



TRUST GOD.
LOVE PEOPLE.
BUILD DISCIPLES.

MEMBERSHIP

COMMITTING TO GOD'S VISION FOR OUR GATEWAY FAMILY

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(Version 15.11.2024)

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1. Meet Gateway Community Church!

First things first - Gateway Community Church is a member of the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia (known in short as the CRCA), which in turn are part of a much larger family of reformed churches that spans the globe.

But that needs more explanation, so let's start wide and work our way inwards.

Since we belong to Jesus, we're part of the largest global group in history.

We are God glorifying, Christ exalting, Scripture believing Christians. We trust that God has saved us by His grace through faith in Christ as revealed by Scripture. This puts us inside the large universal body since the world began – Christ's body – the family made up from people in every tongue, tribe, and nation across time! This makes us both unusually common (and therefore safe) yet extraordinarily special (and therefore worthy of your membership!)

We're a relatively large global denomination.

Across the world though, there are an estimated 500,000 members meeting in an estimated 2000 Christian Reformed Church communities, mostly in across North America (US and Canada), Europe and Africa. While you'd find all kinds of cultural differences between these churches, there are deep threads of similarities (you'll find more on this in the section on our Confessions).

We're a relatively small Australian denomination.

Across the land down under we have approximately 7,500 members loving God and loving others in 55 churches.

What church life feels like on the ground – comparatively speaking.

If you are yet to experience life at Gateway Community Church, and you're wondering if there are comparison churches that we might look and feel like, the CRCA is quite similar in theology and practice to the Presbyterian Church, Westminster Presbyterian Churches, and the reformed branch of the Anglican Church. Yet we are also God's own unique church community – more on this on the next page!



“If I had never joined a church till I had found one that was perfect, I should never have joined one at all; and the moment I did join it, if I had found one, I should have spoiled it, for it would not have been a perfect church after I had become a member of it. Still, imperfect as it is, it is the dearest place on earth to us.”

Charles Spurgeon



2. A Brief History of Gateway

Because who doesn't like a bit of history?

The roots of the CRCA go back to 16th century Europe. In an age where the Roman Catholic Church was not only a dominant power but a frightfully misleading one, a handful of believers were caused to return to the Word of God for the true gospel of salvation that leads to true life in Jesus. You may have heard the names of key church leaders from around that time – men such as Martin Luther and John Calvin. They injected themselves full-time into a growing movement that would later be called *The Reformation*, a theological movement which continues in churches today, whether Reformed, Presbyterian, Baptist, or Pentecostal.

Following World War 2, large numbers of European migrants headed for America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The CRCA is a direct result of migrants coming from the Netherlands to Australia, who then (quickly!) spread across our nation. Reformed Churches began popping up in every capital city (except Darwin), and each church kept on planting more. Gateway Community Church itself was planted in 1996 by Willetton Christian Reformed Church, which was herself planted in 1983 by the former Perth Christian Reformed Church which herself was planted in 1953.

Gateway Community Church originally began under a different name, that being the Christian Reformed Church of Yangebup. They began their weekly meetings on the premises of the Yangebup Community Hall. After five years of meeting in this way, this faithful community were led to pursue some premises of their own in 2001. In faith, the members dug deep and bought a small building surplus to the needs of a Baptist Church - the property located at 63 Spencer Street in Cockburn Central. The Baptist church had leased the premises to a machinery hire business, so over the next couple of years, those faithful and hardworking members diligently laboured to fashion a barn styled workshop into the church building you now know and see.

Gateway remains a rather unique church in that it has been planted within an industrial community. This being the case, most of our members do not live in close proximity to our premises. While distance to the church proper has presented its challenges, God has never stopped answering our prayer that He will keep our doors open! Through His steadfast faithfulness, our church family is alive and vibrant, faithfully walking with Jesus so that others may come to know Jesus!

3. Our Vision

**“We see a welcoming church of unified individuals and families following Jesus!
A church so delighting in God and so treasuring each other that we share in
life centred around building a vibrant, Scripture-led church community
which prays, serves, gives, disciples, trains, reaches and sends in Jesus’ name.”**

Consider the above vision statement like you would consider building elevation plans that precede the renovation of a house. The plans inform you what the new house is going to look like. Were you to follow along the building process, you can see how each additional effort of each tradie is bringing the house one step closer to the final product. In the same way, this vision shows the kind of church God has been building at Gateway, and how He is going to use us all as we build His church together.

Our Mission Banner

“Trust God, Love People, Build Disciples.”

The mission banner reminds us of our core purposes as a church. It keeps us pulling in the same direction, guiding our decisions, and anchoring our actions to our vision goals.

Trust God

because living His way glorifies Him most.
because living His way helps us best.
because living His way seems hardest.



Love People

because He loved us first.
because we need each other.
because the world needs to see Jesus.



Build Disciples

run healthy ministries for Jesus.
build healthy families in Jesus.
reach broken people with Jesus.



3. The 5 M's Ministry Framework

Consider a house. The following titles are very familiar to you: Kitchen, Lounge Room, Bedrooms, Bathrooms, and Garage. Any house that lacks either of these areas is certainly an incomplete house, and the inoperability of any of these areas is a detriment to its occupants.

In a comparable way, the Church has five general areas: Magnification (e.g. Worship), Membership (e.g. Fellowship), Maturity (e.g. Discipleship), Ministry (e.g. Service), and Mission (e.g. Evangelism). When any of these areas are working poorly, the Church suffers. Gateway Community Church (GCC) has been following after God's vision to see our Church grow in each of these areas – for His glory, and our joy in Him!

We're learning to prioritise Magnification.

Worship is central to our church's life, exalting God in all we do! Through praise, prayer, and the preaching of His Word, we magnify His name. Our worship services aim to glorify God, engage the heart, and transform lives. Worship isn't just a Sunday activity; it's a lifestyle of honouring God daily. GCC invites all members to join us in corporate worship, Sunday through to Saturday, praising God with a reverent heart of gratitude.

We're learning to desire Membership.

We believe that every believer is called into fellowship with other Christians. Membership at GCC is more than attending; it's about belonging! Fellowship connects us as one body, supporting each other in prayer, encouragement, and spiritual growth. Through small groups, various gathering, and church life activities, we want to foster deep, Christ-centered relationships. GCC aims to be a family that fosters accountability and mutual care, with each of us strengthening each other. As members, we serve and grow together, sharing life with Jesus together.

We're learning the importance of Maturity.

Maturity in Christ involves growing in knowledge and obedience to God's Word. We're committed to helping believers deepen their faith and understanding of the Bible through discipleship. From Sunday sermons to LifeGroups, Bible studies, and accountability groups, we want to foster a faithful community that studies Scripture, walks with Jesus and lives out His teachings. Discipleship isn't just learning—it's applying God's truth in daily life - becoming more like Jesus.

We're learning the blessing of Ministry.

