

# CONSTITUTION

OF

**Grace Bible Church**

**Revised March 13, 2016**



424 Gender Road  
Canal Winchester, OH 43110

[www.GraceBibleCW.com](http://www.GraceBibleCW.com)

# CONSTITUTION OF GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

The Constitution of Grace Bible Church, Canal Winchester, Ohio, shall be comprised of its Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, and By Laws.

## **DIVISION I**

### **CHURCH COVENANT**

Having believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and submitting to Him as Lord of our lives, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly enter into a covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We, by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, will walk together in Christian love set forth in the Holy Scriptures, and do hereby promise to promote the Lord's Church through this assembly by regular attendance at scheduled meetings, persistent prayer, and giving of our talents and gifts.

## **DIVISION II**

### **ARTICLES OF FAITH**

We feel constrained by fidelity to Christ and to God's Word to adopt the following statement of doctrine to which we ask assent of all applicants for membership. (II Timothy 3:1-7; 4:14; II Peter 2:1-2)

#### **ARTICLE I**

##### **THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**

We believe that the Holy Scriptures, in the original writings, are the verbally inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God. We accept the writings of the Old and New Testaments (66 books) as a reliable transmission of those autographs and the only and final authority for faith and practice. (Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; 12:48; 17:17; II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21)

#### **ARTICLE II**

##### **THE ONE TRIUNE GOD**

The True God – We believe in one God, eternally existing in Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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(a) God the Father – We believe in God the Father, perfect in holiness, boundless in love, infinite in wisdom, measureless in power. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayers, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ, His Son. (Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalms 18:30; 104; 135:6; 147:5; Matthew 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 4:24; 5:23, 26; Acts 5:3-4; II Corinthians 13:14)

(b) God the Son – We believe in Jesus Christ, God the Son, pre-existent with the Father, begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary; sinless in His nature and life, infallible in His teaching, making atonement for the sins of the world by His substitutionary death on the cross. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His ascension into Heaven, His perpetual intercession for His people and His glorious second advent according to promise. (Isaiah 53:5-6; Matthew 1:23; 20:28; Luke 24:36-43; John 1:1, 14, 29; 3:16; 8:46; 20:25-28; Romans 9:5; Galatians 3:13; Colossians 2:9; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 4:14-15; 9:24; 13:8; I John 2:1; Revelation 22:16)

(c) God the Holy Spirit – We believe in the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit. We believe that He came from God to convince and convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and to regenerate, sanctify, indwell, comfort, and empower those who believe in Jesus Christ. (Genesis 1:2; Psalms 104:30; Matthew 28:29; John 3:5; 14:26; 16:8-22; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 8:24; I Corinthians 6:11-19; 12:13; II Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:30)

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **CREATION**

We accept the Genesis account of creation: that God willed into being the heavens and earth and all that is in them. Man was created perfect in the image of God by a special act of God. (Genesis 1:2; Exodus 20:11; Psalms 33:6-9; Mark 10:6; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3)

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **FALL OF MAN**

We believe in the fall of man; that by personal disobedience to the revealed will of God, man became a sinful creature and the progenitor of a fallen race, universally sinful in both nature and practice, alienated from the life and family of God, with no humanly possible means of recovery or salvation. (Genesis 3:1-24; Matthew 29:26; Mark 7:21-23; John 8:42-44; Romans 1:18; 3:29-32; 5:12; 7:18; Ephesians 2:3; 4:18)

### **ARTICLE V**

#### **SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH**

We believe in salvation by grace through faith; that salvation is the free gift of God, neither merited nor secured in any part or in whole by any virtue or work of man, but received only by personal

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repentance/faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom all true believers have as a present possession the gift of eternal life, a perfect righteousness, justification, sonship in the family of God and every spiritual resource needed for life and godliness; that this salvation includes the whole man, and apart from Christ there is no possible salvation. (John 3:16; 5:24; 6:26-29; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 16:30-31; Romans 3:22-23; 4:4-5; 5:18; 11:16; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:3; 2:8-9; I Thessalonians 5:23; Titus 3:5; II Peter 1:8, I John 5:13)

### ARTICLE VI

#### ETERNAL SALVATION

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who by repentance and faith trust Him as their personal Savior are justified on the ground of His blood shed on Calvary and His resurrection from the dead and are born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby become the children of God. (John 5:24; 8:31-34; 10:27-30; Romans 8:5, 35-39; 13:13-14; II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:1; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 10:26-31; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 2:1, 6; 3:3; 3:6-10)

### ARTICLE VII

#### RIGHTEOUS LIVING AND GOOD WORKS

We believe in righteous living and good works as evidence and fruit of the indwelling Holy Spirit. As Christians, we should keep the Word of the Lord, know God's will and accept as our responsibility the duty and privilege of glorifying our Heavenly Father. Good works such as evangelizing the lost and discipling all men are rendered in gratitude for the infinite and undeserved mercies of God. These works result in heavenly reward. (Matthew 7:16-18; 28:19-20; John 14:23; 15:16; Acts 1:8; Romans 6:14; 12:1-2; I Corinthians 3:10-15; 5:10; II Corinthians 5:19; Ephesians 2:8-10; Colossians 3:3; Titus 2:14; I John 2:6; 3:9-11; 4:19; 5:4)

### ARTICLE VIII

#### THE EXISTENCE OF SATAN

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, a fallen archangel, leader of fallen angels and adversary of God with supernatural powers which only God can overrule. (Job 1-2; Isaiah 14:13-14; Ezekiel 28:13-17; Matthew 4:1-11; 12:24-26; 25:41; Luke 22:31-32; John 8:44; 12:31-32; 16:11; II Corinthians 4:4; I Timothy 3:7; Revelation 12:9-11; 20:10)

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## ARTICLE IX

### THE PRE-MILLENNIAL SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the pre-millennial second coming of Jesus Christ, that His return from Heaven will be personal, visible and glorious. (Matthew 13:41-43; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 1:32-33; I Corinthians 15:24-28; Revelation 6:1-18; 19:1; 20:6, 11-15; 21:1; 22:6, 20)

## ARTICLE X

### FUTURE LIFE, BODILY RESURRECTION, ETERNAL JUDGMENT

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all the dead, the saved to eternal life and blessedness in Heaven and the unsaved to eternal, conscious suffering and woe in Hell. (Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-31; John 5:28-29, 6:39-40; Romans 8:23-24; I Corinthians 15:12-58; II Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 1:21-23, 3:20-21; I Thessalonians 4:14-16; II Peter 2:9; I John 3:2; Jude 13; Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8)

