

**Constitution of  
Grace Bible Church of College Station, Texas**

**PREAMBLE**

Recognizing the God-ordained responsibility of the Local Church

1. To stand for the fundamentals of the faith;
2. To teach the Word of God;
3. To evangelize the world;
4. To glorify Jesus Christ;
5. To administer the ordinances;
6. To project orderliness in all things;

(For amplification of the above purposes, please turn to Article II, section 8B2).

We the members of Grace Bible Church of College Station, Texas, submit to the government for our church as outlined in the following Articles, which form our constitution.

**ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this church shall be Grace Bible Church of College Station, Texas, a Texas Corporation having its principal headquarters at 700 Anderson Street, City of College Station, 77840, County of Brazos, State of Texas, hereinafter referred to as the church.

- “The Corporation is a non-profit Christian organization established for purposes as set forth herein. The term for which the Corporation is to exist is perpetual.
- “The church is organized and operated primarily for the purpose of engaging in religious worship or promoting the spiritual development or well-being of individuals.
- “The church is and shall be operated in a way that does not result in accrual of distributable profits, realization of private gain resulting from payment of compensation in excess of a reasonable allowance for salary or other compensation for services rendered, or realization of any other form of private gain.
- “The church does hereby pledge its assets for use in performing the church’s religious functions.
- “On discontinuance of the church by dissolution or otherwise, the assets are to be transferred to the state of Texas or to a charitable, education, religious, or other similar organization that is qualified as a charitable organization under Section 501 (c) (3), Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.”

## ARTICLE II - DOCTRINE

### Section 1: The Holy Scriptures

#### A. Inspiration of the Scriptures

1. Its definition: We believe inspiration to be defined as God superintending human authors so that using their own individual personalities they composed and recorded His revelation to man without error in words of the original manuscripts (Mark 13:11; John 5:39; Acts 1:2,16; 26:22-23; 28:23; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:13, 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21).
2. Its extent: We believe this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the Bible's writings - historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetically - as appeared in the original manuscripts (Mark 12:26, 36; Luke 24:27,44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2,3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23).

#### B. Interpretation of the Scriptures

1. The Bible interpreted by the illumination of the Holy Spirit: We believe the only true interpreter of Scripture is the man who has trusted the person and finished work of Christ for his salvation and as a result receives knowledge of the things of God by the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:1-16; John 14:17,26; 16:13, 1 John 2:27).
2. The Bible interpreted historically: We believe the Bible was written in an historical framework and is not properly understood until the historical background is first considered.
3. The Bible interpreted grammatically: We believe since "all Scripture is inspired of God" that the Bible ought to be considered from a grammatical point of view, that is, understanding the language in which the books of the Bible were written thereby being able to discern the intent of the author as he wrote under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
4. The Bible interpreted contextually: We believe that any passage in the Bible, to be correctly interpreted, must come under the scrutiny of the immediate and wider contexts of the passage under study.
5. The Bible interpreted Scripturally: We believe that the Bible is in harmony with itself and the interpretation of all Scripture ought to include the comparing of Scripture to Scripture.

#### C. The Outworking of Biblical Interpretation

1. The Dispensations
  - a. A definition: We believe a dispensation to be a distinguishable responsibility in the outworking of God's program.
  - b. An explanation: We believe that the dispensations are stewardships or responsibilities given to man by God by which He administers His purposes on the earth. We believe that the sequence in the dispensational dealings of God with man is: (1) A God-given responsibility or stewardship to man; (2) A failure on the part of man to be obedient to the given responsibility; (3) A change of stewardship because of disobedience to the former responsibility. We believe an example of this sequence may be observed in the dispensation or stewardship or responsibility of the Mosaic Law: The God-given responsibility of keeping the Law was given to the children of Israel (Exodus 19:3 ff); the nation Israel was not obedient to the Law (Deuteronomy 9:7-29; Judges 2:11-13; 3:5-7; 6:1,7-10; et. al.; 1 Kings 6:11-13; 9:3-9; 13:33-34; 14:7-9; et. al.); they followed their own righteousness and forsook the righteousness of God (as a comparison of Romans 10:2-4 and Galatians 3:24-25 would show); therefore God removed the nation Israel as a steward and established a new dispensation or stewardship or responsibility, the Church of the New Testament (Romans 9-11; Ephesians 2:11-22; 3:6; Galatians 6). This sequence is found throughout Biblical History and is key to understanding God's dealings with men throughout history. We believe also that the basis of salvation in every dispensation is the death of Christ; the requirement for salvation in every age is faith; and the content of faith changes in the various dispensations. For example: Abraham believed the promises of God and it was accounted to him for righteousness (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3) but it is certain that he did not understand the Death of Messiah as clearly as the New Testament believer.