Every believer has been gifted to serve! Do you believe it? It's true! Ministry is about using our gifts to bless the church and community. Gateway has doors open each week because of a hundred plus faithful servants in all the various ministries, whether it's teaching, hospitality, administration, or practical helps. Ministry areas include worship teams, children's ministry, youth leadership, LifeGroup leading, and more. Each role contributes to the health of the body of Christ, encouraging each other to trust God, love people, and build disciples. We strongly encourage every member to bring their unique gifts to our church family table – your church needs you!

We're learning our call to Mission.

The mission of the church is to build disciples. We know of Jesus' Great Commission – His kingship is meant to be spread locally and globally. And we get it – it's hard. It's not our strong point as a church. Yet it's on our radar - we desire God to help us have our hope of Christ meet a world in need. Whether through acts of service, evangelistic events, or mission trips, our long-term goal is making Christ known more. Every member has a role in this mission - whether by going, sending, or supporting the work of the gospel. Together, GCC's aim is to reach more people with God's love and truth shown to us in Jesus.

5. What We Believe!

God

We believe in one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). God is sovereign, holy, and the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1). He is loving, just, and merciful, in His perfect balance of His perfect attributes. He is good, and only can do Good (Psalm 199:68). As the Father, He cares for His creation (Psalm 103:13) and governs all things according to His will (Ephesians 1:11). The Son, Jesus Christ, is the image of the invisible God and firstborn (Inheriting King) over all creation (Colossians 1:15). The Holy Spirit works to bring glory to Christ by guiding believers to the Son (John 14:26; 16:7-15). God is the epicentre of our worship, and our lives are to glorify Him (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Creation

We believe that God created the heavens and the earth in perfect goodness, by the power of His word (Genesis 1:1-2:3). The universe reflects God's majesty, wisdom, and power (Psalm 19:1). Humanity, made in God's image (Genesis 1:27), are entrusted with stewardship of His creation (Genesis 2:15). All creation was originally good, but it now groans under the curse of sin (Romans 8:20-22). Creation awaits renewal, where God will restore everything (Revelation 21:1). We affirm the responsibility to care for the earth as God's stewards, acting with reverence and responsibility towards the environment (Psalm 24:1).

Sin

We believe that sin entered the world through Adam and Eve's disobedience (Genesis 3), leading to separation from God (Isaiah 59:2). All people inherit a sinful nature (Romans 5:12) and fall short of God's glory (Romans 3:23). Sin affects every aspect of human life, corrupting our relationships with God, others, and creation. It brings death and eternal separation from God (Romans 6:23). However, God, in His mercy, offers redemption through Jesus Christ (John 3:16), calling all to repentance and faith in Him for salvation (Acts 3:19).

God's Revelation

We believe that God reveals Himself in two primary ways: through creation and Scripture. General revelation, seen in nature (Psalm 19:1), shows God's power and divinity, leaving humanity without excuse (Romans 1:20). Special revelation comes through God's Word, the Bible, which is inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16). Scripture is authoritative and reveals God's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ (John 5:39). God also revealed Himself through prophets, apostles, and supremely in His Son, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2), who is the full and final revelation of God's character and will.

The Person of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man, the eternal Son of God (John 1:1,14). Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:35). He is the promised Davidic King (2 Samuel 7) who lived a sinless life, perfectly fulfilling the law (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15), and through Him, all things were created (Colossians 1:16). He is the Mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5) and the Head of the Church (Ephesians 5:23). Jesus willingly suffered, died, and rose again for the salvation of sinners (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

The Work of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ's death and resurrection are central to God's plan of salvation (Romans 4:25). Through His substitutionary atonement on the cross, Jesus bore the punishment for sin, satisfying God's justice (Isaiah 53:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21). His resurrection from the dead confirms His victory over sin, death, and Satan (1 Corinthians 15:55-57). By grace, through faith in Christ, believers are justified, forgiven, and reconciled to God (Ephesians 2:8-9). Jesus ascended into heaven, where He reigns as King and intercedes for us (Hebrews 7:25). He will return to judge the living and the dead (2 Timothy 4:1; Acts 17:31).

The Church

We believe the Church is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23), made up of all believers who are united in faith by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Church is called to proclaim the gospel, make disciples, and grow in holiness (Matthew 28:19-20). As a community of faith, believers gather for worship, teaching, prayer, and fellowship (Acts 2:42). The Church serves as Christ's ambassadors, reflecting His love and mercy to the world (2 Corinthians 5:20). It is both universal, comprising all believers, and local, manifesting in individual congregations.

Baptism

We believe that baptism is a sacrament instituted by Christ (Matthew 28:19), symbolizing the washing away of sins through faith in Jesus (Acts 22:16). It marks entry into the covenant community of the Church and signifies union with Christ in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). In the Reformed tradition, both believers and their children are baptized, acknowledging God's covenant promises (Acts 2:39). Baptism points to the inward reality of spiritual renewal and the believer's identification with the body of Christ (Galatians 3:27). We will nevertheless gladly baptize adults, and welcome into our community those who hold to believer's baptism. In belonging to the CRCA and requiring integrity in adherence to our confessions (see 8.1, 8.2 below), there are some limitations for Credobaptists when it comes to church leadership, though service is welcomed and encouraged.

The Lord's Supper

We believe that the Lord's Supper, also called Communion, was instituted by Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:23-26) as a means of grace for believers. It is a memorial of Christ's death and a proclamation of His return. The bread and cup symbolize His body and blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins (Luke 22:19-20). By faith, believers participate in the benefits of Christ's sacrifice, receiving spiritual nourishment and being united to Him and one another (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). The Lord's Supper strengthens our faith and reminds us of our hope in Christ.

The Return of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ will return visibly and gloriously at the end of the age (Acts 1:11). His return will mark the final judgment, where the righteous will enter eternal life, and the wicked will face eternal separation from God (Matthew 25:31-46). Christ will establish a new heaven and a new earth, where there will be no more death, mourning, or pain (Revelation 21:1-4). Until then, believers are called to live in obedience and readiness, proclaiming the gospel and looking forward to the fulfillment of God's kingdom (2 Peter 3:10-13).

5.1 The Five Solas

Earlier in this document we referenced that we're Reformed; that is, we are a church with Reformed theological convictions that belong to Reformational churches. You might be wondering what that inherently means. The Five Solas (The Five Alones) may just be the best mechanism for summarizing reformed convictions:

Sola Scriptura (Scripture Alone)

Sola Scriptura affirms that the Bible is the sole authority for faith and practice, inspired by God and sufficient for salvation (2 Timothy 3:16-17). This principle emphasizes the importance of Scripture over church tradition and human authority, empowering believers to interpret God's Word directly. The Reformation underscored that all teachings must align with biblical truth, establishing Scripture as the ultimate guide for Christian living and doctrine.

Sola Fide (Faith Alone)

Sola Fide teaches that justification comes through faith in Jesus Christ alone, not by works (Romans 3:28). This principle asserts that salvation is a gift received through faith, which itself is granted by God (Ephesians 2:8-9). During the Reformation, it rejected the idea that human efforts or adherence to the law could achieve salvation, emphasizing reliance on Christ's redemptive work as sufficient for forgiveness and acceptance by God.

