

# **CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS** of Grace Bible Church

*original dated Sept 25, 1977 | revised March 13, 2016 | revised March 2021*  
Twelve Amendments from 1983 – 2016



424 Gender Road  
Canal Winchester, OH 43110

## CONSTITUTION

### Article I: Name

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

The church facility is located at 424 Gender Rd, Canal Winchester, Ohio 43110.

### Article II: Purpose

The purpose of this local church shall be:

- To make more and better disciples in accord with Christ's Great Commission given in Matthew 28:19-20.
- To administer the ordinances of the New Testament: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- 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.
- 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.

*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 III: Doctrinal Statement

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. (2 Tim 3:1-7; 4:14; 2 Pet 2:1-2)

#### 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. (Matt 5:18; Jn 10:35; 12:48; 17:17; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:21)

#### THE ONE TRIUNE GOD

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

- 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. (Gen 1:1; Deut 33:27; Ps 18:30; 104; 135:6; 147:5; Matt 28:19; Mark 12:29; Jn 4:24; 5:23, 26; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor 13:14)
- 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. (Isa 53:5-6; Matt 1:23; 20:28; Luke 24:36-43; Jn 1:1, 14, 29; 3:16; 8:46; 20:25-28; Rom 9:5; Gal 3:13; Col 2:9; Titus 2:13; Heb 4:14-15; 9:24; 13:8; 1 Jn 2:1; Rev 22:16)
- 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. (Gen 1:2; Ps 104:30; Matt 28:29; Jn 3:5; 14:26; 16:8-22; Acts 5:3-4; Rom 8:24; 1 Cor 6:11-19; 12:13; 2 Cor 3:18; Eph 4:30)

## 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. (Gen 1:2; Ex 20:11; Ps 33:6-9; Mark 10:6; Jn 1:3; Col 1:16; Heb 11:3)

## 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. (Gen 3:1-24; Matt 29:26; Mark 7:21-23; Jn 8:42-44; Rom 1:18; 3:29-32; 5:12; 7:18; Eph 2:3; 4:18)

## 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 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. (Jn 3:16; 5:24; 6:26-29; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 16:30-31; Rom 3:22-23; 4:4-5; 5:18; 11:16; Gal 3:26; Eph 1:3; 2:8-9; 1 Thess 5:23; Titus 3:5; 2 Pet 1:8, 1 Jn 5:13)

## 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. (Jn 5:24; 8:31-34; 10:27-30; Rom 8:5, 35-39; 13:13-14; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 5:13; Eph 1:13-14; 4:1; Philippians 1:6; Heb 10:26-31; 1 Pet 1:3-5; 1 Jn 2:1, 6; 3:3, 6, 10)

## 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. (Matt 7:16-18; 28:19-20; Jn 14:23; 15:16; Acts 1:8; Rom 6:14; 12:1-2; 1 Cor 3:10-15; 5:10; 2 Cor 5:19; Eph 2:8-10; Col 3:3; Titus 2:14; 1 Jn 2:6; 3:9-11; 4:19; 5:4)

## 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; Isa 14:13-14; Ez 28:13-17; Matt 4:1-11; 12:24-26; 25:41; Luke 22:31-32; Jn 8:44; 12:31-32; 16:11; 2 Cor 4:4; 1 Tim 3:7; Rev 12:9-11; 20:10)

## THE PREMILLENNIAL SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

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

## 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; Jn 5:28-29, 6:39-40; Rom 8:23-24; 1 Cor 15:12-58; 2 Cor 5:1-10; Philippians 1:21-23, 3:20-21; 1 Thess 4:14-16; 2 Pet 2:9; 1 Jn 3:2; Jude 13; Rev 20:11-15, 21:8)

## 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. (Matt 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:1-13; 2:41-47; 15:14; 1 Cor 12:12-28; Eph 1:22-23; 3:21; 4:23-33; 1 Thess 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; Eph 4:11-15; 1 Cor 12:4-7; Matt 28:19-20)

## 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. (Matt 3:5-6; 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Luke 22:14-20; Jn 3:22-23; 4:1-2; Acts 2:38-41; 8:12, 36-39; 16:32-34; 18:8; Rom 6:4; 1 Cor 11:26; Col 2:12)

## 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. (Jn 20:19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1-2; Heb 10:24-25)

