

CONSTITUTION OF GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

ARTICLE I ~ NAME

The name of this organization shall be GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH OF BROCKPORT, NEW YORK, INC.

ARTICLE II ~ PURPOSE

It shall be the purpose of this Church to magnify the Person, work and program of the Lord Jesus Christ, to promote the worship of the Triune God, to preach the message of salvation by word and deed to our local community, to build up the believers in the faith, to administer the two ordinances of believer's baptism and the observance of the Lord's Supper, to provide Christian fellowship, to promote an active missionary program consistent with this Church's doctrine and practice, and to "*contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints*" [Jude 3]. This is all summed up in our Purpose Statement:

With one heart and mouth glorifying our God....

We are committed to glorifying our God

- ~ as we worship Him through praise, prayer, and obedience;**
- ~ as we build up one another through love and the Word;**
- ~ as we share the Gospel of Christ with others.**

ARTICLE III ~ DOCTRINE

The doctrine of this Church shall be in conformity with the Word of God, and is expressed in our Statement of Faith, as attached.

ARTICLE IV ~ ASSOCIATIONS

This Church, though independent of any outside ecclesiastical authority, declares itself to be identified with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches [GARBC] and with the Empire State Fellowship of Regular Baptist Churches. We reject association with any church or group which does not accept the authority of the inerrant, infallible Word of God and the basic doctrines of the faith revealed in the Word, such as the Triune God, the Deity of Christ, and salvation by grace through faith alone. We also purpose, as a Church, to avoid any association with churches or organizations which are involved in the charismatic movement, with its emphasis on experience and new revelation.

ARTICLE V ~ MEMBERSHIP

The membership shall consist of only those who have professed faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, giving evidence in their lives of being *new creations in Christ* [II Cor. 5:17], committed to pleasing and serving Him as part of a local Body. All members must have been Scripturally baptized [immersion following salvation], and must have affirmed their agreement with the Church Covenant and Statement of Faith, and must have agreed to abide by the Constitution of this Church.

SECTION 1: RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

To become a member, an individual shall first meet with a Pastor and give testimony of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a desire to become a functioning part of the Church Family at Grace. The Deacons, or some representatives from the Deacons, shall then, upon notification by the Pastor, meet with that individual and interview him/her concerning his/her salvation experience, his/her baptism by immersion, and his/her desire to live a holy life and be a functioning part of the Church Family. Upon unanimous recommendation by those Deacons,

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he/she shall give a salvation testimony before the Church Family in a morning worship service. [In rare cases, this can be given at an alternate service or meeting chosen by the Pastors and Deacons, or may, in extremely rare instances, be presented in written form.] He/she shall officially become a member upon three-fourths of the votes cast in favor of that at the next business meeting.

SECTION 2: STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Anyone under eighteen years of age and anyone between the ages of 18 and 25 who is a full-time student shall be joined as a "student member" if they request to become members of Grace. Student members shall join in the same way as all other members except that they do not need to meet with deacon representatives nor do they need to give a salvation testimony before the Church Family. Student members are not permitted to serve as an officer of the Church or to vote in any business meetings of the Church. After their eighteenth birthday or after ceasing to be a full-time student, those who are student members may meet with the Deacons, or representatives from the Deacons, and express their desire to become full members. Upon approval of the Deacons and a public testimony of salvation before the Church Family, this change shall be made. If no such request for change is made, student members shall automatically be removed from membership six months after they cease to be full-time students, or after they reach age 25 if they continue as full-time students.

SECTION 3: ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Associate membership is permitted for all who are temporary residents in the area and who desire to retain membership in their home church of like faith and practice. They shall be admitted to this membership in the same way as prescribed above in Section 1. Associate membership is also permitted for members of Grace Baptist Church who are in full-time Christian service and are unable to attend regularly but who desire to maintain membership here. Associate members shall not be permitted to serve as an officer of the Church or to vote in business meetings of the Church.

SECTION 4: REMOVAL OF MEMBERS

Membership at Grace is seen as a privilege, but also entails certain responsibilities. Our goal is not to develop a large membership as much as it is to maintain an active one. Therefore, removal of members is important.

1. If any member so requests, upon recommendation of the Deacons, that member's name shall be removed from membership. A "letter of transfer" will be sent, when so requested by
or for a member in good standing, upon the approval of the Deacons.
2. If no request is forthcoming, but it is confirmed that a member of Grace has become a member of another church, [see exception under "Associate Membership" above] upon recommendation of the Deacons and a majority of the votes cast at the next business meeting, that member's name shall be removed from membership.
3. Any member failing to attend services at this Church over a period of six months without legitimate reason [as determined by the Deacons] may be listed as "inactive". "Inactive members" do not have the right to vote or hold office. They may be reinstated to active membership by regular attendance and a satisfactory statement to the Deacons regarding their intent to be faithful, functioning members of Grace. Anyone who is listed as "inactive" for a period of six months or more, upon recommendation of the Deacons and a majority of the votes cast at a business meeting shall have his/her name removed from membership

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and

should be so notified.