Sola Gratia (Grace Alone)

Sola Gratia emphasizes that salvation is entirely by God's grace, a free gift (Ephesians 2:5). It asserts that humans cannot earn salvation through their actions or merit; rather, it is through God's unmerited favour that they are saved. This principle highlights God's initiative in the salvation process, reassuring believers that their security lies in God's grace and mercy, fostering a spirit of gratitude and dependence.

Solus Christus (Christ Alone)

Solus Christus declares that Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and humanity (Acts 4:12). This principle emphasizes that salvation comes solely through Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection, rejecting reliance on any other mediators, such as saints or church leaders. It underscores the sufficiency of Christ's work for redemption, reinforcing that faith in Him is essential for a restored relationship with God.

Soli Deo Gloria (To God Alone Be the Glory)

Soli Deo Gloria states that all glory belongs to God alone (Isaiah 42:8). This principle emphasizes that every aspect of life, including creation and redemption, should reflect God's glory. It counters the elevation of human achievements and calls believers to live in a manner that honours God's sovereignty. This doctrine fosters humility and purpose, reminding Christians that their lives are meant to glorify God in all things.

6. Our Creeds

Creeds are essential in Christian denominations as they provide concise summaries of core beliefs, fostering unity and clarity among believers. The term *creed* comes from the Latin, *credo*, meaning 'I believe' or 'I confess.' Our denomination holds claim to three creeds which connect contemporary faith with historical Christianity. Our claim to them safeguards our church against heretical interpretations, and also demonstrates our church leadership's commitment to doctrinal purity. Creeds will thus play a role in worship (albeit from time to time), allowing congregations to collectively affirm their beliefs, which also strengthens communal identity. Additionally, the Creeds guide ethical living and decision-making, influencing how Christians practice their faith. Overall, creeds serve as vital tools for teaching, unity, and spiritual growth within the church.

6.1 The Apostles' Creed

The Apostles' Creed, one of the oldest statements of Christian faith, dates back to the early church around the 2nd century AD. This creed is traditionally attributed to the apostles, though its exact origins are unclear. The creed emerged as a summary of essential Christian beliefs, affirming core doctrines about the Trinity, the person and work of Jesus, the resurrection, the Church, and the New Creation. Over time, the Apostles' Creed became widely used in liturgical practices, and it is still recited across many different Christian denominations today. The creed reflects the early church's efforts to establish orthodoxy and combat heretical views, serving as a unifying declaration of faith across different traditions, and as we can still see now, across the millennia.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth!

*And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell.*

*The third day He rose again from the dead!
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit;
The holy universal church; The Communion of Saints;
The forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the Body;
and the life everlasting. Amen!*

6.2 The Nicene Creed

The Nicene Creed was established at the First Council of Nicaea in 325AD to address particular theological disputes concerning the nature of Christ and His relationship to God the Father (countering Arianism). The Council sought to unify Christian belief, resulting in a creed that affirmed the divinity of Jesus and the Holy Trinity. The Nicene Creed was later modified at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD and has since become a fundamental statement of faith for many Christian denominations.

*We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.
Through Him all things were made.*

*For us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven.
By the power of the Holy Spirit
He became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.
For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified.*

*He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen!*

6.3 The Athanasian Creed

The Athanasian Creed, attributed to Athanasius of Alexandria in the fourth century, emerged as a response to Christological controversies, particularly Arianism. It articulates the doctrine of the Trinity and the dual nature of Christ, emphasizing that Jesus is fully God and fully human. The Creed became prominent in the Western Church, often used in liturgical contexts and during the Feast of the Holy Trinity. Unlike other creeds, it explicitly condemns those who reject its teachings, reinforcing orthodoxy. Its precise origins remain debated, but its significance in shaping Christian theology is widely recognized.

*Whoever desires to be saved should above all hold to the catholic (*Universal, Christian) faith.
Anyone who does not keep it whole and unbroken will doubtless perish eternally.*

Now this is the catholic faith:

*That we worship one God in trinity and the trinity in unity,
neither blending their persons nor dividing their essence.
For the person of the Father is a distinct person,
the person of the Son is another,
and that of the Holy Spirit still another.
But the divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one,
their glory equal, their majesty coeternal.*

*What quality the Father has, the Son has, and the Holy Spirit has.
The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, the Holy Spirit is uncreated.*

*The Father is immeasurable, the Son is immeasurable, the Holy Spirit is immeasurable.
The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit is eternal.
And yet there are not three eternal beings; there is but one eternal being.
So too there are not three uncreated or immeasurable beings;
there is but one uncreated and immeasurable being.*

*Similarly, the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, the Holy Spirit is almighty.
Yet there are not three almighty beings; there is but one almighty being.
Thus the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God.
Yet there are not three gods; there is but one God.
Thus the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord.
Yet there are not three lords, there is but one Lord.*

*Just as Christian truth compels us to confess each person individually as both God and Lord,
so catholic religion forbids us to say that there are three gods or lords.*

*The Father was neither made nor created nor begotten from anyone.
The Son was neither made nor created;
He was begotten from the Father alone.
The Holy Spirit was neither made nor created nor begotten;
he proceeds from the Father and the Son.*

*Accordingly there is one Father, not three fathers;
there is one Son, not three sons;
there is one Holy Spirit, not three holy spirits.*

*Nothing in this Trinity is before or after, nothing is greater or smaller;
in their entirety the three persons are coeternal and coequal with each other.
So in everything, as was said earlier, we must worship their trinity in their unity
and their unity in their trinity.*

Anyone then who desires to be saved should think thus about the trinity.

*But it is necessary for eternal salvation that one also believe in the incarnation
of our Lord Jesus Christ faithfully.*

Now this is the true faith:

*That we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and human, equally.
He is God from the essence of the Father, begotten before time;
and He is human from the essence of His mother, born in time;
completely God, completely human, with a rational soul and human flesh;
equal to the Father as regards divinity, less than the Father as regards humanity.*

Although He is God and human, yet Christ is not two, but one.

*He is one, however,
not by His divinity being turned into flesh,
but by God's taking humanity to Himself.*

*He is one,
certainly not by the blending of His essence,
but by the unity of His person.*

*For just as one human is both rational soul and flesh,
so too the one Christ is both God and human.*

He suffered for our salvation;

He descended to hell;

He arose from the dead;

He ascended to heaven;

He is seated at the Father's right hand;

from there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

At His coming all people will arise bodily

and give an accounting of their own deeds.

Those who have done good will enter eternal life,

and those who have done evil will enter eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith:

one cannot be saved without believing it firmly and faithfully.

7. Our Confessions

At Gateway Community Church, we uphold the rich tradition of Reformed confessions. These historic documents summarize essential Christian beliefs as derived from Scripture, helping guide our faith and practice. Rooted in the Reformation, these confessions help us articulate our understanding of God, salvation, the church, and also many other important doctrines.

We have Four Standards of Faith, which are:

The Heidelberg Catechism

The Belgic Confession

The Canons of Dort

The Westminster Confession of Faith (in so far as it does not go beyond the first three above)

Together, these confessions provide our church with biblical perspectives on grace, faith, and Christian living. While not equal to Scripture, these confessions faithfully reflect its teachings and have shaped Reformed theology for centuries.