## 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; Rom 12:2; 1 Cor 6:9-20; 2 Cor 6:14,18; Eph 5:3-11; Philippians 3:20; Col 3:17; 1 Thess 5:22; 1 Pet 2:11; 2 Jn 9-11)

## 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. (1 Cor 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Cor 12:7-10; Jam 5:14-16)

We believe that the sign gifts tongues, healing, prophecy, etc. are not normative for the Church of Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 12-14; 2 Cor 12:7-10; Jam 5:14-16)

## 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. (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)

## 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 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. (Ex 18:21-22; Matt 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; 23:5; Rom 13:1-7)

## 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. (Gen 2:24; Matt 5:31-32; 19:3-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Cor 6:15-20; 2 Cor 6:14-15).

## 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 (Gen 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 (Gen 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 (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 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 (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10).

We believe that 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 (Matt 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thess 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; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

## 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.

## **Article IV: Governance**

### ELDERS

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. Men meeting the qualifications of an Elder (Titus 1:1-10) will be our spiritual leaders. They will lead under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Pet 5:1-4; Eph 1:22-23), according to the principles of Scripture, and under guidance of the Holy Spirit. They will serve as under-shepherds to the Lord Jesus and will serve for the spiritual well-being of the church (Jn 13:1-17; Acts 20:24-35).

### CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Privileges and responsibilities for congregational authority are vested in those who have become formal members of this church. The membership process is detailed in our by-laws.

The membership of the church will submit to the leadership of its Elders. The membership, at duly called congregational business meetings, by manner of vote, will affirm those men who will become Elders. Accountability to the congregation is detailed in the by-laws.

### SENIOR PASTOR

This church will have only one Senior Pastor. He will meet the qualifications of an Elder (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:1-16). Upon the start of his tenure, he becomes a member of the Elder Board, and agrees to be held accountable to both the Elders and to the membership. He must receive a positive vote in accountability to the congregation to become our Senior Pastor.

Other pastoral or ministry staff are under the supervision of the Senior Pastor (unless delegated, per By-Laws) and accountable to the Senior Pastor and to the Elder Board.

Further ministry clarifications and matters of hiring and/or dismissal are in our by-laws.

## CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

We will have an annual meeting. Additional business meetings may be held as deemed appropriate by the Elder Board. Members may also call for a special business meeting. Procedures for business meetings are detailed in the by-laws.

## PROPERTY

The membership shall have, in the corporate name, the right to own, buy, lease, and sell property.

In the unlikely (and God forbid) dissolution of the church, the voting members at a meeting held for such purpose may adopt a resolution of dissolution by the affirmative majority vote 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 mission agencies supported by the church which remain actively engaged in missions work.

## AMENDMENTS

To amend this Constitution or By-Laws requires the following procedure:

The Elder Board shall propose 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 prepare a ballot to vote upon the proposed amendment(s). The affirmative vote by written ballot of the majority of voting members present shall be necessary to proceed.

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

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*By-Laws are supplemental to the Constitution. They provide a more detailed understanding of the procedural functions of our church. Should there ever be an inconsistency between the Constitution and the By-Laws, the Board of Elders will have the authority to resolve matters. Upon resolution, this information will go into Elder Board minutes and be made available to the Membership of the Church. If there is ever a matter of interpretation or application of either the Constitution or By-Laws, the Elders will have authority to make appropriate determinations for clarification.*

## **BY-LAWS**

### **PREAMBLE**

All things should be done regarding decency and propriety and in an orderly fashion. (1 Cor 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 – Membership**

#### **OVERVIEW**

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.

Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the public is invited to all 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.

#### **ADMISSION**

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

- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Profess faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.
- Have submitted to believer's baptism by immersion.
- Accept the Membership Covenant and Articles of Faith of this local church.
- Agree to abide by the By Laws of this local church.

- Meet with and receive recommendation by the Elders. In accord with the above qualifications, the Elders shall recommend to the church body 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 Membership Covenant, Articles of Faith, and By Laws of this local church.
- Allow their name to be published two consecutive Sundays prior to being received into Membership.

## MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

In affirmation of their beliefs and desire to unite with this particular local family of faith, those received into Membership sign their names to the following Membership Covenant:

### **GRACE BIBLE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT**

Our heavenly Father holds a high value for "the church of God which He purchased with the blood of His own Son" (Acts 20:28).

