

2016

Constitution and By-Laws



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PREAMBLE

The Bible admonishes us saying, "Let all things be done decently and in order," (I Corinthians 14:40). To this end do we, members of Grace Bible Church, solemnly and sincerely set forth the following Constitution by which we willingly and cheerfully agree to be governed.

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

The name of this organization as incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, shall be the Grace Bible Church of the Town of Colonie.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

- To proclaim the "way of salvation" both here, in the Tri-city area, and through home and foreign mission ministries which are in agreement with the doctrines, practices and purposes of this church, (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 8:4-5; Acts 11:22-26; Acts 13:1-3; Romans 16:17; Philippians 4:14-15; I Timothy 5:22).
- To gather together and be "steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42).
- To provide educational opportunities as necessary to insure that men, women, and children will be trained in light of God's Word, (Deuteronomy 31:9-13; Nehemiah 8:1-9; Acts 19:8-10; I Corinthians 4:14-17; Ephesians 4:11-12).
- To "perfect the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of "Christ," (Ephesians 4:11-16; I Corinthians 12; I Corinthians 14:12, 26).

ARTICLE III – CHURCH COVENANT

- Having been quickened by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior (John 6:63; Romans 8:11; II Corinthians 3:4-6; I Peter 3:18) and on profession of our faith in Him (Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; Philippians 2:9-11), having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:12-13; Acts 10:44-48; Acts 16:14-15), we do now with gladness and singleness of heart enter into this covenant with one another as one body in Christ, (Acts 2:46; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:4).
- Promising to strive to:
 - "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we were called" (Ephesians 4:1-16).
 - "Walk not as other gentiles walk" (Ephesians 4:17-32).
 - "Walk in love" (Ephesians 5:1-7).
 - "Walk as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8-14).
 - "Walk circumspectly" (Ephesians 5:15-17).

ARTICLE IV – CONFESSION OF FAITH

SECTION A – THE SCRIPTURES

The Scriptures teach that the Old and New Testaments are the divine revelation of God, and thus constitute the Word of God, (I Corinthians 2:9-13; II Peter 1:19-20). Men chosen by God wrote the Bible under the guidance and enabling of the Holy Spirit, (II Peter 3:13-16). Thus, every word of the entire original documents was inspired (God-breathed). Therefore, the whole of Scripture is authoritative for the faith and practice of every believer, (II Timothy 3:16-17).

SECTION B – THE GODHEAD

The Scriptures teach that God is infinite (Psalm 90:2), self-existent (John 1:1-4; 5:26), Spirit (John 4:24), unchangeable in His nature (Psalm 102:24-27; Hebrews 1:11-12), omnipotent (Matthew 19:26); omniscient (Psalm 139:1-6; Job 37:16), omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-12), holy (I Peter 1:1-16), righteous (Psalm 119:137; Jeremiah 23:6; I John 2:29), good (Psalm 25:8-110, love (Matthew 5:44-45; John 3:16) and truth (John 14:6; Hebrews 6:18). God exists eternally as three distinct yet inseparable persons known as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Isaiah 48:16-17; 63:9-10; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; I Corinthians 12:4-6; II Corinthians 13:14; I Peter 1:2). These three are one as to their essence, nature and attributes. Each is equally worthy of worship, trust and obedience (Deuteronomy 6:4; James 2:19; I John 5:7). Each of these divine persons has a distinct function in the execution of the eternal purpose of the Godhead.