## ARTICLE XI

### THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ is a living spiritual body of which Christ Himself is the Head and consists of all born again people. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:1-13; 2:41-47; 15:14; I Corinthians 12:12-28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 3:21; 4:23-33; I Thessalonians 4:13-18)

We believe that the local church is a congregation of immersed believers, united together by faith in Christ and by covenant for the purpose of worshipping God, edifying one another, and evangelizing the world. (Acts 2:41; Philippians 3:3; Ephesians 4:11-15; I Corinthians 12:4-7; Matthew 28:19-20)

## ARTICLE XII

### TWO SCRIPTURAL ORDINANCES: BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe in two scriptural ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christian Baptism is the immersion of the believer in water into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to show forth in solemn and beautiful emblems our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Lord with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. The Lord's Supper is the partaking of the bread and the cup by which, believers commemorate together the sacrificial love of Christ, preceded always by solemn self-examination. (Matthew 3:5-6; 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Luke 22:14-

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20; John 3:22-23; 4:1-2; Acts 2:38-41; 8:12, 36-39; 16:32-34; 18:8; Romans 6:4; I Corinthians 11:26; Colossians 2:12)

### **ARTICLE XIII**

#### **THE LORD'S DAY**

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, and is not to be confused with the Jewish Sabbath. This congregation will meet weekly on the Lord's Day in remembrance of the Savior's resurrection. (John 20:19; Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Hebrews 10:24-25)

### **ARTICLE XIV**

#### **SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD**

We believe in separation from the world, that since our citizenship is in Heaven, as the children of God we should walk in separation from this present world, have no fellowship with its evil ways, abstain from all unclean amusements and habits which defile mind and body; that Biblical separation also forbids alliances of any nature, such as cooperation in cooperative meetings, councils or organizations with churches which are apostate in that they reject any of these fundamental doctrines: the triune nature of God, the Deity of Christ, the virgin birth of Christ, the sinless life of Christ, and/or the verbal inspiration and authority of the Bible as the Word of God as set forth and supported in these Articles of Faith. (Luke 8:14; Romans 12:2; I Corinthians 16:10-20; II Corinthians 6:14,18; Ephesians 5:3-11; Philippians 3:20; Colossians 3:17; I Thessalonians 5:22; I Peter 2:11; II John 9-11)

### **ARTICLE XV**

#### **SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts. He has given abilities, opportunities and enablement; that is, grace gifts, to each believer for the building up of the Church. He has given specially gifted men to the Church such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the edifying of the souls and the building up of the Body of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; II Corinthians 12:7-10; James 5:14-16)

We believe that the sign gifts tongues, healing, prophecy, etc. are not normative for the Church of Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 12-14; II Corinthians 12:7-10; James 5:14-16)

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## **ARTICLE XVI**

### **HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS**

We believe that home and foreign missions are a basic ministry of the local church outreach. The solemn responsibility rests upon all the saved to help reach all the lost, and thereby evangelize the world. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)

## **ARTICLE XVII**

### **CIVIL GOVERNMENT**

We believe in the authority of civil government and that it was instituted by divine appointment for the interest of all. It is our duty to pray for all those in authority and to obey the laws of the land so long as they are not opposed to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ as set forth in the Scriptures. (Exodus 18:21-22; Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; 23:5; Romans 13:1-7)

## **ARTICLE XVIII**

### **MARRIAGE**

We believe a wedding is an act of worship. Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Grace Bible Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastors and staff of Grace Bible Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Grace Bible Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman who are both believers. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-12; Luke 16:18; I Corinthians 6:15-20; II Corinthians 6:14-15).

## **ARTICLE XIX**

### **GENDER AND SEXUALITY**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complimentary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other

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(I Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18-20; I Corinthians 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Grace Bible Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Grace Bible Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Grace Bible Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage and Gender and Sexuality (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; I Thessalonians 5:22). We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; I Corinthians 6:9-11).

### **ARTICLE XX**

#### **FINAL AUTHORITY FOR MATTERS OF BELIEF AND CONDUCT**

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Grace Bible Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Elder Board is Grace Bible Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

### **DIVISION III**

#### **BY LAWS**

### **PREAMBLE**

All things should be done with regard to decency and propriety and in an orderly fashion. (I Corinthians 14:40)

To foster the spirit of harmony and promote good order in this local church, we hereby submit ourselves to the following By Laws.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **NAME**

The name of this local church and nonprofit corporation shall be GRACE BIBLE CHURCH.

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## ARTICLE II

### PRINCIPAL OFFICE

The principal office of Grace Bible Church shall be located at 424 Gender Road, Canal Winchester, Ohio 43110.

## ARTICLE III

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this local church shall be:

- A. To make more and better disciples in accord with Christ's Great Commission as given in Matthew 28:19-20.
- B. To administer the ordinances of the New Testament: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- C. To edify the saints of God through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God in accordance with the Articles of Faith and By Laws of Grace Bible Church.
- D. To admit members upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and acceptance of the Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, and By Laws; to administer discipline according to principles set forth in the Scriptures.
- E. This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), for such purposes including, but not limited to, the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the establishing and maintaining of religious worship; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

## ARTICLE IV

### MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this Church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and affirm the tenets of the Church Constitution, and who offer evidence, by their confession and their conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmations and this Constitution and By Laws, and are actively pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Elder Board of this Church shall have final authority in all matters of church governance, as set forth and described in the By Laws.

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Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The Elders (or in their absence, an individual designated by the board of Elders) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If, after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the Elders, (or in their absence, an individual designated by the board of Elders), be treated as a trespasser.

### **Section 1 - Admission**

Qualifications - In order to be received into the membership of Grace Bible Church, a candidate must:

- A. Be at least 12 years of age.
- B. Profess faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.
- C. Have submitted to believer's baptism by immersion.
- D. Accept the Church Covenant and Articles of Faith of this local church.
- E. Agree to abide by the By Laws of this local church.
- F. Meet with and receive recommendation by the Membership Committee. In accord with the above qualifications, the Membership Committee shall recommend to the voting members a candidate who: 1) clearly testifies to profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, 2) demonstrates a biblical understanding of the gospel, 3) demonstrates a biblical understanding of and testifies to having submitted to believer's baptism by immersion (or shall submit to believer's baptism before being presented to the voting members), and 4) testifies to reading, accepting, and agreeing to abide by the Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, and By Laws of this local church.
- G. Allow their name to be published in the weekly Sunday bulletin for two consecutive Sundays prior to being presented to the voting members for a vote. During this two-week period, any active voting member who has a matter of question or concern regarding a candidate for membership should express their concern in writing to the Chairman of the Elder Board.
- H. Receive the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present at a congregational business meeting. Notice of such meeting shall appear in the weekly church bulletin for two consecutive Sundays prior to convening the meeting.