To honor this high calling, the leadership and congregation of Grace Bible Church commit to praying, encouraging, and teaching all that our Lord Jesus has commanded in His Word within our membership. This entails loving, admonishing, and devoting ourselves to encouraging one another to "Christlikeness" bringing Him glory. Our members commit to the following covenant.

As a member of Grace Bible Church, I will endeavor to:

- Strengthen the unity of my church. (Eph 4:1-7)
  - ... by connecting to the body. (1 Cor 12; Eph 4:4)
  - ... by acting in love toward other members. (1 Pet 1:22)
  - ... by refusing to gossip or sow discord. (2 Cor 12:20; Eph 4:15; Prov 16:28)
  - ... by following and praying for the leaders. (Heb 13:17)
- Share the responsibility of my church. (3 Jn 1:14-15)
  - ... by praying for its spiritual growth. (Col 2:6-7)
  - ... by inviting the unchurched to attend. (Jn 1:40-42)
  - ... by warmly welcoming those who visit. (1 Pet 4:9; Rom 15:7)
  - ... by giving regularly. (Rom 12:13; 2 Cor 9:7)
- Serve the ministry of my church. (Rom 12:3-8)
  - ... by discovering my gifts and talents. (1 Pet 4:10)

- ... by being equipped to serve. (Heb 13:20-21)
- ... by developing a servant's heart. (Eph 6:7; Gal 5:13)
- Support the testimony of my church. (Titus 2:11-14)
  - ... by attending faithfully. (Heb 10:25)
  - ... by living a godly life. (Eph 5:1)
  - ... by telling others about Christ. (Col 4:4)

I would like to apply for membership to Grace Bible Church. In light of God's will for my life, I understand and agree to abide by this membership covenant, constitution, and by-laws of Grace Bible Church. I also understand that there will be an annual recommitment to membership.

If I determine to resign my membership, I will discuss it with an elder or pastor prior to resignation. I will also continue in prayer and positive support of God's Kingdom work here and request prayer for my life and the church I will be attending in the future.

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## CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP

This local church shall recognize two classes of membership:

- Active Member – An active member shall be accorded all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities set forth in these by-laws including voting rights. Each active member shall be entitled to one vote on each matter properly submitted to voting members.
- Inactive Member – In the case of an active 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 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 except for 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, notice of the reactivation shall be published informing the members of reactivation. A vote by the voting members is not required for reactivation.

## DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

Church discipline is the Scriptural process whereby the church seeks to lovingly confront, rebuke, and correct an erring member for holding or propagating false doctrine or for living in outward, serious, and unrepentant sin (Matt 18:15–20; Rom 16:17–18; 1 Cor 5; 2 Thess 3:6–15; 1 Tim 6:3–5; 2 Tim 2:16–18; Titus 1:10–11; 3:10–11; 2 Jn 10–11).

Any member, therefore, who holds or propagates false doctrine or who is guilty of living in outward, serious, unrepentant sin shall be subject to the admonition of the Elders and the discipline of the church.

## **Purpose**

Scripture affirms that, “for the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it” (Heb 12:11). Consequently, while church discipline may seem unloving or judgmental to some, the purpose of church discipline is five-fold:

- To pursue the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (Prov 15:5; 1 Cor 4:14; 5:5; Titus 1:9; 2 Tim 2:24–26; Heb 12:1–11; James 5:19–20).
- To protect the unity and purity of the church (1 Cor 5:6–7; 2 Cor 13:10; Eph 5:27; 2 Jn 10; Jude 24).
- To instruct the church in righteousness (Rom 15:14; 1 Cor 5:11; 15:33; Col 3:16; 1 Thess 5:14; 1 Tim 5:20; Heb 10:24–25).
- To protect the corporate witness of the church (Jn 13:35; 1 Cor 5:1–2; Philipians 2:14–15; 1 Pet 2:9–12).
- To preserve the honor of Christ and the glory of God (Matt 5:13–16; Jn 13:35; 15:8; Acts 5:1–14; 2 Pet 2:2).