Part 1 – Father

The Scriptures teach that God the Father is the ultimate source of all things (Corinthians 8:5-6; Ephesians 3:8-11; James 1:17-18). His Fatherhood relationship to the Son denotes their equality of nature, while at the same time it expresses the subordination of the Son to the Father in the execution of the divine purpose (John 1:14, 18; John 5:17-26). He forgives the sins of His chosen ones initiating a Fatherhood relationship with them at their spiritual birth, thus making them partakers of the divine nature and calling them his born ones (Psalm 2:7-10; John 3:16; Ephesians 1:3-6; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Part 2 – Son

The Scriptures teach that the second person of the Triune God is the Son whose name is Jesus (Luke 1:31-32), God (John 1:1), the Word (John 1:14) and the Alpha and the Omega (Revelation 1:8, 11). In the incarnation He became a man through the miracle of His divine conception and virgin birth without change as to His deity (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-20; Luke 1:26-28). On earth, He lived a sinless life (Hebrews 4:15), died a substitutionary death for all men (I John 2:20), and was buried and arose bodily from the grave the third day (Matthew 28:1-10; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Philippians 2:5-11). Then He ascended bodily into heaven (Acts 1:8-9), and is presently fulfilling His intercessory and mediatorial ministry (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24), and has promised to come again and receive the church unto Himself (Matthew 24:29-35; I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Part 3 – Holy Spirit

The Scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14; Acts 5:3-4). The Holy Spirit was a co-agent in creation (Genesis 1:3), the divine author of the revelation of God (II Peter 1:21), and the divine agent in the supernatural conception of the humanity of the Son (Luke 1:35). Proceeding from the Father and sent by both the Father and the Son (John 14:26; 15:26). He came to glorify the Son (John 16:14). In relation to man, the Holy Spirit: Convicts (John 16:7-11); Communicates “life” (John 6:63; II Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 2:5; Titus 3:5) and “light”

(John 16:13; II Corinthians 4:6); Communes (John 14:15-24; Romans 8:8-9; I Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 1:13); Cleanses (Romans 8:12-14) and He Teaches (John 15:26).

SECTION C – CREATION

Part 1 – Physical

The Scriptures teach that the physical universe was created through the instrumentality of His spoken Word, and not as taught by proponents of various theories of evolution (Genesis 1; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 11:3). The elements of the material universe cohere by the Word of His power (Ephesians 4:6; Hebrews 1:3). Before the eternal state, the material universe will be destroyed by Christ's spoken judgment (II Peter 3:7-13; Revelation 21). Therefore, matter is not eternal, indestructible or unchangeable. God has in the past and will in the future, intervene and change the natural laws of the universe through miracles and cataclysmic judgment (Exodus 7-12; Revelation 4:22).

Part 2 – Spirit Beings

The Scriptures teach that prior to the completion of the creation of the material universe, the triune God created a great host of varied spirit beings (Genesis 2:1; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 148:1-5; Colossians 1:16). There are both good and bad angels. The good angels called the elect angels (I Timothy 5:21), serve God as His messengers and minister to those who are the elect among the human race (Genesis 3:24; Psalm 91:11-12; Isaiah 6:1-7; Matthew 18:10; Hebrews 1:14, 9:5). The bad angels, headed by Lucifer who is called Satan, fell by sinning against the most high God and took with him in his rebellion a large number of angels (Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:11-19; II Peter 2:4; Jude 6). Satan is the author of sin and the one who brought about the fall of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:1-7; John 8:44; Ephesians 2:2). Satan, who is called "the god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4), is the accuser of God's people and is constantly active in opposing the works and people of God (Revelation 12:9-10). Satan was defeated at the cross and his ultimate destiny, together with his demon accomplices, is the Lake of Fire (Matthew 25:41; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:10).

Part 3 – Man

The Scriptures teach that Adam was created immediately by God in His image and likeness, apart from any process of evolution (Genesis 1:26-27; 3:19; I Corinthians 11:7; Colossians 3:10; James 3:9). Adam, by personal disobedience to the will of God, became a sinner, depraved in nature and subject to Satan's power (Genesis 3:1-7).

This sin nature and depravity was transmitted to the entire human race so that man is a sinner by nature, choice and practice and is guilty before God, possessing within himself no means of recovery or salvation (Romans 1:18; 3:23; 5:12-19; I Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:8-9).