Therefore, the content of faith between those two dispensations is different... Abraham believed specific promises from God and we believe specific promises from God, but they are different promises therefore having different content. Abraham and the Believer come into a relationship with God by Faith but the content of that faith differs with each stewardship or dispensation. We believe that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation, but that man has not at all times been under a stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation (1 Corinthians 9:17, Ephesians 3:2, 3, 9, Romans 6:14, John 1:17).

2. Christian doctrine, Correction, Instruction: We believe all the Scriptures were designed for "doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

## **Section 2: The Nature of God-The Godhead or the Trinity**

- A. God's attributes: We believe that God is eternal (Psalm 90:1-4), immutable (Psalm 102:26,27), the creator of all things, and that nothing exists apart from Him (Psalm 8:3, 102:25, John 1:3). He is omnipotent (Psalm 135:6), omnipresent (Psalm 139:3-12, Jeremiah 23:24), omniscient (Isaiah 46:10, Colossians 2:3), and inscrutable (Isaiah 55:8,9). Being infinite in all His attributes and with perfect foreknowledge, He will not change His mind or repent (Numbers 23:19), but will accomplish His eternal purpose (Isaiah 46:10, 11; 55:11).
- B. A definition of the Trinity: We believe that there is only one God, (Deuteronomy 6:4) but in the unity of the Godhead there are three eternal and co-equal persons, the same in essence but distinct in function.
- C. An explanation: We believe that the Scriptures substantiate the above definition: the Father is God (John 6:27; Ephesians 4:6); Jesus Christ is God (John 8:58; Hebrews 1:8); the Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4); and all three are associated equally as one (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

## **Section 3: The Angels**

- A. Their Origin: We believe that the angels were originally created Holy (Jude 6) by Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:16), before the foundation of the world (Job 38:6-7).
- B. Their Makeup: We believe that the angels are spirit beings (Hebrews 1:14); that they are without power to reproduce after their kind (Mark 12:25); that they do not die (Luke 20:36); that they are distinct from human beings (Psalms 8:4-5); and that they have great power (2 Peter 2:11).
- C. The Fall of Some: We believe that although the angels were created holy, some left that holy estate because of sin (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4). We believe because of sin, these fallen angels are commonly referred to throughout Scripture as demons (Matthew 12:24; 25:41; Ephesians 6:11-12).
- D. Satan
  1. His Origin: We believe that originally Satan was among the creation of angels (Colossians 1:16) and was esteemed highly in the eyes of God (Ezekiel 28:11-15); however, when he tried to exalt himself over God he was deposed by God along with a host of angels that followed him in the same rebellion (Isaiah 14:12-20; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6).
  2. His Person and Work: We believe in the person and personality of Satan, not as some nebulous designation for evil or for evil influence, but as a created being who is the author of sin and the cause of the fall of man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God; that he is currently the ruler of all spiritual wickedness and counterfeiting of Christianity; and that he will ultimately be cast into the lake of fire along with his angels and all men who have rejected Jesus Christ as their Savior (Genesis 3:1-5; Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Revelation 20:10).

#### **Section 4: Man**

- A. His Origin: We believe that God originally created man, in the image and after the likeness of God (Genesis 1:26; 2:7).
- B. His Fall and the Results: We also believe that man fell through sin, and as a consequence of his sin, lost his spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of Satan. We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but from God's point of view is essentially and unchangeably bad apart from divine grace (Genesis 3:1-24; 6:5; Psalms 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; Romans 3:10-19; 5:12-21; 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 5:6; 1 John 3:8).