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### **Section 2 – Classes of Members**

This local church shall recognize two classes of members.

- A. Voting Member – A voting member must be at least 18 years of age. A voting member shall be accorded all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities set forth in these By Laws including voting rights. Each voting member shall be entitled to one vote on each matter properly submitted to voting members.
- B. Non-Voting Member – This local church shall recognize two classes of non-voting members:
  - 1. Inactive Adult Member – In the case of a voting member experiencing extenuating circumstances (i.e. sickness, shut-in, long-term geographical absence due to military service work, or travel), such member may make personal written request for the Elder Board to reclassify them to an inactive status. An inactive adult member remains a member of this local church and shall be accorded all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities set forth in these By Laws with the exception of voting rights. An inactive adult member may be reclassified to active status upon submission of written request to the Elder Board. Upon receipt of such request, the Clerk shall order that notice of the reactivation be published in the weekly Sunday bulletin for two consecutive Sundays. Such notice shall be for the purpose of informing the members of reactivation. A vote by the voting members is not required for reactivation.
  - 2. Youth Member – A child age 12-17 may become a youth member. A youth member is a member of this local church and shall be accorded all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities set forth in these By Laws with the exception of voting rights. Upon reaching the age of 18 years, a youth member may become a voting member upon written request. Within 30 days following a youth member's eighteenth birthday, the Clerk shall notify the youth member in writing that they are eligible to become a voting member. The Clerk shall provide a form for the youth member to complete and return to the church office. Upon receipt of a properly completed form, the Clerk shall order that the youth member's name be published in the weekly Sunday bulletin for two consecutive Sundays. Such notice shall be for the purpose of informing the members of the reclassification of the youth member. A vote by the voting members is not required for reclassifying a youth member as a voting member.

### **Section 3 – Discipline of Members**

The Elder Board shall constitute the Committee of Discipline. In the discharge of its duties, the committee shall always use kindness, consideration, and love.

Definition of Discipline – Discipline is a procedure of censure prescribed by the Scriptures enacted upon a member who persists in unrepentant sinful behavior. Such a procedure includes Christian teaching, training, admonition, and rebuke (both private and public). (Matthew 18:15-17; I Corinthians 5:1-13; Galatians 6:1; II Thessalonians 3:14-15)

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Purpose of Discipline – The primary purpose of discipline is to restore a member from unrepentant sinful behavior to repentance, growth in grace, and a consistent walk with the Lord. A secondary purpose of discipline is to protect the congregation from the harmful influence of a Christian brother or sister who persists in unrepentant sinful behavior.

Procedure for Private Differences – In differences between individuals or in sins not generally known, the parties shall follow Matthew 5:23-24 and 18:15-17. A person bringing a matter into the public or before the church before attempting to resolve such differences in accord with these Scriptures shall be subject to discipline.

Procedure for Discipline – The procedure for discipline shall be as follows:

Charges for which discipline shall be considered must be made in writing, signed, and presented to the Elder Board.

Procedure for Resolution Within the Committee of Discipline – Upon receipt of written charges, the Committee of Discipline shall follow the steps prescribed by Matthew 18:15-16 to discern the validity of the charges and, should the charges prove to be valid, to admonish the member concerning their sinful behavior and encourage repentance.

Procedure for Resolution Beyond the Committee of Discipline – Should the charges prove to be valid and the Committee of Discipline be unable to resolve the charges following the steps prescribed by Matthew 18:15-16, the Committee shall make a formal accusation.

Matters of formal accusation shall be:

- A. Public sins or sins known by the church or the general public.
- B. Holding and propagating false doctrine.
- C. Any other failure to abide by the Church Covenant including the failure to be reconciled to another member, etc.

The Committee shall call and give at least one week's written notice to the accused member of a special Committee meeting to hear the matter. Such notice shall state the charges which comprise the formal accusation. The Committee may proceed with the hearing with or without the accused member present. The accused may call to their aid another church member to speak for them.

A member formally accused is, pending resolution by the voting members of the formal accusation, automatically removed from any office or appointed position, cannot speak at congregational business meetings, and is deprived of their right to vote.

A congregational business meeting shall be called for voting members to decide whether to exclude from membership an unrepentant member formally accused. Notice of such meeting

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shall be made from the church pulpit and appear in the weekly church bulletin two Sunday mornings before the meeting is convened. The affirmative vote by written ballot of a majority of the voting members present shall be necessary to exclude a member from this local church.

Re-admitting an Excluded Member – An excluded member may be received back into membership only after repentance and public confession of their sin(s), and following the procedure for being admitted to membership prescribed in Article IV, Section 1 (II Corinthians 2:6-8).

### **Section 4 – Termination of Membership**

Membership in this local church may be terminated through death, discipline (as described in Article IV, Section 3), continuous absence from the fellowship, or by a member's written request for termination of membership.

Any member in good standing or person deemed worthy by the Elder Board who desires to unite with a church of like faith and order to Grace Bible Church is entitled to a letter of recommendation when a written request is submitted by the church with which they desire to unite.

The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding six months. Upon good cause being shown to the Elder Board, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the Elder Board.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

Jesus Christ alone is the Head of the Church and ultimate authority is vested in Him and His Word (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18). As He lovingly leads the church as the Chief Shepherd (I Peter 5:1-4), He entrusts, through the Holy Spirit, the responsibility of oversight of His church to His undershepherds—the Elders (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17). The Elders are to be a plurality of spiritually gifted, called, and qualified men who are committed to lead the church while pursuing the unity and cooperation of the members of the fellowship (Acts 15).

The following matters shall be submitted to the voting members for a vote:

- Matters of membership, including church discipline, as described in Article IV;
- Election and removal of officers, as described in Articles VI and IX;
- Any proposal to conduct an external, independent audit of church financial records, as described in Article VI, Section 3. D. 2. d.;
- Any proposal concerning the buying, selling or any transaction dealing with real estate, as described in Article X, Section 4;

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- Any proposed amendment to the Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, or By Laws, as described in Article XII;
- Proposals concerning an annual budget and all unbudgeted expenditures in excess of \$5,000, as described in Articles X and VII, respectively;
- Matters of association, as described in Article VII, Section 4;
- Matters of licensing and ordaining, as described in Article XI;
- Any proposal for dissolution, as described in Article XV.