SECTION D – GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MAN

Part 1 – Person of Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices (Prophet – Priest) of the Son of God (Ephesians 2:1-10; Hebrews 9:11-15; 10:11-14). Jesus Christ, Who pre-existed (John 1:1) and Who, by the appointment of the Father (Acts 2:22-23; 3:18) freely took upon Himself our nature (Philippians 2:7-

8). Being conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18-25) and “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). He was the perfect sacrifice (Hebrews 5:4-10). He honored the Divine Law by His personal obedience (Romans 5:19) and by His death and shedding of His blood on the cross He made a full atonement for our sins (Romans 3:24-25; 5:8-11). Having risen from the dead bodily, He is now enthroned in heaven and makes intercession for us, “God’s elect,” (Romans 8:31-34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24).

Part 2 – Justification

We believe that justification is an act of God’s free grace whereby He pardons all our sin and accepts us as righteous in His sight on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to us (counted in our behalf) when we receive Christ by faith (Romans 3:23-26; 4:22-25; 5:17-19; 8:33-34). It is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer’s blood (Romans 3:28; 4:4-5; 5:9; Galatians 2:16). Justification brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God (Romans 5:1-2, 8-11, 17-19).

Part 3 – Freeness of Salvation

We believe that the gift of salvation is made available to all who hear the gospel (Romans 10:13-17; 16:25-26); that it is the immediate duty of all to accept it by a repentance of sin (Luke 18:13-14), and reception of Christ (Acts 2:21; John 1:12), and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and his practice of sin (Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 7:18; 8:7-8; Ephesians 4:17-18; Titus 1:15-16).

Part 4 – Grace in Regeneration

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated or born again (John 3:3-8); that regeneration consists of God’s unmerited favor in giving a holy disposition to the soul (Ezekiel 36:16-37; John 1:13), and that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 2:10-14; Titus 3:5) in connection with Divine Truth (John 6:63-64; II Thessalonians 2:13).

Evidences that one has been regenerated are:

- Confession of Christ (I John 5:1-5)
- Conformity to commandments (I John 3:9)
- Compassion for Christians (I John 4:7)
- Compassion for the Lost (Galatians 6:10)

Part 5 – Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties (Acts 17:30; I John 3:32) and also inseparable graces wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God, (Ephesians 2:8-9; II Timothy 2:25); whereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt (Luke 15:17-19), danger (Luke 13:3), helplessness (Luke 18:13), and of the way of salvation by Christ (Acts 4:12), we turn to God with sincere sorrow for sin (II Corinthians 7:9-10), confession and supplication for mercy (Luke 18:13) and at the same time we heartily receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our only and all-sufficient Savior (John 3:15-18; 14:6; Romans 10:9-10).

We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which He is graciously predestines, calls, justifies, and glorifies those individuals whom He has chosen to save (Romans 8:30) and this is perfectly consistent with the responsibility of the sinner to repent and believe (Acts 2:38-39; 16:31; 20:21).

Part 6 – Sanctification (Positional – Personal)

- A. Positional - We believe that positional sanctification is that inward spiritual work which comes from the Father (Hebrews 13:20-21), through the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:10-14), by the Holy Spirit (II Thessalonians 2:13), when God calls a person to be a true believer and delivers him from the punishment of sin.
- B. Personal – In personal sanctification God the Father not only washes the person from his/her sins through Christ’s blood, but He also separates the person from his/her natural love of sin and the world, and delivers the person from the pollution of sin (Philippians 1:6; I Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 13:20-21).

We believe that the Bible teaches that God established marriage as only between a man and a woman (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4, 5), and that all sexual conduct outside the bonds of marriage is sin (I Corinthians 6:9, 10), with fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality and bestiality all being described by God as abominations (Leviticus 18:6-30). We further believe that the physical condition in which a person is born, including his/her gender, is established by God (Exodus 4:11; John 9:3). Therefore claims of innate sexual confusion are false and transvestism and its related perversions, including sex change operations, are abominations before God (Deuteronomy 22:5). We further believe that declaring God’s word and warning people of the temporal and eternal consequences of their sins, including sexual perversions, is an act of loving concern. God’s word remains true and His prohibitions, including those on sexual perversions and immoralities, cannot be satisfied or amended by any human government authority.