4. Upon death, a member's name shall automatically be removed from membership.
5. Student members shall be removed from membership as stated above in Section 2.
6. The purpose of church discipline is to maintain spiritual and doctrinal purity in our Church, and to restore to fellowship with God and with other believers one who has become involved in false doctrine or in a pattern of sinful behavior. The matter of discipline shall be in the hands of the Deacons assisted by the Pastor[s], with the procedure in **Mt. 18:15-17** being followed. No one shall be expelled without every effort [including a visit if possible] being made for restoration. If necessary, upon recommendation of the Deacons and a majority of the votes cast at a business meeting, the disciplined member shall be removed from membership.

Mt. 18:15-17

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

ARTICLE VI ~ ORDINANCES

SECTION 1: BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

Those professing saving faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior shall be immersed in water one time in accordance with the Scriptural teaching. This shall be administered by a Pastor or an individual authorized by the Deacons in the absence of any Pastors.

SECTION 2: THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper [Communion] shall be administered in accordance with Scriptural teaching as found in passages such as **I Cor. 11:23-29** and **Matt. 26:26-29** to the assembled Church on a regular basis [monthly, if possible] by a Pastor or an individual authorized by the Deacons in the absence of a Pastor. Since it is not Grace Baptist Church's Table but the Lord's Table, all who know and love Him and who are living in fellowship with Him shall be invited to participate.

1 Cor. 11:23-29

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

Mt. 26:26-29

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom."

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ARTICLE VII ~ OFFICERS

The Officers of the Church shall consist of Pastor[s], Deacons, Trustees, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Clerk. Each Officer, except Pastor[s], shall have been a member of this Church with faithful attendance for a period of at least two years before being placed in nomination. The term of office, except for the Pastor[s], shall be for two years, and shall begin on the first day of the year following the Bi-Annual Election Business Meeting. Retiring Officers shall hold office until the new terms begin. No Officer of the Church, except Pastor[s], shall be elected to hold the same office for more than three consecutive full terms at a time. [Note: if someone is appointed by the Deacons to fill the partial term for someone else, he/she is still eligible to serve three additional full terms in that office.] No person shall hold more than two of these offices at the same time, and no person shall hold the office of Financial Secretary and Treasurer at the same time. Each Officer shall, when accepting the nomination to serve, affirm his/her agreement with the Church Covenant and Statement of Faith, and shall agree to support and abide by the Constitution of this Church.

SECTION 1: PASTOR[S]

The term “*pastor*” occurs only once in the New Testament, [Eph.4:11] but is synonymous with “*elder*” and “*overseer*”. The term “*pastor*” is used traditionally here at Grace for the man who is supported financially by the Church so that he can devote all his time to leading and overseeing the ministries and activities at Grace, and especially the teaching and preaching responsibilities. Scripturally, this is defined in **1 Tim. 5:17**; *The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.*

Paragraph A: Qualifications

A Pastor of this Church and, if married, his wife shall be in agreement with the Covenant, Statement of Faith, and Constitution of this Church. He must also meet the qualifications as set forth in the New Testament for his office as Elder, Pastor, and Overseer of the local Church, [Acts 20:28-29; 1 Tim. 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-3] and, if married, his wife shall be a godly believer who meets the qualifications of **1 Tim. 3:11**.

Acts 20:28-29

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

1 Tim. 3:2-7

Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Titus 1:6-9

An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless--not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not

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pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

1 Peter 5:1-3

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder....Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers - not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

Paragraph B: Duties of the Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor shall be the shepherd of the flock, overseer of the work of God, preacher and teacher of the unsearchable riches of Christ and the chief executive officer of the Church. He shall give himself "to prayer and to the ministry of the Word" [Acts 6:4] and shall perform the duties of an elder and overseer as set forth in the Scriptures. The Pastor shall support the work of all the organizations and programs of the Church and shall be permitted to participate and give guidance to all Leadership Teams, Service Groups, Committees, and other organizations of the Church. He shall be the moderator of all Church business meetings, except in matters pertaining to himself. He shall, in consultation with the Deacons, oversee continuation of the pulpit ministry in his absence.

Paragraph C: Duties of Assistant Pastors

Assistant Pastors may be taken on staff as the need arises. They may be hired for the express purpose of working and ministering in a specific area or with a specific group. A job description will be drawn up by the Deacons delineating the duties of each Assistant Pastor.