The Elder Board shall bring any other matter of major change to the voting members for consultation and a majority vote.

### **ARTICLE VI**

#### **OFFICERS**

The officers of this local church shall be: Senior Pastor, Assistant Pastor(s), Elders, Deacons, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Audit Team Member and Clerk. No person shall be eligible for any office who is not an active voting member and living a separated life as set forth by the Holy Scriptures.

#### **Section 1 - Pastor**

##### A. Qualifications

1. The Pastor shall meet the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
2. The Pastor shall accept and submit to the Constitution and Articles of Faith.
3. The Pastor shall be a member of the Church and the Elder Board.

##### B. Election of Pastor and/or Assistant Pastor(s)

1. Whenever the election of a pastor or an assistant pastor(s) becomes necessary, the chairman of the board shall appoint a pulpit committee consisting of two elders besides himself, two Deacons, and two from the church membership. This committee shall investigate at least six possible candidates and recommend one candidate to the board for approval. Upon board approval, the board will recommend the candidate to the congregation.

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2. The candidate will upon acceptance come and preach and submit to a time of questioning by the congregation after the service.
3. The board shall meet with the candidate in a separate meeting for additional questions.
4. The board and pulpit committee shall then meet and decide whether to extend an invitation for the candidate to come and preach the next Sunday.
5. A congregational meeting will be called for the election of a pastor or assistant upon recommendation by the board and pulpit committee. The congregational meeting will be announced two Sunday mornings before the election. The vote shall be by ballot and will require seventy-five (75) percent of the votes cast in the affirmative in order to call a pastor or assistant.
6. If the candidate fails to receive seventy-five (75) percent of the votes cast by the congregation, then the pulpit committee shall recommend another possible candidate to the board.

### C. Tenure

1. The Pastor shall continue in office until dissolved by request of himself or of the church as recommended by the official board. Should the official board recommend resignation of the Pastor, either party may request approval of such recommendation by the church membership at a meeting called for such purpose. Public announcement of such meeting must be made from the church pulpit two Sunday mornings before the vote is held. A majority vote of members present which favors termination of the pastor/church relationship shall declare his position vacant. Either the Pastor or the church shall have the right to claim thirty-days notice before the relationship shall cease, unless otherwise provided by mutual agreement.
2. Proven misconduct of the Pastor which brings reproach upon the Savior or the office will call for an immediate dismissal without the thirty-day notice or pay.

### D. Duties

The Pastor is recognized as the undershepherd of the local assembly (I Peter 5:1-5).

1. Pastor-Teacher
  - a. Preach the Word (II Timothy 4:2)
  - b. Administer the Lord's Supper
  - c. Administer Baptism
  - d. Give Spiritual Guidance

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2. The Pastor shall be a member of the Elder Board and a member *ex officio* of all other boards and committees.
3. The Pastor shall present spiritual programming to the Elder Board for approval concerning:
  - a. Called Speakers
  - b. Procedures
  - c. Literature
4. Pastoral Visitation
  - a. Sick – hospital or home
  - b. Members
  - c. Friends

### **Section 2 – Elders**

- A. Role – Elders are a body of godly men, selected from among the spiritually mature voting members of this local church. They must be willing to accept the responsibility (I Timothy 3:1), being aware that the Holy Spirit has made them overseers and shepherds of the flock (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2). In discharging their duties as Elders, they must communicate with and seek the counsel of members when appropriate.
- B. Qualifications, Recognition, and Appointment – The calling of an Elder is from God and it is the privilege of the church to affirm God’s call when it is placed upon a person’s life. In order to recognize that there is clear and convincing evidence that God has sovereignly called a person to the office of Elder and because of the precautions in Scripture to “not lay hands on any [Elder] too hastily” (I Timothy 5:22), the existing Elders shall appoint (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5) to the office of Elder all and only such candidates who meet the Biblical criteria, as discerned through the following process:
  1. Recognition – The Elders shall discern those qualified men who are already demonstrating the necessary traits for shepherding, teaching & leading the church and determine whether they truly aspire to the office and desire the work of an Elder. Any member of the church is encouraged to recommend another qualified member or himself as a candidate for the office of Elder.
  2. Examination (Titus 1:5-6) – An Elder must be a man who possess the necessary character prerequisites mentioned in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and I Peter 5:1-4. The Elders shall scrutinize such men who aspire to Eldership, evaluating them in light

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of the character of their lives, the conviction of their beliefs, the effectiveness of their gifts of leading, teaching, and shepherding, and their commitment to these ministries (cf. I Timothy 4:16). The Elders shall take as much time as is necessary to develop the candidate through training and discipleship so that he understands the responsibilities of the role and is prepared for the work of an Elder (II Timothy 2:2).

3. Presentation – Once the Elders are confident in a candidate’s qualifications and proficiency, the Elders shall publicly announce his name to the congregation. If anyone from the congregation cannot affirm a candidate for Eldership and questions his eligibility, he or she must demonstrate that such a man is not qualified on Biblical grounds and first handle the matter with the candidate personally and privately (Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1-2; I Timothy 5:19-22). If such cases involving an Elder candidate cannot be resolved privately, the concerned member must consult the Elders on the issue. The Elders must investigate and make the final determination (cf. Deuteronomy 19:15-19). Should the Elders find that the candidate is unqualified for Eldership on biblical grounds, they will withdraw him from the appointment process.
  4. Affirmation – After giving the congregation at least one month to consider and examine the candidate and if there is no known reason to exclude him from service, the congregation shall affirm their belief of God’s call of Eldership upon the man’s life. The level of congregational affirmation shall be determined through a ballot vote of the church members and will require seventy-five (75) percent of the votes cast.
  5. Installation (I Timothy 4:14) – The Elders shall install and appoint any man that has been recognized, examined, and affirmed by the congregation as being qualified to serve in the office of Elder, through a public declaration of endorsement, in keeping with the New Testament practice, “the laying on of hands” (cf. Acts 6:6; 13:3-4; I Timothy 5:22).
- C. Membership – The Elder Board shall be comprised of a minimum of five Elders including the Pastors and qualified laymen who are recognized & affirmed according to the process given in Section 2.B of this Article.
- D. Term – An Elder, once determined to be called by God, gifted for the task, passionate about the work, and qualified for the role is appointed for an indefinite term of service, so long as he remains qualified and desires the work. Should it become necessary, an Elder may be removed using the same procedure as for a Pastor (c.f. Section 1.C of this Article). An Elder may choose to temporarily step down, choose an inactive status, or be removed from the office of Elder for other reasons, including the following: 1) he needs a temporary sabbatical to rest from the intensity of the work of an Elder in order to concentrate on his personal life or family; 2) he is unable to serve by reason of physical or mental incapacitation; 3) he must attend to pressing needs, such as family illnesses, etc. Any process of reinstatement will be determined by the Elders in relation to the circumstances, his qualifications, and his desire to serve again.
- E. Duties – The duties of Elders shall be as follows:

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### 1. Duties towards the corporation (Romans 12:17b; 13:1-5)

The Elder Board shall comprise the Board of Directors of the corporation. As such, the Elder Board shall be responsible to the voting members. The Elder Board shall conduct the affairs of the corporation in accord with the By Laws of this local church as well as all applicable laws, regulations, etc.