The instrument by which the Lord effects personal sanctification is generally discipline: self-discipline (I Corinthians 11:28; Ephesians 5:26; I Timothy 4:7; I Peter 1:22; I John 1:9), church discipline (Matthew 18:15-17. I Corinthians 5) and God’s discipline: (I Corinthians 11:31-32; Hebrews 12:10).

Part 7 – Perseverance of Saints

We believe that a person once saved is always saved (John 10:28; Romans 8:38-39) and that real believers endure unto the end (John 6:37; Romans 11:29); that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors (I John 2:19); that a special providence watches over their welfare (II Thessalonians 3:3); and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto glorification (Philippians 1:6; II Timothy 1:12).

SECTION E – THE CHURCH

Part 1 – The Visible Church

We believe that the visible church is the church as man sees it: a local body of professing believers who have been baptized and who have devoted themselves:

- A. To the studying of God’s Word
- B. To fellowshiping with God’s people
- C. To partaking in the Lord’s supper
- D. praying (Acts 2:41-42, 47)

The word “*Ekklesia*” (Church) most often is used to describe a voluntary and independent self-contained group of professing believers (Romans 16:3-5; II Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:2). These believers are exhorted to use their God-given gifts for the edifying of one another (I Corinthians 12-14) and to use God’s Word to lead others to Christ (Acts 8:1-4; II Corinthians 5:12-21). The officers of the local church are Pastors (Elders & Bishops) and

Deacons, whose qualifications and duties are defined in the Epistles of Timothy and Titus (Acts 6:1-7; I Timothy 3; Titus 1).

Part 2 – The Invisible Church

We believe that the invisible church is the church as God sees it: A universal church which is made up of only “True Believers” (Hebrews 12:22-23). The invisible church includes the whole body of Christendom (Ephesians 1:22-23; 3:21; 5:23-32; Colossians 1:17-18). It is likewise the invisible church’s responsibility to edify saints and to witness to sinners (Ephesians 4:1-16).

Whether the church refers to the visible or to the invisible body, the importance of unity is always stressed (I Corinthians 12:25; Ephesians 4:16).

SECTION F – ORDINANCES

Part 1 – Baptism

We believe that all who have repented of sin and received the Savior should be baptized for the following reasons:

- A. have been commanded to be baptized (Matthew 28:19)
- B. We have been given an example to follow:
 1. The Savior (Matthew 3:13-15)
 2. The Saints (Acts 2:38; 8:36-39; 10:44-48; 16:30-33)

Because baptism symbolizes both the Spiritual cleansing or purification of the believer (Acts 2:38; 22:16), and his/her identification with Christ in His burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-10), then the mode should correspond as nearly as possible to that symbol. Submersion in the waters of baptism portrays the believer’s identification with Christ in His death and burial. This symbolizes the believer’s dying to sin and thus he is no longer under its condemnation or bondage. The emergence of the believer from the water portrays his resurrection with Christ. This symbolizes the believer’s “newness of life”, his freedom from sin (Romans 6:3-10).

Part 2 – Lord’s Supper

We believe that the Lord’s Supper is a memorial to commemorate the broken body and the shed blood of Jesus Christ for our sins (Matthew 26:26-30; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

The elements of the table of the Lord are symbols of what was involved in His sacrifice as the Lamb of God in providing our salvation. The bread represents the body of Christ, which was broken for us, and the cup symbolizes the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed to pay for our sins (Luke 22:14-20). Because of what this ordinance represents, we must be careful to observe it with reverence and respect, lest we be judged (I Corinthians 11:17-22; 11:27-34). It is the policy of Grace Bible Church to practice “open communion”. Thus, we encourage all who would participate to examine themselves concerning their salvation and sanctification prior to their partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