Paragraph D: Calling a Pastor

The procedure for calling a Pastor shall be as follows:

1. Upon recommendation by the Pastoral Search Committee, the candidate shall be presented to the Church Family, to minister from the pulpit for at least two Sundays. There shall also be sufficient opportunities scheduled [at least two times] for questioning by the Church Family. If married, the candidate's wife shall also be present on these occasions. There shall also be an opportunity to meet the candidate's entire family, if appropriate.
2. Following this, the combined Deacons and Trustees shall evaluate the candidate's ministry and shall vote [by ballot] on whether or not to present him to the Church Family for approval. If passed by a vote of at least 80%, notification of a Church meeting to vote on the proposed candidate shall be given from the pulpit two Sundays preceding the meeting, and in addition, written notice will be sent to every active member household by the Church Clerk.
3. The approval of a Pastor requires an affirmative vote, on the first ballot, of three-fourths of the voting members present.
4. Any candidate not approved in this way shall not be reconsidered for this same position for a period of at least one year.
5. The candidate shall be notified promptly of the decision by the chairman or secretary of the Pastoral Search Committee.
6. The Pastor shall be called for an indeterminate term.

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The procedure for calling an Assistant Pastor shall be as follows:

1. Upon recommendation by the Deacons and Trustees, the Church must vote to approve the calling of an Assistant Pastor.
2. The Deacons and Pastor[s] shall prayerfully present to the Church a candidate for the approved position and that candidate must come and minister to the Church. There shall also be sufficient opportunities scheduled [at least two times] for questioning by the Church Family in regard to his prospective ministry. If married, the candidate's wife shall also be present on these occasions. There shall also be an opportunity to meet the candidate's entire family, if appropriate.
3. The election requires an affirmative vote, on the first ballot, of three-fourths of the voting members present.
4. Any candidate not elected shall not be reconsidered for this same position for a period of at least one year.
5. The candidate shall be notified promptly of the decision by the Senior Pastor or the Chairman of the Deacons.
6. The Assistant Pastor shall be called for an indeterminate term.

Paragraph E: Termination of Ministry by a Pastor

A Pastor shall give the Church a notice in writing not to exceed sixty days, and not less than thirty days, of his intention to discontinue as Pastor. The Deacons shall be notified of and approve the actual date for termination of duties. After this date, the Pastor shall continue to receive his salary for a predetermined number of weeks, according to a Termination of Ministry Policy drawn up and overseen by the Trustees. Other considerations, such as temporary health insurance coverage and housing arrangements, shall also be made with the Trustees, taking into consideration especially the length of service and the reason for termination of ministry.

Paragraph F: Termination of Ministry by the Church

The Church may terminate the ministry of a Pastor by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting at a special business meeting called for this purpose [Article XII, Section 2, Paragraph D]. The Deacons shall call this special business meeting of their own volition or on demand by a statement of charge petition presented to the Deacons. Such a petition may be circulated only after the following:

1. The person or persons shall make the charge to the Pastor personally.
2. The person or persons shall make the charge to the Pastor at a Deacons' meeting.
3. The charge[s] against a Pastor must be such as to show the Pastor does not meet the qualifications [Article VII, Section 1, Paragraph A] or is unable or unwilling to fulfill the duties

[Article VII, Section 1, Paragraph B and C].

A petition signed by one-fourth of the active voting members of the Church shall be given due consideration by the Deacons, and, if deemed necessary, a special business meeting may be called. A petition signed by at least one-half of the active voting members of the Church shall require the Deacons to call a special business meeting within a reasonable time period of no more than four weeks. A discussion meeting shall be called prior to, but not on the same day as, the business meeting called for the vote. No public discussion of the matter shall be allowed at the meeting at which the vote is taken and the vote shall be by ballot. The meeting shall be moderated by a member of the Church selected by the Deacons. If the Pastor's

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ministry is terminated, the vote serves as due notice to the Pastor that his term of office shall cease **immediately**. In such case, one additional week's salary shall be allowed. The Trustees shall determine and inform the removed Pastor concerning any health insurance coverage and housing arrangements, taking into consideration especially the length of service and the reason for termination of ministry.

Paragraph G: Salary and Vacation

A Pastor's salary shall be determined by the Trustees and shall be included in the annual budget to be approved by the Church Family. The Church shall make every effort to properly support its Pastor[s] to the best of its ability. The Senior Pastor shall receive an annual vacation according to the number of years he has been in full-time ministry, including any ministry prior to serving at Grace. The specifics of this shall be outlined in a Vacation Policy drawn up and overseen by the Trustees. They shall also determine the vacation allowance of any Assistant Pastor, based on years of ministry and designated responsibilities.

SECTION 2: DEACONS

NOTE: Although the term traditionally used here at Grace is "deacon", we recognize that Scripturally this is really the office of "elder", and so Biblical passages that relate to elders [or the synonymous term "overseers"] are used here.