## **Procedure**

The procedure for church discipline shall follow the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and the example of Scripture:

1. It is the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of an erring member's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct the erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration (Matt 18:15).
2. If the erring member does not heed this warning, the warning member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two other individuals as witnesses to warn and correct, seeking repentance and restoration (Matt 18:16).
3. If the erring member still refuses to heed the warning, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Elders, who, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall tell it to the church encouraging the congregation to pray for repentance and restoration of the erring member (Matt 18:17a).
4. If the erring member refuses to heed the warnings of the Elders and the church, he or she shall be dismissed from the church pursuant to the Scriptures and treated as an unbeliever (Matt 18:17b).

Throughout the discipline process, the erring member shall be confronted in humility and with love (Matt 7:1–5; 1 Cor 13:4–7; Gal 6:1–2). Should the charges against the erring member be either resolved or determined to be without merit, the discipline process will end. Once the matter is brought to the attention of the Elders, the Elder Board will have final authority on how the situation is handled and communicated to the church. There shall be no appeal of the discipline process or the dismissal to any court.

It is clearly understood that the discipline process will continue to conclusion whether the erring member leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership.

## TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership in this local church may be terminated through death, discipline (as described in the DISCIPLINE section of these by-laws), 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 II – LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

(How we are organized under biblical principles to carry out our church mission.)

### SECTION 1 - ELDERS

#### **Overview:**

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

The Elder Board of Grace Bible Church consists of both paid and unpaid Elders. Every Elder shares equally the position, authority, and responsibility of the office. When the church hires a senior pastor, he is automatically a member of the Elder Board. The Elder Board is comprised of a minimum of five active Elders (including paid Elders), and a majority of Elders will constitute a quorum for any Elder meeting.

#### **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 (1 Tim 3:1), being aware that the Holy Spirit has made them overseers and shepherds of the flock (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2). In discharging their duties as Elders, they must communicate with and seek the counsel of members when appropriate.

### **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. 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" (1 Tim 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:

- 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.
- Examination (Titus 1:5-6) – An Elder must be a man who possess the necessary character prerequisites mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. The Elders shall scrutinize such men who aspire to Eldership, evaluating them considering 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. 1 Tim 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 (2 Tim 2:2).
- 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 (Matt 18:15-20; Gal 6:1-2; 1 Tim 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. Deut 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.
- 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.
- Installation (1 Tim 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; 1 Tim 5:22).

**Tenure:**

Once installed, an unpaid Elder is appointed for an indefinite term of service, so long as he remains qualified and desires the work. The Elder Board will require each unpaid Elder to take a one-year sabbatical to rest from the intensity of the work after serving for six consecutive years. However, before that time, he may choose to temporarily step down or choose an inactive status; or the Elder Board may choose to relieve him of duties.

Proven misconduct of an Elder which brings reproach upon the Savior or the office will call for immediate removal. In such cases, the Elder Board will notify the congregation of the disqualifying conduct (1 Tim 5:19–20).

**Responsibilities:**

The Elders are the under shepherds and overseers of the church. As such, they exercise both spiritual leadership as well as ministry and financial oversight over the church. Their leadership, oversight, and shepherding responsibilities are broadly defined below:

- The Elders protect and teach sound doctrine (Acts 6:4; 20:26–32; 2 Tim 2:2, 15; Titus 2:1)
  - The Elders protect the church by refuting doctrinal error, disciplining sin, admonishing improper behavior and attitudes, and confronting internal strife (Acts 15:6-21; 20:28-31; 1 Thess 5:12; 2 Tim 2:24-26; Titus 1:9).
  - The Elders teach the church by proclaiming the gospel, exhorting in sound doctrine, and teaching and preaching the Word of God (Matt 28:20; Jn 21:17; Acts 2:42; 1 Tim 3:2; 4:13; 2 Tim 4:1-2).
- The Elders provide leadership and direction (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 13:1-3, 15:6-35; Titus 1:7)
  - The Elders lead the church by exemplifying Christ as servant leaders (Matt 20:24-28; 1 Cor 3:5-9; 1 Pet 5:3).
  - The Elders discern the mission and vision for the church (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 13:1-3).
  - The Elders establish the strategy, goals, values, and policies of the church (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim 5:17).
  - The Elders steward the personnel and resources of the church (Titus 1:7).
  - The Elders provide high-level ministry oversight, while equipping, enabling, and empowering church members to do the work of the ministry (Rom 12:3-8; Eph 4:7-12).