SECTION G – THE DOCTRINE OF SEPARATION

We believe that the Scriptures teach that the “Church” and Individual Christians” have the responsibility to separate themselves from:

1. Disobedient and unrepenting brothers (Matthew 18:15-17; I Corinthians 5; II Thessalonians 3:6; 13-15).
2. False teachers and their teachings (Romans 16:17-19; II John 1:7-11; Titus 1:10-16; 3:8-11).
3. Unbelievers
 - a. We are not to be unequally yoked in the areas of Religion, Riches or Romance (II Chronicles 18-19; Nehemiah 13; II Corinthians 6:14-17).
 - b. We are not to be partakers of their unfruitful deeds (Ephesians 5:1-14).

SECTION H – QUALIFICATIONS OF CHURCH OFFICERS

Pastors (elders or bishops) and deacons are the only officers portrayed in the Scriptures. Each pastor and each deacon shall be a man (I Timothy 2:12) who meets the qualifications stated in I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9. (See also ARTICLE VII – LEADERS).

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION A – ACCEPTANCE OF MEMBERS

This Church shall be composed of members who profess in a Church Service to be saved by grace having received God’s gifts of repentance and faith to believe Christ died for their sins, was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

SECTION B – DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

1. It is vital to the glory of our Lord and the testimony of this church that the purity of the church be preserved and its peace protected. With these ends in view, it shall be the duty of all to seek diligently to reclaim any member known to be living in sin.
2. Any member who is known to be disobeying God’s Word shall be dealt with in accordance to Matthew 18:15-17 and I Corinthians 5.
 - a. You who know a brother/sister is sinning must go and reprove him/her in private that he/she might listen and repent.
 - b. If they refuse to listen then take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed.
 - c. If they still refuse to listen to you then it must be revealed to the church. If the individual refuses to listen to the church then he/she must be removed from the membership of the church.
 - d. Two or more members who have witnessed the unrepentfulness of an individual may call for a general assembly of the church, with the consent of at least one board member, for the purpose of call the individual to repentance or removal from the church. Two weeks notice shall be given prior to the public meeting. A member may be dismissed when three-fourths of the quorum (see Article VI, Section B, #6) vote to do so.

- e. In as much as an unrepentant heart is the only cause for dismissal from the church, restoration to the church may come only after one has given evidence of repentance (II Corinthians 2:5-11), and has been accepted back into the membership by a three-fourths vote of the quorum.

SECTION C – DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

Dismissal shall be by:

- A. Death
- B. Discipline (See Section B)
- C. Departure:
 1. Any member in good standing may be granted a letter of transfer to any church of like faith and order upon its request. The letter shall be sent to the church with which the member wishes to unite. If no letter is requested by the church but they become members of the church, their membership in Grace Bible shall cease.
 2. Any member in good standing will be put on the inactive roll after 3 months of absence from the church services. After one year of consecutive absences, the person shall be dropped from the membership.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

SECTION A – PUBLIC WORSHIP

1. Public worship services shall be held regularly, on the Lord’s Day in our own place of worship. These services shall not normally be given over to anything but prayer and the preaching of the Word, with an appropriate musical ministry. Any other special presentation shall be subject to approval by the Pastor.
2. At least once each week there shall be a meeting for prayer and praise.
3. It shall be the practice of this church to observe the Lord’s Supper at least once every month at which time it may be appropriate that the Covenant be read.
4. Based on I Corinthians 11:2-16, it is our “recommendation” that women wear a head covering during the services. If a woman desires to teach or minister in other ways (special music, public prayer) she is “required” to wear a head covering.

SECTION B – BUSINESS MEETINGS

1. All business meetings, except for the purpose of disciplining, (See Article V, Section B, 2d), shall be called and moderated by the Pastor. If the office of Pastor is vacant, these meetings shall be called by the deacons and moderated by the Vice-chairman of the deacons.