We invite members to explore and embrace these foundational beliefs as they grow in their walk with Christ. We also invite members to share any struggles or difficulties you might have with these documents. God is slowly teaching us, sharpening us and refining us. Some of the biblical truths within are very heavy topics to explore. God is not only patient with us as we grow in our understanding of them, but He is also gracious in giving us each other to help each other along our way.

Now, the four confessions listed below are all rather long, despite each section being short and pointed. It's simply that they each cover a lot of Scripture! For the reason of their length, they are not included in this Membership document. We strongly encourage our church members to look through, and become familiar with, these confessions. Not only will they increase your grasp on reformed convictions (that which we will shamelessly call 'Biblical Christianity!') but they provide amazing levels of comfort and unwavering hope in God through those convictions.

You can find the first three (HC, BC, and CoD) on our denominational website:

<https://crca.org.au/our-beliefs/>

The fourth (WCoF) can be found on the Ligonier website:

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/westminster-confession-faith>

Yet for those who will not navigate so quickly to these confessions, you can find a summary of each on the next page.

7.1 The Heidelberg Catechism

The Heidelberg Catechism was written in 1563, and quickly became a cherished Reformed teaching tool, explaining key Christian doctrines in a Q+A format. It is divided into three sections: sin, salvation, and service. It's warm and pastoral tone has made it a key resource for personal devotion and church instruction. While not often quoting the Heidelberg Catechism outright, the deep convictions within are referenced each and every Sunday. This Catechism is split into 52 'Lord's Day' Q+A devotionals (max. 200 words each). Read one per week, and you're done in a year!

7.2 The Belgic Confession

The Belgic Confession was written in 1561 by Guido de Brès. It is one of the most significant doctrinal statements of the Reformed faith. It provides a comprehensive summary of Christian doctrine, covering topics such as the Trinity, the person and work of Christ, salvation, and the sacraments. Grounded in Scripture, it was crafted to defend the Reformed faith during times of persecution. It was written in blood, with its author paying for its authorship with his life. Today, the BC still remains a faithful exposition of Biblical truths. It is a valuable resource for understanding God's Word, revealing the practical truths of the gospel, and guiding believers in our walk with Christ.

7.3 The Canons of Dort

The Canons of Dort were drafted in 1618-1619 during the Synod of Dort to address theological disputes over salvation, particularly regarding God's sovereignty and human free will. The Canons are also known as the Doctrines of Grace, and may be summarised as follows: total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints. These are also called the "Five Points of Calvinism," though this title is unhelpfully misleading. These declarations emphasize God's supreme authority in salvation and the security believers have in Christ. At Gateway Community Church, we value the Canons of Dort for their faithful articulation of God's sovereign and gracious work in redeeming His people.

7.4 The Westminster Confession of Faith

The Westminster Confession of Faith, completed in 1646, is a foundational document for many Reformed churches, offering a detailed and systematic expression of Christian doctrine. It addresses essential topics like the authority of Scripture, the sovereignty of God, the covenant of grace, and the nature of the church and sacraments. Known for its theological precision, the Westminster Confession remains a vital tool for teaching and guiding believers in the truth of God's Word. The CRCA also values this confession as it enriches our understanding of faith, promotes spiritual growth, and calls us to live for the glory of God. In the few (minor) areas where the WCoF goes beyond the BC, the CRCA holds to the BC over the WCoF.

8. Church Leadership

In the Christian Reformed Church (CRC), church leadership follows a 'Plurality of Elders' model. You might have heard of churches who have the pastor as the head honcho, from whom and by whom alone the authority flows. This is not the case for the CRCA, nor for Gateway.

We maintain that the Lord Jesus Christ is King over His church!

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

16 For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him.

17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

18 And He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

19 For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him,

20 and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.

(Colossians 1:15-23)

Yet God *has* gifted the church with some authority structures in order that the church would be cared for, and cared for well, for His name's sake. This has come to be known as the Church Council.

8.1 Elders

Elders, serving under Christ, form the church's governing body: the Church Council.

The elders, alongside Pastor Craig, submit to our Lord and Saviour Jesus, and operate under His delegated authority. Together they seek His Spirit's guidance to manage His church according to His Word. This structure reflects biblical passages such as Acts 14:23, where Paul and Barnabas "appointed elders in every church," and Titus 1:5, which instructs the appointment of elders to oversee the spiritual life of the congregation. Elders are responsible for shepherding the church, teaching sound doctrine, equipping the saints for works of service (Eph 4:11-16) maintaining discipline, and providing spiritual care (1 Peter 5:1-3).

This Plurality of Elders model increases shared responsibility, wider wisdom in decision-making, and greater safeguards of accountability. This system aligns with 1 Timothy 5:17, which acknowledges elders (plural) as leaders who "direct the affairs of the church" and stresses that some have the specific gift of teaching (not least, the Pastor). Elders together protect the church from false teaching (Titus 1:9) and act as spiritual overseers (Hebrews 13:17). Jesus informed His disciples that it wasn't the responsibility of leadership to 'lord it over' the church (Matthew 20:25-28), but rather to serve in a humility of the same thread as Jesus. Notably, at the time of writing, every one of the elders and their wives are on the church cleaning roster. This wasn't fabricated by any plan or design – such is the genuine humble servant-heartedness of our Church Council.

8.2 Deacons

Also sitting on Council are our Deacon[s]. Their role is distinct (though complementary) to that of elders or pastors. Acts 6:1-6 reveals just one facet of the blessing it is to have deacons: the apostles appoint seven men to handle the daily distribution to widows, allowing the apostles to focus on prayer and ministry of the Word. Deacons serve as ministers of mercy within the church. While it is not the sole duty of the Deacon to address the practical needs of the congregation and community, the Deacon is the point person to ensure that this is being done.

Deacons are called to oversee charitable work, care for needs, and ensure that the churches ministry resources are distributed fairly, and thus this role calls for wisdom and godliness. The qualifications for deacons are outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, emphasizing qualities like dignity, integrity, and faithfulness in service. Thus, while deacons do not have the position of leadership and authority in the same way as Elders, they are nevertheless recognised and heeded as wise and godly brothers around the Council table.

Deacons must manage their households well, showing that they can faithfully steward the wider church family. In essence, deacons embody Christ's compassion (Mark 10:45) and are vital in reflecting God's love through acts of service, making them a bridge between spiritual and practical care.

8.3 Denominational Structures

Beyond the local church, the CRCA is organized into wider governing bodies.

The Christian Reformed Church of each state meet three times each year in an assembly called **Classis** (similar to a presbytery in other Reformed traditions). At Classis, representatives from local church councils come together for such things as mutual encouragement and accountability, examinations for preaching licenses and the ordination of suitably qualified pastors. This practice is rooted in examples of regional leadership seen in **Acts 15:1-21**, where the Jerusalem Council made decisions for multiple churches.

At the national level, a Synod is our largest and broadest denominational decision-making body.