- Consequently, the Elders will delegate the management, administration, and the work of the ministry to those in the body who are called and equipped to do the work (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Cor 12).
- The Elders care for and shepherd the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2)
  - The Elders love the people, know the needs of the church, and pray for the congregation (1 Sam 12:23; Acts 6:4; 20:35; 1 Cor 13:1, 2; 2 Cor 2:4; Col 1:9-11).
  - The Elders provide pastoral care, counseling, and visitation (1 Thess 2:11-12; 5:12; James 5:14, 1 Pet 5:1-4).

As part of their **shared leadership**, the Elders are responsible for providing close accountability and mutual oversight of one another. Because of the nature of having both paid and unpaid Elders, the Elder Board will provide additional oversight of paid Elders as follows:

- The unpaid Elders will complete a formal annual review of the job description, performance, and salary of each paid Elder (i.e., senior pastor, associate pastor, etc.).
- The unpaid Elders will consult with the senior pastor when completing their formal annual review of the job description, performance, and salary of other paid Elders.
- The oversight and supervision of paid Elders and church staff will be delegated to the senior pastor, unless the Elder Board agrees to delegate such responsibilities to someone else.

As part of their **accountability to the congregation**, the Elders will seek congregational approval for the following matters:

- Election and removal\* of Pastors, Elders, Deacons, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer (\*not sin related).
- Names of the Audit Committee to perform an annual internal audit.
- Any proposal concerning the buying, selling or any transaction dealing with real estate.
- Any proposed changes to the church Constitution, Doctrinal Statement, or By-Laws.
- The annual church budget and all unbudgeted annual expenditures that exceed 5% or more of the annual budget (in total for fiscal year).
- Matters of church association or affiliation.
- Matters pertaining to ordination of men to pastoral ministry.
- Any proposal for dissolution, per the By-Laws.

**Board Structure:**

The Elder Board will annually select from among its unpaid Elders a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary.

- Chairman
  - 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.
  - Responsibilities: the responsibilities of the Chairman of the Elder Board shall be as follows:
    - To oversee the Elder Board and ensure that its duties are faithfully carried out.
    - To serve as a liaison with and among the Congregation, Elders, and Senior Pastor.
    - To serve as moderator at all congregational business meetings.
    - 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.
  
- Vice-Chairman
  - 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.
  - Responsibilities: the responsibilities of the Vice-Chairman of the Elder Board shall be as follows:
    - To assist the Chairman in the carrying out of his duties as requested by the Chairman.
    - To assume the duties of the Chairman in his absence.
    - To assume the office of Chairman of the Elder Board upon the resignation, removal, disability, or death of the Chairman.
  
- Secretary
  - Qualifications: To be eligible to be nominated as Secretary of the Elder Board, an Elder must have completed one year of service as a member of the Elder Board.
  - Responsibilities: the responsibilities of the Secretary of the Elder Board shall be as follows:
    - To record accurate minutes of the proceedings of Elder Board meetings and to distribute copies of such minutes as directed by the Chairman.
    - 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.

- To assume the duties of the Chairman in the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman.
- To ensure that minutes are taken at all Congregational Business meetings.

## SECTION 2 – SENIOR PASTOR

### **Role:**

The Senior Pastor, along with the other church elders, is to provide spiritual and pastoral leadership to the congregation of Grace Bible Church. As one of the elders, he shares the leadership, oversight, and shepherding responsibilities of the Elder Board. However, the distinctive calling and priority of the Senior Pastor is the preaching and teaching of God's Word. Grace Bible Church will only have one Senior Pastor.

### **Qualifications:**

- The Senior Pastor shall meet the elder qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4.
- The Senior Pastor shall accept and be in full agreement with the Doctrinal Statement, Constitution, By-Laws, Mission, and policies of Grace Bible Church.
- The Senior Pastor shall be a member of the Church and the Elder Board.