### 2. Duties towards the congregation

#### a. Duties as overseers (Acts 20:28a; I Timothy 3:1; 5:17)

##### 1) To represent church members by providing oversight of:

- a) membership matters.
- b) all church programs, activities, and budget, with final responsibility for the general wellbeing of the assembly.
- c) the Senior Pastor through the Chairman of the Elder Board. The Elder Board shall conduct an annual review of the Senior Pastor's job description, performance, and salary.
- d) the pastoral staff through the Senior Pastor. The Elder Board shall consult with the Senior Pastor to prepare an annual review of the pastoral staff's job descriptions, performances, and salaries.
- e) all boards and committees. This duty includes, but is not limited to, oversight of:
  - i) the Deacon Board. The Elder Board shall meet with the Deacon Board as necessary to conduct the business of the church that the congregation has given them authority to conduct.
  - ii) the Missions Committee and missions budget. Policy and procedures for the Missions Committee and missions budget are contained in the published missions policy of this local church.
  - iii) the Building Committee. The Elder Board shall approve the Chairman of and non-Deacon candidates for the Building Committee as proposed by the Deacon Board.
- f) Sunday School and all other auxiliary ministries by appointing necessary personnel, reviewing policy and procedures, etc.
- g) all official balloting in accord with Article IX.

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- h) all legal transactions.
  - i) presenting to the voting members all proposed unbudgeted expenditures in excess of \$5,000 (as described in Article VII, Section 1).
  - j) presenting to the voting members any proposal to conduct an external, independent audit of church financial records as deemed warranted by the Audit Team and recommended by both the Deacon Board and Elder Board.
- 2) To actively communicate with and seek the counsel of members in the discharging of their duties.
  - 3) To constitute the following committees:
    - a) The Committee of Discipline.
    - b) The Membership Committee. The Membership Committee shall consist of the Senior Pastor and a minimum of three additional Elders.
    - c) The Nominating Committee.
- b. Duties as shepherds (Acts 20:28b; I Peter 5:2-3)
    - 1) To promote true biblical and spiritual guidance, biblical knowledge, and godly fear.
    - 2) To visit the sick and needy.
    - 3) To assist the Pastor in:
      - a) analyzing the spiritual life of this local church so as to promote deeper spiritual growth.
      - b) reviewing literature for proper spiritual emphasis in Sunday School literature, tracts, etc.
    - 4) To assist with the ordinances.
      - a) To assist the Pastor in administering baptism.
      - b) To supervise the preparation of the elements and table for the Lord's Supper and assist in serving the elements.

### F. Organization

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1. Officers – The Elder Board shall nominate yearly from among its members (with the exception of pastors) a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary.
  - a. Chairman
    - 1) Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as Chairman of the Elder Board, an Elder must have completed one year of service as a member of the Elder Board.
    - 2) Duties – The duties of the Chairman of the Elder Board shall be as follows:
      - a) To oversee the Elder Board and ensure that its duties are faithfully carried out.
      - b) To serve as liaison between the membership and Elder Board, and the Senior Pastor (as described in Article VI, Section 2. E. 2.)
      - c) To serve as Moderator. The Moderator shall preside at all congregational business meetings.
      - d) To serve as the statutory agent for the corporation. Upon election, the Chairman of the Elder Board shall request, complete, and return a form prescribed by the Secretary of State to record his appointment as statutory agent.
  - b. Vice-Chairman
    - 1) Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as Vice-Chairman of the Elder Board, an Elder must have completed one year of service as a member of the Elder Board.
    - 2) Duties – The duties of the Vice-Chairman of the Elder Board shall be as follows:
      - a) To assist the Chairman in the carrying out of his duties as requested by the Chairman.
      - b) To assume the duties of the Chairman in his absence.
      - c) To assume the office of Chairman of the Elder Board upon the resignation, removal, disability, or death of the Chairman.
  - c. Secretary
    - 1) Qualifications – To be eligible to serve as Secretary of the Elder Board, an Elder must be nominated. To be nominated as Secretary of the Elder Board *ipso facto* nominates such Elder for the office of Clerk. To be installed in the office of Secretary of the Elder Board, such nominee must first be elected Clerk.

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A candidate for the office of Elder shall be eligible to be nominated for the office of Secretary of the Elder Board and shall serve in such capacity provided that he is elected as both an Elder and Clerk.

- 2) Duties – The duties of the Secretary of the Elder Board shall be as follows:
  - a) To record accurate minutes of the proceedings of Elder Board meetings and to distribute copies of such minutes as directed by the Chairman.
  - b) To keep current a binder which shall contain a copy of the proceedings of Elder Board meetings. Such binder shall be kept in the church office and may be examined by any officer or voting member at any reasonable time.
  - c) To assume the duties of the Chairman in the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman.
  - d) To serve as Clerk.
2. Meetings – The Elder Board shall meet monthly and as called by the Chairman. Postponement or cancellation shall be proposed by the Chairman and approved by a majority of Elders. Postponement or cancellation shall be noted in the weekly church bulletin when practical.
3. Quorum – A majority of Elders shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Elder Board. The affirmative vote of a majority of the Elder Board shall be necessary for authorization or taking of any action.
4. Unity – Whereas these By Laws allow for the affirmative vote of a majority of the Elder Board for authorization or taking of any action, the Elder Board should strive for being of “one mind” when proposing, authorizing, or taking of any action. (Psalm 133:1-3; Acts 15:25; Ephesians 4:2-3)

### **Section 3 – Deacons**

- A. Qualifications – The qualifications for a Deacon shall be as set forth in the New Testament. (I Timothy 3:8-10)
- B. Membership – The Deacon Board shall be comprised of a sufficient number of members to accomplish their assigned duties, providing biblically qualified men are available. Deacons are to be elected from the membership by congregational vote. Any candidate for Deacon must have been a member of the congregation for at least one year. (I Timothy 3:10)
- C. Term – The term for a Deacon shall be for three (3) years or until resignation, removal or death. Following completion of a first term, a Deacon may be elected for a second

## CONSTITUTION OF GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

consecutive term. A Deacon may be removed using the same procedure as for a pastor (described in Article VI, Section 1. C.)