#### **Section 5: Jesus, The Christ**

- A. His Pre-existence: We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ eternally existed with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit prior to His incarnation (John 1:1,2,14; 6:33, 38, 41, 50, 51, 58, 62; 8:58; 17:5).
- B. His Incarnation: We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:16,18,20; Luke 1:34-35) and was born of the Virgin Mary (Matthew 1:18, 22-23; Luke 1:24, 34-35). In this He took upon Himself the likeness of man (Philippians 2:6-11) while retaining His divinity, so that being wholly man and wholly God, He was tempted in every way and yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). Being sinless He bore our sins on the cross allowing God to be just and also the justifier of those who believe (Romans 3:26; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- C. His Purpose: Jesus Christ came into the world to do the will of the Father (John 6:38), to glorify God the Father (Philippians 2:11), and to be highly exalted (Philippians 2:9). He also came in order that He might reveal God (John 5:19-30), redeem sinful mankind (John 12:27, Matthew 1:21, Romans 3:23-24, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 1:7), provide an example for Christian Living (1 Peter 2:21), destroy the works of Satan (1 John 3:8), be merciful High Priest (Hebrews 5:1-2), and fulfill the Abrahamic (Galatians 3:8,14), Davidic, and New (1 Corinthians 11:25), Covenants (Luke 1:31-33).
- D. His Death and Resurrection: We believe that Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that our redemption is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Romans 3:24-25; 4:25; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 15).
- E. His Ascension and present Session: We believe that Jesus Christ has ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God the Father, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 9:24; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1,2).
- F. His Transfer of the Church, Second Coming, Millennial Reign, and Eternal State: (see under future things).

#### **Section 6: The Holy Spirit**

- A. His Person: We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity (see under Article II, Section 2).
- B. His Work: We believe that the Holy Spirit, in relation to Salvation, is the Person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of complete redemption; and sovereignly bestowing spiritual gifts upon all believers (John 1:13; 3:3-6; 16:8-11; Romans 8:9,14; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

#### **Section 7: Salvation**

- A. The Need for Salvation: We believe that man is universally and totally depraved. We believe this does not mean that man is as bad as he could be but simply means that man is tainted with sin in every facet of his personality and cannot, apart from saving Grace through Faith, come to knowledge of the righteousness of God and/or enter into the kingdom of God. We believe that this means that no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven apart from a new nature imparted from above. This is a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, which is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are sons of God (Isaiah 64:6; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 1:21-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 8, 9;

Romans 10:13-17; Philippians 3:4-9; John 3:5, 18; 1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18). It is impossible for anyone to come to Christ unless the Father draws him (John 6:44), yet all whom the Father calls will come to him (John 6:37).

B. Election: The Father's choice is referred to as "election" (Romans 9:11; 11:5, 7, 28) or predestination (Romans 8:29-30, Ephesians 1:5). God also desires all men to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9). Christ died for the whole world (1 John 2:2), and whoever calls up on the name of the LORD will be saved (Romans 10:13). This doctrine is a great mystery, but must be viewed from the juxtaposition of God's sovereignty as seen in Romans 9 and man's responsibility as found in Romans 10. It is no more mysterious than the fact that the God who declares the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10), and does not change (Malachi 3:6), can accomplish His will in response to our prayers (1 Timothy 2:1,2, James 5:16). This doctrine of election is a great comfort to those who believe, since what God predestines cannot be set aside by man or anything else (Romans 8:35-39).

C. The Basis for Salvation: We believe that the death of Jesus Christ provided the necessary payment for the price of sin and that our Salvation is based upon our trust in His Person and His finished work upon the cross (see Article II, section 5C; Leviticus 17:11; Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:35; Ephesians 1:7; Romans 3:23-25; Galatians 3:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:19,21; Hebrews 10:4, 10-12; 1 John 2:2; 4:10).

D. The Pre-requisites for Salvation:

1. What will save a person: We believe that a new birth of a believer comes only by grace through faith in the person and finished work of Christ and that repentance (that is, to change one's mind about the person and finished work of Christ) is a vital part of believing, and is no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation; nor are any other acts such as baptism, or faithful service, to be added to believing as a condition of salvation. We believe that faith or belief is based upon the knowledge of the Word of God, (John 3:15-18; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 4:5; 10:13-17; Ephesians 2:5, 8, 9; 1 John 2:6).
2. What will not save a person: We believe that since our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ (see Article II, sections 5D and 7C), no feeling, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no commitment, no amount of subsequent good works, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles, can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood of Christ, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true deity with perfect and sinless humanity (Romans 3:10-18, 23; Ephesians 2:5,8,9; Galatians 2:16; 3:2, 11; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