### **Election of Senior Pastor:**

- Whenever the election of the Senior Pastor becomes necessary, the chairman of the Elder Board shall appoint a search team (pulpit committee) consisting of two elders besides himself and five others from the church membership: two of the five shall be ministry leaders, and two of the five shall be women. The chairman shall solicit nominations from the congregation to help him appoint these five positions.
- The search team will determine the best process to follow as they undertake to find the candidate that God has chosen for the church. Upon the recommendation of the search team and approval from the Elder Board, the chairman of the Elder Board will recommend a candidate to the membership of the church.
- A congregational meeting will be called for the election of the Senior Pastor, and the 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 to call the Senior Pastor.
- If the candidate fails to receive seventy-five (75) percent of the votes cast by the congregation, then the search team shall recommend another possible candidate to the Elder Board.

**Tenure:**

The Senior Pastor shall continue in office until dissolved by request of himself or of the church as recommended by the Elder Board.

Should the Elder Board recommend the resignation of the Senior 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 Senior Pastor / church relationship shall declare his position vacant.

If termination occurs because of a majority vote of the members, the Elder Board and the Senior Pastor will determine by mutual agreement the terms of his departure. These terms would include issues such as further pulpit duty, notice of vacating the offices, and a minimum of 30 days financial severance.

If the Senior Pastor determines to resign (for any reason except proven misconduct), he will give the Elder Board a minimum of thirty-days' notice. The Elder Board and the Senior Pastor will determine by mutual agreement the terms of his departure.

Proven misconduct of the Senior Pastor which brings reproach upon the Savior or the office will call for immediate removal without the thirty-day notice or pay. In such cases, the Elder Board shall notify the congregation of the disqualifying conduct (1 Tim 5:19-20).

**Responsibilities:**

- Serve as the primary pastor-teacher of Grace Bible Church. This includes the regular expository preaching and teaching of God's Word as well as the ongoing training and equipping of God's people for the work of ministry.
- Provide oversight and guidance to those responsible for the Sunday worship service(s) to foster an experience that is biblical, contemplative, and participatory, with the ultimate goal of preparing the worshippers to hear the Word of God proclaimed.
- Share the leadership, oversight, and shepherding responsibilities of the Elder Board (see Section 1) while also initiating discussions about the health and future direction of the church.
- Encourage and accept close accountability and mutual oversight on the Elder Board. Along with the other elders, help foster healthy relationships on the board and a spirit of love, unity, and comradery.
- Provide oversight, supervision, and evaluation of pastoral and church staff members, unless the Elder Board agrees to delegate such responsibilities to someone else.
- Provide general leadership and broad-based administration of the church at large. This is macro-management, not detailed day-to-day duties.
- Serve as a non-voting *ex officio* member of all ministry teams and committees.

- Receive a formal (written and verbal) annual review from the Elder Board.

### SECTION 3 - ASSOCIATE/ASSISTANT PASTOR(S)

#### **Role:**

When necessary, the Elder Board may call additional pastors (e.g., Youth Pastor, Worship Pastor, Children's Pastor, etc.) whose relationship to the Senior Pastor is that of associate or assistant. At the discretion of the Elder Board and upon affirmation of the congregation, these individuals may also serve as paid elders and share the leadership, oversight, and shepherding responsibilities of the Elder Board.

#### **Qualifications:**

- The Pastor shall meet the elder qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4.
- The Pastor shall accept and be in full agreement with the Doctrinal Statement, Constitution, By Laws, Mission, and policies of Grace Bible Church.
- The Pastor shall be a member of the Church.

#### **Election of Pastor:**

- The Elder Board may call additional pastors to serve at Grace Bible Church without requiring a formal congregational vote.
- If the Elder Board chooses to recommend an Associate/Assistant Pastor also serve as a paid elder on the Elder Board, a congregational meeting will be called to affirm the recommendation of the Elder Board. 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 for the Associate / Assistant Pastor to serve on the Elder Board.

#### **Tenure:**

The Pastor shall continue in office until dissolved by request of himself or the Elder Board upon consultation with the Senior Pastor.

Before the relationship between the Pastor and the church shall cease, each will have the right to claim a thirty-day notice, unless otherwise decided by mutual agreement.

Proven misconduct of the Pastor which brings reproach upon the Savior or the office will call for immediate removal without the thirty-day notice or pay. In such cases, the Elder Board shall notify the congregation of the disqualifying conduct (1 Tim 5:19-20).

#### **Responsibilities:**

- The Senior Pastor in consultation with the Elder Board shall define the responsibilities of the Associate / Assistant Pastor. The Pastor will report directly

to the Senior Pastor, unless the Elder Board delegates that oversight and supervisory role to someone else.