Should a vacancy occur, the Nominating Committee shall nominate a qualified candidate to present to the voting members for a vote in accord with Article VI, Section 3. B. and Article IX. A Deacon duly elected due to a vacancy shall complete the term of the Deacon vacating the office.

### D. Duties

#### 1. Duties towards church facilities:

- a. Maintenance of facilities/grounds.
- b. Supervise logistics of all church activities.
- c. Superintend improvements.
- d. Be the nucleus of the Building Committee. Nominate the Chairman and non-Deacon members of the Building Committee for approval by the Elder Board.

#### 2. Duties towards church finances:

- a. Oversee the process of counting weekly offerings as assigned or requested by the Treasurer.
- b. Superintend all monetary expenditures. Monitor expenditures to assure expenses are within budget limits.
- c. Oversee an annual internal audit of church financial records performed by the Audit Team (as described in Article VI, Section 6).
- d. Arrange for an external, independent audit of church financial records as deemed warranted by the Audit Team, recommended by both the Deacon Board and Elder Board, and approved by the voting members. In the event that an external, independent audit is performed, the Treasurer shall submit a report of the results at the following annual congregational business meeting.
- e. Prepare an estimated annual operating budget and proposed capital improvements for review by the Elder Board.

#### 3. Duties towards Elders:

Assist the Elder Board as requested by the Chairman of the Elder Board (Acts 6:1-7).

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### E. Organization

1. Officers – The Deacon Board shall nominate and elect yearly from among its members a chairman, secretary, assistant treasurer, and assistant financial secretary.

#### a. Chairman

1) Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as Chairman of the Deacon Board, a Deacon must have completed one year of service as a member of the Deacon Board.

2) Duties – The duties of the Chairman of the Deacon Board shall be as follows:

a) To provide oversight to the Deacon Board to ensure that its duties are faithfully carried out.

b) To serve as liaison on behalf of the Deacon Board to the Elder Board and Senior Pastor.

#### b. Secretary

1) Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as Secretary of the Deacon Board, a Deacon must be nominated and elected by the Deacon Board.

2) Duties – The duties of the Secretary of the Deacon Board shall be as follows:

a) To record accurate minutes of the proceedings of Deacon Board meetings and to distribute copies of such minutes as directed by the Chairman.

b) To keep current a binder which shall contain a copy of the minutes of Deacon Board meetings. Such binder shall be kept in the church office and may be examined by any officer or voting member at any reasonable time.

c) To assume the duties of the Chairman in his absence.

d) To assume the office of Chairman of the Deacon Board upon the resignation, removal, disability, or death of the Chairman. In such an event, the Deacon Board shall nominate and elect another Deacon to assume the office of Secretary.

#### c. Assistant Treasurer

1) Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as Assistant Treasurer, a Deacon must be nominated and elected by the Deacon Board.

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- 2) Duties – The Assistant Treasurer shall perform the duties of the Treasurer in his absence.
- d. Assistant Financial Secretary
  - 1) Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as Assistant Financial Secretary, a Deacon must be nominated and elected by the Deacon Board.
  - 2) Duties – The Assistant Financial Secretary shall perform the duties of the Financial Secretary in his absence.
2. Meetings – The Deacon Board shall meet monthly and as called by the Chairman. Postponement or cancellation shall be proposed by the Chairman and approved by a majority of Deacons. Postponement or cancellation shall be noted in the weekly church bulletin when practical.
3. Quorum – A majority of Deacons shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Deacon Board. The affirmative vote of a majority of the Deacon Board shall be necessary for authorization or taking of any action.
4. Unity – Whereas these By Laws allow for the affirmative vote of a majority of the Deacon Board for authorization or taking of any action, the Deacon Board should strive for being of “one mind” when proposing, authorizing, or taking of any action. (Psalm 133:1-3; Acts 15:25; Ephesians 4:2-3)

### **Section 4 – Treasurer**

- A. Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as Treasurer, a Deacon must be nominated by the Nominating Committee.

A candidate for the office of Deacon shall be eligible to be nominated for the office of Treasurer and shall serve in such capacity provided that he is elected as both a Deacon and Treasurer.

- B. Election – A candidate for Treasurer must be elected by the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present for such an election.
- C. Term – The term for Treasurer shall be for one (1) year. The Treasurer may serve consecutive terms.
- D. Duties – The duties of the Treasurer shall be as follows:
  1. Assign Deacons to oversee the process of counting all monies received.
  2. To provide a monthly report in writing to the Elder Board, Deacon Board, and other ministry leaders as directed by the Chairman of the Elder Board or Senior Pastor.

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3. To prepare and make available a written financial report as of March 31, June 30, October 31, and December 31 to the membership. To attach to the June 30 financial report a letter report prepared by the Audit Team that describes its findings and any recommendations from its audit of the previous year's financial records (as described in Article VI, Section 6.E.2.)
4. To make a presentation during the annual congregational business meeting concerning the financial status of this local church. In the event that an external, independent audit is performed, to submit a report of the results at the following annual congregational business meeting (as described in Article VI, Section 3. D. 2. d.)
5. To provide an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements.
6. To keep current records that shall contain a copy of monthly financial reports. The records shall be kept in the church office and may be examined by any officer or voting member at any reasonable time.
7. To pay all approved bills.

### **Section 5 – Financial Secretary**

- A. Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as Financial Secretary, a Deacon must be nominated by the Nominating Committee.

A candidate for the office of Deacon shall be eligible to be nominated for the office of Financial Secretary and shall serve in such capacity provided that he is elected as both a Deacon and Financial Secretary.

- B. Election – A candidate for Financial Secretary must be elected by the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present for such an election.
- C. Term – The term for Financial Secretary shall be for one (1) year. The Financial Secretary may serve consecutive terms.
- D. Duties – The duties of the Financial Secretary shall be as follows:
1. To receive all monies, record individual gifts, and deposit all monies in the bank.
  2. To provide an accurate account of all monies received.