E. Some Results of Salvation:

1. Assurance of Salvation: We believe it is the privilege not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior from the ultimate judgment of sin; and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God and His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience (Luke 10:20; 21:32; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 5:1; 6-8; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 10:22; 1 John 5:13).
2. Eternal Security: We believe that (1) because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love; (2) because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless, on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ; (3) because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life; (4) because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven; (5) because of the immutability of the covenants of God; (6) because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever (John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16-17; 17:11; Romans 3:24-25; 8:29; 9:6; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 1:4, 13-14; 2:4,5,8,9; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1-2; 5:13).
3. Chastisement of the Believer: We believe that God is a holy and righteous Father and since He cannot overlook the sin of His children will chasten them and correct them in infinite love if they persistently sin. We believe, in keeping with our eternal security, God the Father has undertaken to save His children and keep them forever, apart from all human merit and since He cannot fail will present every believer faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son (1 Corinthians 11:27-32; Hebrews 12:5-11; Galatians 4:6-7; Ephesians 5:27; Colossians 1:22; Jude 24).

## Section 8: The Church

- A. The Universal Church: We believe that the Universal Church, which is the body and the espoused Bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this present Age of Grace, irrespective of their individual organizational affiliation (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:24-27, 30,32; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 11:2).
- B. The Local Church: What it is and what it does.
1. What it is: We believe that the Universal Church (the Body of Christ) is to have its primary expression in local assemblies (or churches) whose membership is made up of professing Christians (see Article II, section 7) and whose governments are to be autonomous and independent of any denominational association except for the purposes of participation in God-honoring, cooperative efforts and Spirit-guided fellowship, always recognizing the headship of Christ in every aspect of the life of the church. We further believe that the government of the local church is made up of God-ordained leaders to carry on the responsibilities as they are listed below (see Article II, section 8B2 and Article III; Revelation 1:4; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Acts 11:22; 13:1; 1 Corinthians 5:12-13; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18).
  2. What it does: We believe the responsibilities of this local church are (1) to stand unequivocally for the fundamentals of the faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures and Article II of this constitution (1 Timothy 3:15; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 4:1-2); (2) to teach the Holy Scripture for the maturing and edifying of the saints for the work of the ministry (Acts 20:27; Romans 15:1-2; 1 Corinthians 14:12; 2 Corinthians 1:4; Galatians 6:1-2; Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 2:1-3; 3:8, Hebrews 10:24-25); (3) to evangelize the world, namely, giving the world an opportunity to hear the Word of God and the claims of Jesus Christ (Luke 24:46-48; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:13-17); (4) to glorify Jesus Christ, namely, to do all things in the name of and for the honor and glory of our Savior, the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, even Jesus Christ (Philippians 2:10-11; Galatians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Revelation 19:16); (5) to administer the ordinances of Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper (see Article 2, section 10); (6) to realize the Scriptural injunctions namely to do all things decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40), with love (1 Corinthians 16:14), for edification (1 Corinthians 14:26), and in the name of the Lord Jesus (Colossians 3:17). We hereby believe the local church has the authority to administer discipline to any of its members for immorality (1 Corinthians 5:1-13), for false doctrine (1 Timothy 6:3-5; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:16-18), for a disorderly walk (2 Thessalonians 3:6,14), for divisive tendencies (Romans 16:17-18), and unrepentant attitude toward sin (Matthew 18:15-17).

## Section 9: Future Things

- A. The Transfer of the Church: We believe that the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord Jesus in the air to receive to Himself the dead in Christ and the believers that are alive at His coming, otherwise known as the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14).
- B. The Tribulation: We believe that this present age of grace will be followed by a period of tribulation for the world, which will be consummated by the literal, bodily, second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth (Matthew 24:25; Revelation 6:17; 19:11-16; Joel 2:3; Zechariah 14; Acts 1:11; etc.)
- C. The Millennial Reign of Christ: We believe that, following and dependent upon the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ, God in His sovereign control of history will faithfully keep His covenants with Israel to restore them to and bless them in their "promised land", under the dominion of the perfect son of David, Jesus Christ, in a heavenly kingdom rule (commonly known as the millennium), which will likewise bring blessing to the whole earth (Genesis 12:1-7; 15:17-21; 17:1-8; Deuteronomy 30:1-5; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 87:105; Isaiah 9; Micah 4:5; Joel 3; Amos 9; Zephaniah 3; Romans 11:26-29; Revelation 20).
- D. Man's Destiny Beyond the Grave: We believe that at the death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast unto the lake of fire, not be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power (Luke

16:19-31; 23:42,43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6,7; Revelation 20:11-15).

