The Lead Pastor in coordination with the Vice-Chair shall set the agenda for regular elder team meetings.

Quorum. A simple majority of the elder team will constitute a quorum. All decisions require majority consent but will seek unanimous consent.

#### **F. Selection**

1. One month prior to the selection of new elders, the elder team will present nominations for new elders to the membership.
2. Members will have 3 weeks to bring any charge against nominees that would disqualify them from eldership based on the qualifications laid out in Scripture and defined in the constitution. If any charges are raised, the existing elder team will investigate to determine if it is disqualifying in nature.
3. After a three-week period has ended, the elder team will vote to affirm each new elder candidate. A unanimous vote of the elder team is required for each nominee to become an elder.

4. The elder team will present the new class of elders to the congregation.

#### **G. Term**

The regular term for an elder shall be three years. Upon completion of a term, a lay elder may be nominated for a new term upon the agreement of the elder and the unanimous support of the elder team. The elder team must present the elder's nomination to the congregation as described in Article III, Section II, F.

An elder may resign at any time by informing the elders at least 60 days prior to the date of their intended resignation. If an elder becomes unqualified or unable to perform his elder duties satisfactorily, the elders may remove him with a three-quarters (3/4) vote. An elder being considered for removal will not vote to remove himself. The elders will inform the congregation when an elder resigns or is removed.

### **Article IV: Ordinances**

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Wingfoot Church will practice two ordinances regularly: baptism and communion.

#### **Section 1: Baptism**

All those who have placed their trust in Jesus for salvation will be baptized. Baptism shall be by immersion following conversion. Those who have been previously baptized who wish to join the membership of the church will indicate the date of their baptism in their membership process.

#### **Section 2: Communion**

Communion will be practiced during public worship gatherings and is open for all those who have placed their trust in Jesus. Communion may also be observed within the gathered community groups of the church under the direction of a community group leader.

### **Article V: Membership**

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#### **Section 1: Qualifications**

Any person 16 years of age or older who professes faith in Jesus may become a member of Wingfoot Church. Individuals shall attend an established class for potential members. Prior to becoming a member, an individual must articulate their story of confession in faith in Jesus, acknowledge acceptance of the Articles of Faith, and if they have not yet been, must be baptized.

#### **Section 2: Responsibilities**

Every member is responsible to walk faithfully in the way of Jesus in daily life, living to make Jesus central in every area of their life in such a way that their life is evidence of the power of the gospel and an appeal to those who do not yet know Jesus.

Every member should attend the regular worship services of the church and participate regularly in giving of their time, talents, and tithes in conformity with the gospel and the mission of this church.

#### **Section 3: Termination**

An individual's membership shall be terminated upon the following instances:

1. Personal request of the member to the elder team,
2. Failing to abide by the membership covenant, requiring church discipline

3. Extended absence, defined as more than one year or having joined the membership of another church.

The elder team may terminate the membership of an individual in these circumstances by a simple majority vote of the elders.

## **Article VI: Financial Policies**

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### **Section 1: Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year shall begin July 1 and end on the last day of June.

### **Section 2: Fiduciary Committee**

The elder team shall call a fiduciary committee on an annual basis for the purpose of creating an annual budget and overseeing the legal matters of the church. The fiduciary committee shall consist of the lead pastor, the secretary of the elder team, and any additional individuals the elder team deems necessary and appropriate for the healthy oversight of the church's finances. All members of the Fiduciary Committee must be approved by a unanimous vote of the elder team.

### **Section 3: Financial Checks**

The fiduciary committee shall create an annual budget for the church to be submitted for approval by the elder team prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. The elder team shall first approve any expenditure that meets any of the four criteria:

1. Any expenses related to the salary or benefits offered to any paid staff
2. Borrowing money or encumbering church property
3. Selling, leasing, disposing of, or buying any real estate
4. Making any expenditure that exceeds 2% of the annual budget or more than \$500 unless it is specifically included as a line item in the annual budget or unless it is of an emergency nature as determined by a majority vote of the elder team.  
Expenditures of an emergency nature must be reported to the congregation as soon as possible.

### **Section 4: Financial Report**

The elder team will provide a financial report to the membership annually detailing year-to-date giving, expenses, and any other relevant financial information as determined by the elder team.

## **Article VII: Church Meetings**

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### **Section 1: Worship Services**

Public worship services will be held weekly on Sundays for the purpose of singing, reading, and preaching the gospel.

### **Section 2: Elder Meetings**

The elder team will meet on a monthly basis at a time and place determined by the Lead Pastor and at the convenience of the elders.

### **Section 3: Membership Meetings**

The membership of the church will meet for an annual meeting called and scheduled by the lead pastor and the elder team, during which time the lead pastor and elder team will

report on the previous year, provide a financial report, update the membership on the life of the church, and offer vision for the coming year.

Other membership meetings can be called as deemed necessary by the lead pastor and/or the elder team.

#### **Article IX: Amendment Process**

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This constitution may be amended by two thirds (2/3) vote of eligible voting members present at any special business meeting providing that the notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given public announcement for the two (2) weekends prior to the meeting at which action is desired.

#### **Article X: Dissolution**

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This church shall have the right to own, buy or sell tangible properties, both real and personal, in its own name and through properly elected and authorized officers. No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any member from the assets, holdings or other transactions as a result of dissolution.