Paragraph A: Qualifications

Each Deacon of this Church shall be a mature Christian man who has manifested a thorough knowledge of and a consistent walk in the Word of God and has demonstrated a pattern of supportive involvement and attendance in the ministries of the Church. He shall meet the qualifications as set forth in the New Testament [**1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Tim. 3:2-7; Tit. 1:6-9**] and, if married, his wife shall be a godly believer who meets the qualifications of **1 Tim. 3:11**.

1 Tim. 5:17

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

1 Tim. 3:2-7

Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Titus 1:6-9

An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless--not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

1 Tim. 3:11

In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

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Paragraph B: Organization

The Deacons shall elect from their number a chairman and a secretary. The chairman shall preside at their meetings and have general oversight of their work. He shall also preside over joint meetings of the Deacons and Trustees, and over Church Business Meetings when the Pastor is not able to. The secretary shall keep a faithful record of any important work, acts, or transactions performed by the body. Meetings shall be held at the call of the chairman, Pastor or two-thirds of the Deacons. Two-thirds of the full number of Deacons shall constitute a quorum.

Paragraph C: Duties

The Deacons shall assist the Pastor[s] in the spiritual leadership of the Church and serve the members of this Church. Examples of ways they will do this are: [1] Carry out, with the Trustees, the ministry of the Caring Program, personally maintaining a sensitivity to the needs of the Church Family; [2] assist the Pastor[s] in administering the ordinances; [3] carefully examine, with the Pastor, all candidates for church membership such as they consider eligible; [4] be responsible, with the Pastor[s], for all matters of discipline of members; [5] approve members to serve on Leadership Teams and Service Groups [as per the procedure detailed in Article XI]; [6] appoint Deacons as liaisons with Leadership Teams, Service Groups, Committees, and organizations of the Church in accordance with the policy of the Deacons for such appointments; [7] in consultation with the Music Leadership Team, appoint persons to assume the responsibility of choir director, church pianist, and/or organist; [8] appoint persons to fill, until the next Bi-Annual Election Business Meeting, vacancies in office which may occur during the year; [9] make a full report of their activities to the Church in the Annual Report and/or as required by the Church Family [as requested by petition signed by 20% of the members]; [10] administer the benevolent ["Deacon Caring"] fund; [11] draw up and oversee any necessary policies [Note: all such policies shall be made available to any member upon request]; [12] appoint and oversee the official "Greeters" for Sunday services; [13] periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of the programs and the leadership at Grace by means of surveys, special meetings, etc. [14] carry out the responsibilities in the calling of a Pastor. It shall also be the responsibility of the wives of the Deacons to, when necessary, coordinate hospitality needs in the event of a funeral.

Paragraph D: Number

The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the Church, with a minimum number of four. The exact number of Deacons may be changed, when necessary, with Church approval at any Business Meeting.

SECTION 3: TRUSTEES

NOTE: Although the term traditionally used here at Grace is "trustee", we recognize that Scripturally this is really the office of "deacon", and so Biblical passages that relate to deacons are used here.

Paragraph A: Qualifications

Each Trustee of this Church shall be a mature Christian man who has manifested a thorough knowledge of and a consistent walk in the Word of God, and demonstrates a pattern of supportive involvement and attendance in the ministries of the Church. He shall meet the qualifications as set forth in the New Testament [**Acts 6:3; I Tim. 3:8-13**] and, if married, his wife shall meet the qualifications of **I Tim. 3:11**.

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Acts 6:3

Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them

1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.... A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

I Tim.3:11

In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

Paragraph B: Organization

The Trustees shall elect from their number a chairman and secretary. The former shall preside at their meetings and have general oversight of their work. The latter shall keep a faithful record of any important work, acts or transactions performed by the body. Meetings shall be held at the call of the chairman, Pastor or two-thirds of the full number of Trustees. Two-thirds of the full number of Trustees shall constitute a quorum.

Paragraph C: Duties

The Trustees shall work closely with the Deacons in carrying out the Caring Ministry of the Church. They shall also actively seek input from the Deacons in regard to any policies. The Trustees shall oversee the financial business and maintenance matters to support the ministries of the Church. Examples of ways they will do this are: [1] oversee and care for the property of the Church; [2] oversee the hiring and supervising of the custodian[s]; [3] superintend any improvements that are not entrusted to a special committee of the Church; [4] appoint one of their number to serve on the Missionary Leadership Team and one to serve on the Christian Education Leadership Team and one to serve on the Local Outreach Leadership Team; [5] present a proposed budget for the consideration and approval of the Church at each Annual Meeting; [6] oversee the hiring and supervision of the Church secretary; [7] perform such other business concerns of the Church as shall from time to time be assigned to them by the Church; [8] make a full report of their activities to the Church at each Annual Report Meeting and/or as requested by the Church Family [as requested by petition signed by 20% of the members]; [9] assist the Financial Secretary in counting the offering while maintaining the confidentiality of the givers; [10] draw up and oversee any necessary policies [Note: all such policies shall be made available to any member upon request]; [11] annually appoint a financial Auditing Committee and, if deemed appropriate, order an outside audit.