#### **Section 10: The Ordinances**

- A. Water Baptism: We believe that baptism by immersion is but a symbolic representation of a spiritual transformation within and has no saving power. It is the logical conclusion to the New Birth (see Article II, section 7; Acts 2:38; 10:47; 16:31-33; 1 Corinthians 1:13-18; Ephesians 2:8,9; Matthew 3:13-17; etc.).
- B. The Lord's Supper: We believe that fellowship among all true members of the Body of Christ should be encouraged, and that such fellowship includes participation in the Lord's Supper, the elements of which are but symbolic representations of the sacrificed body and blood of Christ, a memorial service to Christ's death (Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:23-26).

#### **Section 11: The Responsibility of Believers**

- A. To Live a Holy Life of Service and Obedience: We believe that it is the responsibility and privilege of all Christians to live a Christ-centered life. We believe that normal expression of this kind of life is individual ministry according to each believer's gift(s) and attitudes, which edify the entire Body of Christ, not bringing reproach upon the Name of Jesus Christ. We believe any Christian who is not so living is subject to the chastening hand of the Father and the discipline of the local church (Romans 12:1-21; 1 Corinthians 11:28-32; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; 7:1; 5:10; Galatians 5:16, 25; Ephesians 6:10-18; Colossians 2:6-7; Hebrews 12:1-15).
- B. To Pray and Give: We believe that it is the obligation and privilege of every Christian to remember the work of the Lord in prayer, and to support this work with their means as the Lord has prospered them (1 Corinthians 16:2; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Galatians 6:6; 2 Corinthians 9:7).
- C. To Witness: We believe that it is the obligation and privilege of every Christian to witness by life and by word to the truth of the Holy Scriptures according to their spiritual gift(s) (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2; Romans 12:1-21).

## ARTICLE III – GOVERNMENT

### Section 1: Officers

The Officers of the church shall consist of a Senior Pastor, other Pastors as needed, a Board of Elders, and a Board of Deacons.

### Section 2: Qualifications of Officers

The Board of Elders, excluding the other officers of the church, is to consist of a minimum of five (5) spiritually mature male members of the church. The Board of Elders and the other officers of this church (as listed in Article III, Section 1) should have the spiritual qualification outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-6 and in Titus 1:5-9:

1. Blameless (a reputation above reproach)
2. One-woman Man (faithful husband of one wife)
3. Temperate (not given to extremes)
4. Sober minded (not frivolous, but serious minded)
5. Having orderly behavior
6. Given to hospitality
7. Apt to teach (founded well enough in the Scriptures to lead others)
8. Not addicted to wine
9. Not a striker (not given to the use of violence)
10. Not fond of dishonest gain
11. Patient
12. Not a brawler (peaceable, not contentious)
13. Not covetous
14. Ruling his own house well
15. Not a novice (not spiritually immature)
16. Having a good reputation before the world
17. Not self-willed, stubborn, or arrogant
18. Not quick-tempered
19. Loving that which is good
20. Just
21. Holy (devout, pious)
22. Holding fast the faithful word (defenders of sound doctrine)

### Section 3: Duties of Officers

- A. The Duties of the Senior Pastor** shall be to exercise general oversight of the spiritual life of the church under the authority of the Board of Elders. This includes but is not limited to the following:
- 1) Living an exemplary life, serving as a model of holiness, godly conduct and sacrificial service for the church.
  - 2) Leading the corporate worship of the church.
  - 3) Accurately and faithfully teaching and preaching the Word of God,
  - 4) Leading the staff toward the fulfillment of the mission and vision of the church as established by the Board of Elders.
  - 5) Serving as an ex-officio member of all the boards and committees of this church.
- B. The Duties of the other Pastors** will be specified by the board of Elders and will be under the supervision of the Senior Pastor, including but not limited to:
- 1) Living an exemplary life, serving as a model of holiness, godly conduct and sacrificial service for the church.
  - 2) Accurately and faithfully fulfilling their assigned responsibilities.
- C. The Duties of the Board of Elders** shall be to administer the affairs of this church. They should specifically:
- 1) Live exemplary lives, serving as models of holiness, godly conduct and sacrificial service for the church.
  - 2) Prayerfully lead and manage the church wisely, according to biblical principles and consistent with the church's mission, vision and values. This includes, but is not limited to the following:
    - a. Serve as the designated earthly authority for all matters confronting the church, including the church's mission, ministries, organizations, programs, personnel, finances, etc. These responsibilities may be delegated as appropriate.