2. The official church year shall begin the first day of January and close the thirty-first day of December.
3. The semi-annual meetings of the church shall be held sometime during the months of June and December. The time for business meetings may be established at the discretion of the church.
4. Special business meetings may be called at any time, providing public notice be given of the same on the Sunday preceding, except as otherwise stipulated in this constitution, or required by state law. Routine business such as receiving members or granting letters may be transacted when necessary at any stated meetings of the church without regard to the above requirements.
5. Only members sixteen years of age and above shall be eligible to vote. Only members eighteen years of age and above shall be eligible to vote upon corporate matters such as buying, selling or mortgaging property, or election of board members.
6. Fifty percent of voting, active membership constitutes a quorum.

SECTION C – RULES OF ORDER OF BUSINESS

The ordinary rules of deliberative assemblies shall be observed in the transaction of business, as set forth in Roberts’ Rules of Order.

ARTICLE VII – LEADERS

No one shall be nominated to office who has not been a member of this church at least one year; except upon the recommendation of the pastor and deacons (I Timothy 5:22; 3:10).

SECTION A – PASTOR

Part 1 – Qualifications

The pastor shall be a minister in good standing who believes in “The Articles of Faith” adopted by this church and who fulfills the specific qualifications as delineated in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

Part 2 – Nomination – Election – Dismissal

- A. A candidate for the pastorate and his family shall be carefully examined by the pastor and deacons, and he shall preach at least two consecutive Sundays before being considered as a candidate. If he has served in other churches, his ministry there should be explored. He shall be required to state his acceptance of and adherence to “The Articles of Faith, Constitution and Covenant” of the church. Any difference which he holds concerning these documents should be submitted to the pastor and deacons in writing. The pastor and deacons shall present only one man at a time, once, for the consideration and vote of the church.
- B. A call to a pastor shall be extended at a meeting of the church called for that purpose and announced from the pulpit for two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting. A three-fourths majority of the quorum shall be necessary for a call. Voting shall be by a ballot. A

written call and agreement shall be presented to the prospective pastor giving details of the church-pastoral relationship including: moving expenses, salary, housing, car allowance, vacations, social security, retirement, holidays, personal time (see pastoral salary and benefit plan sheet), after these matters have been discussed with the pastor and agreed upon.

- C. The pastor shall continue in office until he resigns or is disciplined in accordance to Article 5, Section B.

Part 3 – Responsibilities

- A. The pastor shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the church. His primary responsibilities shall be to pray, preach the gospel and teach the Word.
- B. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all boards, committees, and business sessions and shall call and moderate all meetings of the same, unless specified otherwise by a majority of the deacons.
- C. The pastor shall have direct responsibility for all employees including the associate pastor (if any).
- D. The pastor shall be chairman of the board of deacons.
- E. The pastor shall have complete charge of the platform.
- F. The pastor will assist in the hiring of his replacement and in the hiring of any assistant pastor.

SECTION B – DEACONS

Part 1 – Qualifications

The deacons shall be male members of this church, in good standing, who evidence the specific qualifications for deacons as described in Acts 6, and I Timothy 3:8-13.

Part 2 – Nomination – Election – Dismissal

- A. Upon the recommendation of the pastor and deacons, candidates shall be presented to the church body for election.
- B. The deacons shall consist of men elected by the church. There shall be no specific required number of deacons. A deacon must receive at least three-fourths majority vote of the quorum.
- The week following the election of officers, the deacons shall elect to serve for a period of twelve months, beginning the first day of January, a vice-chairman and clerk, and such standing committees as the work may require.
 - It shall be the duty of the clerk to keep the records of the actions taken by the deacons and the congregation and to conduct the official correspondence of the church.
- C. The deacon shall continue in office until he resigns or is disciplined in accordance to Article 5, Section B.