The Trustees shall not have the authority to sell, lease, give away or dispose of in any manner, Church property to exceed two thousand dollars in value; nor to mortgage or encumber the same with debt to exceed the above amount, only as the Church shall order the same by corporate act.

Paragraph D: Number

The number of Trustees shall be determined by the needs of the Church, in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, with a minimum number of three. The exact number of Trustees can be changed by the needs of the Church at a Business Meeting.

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SECTION 4: TREASURER

The Treasurer shall disperse funds of the Church as directed by the Trustees, keep an accurate and adequate record of accounts and make a full report to the Church at each Annual Meeting and shall provide a written quarterly report for the Church Family [in April, July, and October] and when otherwise directed by the Church Family [as requested by petition signed by 20% of the members] or by the Trustees. His/her books shall be audited by the Auditing Committee before each Annual Report Meeting and at the request of the Trustees. In his/her absence, the Trustees shall oversee these responsibilities, in agreement with the Treasurer.

SECTION 5: FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary shall receive all incoming funds and collections and shall count said funds with the assistance of at least one Trustee. The Financial Secretary shall record and deposit all funds to the credit of the Church, and shall keep a separate account and maintain the confidentiality of each contributor and furnish statements annually or whenever requested. He/she shall make a full report at the Annual Report Meeting and shall provide a quarterly report to the Church Family [in April, July, and October] and whenever requested by the Church Family [as requested by petition signed by 20% of the members] or by the Trustees to do so. His/her books shall be audited by the Auditing Committee before each Annual Report Meeting and at the request of the Trustees. In his/her absence, the Trustees shall oversee or delegate these responsibilities, in agreement with the Financial Secretary.

SECTION 6: CLERK

The Clerk shall keep true and complete minutes of the proceedings of the Church business meetings, maintain records, keep a register of all members of the Church, write necessary correspondence, give notice of certain Church Business Meetings [see Article VII, Section 1, Paragraph D], and perform such other particular duties as may be prescribed by the Deacons.

ARTICLE VIII - FINANCES

SECTION 1: FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end the following December 31.

SECTION 2: CHURCH INCOME

The Church shall depend on freewill giving of its members for the support of its ministries and shall not engage in fund raising projects [such as bazaars] that would appeal to unbelievers for funds or financial support. [1 Cor. 9:12-14]

1 Cor. 9:12-14

If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

SECTION 3: CHURCH DEBT

No financial obligation shall be placed upon the Church either as a mortgage note or outstanding bill, or in any other form unless money is on hand to meet the same, except as stated in Article VII, Section 3, Paragraph C, or by corporate act of the Church.

ARTICLE IX - MISSIONS

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It shall be the policy of this Church to always have an active missionary program, supporting efforts which seek to advance the Gospel message both at home and abroad. The missions supported and missionary speakers shall be in agreement with our Statement of Faith, both in doctrine and practice.

ARTICLE X - AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN GRACE

NOTICE: No organizations may directly support any work or missionary without first receiving the approval of the Deacons and, for missionary related activities, the approval of the Missionary Leadership Team. Likewise, no organizations may invite any speaker[s] without first receiving the approval of the Deacons.

SECTION 1: SUNDAY SCHOOL

There shall be structured Bible classes for all ages on Sunday Mornings.

Paragraph A: Purpose

The Sunday School shall function as part of the Church, not as a separate organization. The purpose of the Sunday School is help every student to have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and to instruct him/her concerning the truths and principles of God's Word for living the Christian Life.

Paragraph B: Organization

The Sunday School shall be under the general supervision and control of the Christian Education Leadership Team.

SECTION 2: OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Church may establish other organizations or programs as required to fulfill the purpose of this Church [Article II]. No organization or program shall be started without the unanimous approval of the Deacons and the Pastor[s]. These organizations shall be subject to the control of the Church through its Constitution and any approved Church policy. Upon the request of the Pastor[s], Deacons, or Trustees, each organization or program shall present a written report to the person[s] requesting it of its activities. Every organization and program shall submit a report covering its activities for the previous year to be published in the Annual Report. A report of any and all funds received and disbursed shall be given annually to the Trustees.