- While not necessarily a member of the Elder Board, this role provides leadership, oversight, administration, and spiritual care of a key ministry in the church. As such, the Pastor may be invited to any or all elder meetings for the purpose of training, development, and to provide ministry perspective to the elders. Unless deemed highly confidential, in general, any information discussed at elder meetings can be shared with the Pastor.
- If called to serve on the Elder Board, the Pastor will equally share the leadership, oversight, and shepherding responsibilities of the Elder Board. However, he will still report to the Senior Pastor in his specific ministry responsibilities.

#### SECTION 4 - DEACONS

##### **Qualifications:**

Character qualifications are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 (distinct from Elders only in category of teaching).

This team will be comprised of a sufficient number of members to accomplish its responsibilities.

- Those currently in this position will bring candidates to the Elder Board for affirmation.
- Upon approval, the Elders will present candidates to the Membership at a duly called congregational business meeting for vote. An affirmative majority of votes cast is required.
- The term shall be for three (3) years or until resignation or removal. Two (2) consecutive terms are allowed, after which a mandatory one (1) year sabbatical is required.
- Any mid-term vacancies may be filled following the procedure in the steps above.

Responsibilities have a focus on Facilities and Finances.

- All matters associated with property
  - Maintenance
  - Legal documents
  - Building funds
  - Improvements such as décor, design, remodeling, buildouts
  - Oversight of any paid positions under Deacon purview (e.g., Custodian, lawn services, etc.)
  - Security and Safety of property and programs
- All matters associated with finances

- Management and tracking of offerings, income, expenditures
  - Monitor cash-flow regarding budgets
  - Assist ministries with financial matters
  - Prepare and present an annual budget (in conjunction with the Elder Board)
  - Prepare and present an annual internal audit and/or when appropriate seek services for an external audit
  - Oversight of all financial personnel (paid or unpaid)
  - Nominate a Treasurer for annual Membership vote
  - Nominate an Assistant Treasurer for annual vote
- Assist the Elder Board with other assignments within the bounds of Facilities and Finance.

**Organization:**

- Organize on an annual basis:
  - Select a Chair (must have been a Deacon for at least one full year)
    - Prepare meeting agendas and lead meetings (or if absent, appoint another Deacon).
    - Serve as liaison with the Elder Board and other ministries as may be requested.
    - Hold authority to speak for the Deacon Board in all matters with outside agencies.
  - Select a Secretary
    - Take and maintain a record of minutes of all Deacon meetings (or if absent, appoint another Deacon).
    - Record and maintain a record of Deacon decisions that may occur outside of the regular meetings (and report such decisions at the next regular meeting).
  - An affirmative vote of a majority of the Deacon Board shall be necessary for authorization or taking of any action (this may be in-person or online electronic voting).

**Treasurer**

This position may or may not be a member of the Deacon Board. However, this person must meet character standards like that of Deacons (1 Tim 3) and possess skills relative to this position.

The Treasurer is nominated by the Deacon Board and recommended to the Elder Board. Upon approval, the Elder Board presents this person for vote at the annual Membership meeting. (An affirmative majority of votes cast is required).

The term is one (1) year. The Treasurer may serve up through six (6) consecutive years, after which a sabbatical year is mandated.

Responsibilities include:

- Provide a monthly account of financial matters to Deacons, Elders, and Ministry leaders.
- Assist as requested with annual or special audits. (Note that a Treasurer cannot serve as a member of an audit team for any year in which he/she was in active office).
- Prepare an annual financial report for the annual Membership meeting (or special meetings that may be requested by the Elders or Deacons).
- Remain current on payment of all bills, with accurate record keeping.
- Work with other financial persons (paid or unpaid) for accuracy, integrity, and 'best practices' in all of the church financial matters. (e.g., financial secretary, bookkeeper, CPA).

### **Assistant Treasurer**

This position may or may not be a formal member of the Deacon Board. However, this person must meet the character standards like that of Deacons (1 Tim 3) and possess skills relative to position.

The Assistant Treasurer is nominated by the Deacon Board and recommended to the Elder Board. Upon approval, the Elder Board presents this person for vote at the annual Membership meeting. (An affirmative majority of votes cast is required).