Part 3 – Responsibilities

- A. Board
1. They shall assist the pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church; to be his helpers and counselors; to exercise prudent watch care over the church membership; to seek out such members as need alms; to visit the sick; to visit the lost; to assist at baptisms; their wives assisting the ladies; and to supervise the preparation and distribution of the Lord's Supper.
 2. They shall appoint ushers to serve at all meetings of the church.

3. They shall administer the deacon's fund.
4. They shall serve as the trustees of the church, and as a board, they shall serve as its corporate agent. They shall not have authority to sell, lease, give away or dispose of any church property in excess of \$500.00 value; not to mortgage or encumber the church with debt in excess of \$500.00 (except as the church order the same by vote). They shall be responsible for the care and upkeep of the physical properties of the church, including the hiring of a custodian.
5. The vice-chairman shall moderate all deacons' meetings if the office of pastor is vacant.
6. They shall be responsible for scheduling and approving all church activities.
7. They shall assist the pastor in conducting the membership classes covering the Articles of Faith for all prospective members.
8. They shall authorize a person to countersign all checks.
9. They shall be responsible for preparation of job descriptions for church employees.
10. They are, in effect, to handle all of the responsibilities of church administration, leaving the pastor free to pray and preach the Word.
11. The budget committee shall be composed of the pastor and deacons. The deacons, along with the pastor, shall be responsible for preparing the budget for the ensuing year.
12. The deacons, along with the pastor, shall be responsible for the nomination of any candidate to any office of the church. Every member of this committee shall have the right to veto the nomination of any candidate, so long as he can do so with a good conscience before God. No candidate shall be nominated without a one hundred percent approval of the pastors and deacons.
 - a. Members who wish to submit nominations should give their suggestions in writing to the nominating committee at least three weeks before the election to enable the committee to ascertain their qualifications.
 - b. Before posting the nominations, the committee shall approach each nominee and secure consent to serve in harmony with the pastor and the constitution of the church, if elected.

B. Individuals

Vice Chairman

- This deacon shall oversee the needs of the church in the absence of the pastor.

Clerk

- The clerk shall charge of the official correspondence and shall keep a record of all business meetings of the church and the deacons, entering the minutes of the meetings of the two groups in separate records. The clerk shall keep a record of the membership, of baptisms and of the reception and dismissal of members. The clerk shall perform such duties as properly belong to the office.
- The clerk shall promptly provide the financial secretary and treasurer with a transcript of the minutes of each church business meeting in which authority is granted for the disbursement or transfer of funds.

- The clerk shall certify annually to the bank the names of officers who are authorized to have access to the church's safety deposit boxes and to sign the checks for disbursement of funds.
- The clerk shall provide a letter of transfer upon request from any member in good standing.
- Upon his retirement or removal from office, he shall deliver to his successor, or the vice-chairman of the deacons, all records, files and/or other papers belonging to the church, and shall present the same with all contents complete to the date of surrender of such documents.

SECTION C – MISCELLANEAOUS

Part 1 – Qualifications

These church leaders shall be spiritually mature, of unquestioned Christian character, loyal to the Word of God, dedicated and devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the spiritual and material welfare of the church. They shall also be faithful in attendance and participation, both in regular services and business meetings of the church. Their moral conduct shall be beyond reproach. In light of I Timothy 3, the home and family relationships must be considered as well as individual qualifications.

Part 2 – Nomination – Election – Dismissal

Upon the recommendation of the pastors and deacons candidates shall be presented to the church body for election.

- A. Each candidate must receive at least three-fourths majority vote of the quorum. These officers shall consist of men elected by the church.
- B. The individual shall continue in office until he resigns or is disciplined in accordance to Article 5, Section B.

Part 3 – Responsibilities

Financial Secretary (He – Deacon)

- It shall be the duty of the financial secretary, together with one or more of the deacons, to count and record in a permanent record all monies received in the offerings of the church. The financial secretary shall be responsible for depositing all funds in the bank, including monies received from organizations within the church. A statement of each donor's account shall be given to him at the end of each year by the financial secretary; offering envelopes will be provided to enable proper records to be kept. The financial secretary shall provide the treasurer with a record of all monies received and deposited, specifying the distribution into various funds as indicated by the donors or by special offerings. The vice-chairman of the deacons shall assume the duties of the financial secretary in absence of the latter, except that he may not assume the duties of the treasurer (see outline in Section C, Part 3b) simultaneously.