ARTICLE XI - LEADERSHIP TEAMS, SERVICE GROUPS, COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: FORMATION OF LEADERSHIP TEAMS AND SERVICE GROUPS

Early in November, "Desire to Serve" forms shall be made available to all Church members, with a brief description of each Leadership Team and Service Group. Every member shall be encouraged to consider serving on one or more of the Leadership Teams or Service Groups, depending on his/her spiritual gifts, interests, availability, etc. The "Desire to Serve" forms shall be collected and given to the Deacons, who shall then review the forms and approve, if requirements are satisfied [see Article XV: Leadership Standards], the individuals for each Leadership Team and Service Group. The length of term shall be for 1 year; there is no limit to the number of consecutive terms someone may serve on any Leadership Team or Service Group. The list of members serving on each Leadership Team or Service Group shall be posted at the beginning of the year, along with the list of Church Officers.

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SECTION 2: LEADERSHIP TEAMS

A. Missionary Leadership Team

PURPOSE: To promote and oversee the missionary program of the Church.

MEMBERSHIP: Pastor[s], a Deacon representative, a Trustee representative, and members approved annually by the Deacons [see Section 1 above]. The Leadership Team shall elect a chairman and secretary from its membership.

OPERATING PROCEDURE: This Leadership Team shall operate under the guidelines of the current Church-approved Missionary Policy, a copy of which shall be appended to this constitution.

B. Local Outreach Leadership Team:

PURPOSE: To promote and coordinate the various local outreach programs of the Church, and to creatively identify and organize other outreach opportunities.

MEMBERSHIP: Pastor[s], a Deacon representative, a Trustee representative, and members approved annually by the Deacons [see Section 1 above]. The Leadership Team shall elect a chairman and secretary from its membership.

OPERATING PROCEDURE: This Leadership Team shall operate under the guidelines established and approved by the Deacons for the Local Outreach Leadership Team.

C. Christian Education Leadership Team:

PURPOSE: To promote and oversee the Christian education ministries and programs of the Church, including the Sunday School, VBS, and various children's meetings held during the regular services.

MEMBERSHIP: Pastor[s], a Deacon representative, a Trustee representative, and members approved annually by the Deacons [see Section 1 above]. The Leadership Team shall elect a chairman and secretary from its membership.

OPERATING PROCEDURE: This Leadership Team shall operate under the guidelines established and approved by the Deacons for the Christian Education Leadership Team.

D. Music Leadership Team:

PURPOSE: To oversee and coordinate the ministry of music and accompaniment for each Church service.

MEMBERSHIP: Consisting of the choir director, a representative of the worship leaders, a representative of the accompanists (pianists, orchestra members, etc.) a Deacon representative, and members approved annually by the Deacons [see Section 1 above]. The Leadership Team shall elect a chairman and secretary from its membership.

OPERATING PROCEDURE: This Leadership Team shall meet on a regular basis to identify the various opportunities and needs for music. Persons with the desire and ability to minister shall be contacted and a schedule prepared. A goal of this Leadership Team shall be to try to extend the opportunity to minister in music to as many people in the Church as possible and appropriate. This Leadership Team shall operate under the guidelines established and approved by the Deacons for the Music Leadership Team.

SECTION 3: SERVICE GROUPS

A. Flower Service Group:

PURPOSE: To oversee the flower placement and decoration of the auditorium and distribution of special gifts.

MEMBERSHIP: Members shall be those approved annually by the Deacons [see Section 1 above].

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OPERATING PROCEDURE: This Service Group shall oversee the placement of arrangements for each Sunday, Church decorations for special seasons and occasions and distribution of flower arrangements/gifts when appropriate [e.g., surgery, baby births, etc.]

B. Hospitality Service Group:

PURPOSE: To oversee and coordinate the hospitality needs of the Church.

MEMBERSHIP: Members shall be those approved annually by the Deacons [see Section 1 above].

OPERATING PROCEDURE: This Service Group shall arrange accommodations and meals for missionaries or special speakers. In addition, it shall arrange for the provision of meals for Church members and friends when appropriate [e.g. post surgery, sickness, etc.].

C. Fellowship Service Group:

PURPOSE: To organize and oversee specific Church social activities and meals.

MEMBERSHIP: Members shall be those approved annually by the Deacons [see Section 1 above].

OPERATING PROCEDURE: This Service Group shall organize and oversee Church dinners, receptions, and refreshments for special events as approved by the Deacons, and take responsibility for the church kitchens and appropriate equipment.

D. Head Usher Service Group:

PURPOSE: To provide and coordinate the necessary ushers for Church services.

MEMBERSHIP: Members shall be those approved annually by the Deacons [see Section 1 above].

OPERATING PROCEDURE: Head Ushers are responsible to make those who visit feel welcome and help them in any way, to assist all who attend in such things as seating and distributing materials, to keep the regular printed materials for the pews stocked, to monitor the facilities during the services, and to receive offerings and, with integrity, turn all such funds over to the financial secretary or a trustee.

SECTION 4: COMMITTEES

NOTE: A committee is a temporary group organized for a specific purpose.