The Synod gathers every 3 years with representatives voted in as delegates from each State Classis. The Synod addresses issues affecting the denomination as a whole, ensuring the highest levels of unity in doctrine and practice across churches. This tiered structure reflects the CRC's emphasis on shared governance, cooperative decision-making, and the interdependence of local churches within a broader fellowship. In a phrase, the Synod serves the Classes, the Classes serve each local church council, and the local church council serves the local church.

8.4 Accessible and Approachable Leadership

The Council exists to serve the Church through the Ephesians 4 principle:

- 11 "So Christ Himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,*
- 12 to equip His people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up*
- 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."*

Thus the Council wishes to be both accessible and approachable. If you wish to register a need for help, a concern, a complaint, a rebuke or otherwise of anyone or anything within Gateway Community Church, it is the Council whom you must approach first [although please note that matters of Child Safety require you to first approach our ChildSafe Coordinator]. This allows the issue to be brought to the wisdom of the Council and allow them to weigh in on the issue before you approach someone else [E.g. Let's say the Pastor never quotes the Bible in his sermons, the Lord's Supper grape juice isn't red enough, or the after-church coffee beans taste like hazelnut-chocolates instead of chocolate-hazelnuts]. Regardless of the issue [with the exception of Child Safety] the path to take is this: go to the Eldership first. Church leadership and management is their delegated responsibility, and they care that our church family is served in the best possible manner.

In the event that the matter you bring to the Church Council is of a more serious nature, and you believe the Church Council has operated outside of holy obedience, our denomination has further structures in place to protect you. In this event, you would seek an audience with the Classis Moderamen (Chairman and Vice-Chairman), who would see to your matter to help find a solution to the issue. Worthy of note, the Classis does not command the local Church or its Council – rather, it serves the local Church and its Council. While Classis can only recommend a course of action to the local Church Council, the unity of our denomination is such that our local Church Councils take the advice and ministry of the Classis very seriously. In the unlikely event that Classis cannot resolve your issue, you are able to approach the Denominational Synodical Interim Committee for further intervention.

8.5 Ministry Leaders

According to the Ephesians 4 principle of church leadership 'equipping the saints for works of service,' the Gateway Church Council is committed to allocating suitably gifted individuals into roles of ministry leadership. There is a certain amount of delegated authority that comes with these ministry positions.

'Authority' is a term that may leave an odd taste in our mouth, but it really ought not to. A Ministry Leaders' authority in a particular area of ministry simply means that they have agreed to carry the delegated responsibility of seeing that ministry done well. The authority of a ministry position is limited to that ministry area. These Ministry Leaders serve under the authority of the Elders, who seek not to micromanage these ministry areas, but instead free others to use their God given gifts to serve the Church (Romans 12:3-8). The elders have the aim to encourage these ministry leaders and encourage their further equipping or training as necessary.

We encourage the Church to honour how selflessly these members make themselves available to serve our Gateway family, and to honour their positions by using each of our time and talents to make their task as smooth as possible. Currently, we have Ministry Leaders in the following areas:

- Youth Pastor*, who oversees all ministries related to Kids and Youth.
- Kids Church Leader*, who oversees Sunday Kids Church (and who serves under the Youth Pastor).
- Music Leader*, who oversees Sunday service worship and musician auditions and training nights.
- AV Leader*, who oversees our audio and visual technology (and serves under our Music Leader).
- Admin*, who oversees our church newsletter editions and rostering schedules.

9. Membership (and Responsibilities).

Membership is everywhere these days. You can become a member of Woolworths, your local gym, and Subway without them ever expecting a thing from you.

Are we simply offering some perks in exchange for a monthly prescription fee?

Not at all!

Formal Membership is the universal church's way of encouraging maximum alignment with Jesus.

You see, the Bible teaches us that when we put our faith in Jesus, we immediately become a member of God's family:

17 *"Jesus came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.*

18 *For through Him, we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.*

19 *Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of His household,*

20 *built on the foundations of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone.*

21 *In Him, the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord."*

(Ephesians 2)

12 *"But to all who did receive (Jesus), who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God."*

(John 1)

Note there, we aren't a single-child family – but rather, a many child family. We are united to all other believers in all other places through faith in Jesus and by the presence of the Holy Spirit. There is nothing more that we need to do to be accepted by God – God has already done that by His decree alone.

Formal membership is about committing ourselves to God's family – because that is who we are already!

9.1 How We'll Bless You

We live in a hyper-individualistic culture. How often in our day to day are we fed the lie that it is all about us, that we're the most important and that we're the most deserving of all our hearts desires? Your church family will counteract that lie.

Jesus didn't say "just be yourself," He said, "*deny yourself!*" (Mark 8:34). To deny ourselves and live for Jesus will, rather than our own, creates a wonderful paradox, as Jesus reveals in the next verse:

35 *"For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it."* (Mark 8)

Jesus came to give, and not take. He promises such:

10 *"I have come that you might have life and have it to the full."* (John 10)

Your church community is made up of people who love God and love others. So, we will be about serving you in obedience to Jesus. We'll lift you up, encourage you, provide for you, work with you to increase within you your maximum joy in Jesus. Not because we're all about you – but because we're all about Jesus, who loves you, died for you, lives for you, and wants the best for you (which is you being in closest proximity to Him!)

Together, we're building a biblically grounded faith.

We are committed to clear teaching from the Bible because it contains all that we all need to know about God and how to live for Him:

16 *"For all Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in all righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."* (2 Tim 3)

Together, we're prioritizing a gospel centred worldview.

We centre on the gospel because in the person and work of Jesus the church sees the power of God for salvation, and thus in Him we find our primary purpose in life. The gospel is the announcement that Jesus is not only Saviour, but Lord! Consequently, the most important thing about us is what we each say about who Jesus is, and what He has done.

16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.*

17 *For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."* (Romans 1)

Together, we're aiming for servant hearted lives.

We are servants because Jesus served us and called us to go and do likewise. We seek to serve others by adopting an attitude of humility that reflects the heart and example of Christ, our Servant King:

25 *You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their officials exercise authority over them.*

26 *"Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,*

27 *and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—*

28 *just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."* (Matthew 20)

Together, we're developing a church family that is outward looking.

We are sent into the world as witnesses to the good news about Jesus as King of God's Kingdom. We want to be a welcoming, winsome, authentic and accessible community – one that winsomely engages new followers of Jesus:

12 Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us. (2 Peter 2)

Together, we're learning how truly that life is better with Jesus together.

As explored above, we are graciously adopted into God's family through the finished work of Jesus and the unifying presence of God's Spirit. We seek to live out our new identity as brothers and sisters of Christ and children of God our Father in Heaven:

15 ... Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ.

16 From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Ephesians 4)

9.2 How You'll Bless Us

Attending

Your regular attendance is a vital blessing to our church family. When you gather with us for worship, teaching, and fellowship, you contribute enormously to our sense of unity and community! It's the marvellous ministry of showing up! Hebrews 10:24-25 encourages us to not give up meeting together, but to inspire one another in love and good deeds. Your presence not only uplifts fellow members but also reflects a shared commitment to growing in faith together. By participating in corporate worship, you help create an environment where God's presence is felt, drawing others into our community and nurturing spiritual growth. Your presence is also especially helpful for making visitors feel welcome!