Treasurer (He – Deacon)

- The treasurer shall be responsible for the recording of all financial transactions in permanent records and shall make quarterly and annual reports to the church.
- The treasurer shall pay the bills of the church after they have been approved by the board. He shall write, sign, record and mail all checks. Checks shall be countersigned by a person authorized by the pastor and deacons, other than the financial secretary. The vice-chairman of the deacons shall assume the responsibility of signing checks in the treasurer's absence, except that he shall not perform the duties of the financial secretary (as outlined in Section C, Part 3a) simultaneously.

Sunday School Superintendent (He)

- The Sunday School Superintendent, under the pastor's leadership, shall have general supervision over the Sunday School, teachers and officers. He shall carry out the program established and shall report annually to the church.
- He shall be responsible with the Boards' approval for appointing and dismissing all Sunday School teachers.

ARTICLE VIII – MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH

SECTION A – STATEMENT

All departments, organizations, classes and groups are subservient parts of the church and shall, under not circumstances, be considered as separate and apart from the church or as operating independently of the church, its pastor and deacons. Each group shall remember this and be constantly careful not to detract from or divide the church body.

SECTION B – MISSIONS

It shall be the policy of this church to support only missions and outreaches engaged principally in evangelization and establishment of evangelistic, Bible believing separated fundamental churches, schools, hospitals and similar ministries. They shall be known to be in hearty agreement with our confession of faith, both in doctrine and practice. Christian schools and social agencies, such as homes for the aged, children's homes etc., shall be considered an appropriate part of the missionary program.

ARTICLE IX – ORDAINING

SECTION A – ORDAINING

Any member of this church who in the judgment of the board gives sufficient evidence of his piety, zeal and aptness to teach, and feels that he is called of God to the work of the Christian ministry may, upon recommendation of the board of deacons, be ordained to preach.

ARTICLE X – FINANCIAL SUPPORT POLICY

The systematic giving of money for the support of the work of the Lord is duty as well as worship, yet it must be kept in the plane of voluntary, free-will offerings, untarnished by any hope of material gain. No monies shall be raised for the support of the church and its various activities by any but the Biblical plan of tithes, offerings and gifts.

No part of the net earnings of the organization shall incur to the benefit of, or be distributed to, its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of its purposes.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

The constitution may be amended at any business meeting by a three-fourths vote of the quorum, provided two weeks notice has been given the church.

ARTICLE XII – CHURCH PLANTING AGREEMENT

Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC, extended a conditional loan to Grace Bible Church, in the amount of fifty-two hundred dollars, to be paid in monthly installments for one year, from August 1978 through July 1979. This financial help from the University was given to help support the pastor’s financial needs during our formative stage to help assure our church’s independence.

This support was received by Grace Bible Church, and its founding pastor “with the understanding that the church will never affiliate with any fellowship, association, convention, denomination, etc. It is to be completely autonomous and non-affiliated. In the event the church should affiliate with anything, the fifty-two hundred dollars is to be paid back to Bob Jones University.” It is further understood that the church is not connected with Bob Jones University, and the University, except in the matter of the conditional loan, will exercise no claim or control over it.

ARTICLE XIII – DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution of this organization, no residual asset shall go to or for the benefit of any individual or individuals; but the residual assets shall only go to: an organization which has been determined to be exempt from Federal Income Tax as an organization, fundamental church or organization selected by the congregation at the time of dissolution as having like faith and order as our church.

ARTICLE XIV – CONSTITUTION REVIEW

This constitution shall be reviewed annually for the purpose of updating and improving by the Board of Deacons, with recommended amendments to be presented to the congregation for approval.