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### **Section 6 – Audit Team Member**

- A. Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as an Audit Team Member, a candidate must be a voting member and not concurrently serving as a Deacon, the Accounting Clerk, or the Church Accountant. A candidate must be nominated by the Nominating Committee.
- B. Election – A candidate for Audit Team Member must be elected by the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present for such an election.
- C. Term – The term for an Audit Team Member shall be for one (1) year. An Audit Team Member may serve consecutive terms.
- D. Membership – The Audit Team shall be comprised of three members.
- E. Duties – The duties of the Audit Team shall be as follows:
  - 1. To complete an internal audit of church financial records by May 31 of each year.
  - 2. To prepare a letter report which the Treasurer shall attach to the June 30 financial report that describes its findings and any recommendations from its audit of the previous year's financial records (as described in Article VI, Section 4. D. 3.)
  - 3. If deemed warranted due to a concern or problem, to recommend to the Deacon Board that an external, independent audit be performed.

### **Section 7 – Clerk**

- A. Qualifications – To be eligible to be nominated as Clerk, an Elder must be nominated as Secretary of the Elder Board. (cf. Article VI, Section 2. F. 1. c.1.)

A candidate for the office of Elder shall be eligible to be nominated for the office of Clerk and shall serve in such capacity provided that he is elected as both an Elder and Clerk.
- B. Election – A candidate for Clerk must be elected by the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present for such an election.
- C. Term – The term for Clerk shall be for one (1) year. The Clerk may serve consecutive terms.
- D. Duties – The duties of the Clerk shall be as follows:
  - 1. To record accurate minutes of the proceedings of all congregational business meetings.
  - 2. To keep current a binder which shall contain a copy of the proceedings of all congregational business meetings. Such binder shall be kept in the church office and may be examined by any officer or voting member at any reasonable time.

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3. To maintain an accurate and current membership roll containing the name, address, the date of admission to and termination of membership, and class of each member.
4. To maintain records of baptisms, marriages, and dedications.
5. To propose to the Elder Board the names of inactive members that are subject to termination of membership. Upon authorization by the Elder Board, the Clerk shall present such names to the voting members at the annual congregational business meeting.

### **ARTICLE VII**

#### **CHURCH POLICIES**

##### **Section 1 – Financial Policies**

The primary financing of the Lord's work is to be through the offerings of consecrated hearts in systematic and proportionate giving (I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-7). Any secondary means to collect money through methods such as fundraisers, suppers, and sales for special projects or ministry teams must be done tastefully and approved by the Board of Elders.

From time to time the Elder Board, in the exercise of Grace Bible Church's religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. All contributions to these funds shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature and shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Elder Board. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of its tax-exempt purposes.

The fiscal year shall run from January 1 - December 31.

The Elder Board shall present to the voting members all proposed unbudgeted expenditures in excess of \$5,000. An affirmative vote by a majority of voting members present shall be required to approve the proposed unbudgeted expenditure(s).

##### **Section 2 – Benevolence Fund**

In order to provide for personal and confidential financial assistance to regular attendees of Grace Bible Church in dire and immediate need, the Grace Bible Church Elder Board, by unanimous vote, may approve expenditures from the benevolence fund without vote of the membership, not to exceed the balance in the fund. A maximum of \$100 may be expended to non-attendees with emergency needs. Such expenditures without notation of names shall appear in regular financial reports.

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## **Section 3 – Missions Policies**

Under the supervision of the Elder Board, the Missions Committee shall be responsible to administer the missions program in accord with the published missions policy of this local church. The Missions Committee shall propose an annual missions budget, propose missionary candidates and missions projects for prayer and financial support, and shall promote missions education and involvement through conferences, missionary speakers, short-term missions trips, etc.

## **Section 4 – Policy of Association**

As an autonomous New Testament body of believers, this local church shall not join anything outside of itself, but by majority vote of its voting members, may declare itself in fellowship or association with sister churches on a local, state, national, or international basis. It also, therefore, may withdraw from any such fellowship or association by majority vote of its voting members without endangering its property rights in any way.

## **Section 5 – Child Safety Policies & Procedures**

Our Child Safety Policies & Procedures provide the guidelines for the operations of our children's ministries.

## **Section 6 – Facility Use Policy**

Grace Bible Church's facilities may not be used for activities that contradict or are deemed inconsistent with the church's faith or moral teachings. The Elder Board, or their official designee, shall be the final decision maker concerning the use of church facilities. The Elders, or their official designee, must approve all use of church facilities.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **AUXILIARY MINISTRIES**

All Sunday School teachers and officers of auxiliary ministries who are not members must sign a statement of agreement with the doctrine of Grace Bible Church (Division I – Church Covenant and Division II – Articles of Faith) and be approved by the Elder Board.

## **Section 1 – Sunday School**

This auxiliary ministry shall promote Bible study for all ages. It shall be under the general supervision and control of the Elder Board. It shall be included in the church budget.

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## **Section 2 – Other Auxiliary Ministries**

Other auxiliary ministries may be organized and shall be self-governing but always amenable to the voting members through the Elder Board.

Auxiliary ministries may organize only after approval has been granted by the Elder Board which must be the sponsoring agency in each case. The Elder Board shall appoint an Elder to oversee each auxiliary ministry. The leaders of each auxiliary ministry shall prepare an annual report concerning the ministry activities for which they were responsible and share plans for the coming year's ministry activities.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **ELECTIONS**

The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates and shall consider any candidate proposed by a voting member in writing by September 1. Two Sunday mornings prior to elections, the names of the candidates shall be submitted to the congregation in the weekly church bulletin.

Elections shall be conducted by written ballot. A single ballot shall be given to each voting member present for prayerful consideration.

Tellers shall consist of Elders not up for election. In the event that a sufficient number of Elders are not present, the Moderator shall appoint Deacons to act as tellers for that particular meeting. Tellers shall count the votes and report the results in a timely and prudent manner.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **MEETINGS**

#### **Section 1 – Regular Services**

Regular church worship and/or evangelistic services shall be conducted each Sunday morning with weekly Bible studies, prayer meetings, and/or other ministry opportunities as scheduled. Exceptions shall be approved by the Elder Board.

#### **Section 2 – Annual Congregational Business Meeting**

An annual business meeting of voting members for the election of officers and consideration of the next fiscal year's budget shall be held the first Sunday of December. Exceptions will be approved by the Elder Board.

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### **Section 3 – Special Congregational Business Meeting**

A special business meeting may be called by the Pastor or the Chairman of the Elder Board. Public notice of such meeting shall be made from the church pulpit during the morning worship service of the preceding Lord's Day as to time, place, and nature of the business. Except in the case of an emergency, a special congregational business meeting shall be convened not less than one week from the date of initial public notice.