Serving

When you serve within our church family, you become an essential part of our mission to share the love of Christ. Each member brings unique gifts and talents to various ministries – this is you too! See 1 Peter 4:10 which calls us all to use our gifts to serve others. Remarkably, serving alongside one another deepens our connections and strengthens our bond as a church family. It's supposed to be fun, and a joy! And shouldn't it be, if through your willingness to volunteer, you help meet the needs of our Church family? You really do make a tangible difference by offering yourself to the work of our church.

Submitting

Submission to the authority of our elders is crucial for maintaining order and unity within the church. Hebrews 13:17 instructs us to obey our leaders and submit to their authority, recognizing their task of 'keeping watch' over our souls (Acts 20:28-30). This submission involves respecting their guidance and participating in discipline processes when necessary (albeit rarely!) By embracing this structure, you help cultivate an environment of accountability, growth, and spiritual maturity. Your commitment to this process strengthens our church community and fosters a spirit of love and respect among all members.

9.3 Giving: Using God's Money well.

“How much should I give?”

It's the age-old question, and it's not exactly the right question.

“How much *should* I give?” sounds like the question of someone looking to share the least amount possible – but is that the attitude to God's money that God expects of His family? Christians not only understand the enormous riches that we have in Christ already, but we also entrust ourselves to the God of every cow on every hill, every dollar in every bank, and every expensive mineral on every planet. God knows how to manage His creation with perfect wisdom; He also knows how to provide for us perfectly. Therefore instead of asking, “How much *should* I give?”, Christians now respond to God's goodness to us by asking, “How much *can* I give?”

Why we give.

We believe giving is an act of worship! Giving back to God is a joyful response to God's abundant generosity toward us.

7 "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9)

Notably, God's call for generosity amongst His people is woven throughout Scripture. He invites us to give freely, just as He has freely given His grace, mercy, and resources to us. The Bible reminds us that every good and perfect gift comes from God (James 1:17) – this includes our families, our friends, our homes, our stuff, and our money. Each of these is a blessing from God, and giving back to Him is a reflection of our gratitude for all He has provided.

Jesus taught His disciples to give with a ‘worshiping’ heart, reminding us that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). We therefore encourage each member to consider their giving thoughtfully and prayerfully.

Generosity is not only an act of faith, but an act of discipline. As we release funds for the work of His church, it teaches us every week to rely on Him as our ultimate provider, and His Kingdom as our ultimate goal.

Our church is blessed by faithful givers who enable us to serve our community, offer vital ministries, support those in need, and share the message of Jesus with others. Without their faithful giving, none of this would be possible. Each offering, no matter how large or small, contributes to the work God is doing through our church.

Giving may appear to be a thankless sacrifice, but please know that our Church family is thankful for every gift! As we give, we participate in God's work, furthering the mission of trusting God, loving people, and building disciples. By our churches open doors, we continue to bring hope to the small sector of the world that God has placed us in. Again, we thank you for helping the Gateway family do its work.

9.4 What it Takes to Run a Church!

As 1 Corinthians 12 says:

12 *Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.*

13 *For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body, whether Jews, Gentiles, slave or free,*

14 *and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.*

....

18 *In fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.*

19 *If they were all one part, where would the body be?*

20 *As it is, there are many parts, but one body.*

....

27 *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*

In other words, the Church needs everybody! God has fashioned each of us with gifts that enable us to offer self-sacrificial service to His kingdom, especially to our Church family. When we serve, we not only be the part whom God has made us to be, but we glorify Christ by doing our part to build up His body.

Servants and Services

For the Church to run, it requires a tonne of moving parts! A Church can exist despite the absence of any of the services shown below, but the church family will not be as functionally healthy as it could be as when having them present. The table below shows a (non-exhaustive list) list of all it takes to run a church.

Singers (Worship team)	Musicians (Instrumentalists)
Sound technicians	Welcomers/Greeters/Ushers
Projection operators	Communion preparers
Offering collectors	Generous Givers
Weekend Cleaner Teams	Coffee baristas
Kitchen servers	Creche Team
Hospitality Leader	Kid's Church Teams
Treasurer a	Little Kids Teams
Gaters Team	Gateway Youth Team
Life Group Hosts	Prayer Teams
Counsellors	Set Up / Tear Down Crews
Newsletter Admin	Elvanto Admin
Church Website Manager	Event Coordinators
Church Lock-up	Gardeners and Groundskeepers
Site Management	Life Group Attenders
Community Outreach Volunteers	Elders
Meal-makers	Visitors of the sick, lonely or hurting
Deacons	Youth Pastors
Pastors	Women's Ministry Workers
Men's Ministry Workers	Art and Décor Planning
Givers/Donors/Purchasers	Bible Study Leaders
Pick-Up/Drop-Off Drivers	Hospitality Hosts

9.5 Are you Ready for Membership?

How do you know you are ready to pursue Formal Membership?

Here are some questions to ask yourself?

[1] Am I committed to Jesus and to God's Word?

This is the most important place to start. The Church is not a club – it's Christ's body! Are you willing to cultivate an ever-deeper personal relationship with Jesus? Are you praying, reading your Bible and following Jesus' teachings? The question is not, "are you perfect?", because none of us are! We gather precisely because the grace of God calls us to ever-deeper experiences of the grace of God. If you are willing to commit to the difficult and painful but joyful and glorious journey of following Jesus, then joining a church family is a grand step towards this goal!

[2] Are you in alignment with our Creeds and Confessions and Vision?

It's obviously Scripture that is God's Word, but our Creeds and Confessions summarise what we think the Word is saying. Are you in alignment with those? Now, let's be clear. We are all (hopefully!) in a constant process of growth and maturity. The question, then, is not "do you already agree 100% with us?" but rather, are you willing to sail with us in that direction with a heart that is open and humble and willing to consider our teaching that is Scripture-based and Confessionally-sound?

[3] Do I want to commit to *this* local church called Gateway?

Have you sensed that a love has been growing within you for the people at Gateway? We're not asking whether you love the services, agree with all its theology, and find the coffee three points above bearable. We're asking, do you love the people themselves. This is more than just a little bit important. It is love that binds us together and marks us out as an authentic church (John 13:34-35), and love that allows us to humbly remain in service to one another, whilst being served by one another. By committing to this local church, you are submitting to the pastoral care, leadership, teaching, and discipline of the Church Council. You are agreeing to join with us financially, supporting the church to keep its doors open. You are agreeing to walk with Jesus, who is the head of His body, the Church, willingly seeking to see how Christ Himself will use your faith and wisdom, gifts and talents, resources and energies to build Gateway higher and stronger in Him?

9.6 Committing to this Church Family!

If your answers to the questions on the page prior are “Yes!” then we need to talk!

While there may be slight variations to the following steps, they detail the general sequence to having you on board at Gateway with us.

[1] Visit us for more than 6 months.

This allows you to authentically get to know us, and us to authentically get to know you.