- b. Assure biblical teaching according to sound doctrine and protect the church from heresy in all settings.
  - c. Assist the pastors in shepherding the church by giving counsel and comfort to those in need; by keeping order in the assemblies of the church; by acting for the church in the reception and dismissal of members as outlined in Article V; and by overseeing and evaluating the ministries of the church.
  - d. Oversee the progress in spiritual maturity of the church.
  - e. Protect and promote the mission, vision and values of the church.
  - f. Interpret the Constitution.
- 3) Conduct the administrative responsibilities of the Board in a timely and orderly manner, including but not limited to:
- a. Present a semi-annual report of its activities to the church.
  - b. Elect from their own number at the first meeting of the Board after the January Church Business Meeting, a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, and a Secretary.
  - c. Annually determine and/or review the responsibilities that shall be delegated to the Deacon Board.
  - d. Approve the budget.
  - e. Give final approval to major financial decisions (such as hiring of new senior staff) that create additions to already approved budgets.

**D. The Duties of the Board of Deacons** shall be to serve the church in the administration and care of needs and concerns that the Elders shall designate. Deacons shall operate in cooperation with the staff operations director and under the general supervision of the Board of Elders in the various service areas the Elders designate.

- 1) Deacons shall live exemplary lives, serving as models of holiness, godly conduct and sacrificial service for the church
- 2) Any change in the customary policy of the Deacons shall be approved by the Board of Elders.
- 3) The Deacons shall elect a chairman from among their own membership each year. The Chairman shall see to it that the Board of Deacons is well organized around the tasks designated by the Elders.
- 4) The Deacons shall meet with the Board of Elders periodically at the discretion of the Board of Elders. Between such meetings, in order to ensure the efficient function of the Board of Deacons, the Deacon Chairman and Elder Chairman shall communicate with one another regarding the decisions and discussions of their respective boards.

#### **Section 4: Election of Officers**

**A. A candidate for the position of Senior Pastor or any other Pastor** of this church shall be considered only after he has subscribed in writing to the doctrinal statement and constitution of the church indicating any disagreements or reservations he may have. He shall be recommended to the Members by the Elder Board and called to serve by affirmative votes of at least four fifths (4/5) of the Members voting on that position in a duly called business meeting.

**B. The Election of the Board of Elders** shall be at a business duly called meeting of the church.

- 1) **Leadership Training Program:** Nominees for the leadership training program may be recommended by the Board of Elders or any member of the church. The Board of Elders will choose the interns from this group.
- 2) **The Preparation of the Election:** A candidate for Elder must be a male member of Grace Bible Church, who is at least forty (40) years old. The Board of Elders will choose those who in the judgment of the Board best meet the biblical requirements for Elders and possess the gifts and talents most needed to perform the oversight and leadership responsibilities of the Board. At least two (2) weeks prior to the election, a list of recommended candidates must be posted or in the hands of the members of the church.

At any time before the election, any man on the list of candidates may withdraw his name by contacting the Chairman of the Board of Elders.

- 3) **The Election:** The election of the Elders shall be by secret ballot. A candidate shall be elected to the Board by receiving affirmative votes from at least four-fifths (4/5) of the members voting on that position at a duly called business meeting. If for any reason an insufficient number of candidates are elected to fill the openings on the board, then the board may operate with less than five (5) members until the next election is called by the Board.
- 4) **The Term of an Elder:** An Elder shall be elected for a term not exceeding three (3) years. The term of approximately one-third (1/3) of the Elders shall expire each year. An Elder who has served a three (3) year term may be eligible for re-election.
- 5) **Elder Emeritus:** Certain senior members or former members of the Board of Elders may be awarded the status of Elder Emeritus by the elected Elder Board. An Elder Emeritus will not be elected nor can he vote on issues before the Elder Board. He will not be expected to attend board meetings, but may at the Board's discretion. He may, however, provide pastoral care and may at the pleasure of the Board participate in other activities and responsibilities of the elected Board members. This office will be open to Board members or former board members who are at least sixty (60) years old and who have served at least five (5) terms as an elected board member during the previous twenty-five (25) years. The office may be held indefinitely by consent of the elected board.