In the event that a Sunday service is cancelled (due to inclement weather, etc.) at which or following which a business meeting is scheduled, the meeting shall be rescheduled for the following Sunday without requiring any additional notice.

### **Section 4 – Voting and Quorum**

At any business meeting of the congregation, twenty (20) percent of the members eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be necessary for the authorization or taking of any action voted upon by the members except as otherwise provided in these By Laws.

There shall be no absentee voting. Notwithstanding, each voting member shall be accorded the opportunity to vote on proposed amendments to the Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, or By Laws in accord with Article XII.

Voting at all business meetings may be by voice vote except for the following which shall be by written ballot:

- A. Matters of Church Discipline.
- B. Election/Removal of all officers.
- C. Decisions concerning the buying, selling, or any transaction dealing with real estate.
- D. Proposed amendments to the Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, or By Laws.

### **Section 5 – Proper Spirit**

The spirit of worship shall prevail at all meetings of the church and at all auxiliary organizations' business meetings.

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### **Section 6 - Moderator**

As outlined in this Division, Article VI, Section 2. F. 2. c., the Chairman of the Elders shall function as moderator for all official church meetings. In the event of his absence, the Elders may designate another Elder to function as moderator. The moderator shall refer to the church Policies and Procedures Manual for the rules and procedures for church business meetings. The moderator shall conduct church business meetings with a sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The actions of the moderator are under the authority of the rest of the Elder Board as noted in Article VI, Section 2. D., and he is subject to their authority should issues arise regarding his leadership of meetings.

The moderator has the responsibility to maintain order at church business meetings. In order to maintain order the moderator may request that a disorderly member refrain from disorderly conduct or remove themselves from the meeting. If the disorderly member refuses to comply with the moderator, the moderator may choose to immediately adjourn the meeting until such time proper order and spirit can be restored.

### **Section 7 - Meetings of a Sensitive Nature**

For any meeting under this Article, the Elder Board, in their sole discretion, shall have full authority to require nonmembers and children under 18 years of age to leave the meeting room, if the circumstances so warrant due to the subject matter to be discussed.

### **Section 8 - Meeting Outline and Procedures**

Meetings should be conducted according to the suggested outline in the church Policies and Procedures Manual.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **LICENSING AND ORDAINING**

#### **Section 1 - Licensing**

Any member who in counsel with the Senior Pastor feels constrained by a call of God to the Gospel Ministry and demonstrates both personal character and spiritual giftedness for such, shall present himself as a candidate for licensing to the Elder Board. The Elder Board shall interview the candidate, examining character and evaluating both giftedness and ministry involvement. The Elder Board shall then recommend the candidate to the voting members to be licensed to preach and shall arrange for the candidate to preach in the hearing of the church. The Chairman of the Elder Board shall then call a special congregational business meeting to coincide with the occasion of the candidate's preaching, or not more than one week thereafter, to discern the judgment of the

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voting members concerning the evidence that the candidate is called of God to the Gospel Ministry. To this end, a vote shall be taken from the voting members. The affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members present shall be necessary to proceed with licensure.

### **Section 2 - Ordaining**

Any licensed member who in counsel with the Senior Pastor feels constrained by a call of God to pursue ordination to the Gospel Ministry shall present himself as a candidate for such to the Elder Board. Upon recommendation by the Elder Board, the Chairman of the Elder Board shall call a special congregational business meeting to discern the judgment of the voting members concerning the evidence that the candidate possesses the Scriptural qualifications for ordination to the Gospel Ministry. To this end, a vote shall be taken from the voting members. The affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members present shall be necessary to proceed. Upon approval by the voting members, the Senior Pastor shall call a council of pastors and brethren to examine the qualifications of the candidate, to which council the propriety of ordaining is to be referred. Upon favorable recommendation of the council, the church shall proceed with the public ordination.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **AMENDMENTS**

To amend the Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, or By Laws requires the following procedure:

The Elder Board shall propose any and all amendment(s). The Elder Board shall distribute proposed amendment(s) in writing to the voting members. The Elder Board shall schedule and conduct a minimum of one public hearing concerning proposed amendment(s).

A minimum of two weeks following the initial distribution of proposed amendment(s) to the voting members, the Chairman of the Elder Board shall convene a congregational business meeting at which the voting members shall vote on a motion to order the Clerk to prepare a ballot containing the complete text of the proposed amendment(s) and distribute such ballot to all voting members to be returned to the church office on or before a date specified in the motion. Notice of such meeting must be made from the church pulpit and appear in the weekly church bulletin two Sunday mornings before the meeting is convened. The affirmative vote by written ballot of the majority of voting members present shall be necessary for the Clerk to proceed.

Upon collection of ballots by the date specified, seventy-five (75) percent of all ballots returned must favor to amend.

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## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **ADOPTION**

This Constitution is adopted on September 25, 1977. Its By Laws were amended as follows:

- A. Amendment I—January 23, 1983
- B. Amendment II—July 6, 1986
- C. Amendment III—July 24, 1996
- D. Amendment IV—July 12, 1998
- E. Amendment V—March 28, 1999
- F. Amendment VI—July 1, 2003
- G. Amendment VII—September 4, 2005
- H. Amendment VIII—July 2, 2006
- I. Amendment IX—November 19, 2006
- J. Amendment X—November 8, 2009
- K. Amendment XI—December 7, 2014
- L. Amendment XII—March 13, 2016

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

Grace Bible Church, a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Ohio, may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party of any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, other than an action by or in the right of the corporation, by reason of the fact that they are or were a director, trustee, officer, employee, agent, attorney or accountant of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a director, trustee, officer, employee, agent, attorney or accountant of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by them in connection with such action, suit or proceeding if they acted in good faith and in a manner they reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful. Such rights of indemnification and reimbursement shall not be deemed exclusive of any other right to which director, trustee, officer, employee, agent, attorney or accountant of the corporation may be entitled under any by law, agreement, vote of members or otherwise.

# CONSTITUTION OF GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

## **ARTICLE XV**

### **DISSOLUTION**

The voting members at a meeting held for such purpose may adopt a resolution of dissolution by the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present. Such a resolution shall set forth that the corporation elects to be dissolved and cease existence as a local church, and any additional provisions deemed necessary with respect to the proposed dissolution and winding up of affairs. Upon such a vote, the Elder Board shall continue as the Board of Directors for the corporation and shall exercise all the authority of the corporation to wind up its affairs. All assets remaining after the payment of all just financial obligations shall be divided equally among the missions agencies supported by the church which remain actively engaged in missions work.