6 months is the general principle, simply because it allows you enough time to gather enough information about us to have a fuller picture of the kind of church family we are like. During this time, you’ll hopefully have:

- attended 20+ church services (not that we’re specifically counting!),
- experienced love from a warm and welcoming church,
- been won over to our Vision and Mission,
- considered our creeds and confessions (try the Apostles Creed, and Belgic Confession to start!),
- been invited to a Welcome Lunch,
- witnessed trustworthy church leadership, and
- been shown hospitality by a family or two along the way.

[2] Book a pastoral catch-up with the Church Council.

Once you’ve been with us for over 6 months, we invite you to make contact with Church Council. Two members of Church Council will come to visit you (at your home, or else another suitable location) to have a heart to heart about joining this Church family. We’ll discuss things like your faith, your history (e.g. previous churches along your journey), special needs, financial partnership, and willing submission to and cooperation with church leadership. On this last point, we assure you – there’s nothing sinister involved! We will simply call you to the biblical concept of elder oversight on your journey with Jesus. We can also use this time to answer any questions you might have on our theology or practice or direction as a church, and we’ll ask about your God given gifts or desires for service. Have no doubts that we’ll encourage you to help us make Gateway even more faithfully efficient in ministry!

[3] Church Council accepts you as members and officially welcomes you to the Family!

Once the members of the Church Council have met with you, they will report back to the Church Council with recommendations for your acceptance. For your assurance, you will almost certainly know what our recommendation will be before we leave that meet. Taking the recommendation back to Council will allow us to minute your arrival as members (for legal reasons – we are, of course, an instituted body), after which we’ll inform you of your acceptance, and announce your welcome you at the next appropriate Sunday service!

As mentioned above, there may be slight variations to the above sequence, and that’s ok. Should you have any worries about our approach above, please don’t hesitate to contact Craig or a council member. While we do wish to maintain a sense of order, we’re willingly flexible if a different approach serves you better.

10. Kids and Youth Ministries

We want to partner with Christian parents in our church in the task of building young disciples. While we invite young people into our programs to meet Jesus and learn what it means to be a Christian, we believe that God intends the primary place of discipleship for young people in Christian families to be in the family.

It's our hope that faithful Mums and/or Dads model the Christian life for their children as they build what it means to be a Christian into the rhythms of daily life. Speaking about faith, reading the Bible, or a bible devotional around the dinner table, praying together as family, and dealing with the joys and struggles of this life that demonstrates genuine trust in God and love for people. This will positively shape the lives of children more than any well-polished church program or fancy Christian school could ever do. (Deut 6:4-9).

All that being said, "it takes a village to raise a child." God has assembled this body (the local church) to work together in proclaiming the gospel and building disciples. You're not in it alone! God has given us each other to teach, model, encourage and rebuke. Every part of the body is welcome, and each part must be cared for by the rest of the body.

**This is why we have specifically targeted ministries for our young people.
We want them to know they belong here, and that they are valued children of Jesus.**

We also want to obey Jesus by letting the little children come to him.

There are two main categories of Youth and Children's ministry at Gateway.

Those that happen on a Sunday during the church service, and those that happen during the week at other times.

10.1 Sunday Youth and Children's ministry

Our Purpose:

Sunday children's ministry at Gateway exists to welcome children in our corporate gatherings in an age-appropriate way. We aim to assist families to lay a strong biblical foundation in the lives of their children.

Our Vision:

We see kids following Jesus as treasured members of this church, built-up as disciples through the teaching of His word, trusting God as they grow in faith, and Loving people as the gospel changes them

Our Ministries:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| - <i>Parents room</i> | - for parents with infants |
| - <i>Little Kids</i> (Creche) | - for toddlers up to Kindy |
| - <i>Kids Church</i> (Sunday School) | - for Kindy – Year 3 |
| - <i>Sermon Packs</i> | - for Kindy - early high school. |

More on each of these ministries can be found on the following pages.

Parents' Room

Who: For parents with infants

When: Available any time during the service

What: The Parents' Room is a space where parents with infants can continue to engage with the service in a quiet and comfortable environment. The room is equipped with a speaker to hear audio from the Service, couches and chairs, and a large window so that the service is still visible for parents using the room, allowing parents to stay connected while caring for their young children.

Where: The Parents' Room is located directly to the right of the foyer as you enter the building. (please speak to the audio technician at the sound desk if you cannot hear the speaker.)

Little Kids (Creche)

Who: For Toddlers - Pre-Kindy

When: All children remain in the service until just prior to the Scripture reading (we want the parents back for that!) and runs for the remainder of the church service, most weeks during the school term.

What: A volunteer-run space to provide toddlers and pre kindy children with an environment to hear about the God who loves them, engage in play and sing songs with the opportunity for parents of not-too-sure children to accompany their child and be involved in helping their children to engage with the activities.

Where: The Little Kids room is located through the door on the left side of the foyer as you enter the Gateway building.

Kids Church (once known as Sunday School!)

Who: For children in Kindy – Year 3

When: All children remain in the service until just prior to the Scripture reading (we want the parents back for that!) and runs for the remainder of the church service, most weeks during the school term.

What: Children will participate in a lesson based on part of the bible, work on learning or memorising bible verses, and participate in various crafts and activities to reinforce a biblical topic.

Where: The Kids Church room is located at the back of the building near the undercover area. It is accessed by passing through the main hall's double doors, and out through the roller door. You can expect our treasured volunteers to lead the way for parents and children to sign in when it is time.

We strongly (repeat: strongly!) believe that Kids Church is a vital ministry to the life of Gateway Community Church.

Gateway Kids Church exists to:

- Instruct children about the character of God as he has revealed himself in the stories of the Bible so that they may have confidence to TRUST the promises of GOD.

4 *"We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done."* (Psalm 78)

- Show that we LOVE the young PEOPLE God has given Gateway Community Church as valued members of our family.

14 *"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'"* (Matthew 19)

- Partner with families to BUILD young DISCIPLES with a strong biblical foundation as they learn to submit their lives to His care.

4 *"...bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."* (Ephesians 6)

Sermon Packs

Who: mainly for children in upper primary and early high school. There are also packs available for Kindy- Year 3 aged children available for weeks where those ministries do not run. There are also packs made available for visitors and guests labelled "Be our Guest."

What: An A4 sized pack with things to write with, and things to write on to help engage with the sermon content during the church service. Sometimes they may include encouraging notes, stickers, or even the odd lolly or two as a special treat. The folders may be picked up on the way into church, and we kindly ask that they are neatly returned to the shelf at the end of the service.

Where: The sermon packs are located in the white cubed shelf in the foyer. Names have been written on the edge so children can easily locate their pack.

10.2 Weekly Youth and Children's ministry

During the school term we also run two programs aimed at children in upper primary and high school: Gaters (upper primary age), and Gateway Youth (secondary age).

Both of these programs exist to provide a space to grow a sense of community amongst our young people and to engage them with the truth of God's Word in a way that is specifically targeted at their age level.

Both Gaters and Youth are excellent places for our young people to grow together, and to invite their friends to come and hear about Jesus!