### C. The Selection of the Board of Deacons

1. **The Procedure of Selection:** The Board of Elders shall be responsible to select able men to carry out the duties of a Deacon. This selection shall be made at the first of every year.
2. **The Number of Deacons:** The number of Deacons shall be determined by the Board of Elders and Deacon Chairman, according to the nature and number of responsibilities given to the Deacons.
3. **The Term of a Deacon:** A Deacon shall be selected for a term of three (3) years rotating so that not more than a third (1/3) of the Board's membership expires at any given time.
4. **Deacon Emeritus:** Certain senior members or former members of the Board of Deacons may be awarded the status of Deacon Emeritus by the elected Elder/Deacon Board. A Deacon Emeritus will not be elected nor can he vote on issues before the Deacon Board. He will not be expected to attend board meetings, but may at the board's discretion. He may, however, continue to function in a Deacon role and may at the pleasure of the board participate in other activities and responsibilities of the elected board members. This office will be open to board members or former board members who are at least sixty (60) years old and who have served at least five (5) terms as an elected board member during the previous twenty-five (25) years. The office may be held indefinitely by consent of the elected board.

## Section 5: The Removal of Officers

The leaders of Grace Bible Church are accountable to God, fellow leaders, and fellow Christians they serve. If a leader exhibits conduct or beliefs contrary to Scripture and the policies of Grace Bible Church, that individual will be removed from office. The provisions listed below describe how leaders in various offices will be addressed. In the unusual event that normal procedures do not work special provisions allow the congregation to intervene.

- A. **The removal of Pastor(s):** The dismissal of any Pastor supported by this church shall not be considered until the Pastor in question has been approached relative to the reason(s) for proposed dismissal by a delegation of at least two elders. Any reason(s) for dismissal shall be consistent with requirements for a Pastor (Article III, Section 2) and/or current human resources policy. The Pastor under consideration shall be notified in writing of the reason(s) for the recommended dismissal, and at his discretion may be represented by two members, introduce evidence, and present and cross examine witnesses. If, after examination, the Board of Elders recommends dismissal by an affirmative vote of at least four-fifths (4/5) of the total number of the Elders, two (2) weeks notification will be given to the congregation in order to solicit additional information that might overturn the vote for dismissal. The Board of Elders shall meet again after the two week period and either overturn or uphold the previous vote. Notification of the vote will given to the congregation the following Sunday.

- B. The removal of Elder(s):** Any Elder may be removed from office for conduct contrary to the Word of God at any duly called Elder meeting. If an elder is perceived to have conduct or beliefs incompatible with the requirements for an Elder (Article III, Section 2), at least two witnesses, not man and wife, shall bring this to the attention of the Board which will investigate the charges. If the charges are substantiated, the Board will dismiss the offending member by a majority vote of the entire remaining elder board. If it becomes obvious to church members that the board is failing to act on legitimate charges, a petition signed by 1/3 of the voting membership of the church and presented to the Board will automatically remove the offending Elder.
- C. The removal of other Officers:** Any officer, teacher or employee appointed by the elders or whose office or position requires the approval of the Elders, may be removed by the Elders. Employees whose position does not require approval of the Elders may be removed by the appropriate staff supervisor, according to human resources policy in effect at the time.

#### **Section 6: Vacancies of the Officers**

The position of any other officer of the church shall be considered vacant upon the occasion of one of the following:

1. Death
2. Resignation
3. Refusal to serve
4. Removal as stipulated above
5. By becoming an inactive member

#### **Section 7: Financial Directives to Church Officers**

Pertaining to financial matters of the church which may be delegated by the Elder Board to other Officers or staff, it shall be the responsibility of the church Officers and staff to carry out such duties subject to the following limitation: every purchase and sale of real property shall be approved by a majority vote of the members present at a business meeting.

## **ARTICLE IV - CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS**

### **Section 1: Annual Meeting**

The Board of Elders shall decide upon the frequency of the business meetings with a minimum of one per annum. The annual business meeting shall be held on a date determined by the Board of Elders and announced to the congregation in the manner prescribed for duly called business meetings.

### **Section 2: Quorum**

A quorum for the transaction of business in all duly called business meetings shall consist of the members present who are in good and regular standing and have attained to the age of eighteen (18) years.