A. Nominating Committee:

PURPOSE: The Nominating Committee shall place in nomination at the Bi-Annual Election Meeting, members of the Church whom it deems qualified to serve as officers. No member, other than the Pastor, shall serve two consecutive times on this Committee.

MEMBERSHIP: Pastor[s], a Deacon representative, a Trustee representative, a Sunday School representative [selected by but not necessarily a member of the Christian Education Leadership Team], and a representative from the Missionary Leadership Team.

OPERATING PROCEDURE: At least two months prior to the Bi-Annual Election Business Meeting, the Senior Pastor will initiate the action to form the Nominating Committee. At least six weeks before the Bi-Annual Meeting, each active member of the Church will be given a ballot. Names can be nominated for every office. The emphasis is to be on the spiritual qualifications for service, and the Nominating Committee is required to eliminate a name from consideration if it is known that the individual does not satisfy the requirements of the position. The Nominating Committee shall have a procedure that will protect and insure the integrity and confidentiality of the collection and counting of the nominations. Beginning with the person with the largest number of nominations for a particular office, the Committee will ask each person concerning his/her willingness to serve. As soon as the number of people willing to serve

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equals the number of openings, the process stops and that then becomes the ballot to be presented to the Church for approval. In the event that there are not enough nominations accepted to fill every office, the Nominating Committee shall be responsible to present, as much as possible, a full ballot to the Church. As the Lord leads, it is permissible to present to the Church for approval a list that contains less than the number of openings.

At least two weeks before the Bi-Annual Election Business Meeting, the proposed list of Deacons, Trustees, and Officers shall be posted. Then, at the Bi-Annual Election, the list of proposed Deacons, Trustees and Officers will be presented for approval or disapproval. In the event that the congregation does not approve a nominated Deacon, Trustee or Officer, the Nominating Committee must bring before the Church, within 4 weeks or less, [at a Special Business Meeting] another name for approval.

B. Pastoral Search Committee:

PURPOSE: To initiate a search for, and present to the Church, qualified Senior Pastor candidates when a vacancy in that office occurs.

MEMBERSHIP: Five men, all members of the Church, of which at least two shall be Deacons and one a Trustee. At a vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor, the Pastoral Search Committee shall be elected by the Church at a Special Business Meeting, with the Deacons overseeing this entire election process. The Committee shall select a chairman and secretary from its membership.

OPERATING PROCEDURE: Before a man is brought as a candidate, the Committee shall obtain and evaluate resumes and recommendations, prepare a written questionnaire, submit it to the prospective candidate, evaluate responses, observe him, if possible, in his present ministry and interview him and, if married, his wife. Only one candidate shall be presented to the Church at a time and no candidate who is not approved by the Church can be considered a second time for the same position within a period of one year.

C. Auditing Committee:

PURPOSE: To audit the Church's financial accounts and certify all records including those of the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, and others as appropriate.

MEMBERSHIP: Annually, following the Annual Business Meeting and prior to the end of the year, the Trustees shall appoint three members of the Church to this Committee. No one having signatory authority over the accounts being audited, nor the Financial Secretary, nor no more than one Trustee shall serve on this Committee. Nor shall anyone serve on this Committee for 2 consecutive years.

OPERATING PROCEDURE: The Committee shall at the end of each year, and at other times if directed by the Trustees, audit the financial accounts and records of the Church in accordance with the Financial Audit Guidelines established by the Trustees, and present a written certification of the accounts and records to the Trustees at least one week prior to the Annual Report Meeting of the Church. Any discrepancies shall be reported to the Trustees and the Financial Officer involved. The Committee shall also present its report at the Annual Report Meeting of the Church.

SECTION 5: OTHER LEADERSHIP TEAMS, SERVICE GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

The Church may establish other Leadership Teams, Service Groups or Committees as required to fulfill the purpose of this Church [Article II]. No Leadership Team, Service Group or Committee shall be started without the approval of the Deacons and the Pastor[s]. These organizations shall be subject to the control of the Church through its Constitution and any

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approved Church policy. Upon the request of the Pastor[s], Deacons, or Trustees, any such organization shall present a written report to the person[s] requesting it of its activities. Every Leadership Team, Service Group and Committee shall submit a report covering its activities for the previous year to be published in the Annual Report. A report of any and all funds received and disbursed shall be given annually to the Trustees.

ARTICLE XII ~ BUSINESS MEETINGS

SECTION 1: PROCEDURAL

Paragraph A: Business for Consideration

Any business item to be voted on by the Church shall be recommended by the Deacons and/or Trustees. Any item from the floor shall be brought back before the Church within 3 months with a recommendation from either the Deacons or the Trustees, depending on the matter.