Gaters

Who: For children in Years 3 – Year 6 (upper primary school)

When: Currently, Gaters runs once every month on a Friday during the school term. This means we will usually only meet two or three times a term

What: At Gaters we play fun games together, sometimes we sing, we hear a story from the bible, and a small talk is given before we break off into small groups. In our groups we will seek to understand the bible and how it applies to our lives with questions and discussion. children have an opportunity to share about their own lives, and to pray for each other too.

Where: Gaters meets at the main hall at Gateway Community Church, and sign-in and sign-out is located in the foyer as you enter the building.

Gateway Youth

Who: For high-school aged youth: Year 7 – Year 12

When: Currently, Gateway Youth is on from 6:30 – 8:30, every second Friday during the school term.

What: at Gateway Youth, we want youth to build meaningful relationships with their peers and leaders as they navigate the treacherous waters of adolescence, learning to trust Jesus and walk with Him as they mature into adulthood. We do this by building trust and community through games and fun activities together, Bible talks aimed to challenge them and impact their hearts with beauty of the gospel, Bible studies that teach them the tools to read and understand for themselves, and discussions that are designed to help us think critically about how God's word impacts our lives, and times of sharing about life in smaller groups where there is opportunity for prayer. This is a great place for youth to invite their friends to experience Christian community and learn about Jesus. We have a large, combined camp with other CRCA youth groups once a year, and participate in other CRCA combined youth events, as well as occasional events run by the Perth Youth Gospel Partnership.

Where: Unless otherwise stated, our regular Youth nights happen at the Church building in the main hall and Cafe.

10.3 Childsafe/Code of Conduct

Gateway Community Church is part of a wider denominational church family that is committed to the care and safety of our most vulnerable members.

At Gateway, our Volunteers undergo a rigorous process to ensure that we have the right people in the right services.

This process includes:

- Council awareness and endorsement of a volunteer to the ministry.
- Current Western Australian 'Working With Children Check';
- Completed Volunteer Application form (including character references);
- Approval by our ChildSafe Coordinator;
- and Completion of all ChildSafe training modules.

Our Child Safe Coordinator performs a weekly checkup to ensure volunteers are informed when renewals are required.

11. Church Groups

Mid-week groups provide a valuable opportunity for deeper connection and growth beyond Sunday services. These smaller gatherings allow for more intimate fellowship, where relationships can flourish through meaningful discussions, prayer, and support. As we meet in various other settings, we share insights and struggles, encouraging one another to live out our faith in practical ways (Hebrews 10:24-25). These spaces also afford us opportunities to ask questions, be vulnerable, and correct each other. In short, meeting mid-week helps keep our focus on Christ throughout the week. This not only builds spiritual maturity, it also strengthens our church community.

11.1 Life Groups

Life Groups are an essential part of the community at Gateway Community Church, where families come together midweek for fellowship, growth, and support. These groups provide a space for individuals and families to share meals, study the Bible, and deepen friendships together! As children play and connect with each other, parents discuss faith, life challenges, and victories, fostering spiritual growth and mutual encouragement – sometimes with children there, other times with children absent for pointed adult-focused growth. In short, Life Groups are absolutely brilliant! They not only heighten within us the joy of belonging to the Gateway family, but they also deepen our walk with Christ as individuals and family navigate life's journey together. They serve as a powerful way to strengthen each other's walks with Jesus, supporting one another over food, prayer, love, and practical care. Church Council is so committed to the expansion of Life Groups, we don't want to be a Church with Life Groups, we want to be a Church OF Life Groups!

11.2 KYB

A faithful group of (mostly) women from Gateway Community Church and beyond gathers weekly to study the Word of God through the **Know Your Bible (KYB)** devotional series. This dedicated group prioritizes spiritual growth, fellowship, and prayer as they dive deeply into Scripture together. Each week, they explore the Bible's rich teachings, supporting one another to know and live out God's truth. Their meetings foster a warm, encouraging environment (not least due to their freshly cooked delicacies and hot cups of tea!) where relationships are strengthened and faith is deepened. With a heart for God and each other, these women are committed to growing in their walk with Christ together.

11.3 Band of Brothers (Men's Ministry)

Men's Ministry is crucial for building a strong, Christ-centered church community. It is often said, "If you win the man, you win the family." It is certainly true how profound an impact a man's faith can have on his entire household, and conversely how detrimental his lack of faith can be. Scripture teaches that men are called to lead their families in spiritual matters. Ephesians 5:23 affirms that the husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the head of the church, and Timothy 3:4-5 affirms the praiseworthiness of men managing their families well. Godly, male headship builds strong marriages and strong families!

However, Men's Ministry isn't limited to those who are husbands or fathers. All men, regardless of their family situation, are called to live godly lives. Paul reminds Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:11 to "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness." Whether married or single, with or without children, every man will bless the world by his close walk with Christ.

At the time of writing, GCC aims to meet quarterly. These gatherings can take all kinds of forms – from BBQ's, specific talks, overnighters, Church maintenance days, or otherwise. Gathering together as men remind us that we're not the only ones walking with Jesus – we're surrounded by a Band of Brothers who are striving to do the same.

12. Gateway Community Church Constitution

As an incorporated body, Gateway Community Church is governed by a formal constitution.

This document aligns with the requirements of the *Association Incorporations Act 2015* and serves to establish the framework within which we operate. Our constitution provides guidelines for leadership, governance, and accountability, supporting our whole church we endeavour to live out our mission and values as a church community within the wider community of Australia.

We encourage all members to familiarize themselves with this document, which can be accessed by visiting our church website. Understanding our constitution helps us all to be unified in our purpose and commitment, enabling us to participate more fully and responsibly in the life of our church,

Reflecting on this, consider Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 14:40: *"But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way."*

13. Gateway Community Church Membership Covenant

As members of Gateway Community Church, we joyfully commit to walking together in faith, love, and service as followers of Christ. We seek to honour God and grow in our trust in Him, recognizing His grace and guidance in every aspect of our lives.

Together, we commit to:

- **Trust God** – Depending on Him in all things, seeking His wisdom and strength through prayer and Scripture, and being open to His leading towards greater faithfulness.
- **Love People** – Embracing the command to love one another, offering grace, forgiveness, and encouragement to build a community marked by compassion, unity, and understanding.
- **Build Disciples** – Actively engaging in the mission to make disciples, both within our church family and in the broader community, sharing the love and message of Jesus with others.

Together, we commit to the goal which is our Church vision:

“We see a welcoming church of unified individuals and families following Jesus!
A church so delighting in God and so treasuring each other that we share in
life centred around building a vibrant, Scripture-led church community
which prays, serves, gives, disciples, trains, reaches and sends in Jesus’ name.”

We recognize and honour the eldership’s God-given role in overseeing our spiritual growth, guiding the our church family’s ministries, and providing correction as needed. As members, we commit to respecting and praying for our elders as they seek to build up the church, support our walk with Christ, and equip us for service.

We also commit to participating in the life of Gateway through regular attendance in worship, serving our Church family through our God-given gifts, and supporting the Church’s mission with our God-given finances and Spirit-led prayers.

By God’s grace, we covenant together to trust God, love people, and build disciples with this Church family!