The term is one (1) year. The Assistant Treasurer may serve up through six (6) consecutive years, after which a sabbatical year is mandated.

Responsibilities include:

- Perform functions of the Treasurer when the Treasurer is unable or not available.
- Assist the Treasurer as needed.
- Assist as requested with annual or special audits. (Note that an Assistant Treasurer cannot serve as a member of the audit team for any year in which he/she was in active office).

## **SECTION 5 – INTERNAL AUDIT TEAM**

### **Audit team member**

#### **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, Treasurer, Bookkeeper, Accounting Clerk, or Church Accountant.

**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.

**Term:**

The term for an Audit Team Member shall be for one (1) year. An Audit Team Member may serve consecutive terms.

**Membership:**

The Audit Team shall be comprised of three members.

**Responsibilities:**

The responsibilities of the Audit Team shall be as follows:

- To present results of the annual audit for report at the annual Membership meeting.
- If deemed warranted due to a concern or problem, to recommend to the Deacon Board that an external, independent audit be performed.

**SECTION 6 - MINISTRIES**

**Ministries**

These may be called Boards, Committees, Teams, Groups, etc. Regardless of the title, they serve the church with a specific ministry function. While maintaining a narrow focus, each ministry will advance the Mission and Vision of the church-at-large. They agree to support the Organizational culture of the church and its Core Values. Those who are called to be the designated leader of each ministry must meet the spiritual maturity characteristics that are like that of Deacons (1 Tim 3:8-13).

The Elder Board shall be responsible to approve the formation and elimination of Ministries. Broad oversight and support of each Ministry will come from either the Senior Pastor, an Elder, Pastor or other Staff member, or others as may be designated by the Elder Board.

The Elder Board will approve the Ministry Leader (often termed Director or Chair). This person must have been a Member of GBC for at least one year prior to approval. The term of service will vary dependent upon the nature of a particular ministry. Following an agreed upon term, a mandatory sabbatical year will be taken.

The Ministry leader is free to choose and develop team members based on interests, spiritual giftings, abilities, and of course, Christian maturity. Those team members who

may function in a role of authoritative Bible teaching must have been a Member for at least one year.

Each ministry will submit an annual report. This report will include a statement of purpose (mission), and a summary of accomplishments from the prior year. Reports will include goals for the subsequent year, and if necessary, a budget request to support the goals. Budget approval will pass through the Deacon financial team and the Elder Board. The membership votes on the final budget at its annual meeting.

While free to make their own determinations of how to manage their ministry, all ministries are understood to support and be part of the larger unified church. As such, decisions such as scheduling, decorating, facility or property maintenance or improvements, security, or legal matters, must be made through consultation with appropriate church staff and/or leadership personnel.

The diagram here reflects the autonomy within authority for Ministries:



### ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

#### 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.

#### CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

A business meeting of voting members for the election of officers and consideration of the next fiscal year's budget shall be held annually.

A special business meeting may be called by the Senior 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. Adequate notice shall be made to the Membership by the most practical means. 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.

If a special business meeting is cancelled (due to inclement weather, etc.) at which or following which a business meeting is scheduled, the meeting shall be rescheduled for the next reasonable date.

### **Business Meeting Guidelines:**

#### Proper Spirit

- The spirit of worship (recognizing God's presence), and Christian demeanor (Col 3:5-16, Philippians 2:1-11) shall prevail at all meetings of the church.

#### Moderator

- 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 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, 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. 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.

#### 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 with the exception of unusual or uncontrollable circumstances that would prohibit attendance.
- All matters requiring a vote will be by ballot and not by voice.

- Ballot votes may be taken at a meeting or by digital format, to be determined by the Elders as to the most expeditious means of engaging members in this process. If “in person,” the Tellers shall be Elders not up for election; of if insufficient in number, the Moderator will appoint other(s) as Tellers. If by digital means, an appointee by the Elder Chair will report results in a timely and prudent manner.

#### Meetings of a Sensitive Nature

- For any regular service or congregational business meeting, 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.

### **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.

### **OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

These afore-named By-Laws do not exhaust the means of church administration and management. As deemed helpful for “decency and order” (1 Cor 14:40) in governance, we will provide written policies, job descriptions, legal documents, and procedural guidelines.

These materials will be maintained and made accessible to the respective parties relevant to the information. Any Member is welcome to this information as well.