Paragraph B: Quorum

The presence of twenty-five percent of the voting members shall normally constitute a quorum. But at Special Business Meetings called specifically to vote on a Pastor [Article VII, Section 1, Paragraph D], to approve a Constitution Revision or Amendment [Article XIII, Section 2], or to approve a change in the Doctrinal statement of the Church [Article XIII, Section 1], a quorum shall consist of 35% of the voting members.

Paragraph C: Voting Members

All full members may vote at any Church business meeting. Associate members, student members, and inactive members are not eligible to vote.

Paragraph D: Order of Meetings

In the conduct of business, the generally accepted practice of a motion being made and seconded, then allowing for discussion before a vote shall be followed. A written ballot shall be used for the annual budget and for the bi-annual elections, and may be requested at any other time by any member. Consensus and unity shall be the goal, rather than a simple majority, and the Biblical principle of doing everything “*in a fitting and orderly way*” [I Cor. 14:40] shall be followed.

SECTION 2: TYPE OF MEETINGS

Paragraph A: Annual Business Meeting

There shall be an Annual Business Meeting of the Church on the first Sunday of December [or if, for some reason, that is impossible, the earliest possible date thereafter] to approve, by ballot, the annual budget for the coming year and to transact any other Church business. Notice of the meeting shall be given from the pulpit or in the Sunday bulletin for two Sundays preceding the meeting. In the event of postponement or uncompleted business, the meeting shall be called and held upon the earliest practical date thereafter, allowing for two weeks notification. In the event that a new budget is not able to be approved before January first, the previous budget shall be followed until such a time as a new one can be adopted.

Paragraph B. Bi-Annual Election Business Meeting

There shall be a Bi-Annual Election Business Meeting of the Church on the first Sunday of December [in conjunction with the Annual Business Meeting] to elect, by ballot, Deacons, Trustees and Officers. Notice of this meeting shall be given along with notice of the Annual

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Business Meeting. In the event of postponement or uncompleted business, the meeting shall be called and held upon the earliest practical date thereafter, allowing for two weeks notification from the pulpit.

Paragraph C: Annual Report Meeting

There shall be an Annual Report Meeting of the Church in February which will include the report from the Auditing Committee, and at which time the financial reports from the previous year can be approved by two-thirds vote. Annual reports from the various Leadership Teams, Service Groups, organizations and structured programs of Grace should also be presented at this time, in a way determined by the Deacons.

Paragraph D: Special Business Meeting

A Special Business Meeting may be called at any time by the Pastor, Deacons, or Trustees. Public notice and description of the subject shall be given on the Sunday immediately preceding. No other business than that stated in the notice shall be transacted. Meetings held for the call or dismissing of a Pastor [Article VII, Section I, Paragraph C & E] or for corporate business shall be given public notice for two Sundays preceding the meeting. No other business than that in the notice shall be transacted.

ARTICLE XIII ~ AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1: DOCTRINAL

The doctrinal basis of this Church, as stated in Article III of this Constitution, may not be amended or changed without three-fourths approval of the voting members present at a Business Meeting. Notice of the proposed amendment or change shall have been presented and recorded in the minutes of a business meeting at least two months prior to the vote.

SECTION 2: OPERATIONAL

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at any Annual, Bi-Annual, or Special Business Meeting. Notice of the proposed amendment shall have been presented and recorded in the minutes of a business meeting at least two months prior to the vote.

A written notice, including the proposed amendment, shall be available to each member at least one month prior to the meeting at which the action is desired. Notice of the meeting shall be given from the pulpit for two Sundays preceding the meeting. Proposed amendments may be initiated by the Deacons and/or Trustees, or by one fifth [20%] of the voting Church members subscribing to the same by petition to the Deacons and Trustees.

ARTICLE XIV ~ NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

SECTION 1: DEFINITION

This Church shall be a non-profit corporation. No member shall receive profit from the corporation, except, of course, as remuneration for services rendered.

SECTION 2: DISSOLUTION

This Church can only be dissolved by a two-thirds vote. Any and all funds and/or assets shall be equally distributed to the active [i.e. non-retired] missionaries currently supported by the Church.

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ARTICLE XV ~ LEADERSHIP STANDARDS

In order for the Church to hold a consistent witness in the community, each Pastor, Deacon, Trustee, Officer, Leadership Team member, Service Group member, Committee member, teacher, or any other person serving in a place of leadership, or any person who is a part-time or full-time employee of the Church must:

- ~ be a member of the Church in full agreement with the doctrinal position.
- ~ be loyal to the Church, its programs and services, demonstrating a pattern of supportive involvement and attendance in the Church
- ~ be a positive example and testimony for Jesus Christ, abstaining from any practice that would reflect negatively on the Church or the Cause of Christ.
- ~ accept and fulfill the responsibilities in a manner that befits service unto God Most High.

Covenant and Constitution approved by Church Vote Oct.20, 2002, most recently updated on January 25, 2015.