### **Section 3: Special Business Meetings**

Any regular or duly called business meetings may be constituted a meeting for the transaction of business, providing announcement of said meeting be given on two Sundays preceding the appointed time of said meeting. Special meetings of the congregation may be called at any time by the Board of Elders or upon written request to the Board of Elders by twenty (20) percent of the members who are eligible to vote.

### **Section 4: Presiding Officer**

In all business meetings the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, or one whom the Board of Elders shall designate shall preside at the church business meetings.

### **Section 5: Place of Meeting**

All business meetings of the Members shall be held at a principal place of worship of the church unless otherwise specified in the notice.

## **ARTICLE V - CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: Qualifications for Membership**

- A. A person must profess Jesus Christ as personal Savior.
- B. A person must agree to be in submission to the Elders as they govern by this constitution and, in particular, a person must:
  - 1. Have experienced a believer's baptism (either by sprinkling or immersion, however, sprinkling will be received only if a believer has experienced this mode of baptism prior to presenting himself for membership in this church, otherwise baptism will be done by immersion).
  - 2. Have indicated that his attitudes and/or beliefs will not disrupt either the doctrinal or the spiritual unity of the church.
  - 3. Have a manner of life that is not contrary to the Word of God.

### **Section 2: Procedure for Membership**

- A. Acceptance of the inquirer: Any person desiring to become a member of the church and who makes such a request to the Pastor or to any Elder, and who meets the qualifications of this article, shall be received as a member into the fellowship of the church.
- B. Acceptance procedure: The procedure that shall be followed in receiving new members shall be as follows:
  - 1. Attend all required membership classes;
  - 2. An initial interview by one or more of the Elders (left to Elder discretion);

3. A unanimous approval of a quorum of the Elders;
4. An announcement of the candidacy to the church on Sunday, allowing the church to bring any Scriptural objections to the attention of the Elders;
5. In the absence of any objections, automatic approval of membership will be established and shall be announced the following Sunday.

### **Section 3: Inactive Members**

Any person not in attendance for four consecutive months shall automatically be declared inactive and forfeit his voting rights. Such members shall be reinstated as active members at the discretion of the Board of Elders.

### **Section 4: Examination of the Membership Rolls**

It shall be the duty of the Pastors and the Elders to examine the membership rolls at least annually. Any member who has been absent from the services of the church for a period of one year or longer, and who fails to give satisfactory reason for such absence, may be removed from the membership rolls of the church or placed on the inactive roll at the discretion of the Board of Elders.

### **Section 5: Active Voting Membership**

Those active members who are eighteen (18) years of age and over shall be considered active voting members, and shall have the right to participate in those actions which this Constitution requires to be brought before the church.

### **Section 6: Non-Voting Members**

Those under 18 may obtain non-voting membership status by satisfying the requirements listed in Article V, Section 2 and 3. Upon reaching the age of 18 the non-voting member may become a voting member upon request.

### **Section 7: Discipline**

Any member of the church may come under the discipline of the church for action contrary to the Word of God (see Article II, section 8B2).

## **ARTICLE VI - MISSIONARIES**

### **Section 1: Support and Selection**

It is expected that full or partial support of missionaries will be undertaken in an expanding fashion as the church grows and as the Lord leads. The Board of Elders shall recommend missionaries to the voting members at a duly called business meeting and they in turn will accept or reject the recommendation by a simple majority vote. No missionary or missionary organization shall be supported unless the missionary or missionary organization shall subscribe to the doctrinal statement of the church.

### **Section 2: Removal of Support**

If a missionary or a mission organization fails to maintain the standards of the doctrinal statement of this church, or for some other good reason, the Board of Elders may recommend a removal of support for either the missionary or the mission board or both, which in turn shall be presented to the voting membership at a duly called business meeting and shall be acted upon by a simple majority vote.

## **ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS AND ADOPTION OF THIS CONSTITUTION**

### **Section 1: Amendments**

These articles may be amended, repealed, or altered in whole or in part by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of a quorum of the active voting members in a regular business meeting of the church providing the alteration has been conspicuously posted in written form or a letter sent to the members.

## **Section 2: Adoption of this Constitution**

This Constitution supersedes all by-laws, articles of faith and amendments to the by-laws, made prior to its adoption. Adoption shall be by a two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of the church's active voting members in a duly called business meeting of the church.

Revised and Approved January 2015