

THE CONSTITUTION OF GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The ultimate purpose of this local church is to glorify God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ.

The immediate purpose of this church is:

1. to provide worship, fellowship and instruction in the Word of God to those who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior; and
2. to present the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ at home and abroad to those who have not accepted Him as their personal Savior.

II. STATEMENT OF FAITH AND DOCTRINE

Section A. *Articles of Biblical Faith*

1. *The Holy Scriptures*

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Matt. 5:18; John 16:12-13).

2. *The Godhead*

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deut. 6:4; 2 Cor. 13:14).

3. *The Person and Work of Christ*

- a. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (John 1:1-2, 14; Luke 1:35).
- b. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Rom. 3:24-25; 1 Pet. 2:24; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:3-5).

- c. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of representative, intercessor, and advocate (Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2).

4. *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*

- a. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that He is the supernatural agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:13-14).
- b. We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth; and, that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (John 16:13; 1 John 2:20, 27; Eph. 5:18).

5. *The Total Depravity of Man*

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and, that man is totally depraved, and of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3, 12).

6. *Salvation*

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (Eph. 2:8-10; John 1:12; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

7. *The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers*

We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word. That Word, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

8. *The Two Natures of the Believer*

We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and, that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural (Rom. 6:13; 8:12-13; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

9. *Separation*

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded by God (2 Tim. 3:1-5; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11; 2 Cor. 6:14; 7:1).

10. *Missions*

We believe that it is the obligation of the saved to witness by life and by word to the truths of the Holy Scriptures and to seek to proclaim the gospel to all mankind (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:19-20).

11. *The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts*

- a. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts and that the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is given to each member of the Body of Christ for the good and profit of the Body according to the will of God (1 Cor. 12:4-11). We also believe that Jesus Christ gave gifted men to the church for the equipping of the saints to do the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11-12). We believe that sign gifts were primarily designed to authenticate God's apostolic messengers and to confirm their message (2 Cor. 12:12; Mark 16:20; John 14:26; 15:15). However, as the Church was established and as the New Testament Scriptures were completed, these sign gifts ceased (Heb. 2:3-4; Rom. 10:17).
- b. We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted (John 15:7; 1 John 5:14-15).

12. *The Church*

- a. We believe that the church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born again persons of this present age (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2).
- b. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).
- c. We believe in the autonomy of the local church, free of any external authority or control (Acts 13:1-4; 15:22-23; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
- d. We recognize the ordinances of water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper as a Scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:8; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

13. *Dispensationalism*

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations of rules of life, which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather divinely ordered stewardship by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these, the age of law, the age of the Church, and the age of the Millennial Kingdom are subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (John 1:17; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25; Heb. 7:19; Rev. 20:2-6).

14. *The Personality of Satan*

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and, that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6, 7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

15. *The Second Advent of Christ*

We believe in that "blessed hope:" the personal, imminent, pretribulational and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones; and in His subsequent return to earth, with His saints, to establish His Millennial Kingdom (1 Thess. 4:13-18; Zech. 14:4-11; Rev. 19:11-16; 20:1-6, 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 3:10).

16. *The Eternal State*

- a. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Rev. 5-6, 12-13).
- b. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; Rev. 20:4-6; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17).
- c. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne of judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment (Luke 16:19-26; Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6, 7; Mark 9:43-48; Rev. 20:11-15).

Section B. *Movements Contrary to Faith*

1. *Ecumenism*

Ecumenism is that movement which seeks the organizational unity for all Christianity and ultimately for all religions. Its principal advocates are the World Council of Churches and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

2. *Neo-Orthodoxy*

Neo-Orthodoxy is that theological movement which affirms the transcendence of God, the finiteness and sinfulness of man, and the necessity of supernatural divine revelation of truth; however, while using evangelical terminology, it seriously departs from orthodoxy in accepting the view of destructive higher criticism, in denying the inerrancy of the Bible as historic revelation, in accepting religious experience as the criterion of truth, and in abandoning important fundamentals of the Christian faith.

3. *New Evangelicalism* (Neo-Evangelicalism, New Conservatism)

- a. These terms refer to the movement with evangelicalism characterized by a toleration of and a dialogue with theological liberalism. Its essence is seen in an emphasis upon the social application of the gospel and weak or unclear doctrines of the inspiration of Scripture, biblical creationism, eschatology, dispensationalism and separation. It is further characterized by an attempt to accommodate biblical Christianity and to make it acceptable to the modern mind.
- b. We believe that these movements are out of harmony with the Word of God and the official doctrine and position of Grace Bible Church.

Section C. *Covenant of Faith*

In subscribing to these articles of faith, we by no means set aside or undervalue any of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, but we deem the knowledge, belief, and acceptance of the Truth as set forth in our Doctrinal Statement to be requisite to sound faith and fruitful practice, and therefore will be expressed in the teaching and preaching at Grace Bible Church.

III. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Section A. *Policy of Bible Doctrine*

1. The responsibility of Grace Bible Church is to teach the whole Word of God; it is the responsibility of the Holy Spirit to teach His doctrine through the clear exposition of the whole Bible; it is the responsibility of the elders of the church, acting under the Holy

Spirit, to guard and preserve the truth so taught (Acts 20:20-29; 2 Tim. 1:12-14; 3:16; Titus 1:9-11).

2. Since a primary responsibility of the elders it to preserve the integrity of Bible doctrine (Titus 1:9), the elders shall be the final authority as to the content of teaching to be disseminated in all officially sanctioned gatherings of the church.
3. Those who teach in Grace Bible Church are responsible to teach the whole counsel of God, in sound doctrine, rightly dividing the Word of Truth (Acts 20:27; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:15; 3:16-17; Titus 2:1).

Section B. *Policy on Membership*

1. All who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior are part of the Body of Christ, of which Grace Bible Church is a local expression (1 Cor. 12:13).
2. Any person who has trusted in Christ alone as his or her personal Savior, has subsequently been baptized, has a desire to live a consistent Christian life, and is willing to submit himself to the leadership of this church shall be considered eligible for membership in Grace Bible Church.
3. All applicants for membership shall a) participate in a membership class at Grace Bible Church, b) complete and sign the membership application and covenant c) make a personal statement before at least two board members of their faith in Christ, their acknowledgement of having read the Doctrinal Statement and Constitution, their purpose, by God's grace to live a holy Life, and their willingness to submit themselves to the leadership of this church. Upon the unanimous approval of this review committee, and after placing the applicants name in the bulletin for two consecutive weeks for responses from the congregation, the applicant shall be received into church membership upon verbally declaring their commitment to keep the membership covenant at a regular church service.
4. The following privileges and responsibilities of membership shall apply to all who become members of this church:
 - a. Privileges: Regular services provided, Bible study provided, preaching and teaching from the Word of God given, opportunities given to engage in Christian service, ordinances given and observed (communion and baptism), special services provided, counseling, fellowship, prayer meetings provided, training given for Christian service, marriages, dedications and funerals, practical assistance given where necessary, privileges of participation in church affairs, and privileges of voting (16 years of age and above).

- b. Responsibilities: Faithful attendance at services, obedience to the Word of God, serving according to one's gift, personal spiritual growth, regular giving, submission to spiritual leadership, and witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. Membership at Grace Bible Church may be terminated and the members named dropped from the membership roll at Grace Bible Church under the following circumstances:
- a. Voluntary termination at the request of any member in good standing. No member may withdraw his/her membership during the process of church discipline of that member, as set forth in Section J.
 - b. Death of a member.
 - c. Active involvement by the member in another church. (Excluding students or military personnel temporarily living in another community.)
 - d. Those who have not regularly attended Grace Bible church for a period of one year unless for illness or being physically impaired.
 - e. Church discipline for an unrepentant member.

Section C. *Policy on Ecclesiastical Affiliation*

Grace Bible church is a non-denominational church. Christian unity is maintained on the basis of all believers being one in Christ, not on the basis of human organizations (Rom. 12:5; John 17:20-23; Eph. 4:4-6).

Section D. *Policy on Finances*

Believers, giving as the Lord has prospered and directed them, support the ministry of Grace Bible Church.

1. Giving will be private and secret (Matt. 6:2-4).
2. Giving according to a tithe or other fixed formula will not be advocated (2 Cor. 8:12; 9:7). Rather, all believers will be encouraged to give generously and sacrificially, as they purpose in their own hearts in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 8:7; 9:6-8; Phil. 4:14).
3. Advance commitments to give for a specific purpose ("Faith Promise" offerings) may be recommended from time to time, but shall be secret and non-binding (1 Cor. 16:2; Matt. 6:2-4; 2 Cor. 8:10-11; 9:7).
4. Our desire is to fulfill all obligations promptly (Rom. 13:8).

5. Strict accounting shall be made of all funds entrusted to the church (2 Cor. 8:19-21).
6. Memorial gifts will be received and acknowledgement made privately to designated persons; however, no permanent markers or memorials will be placed on articles of church property.
7. Conditional gifts will not be accepted; however, gifts may be designated for causes consistent with the purpose of the church.

Section E. *Policy on Officers*

1. Spiritual work in the church is a result of believers exercising their spiritual gifts. Usually at least one man with the combined gifts of pastor-teacher is supported by the church so he may give full time to study, teaching, and pastoral care of the flock. Such gifted men do not, by virtue of their gift or support, exercise any authority.
2. The word “deacon” means, literally, one who helps or serves. “Elder” means an older person — usually one of maturity in the Word, seasoned in the experiences of life, and affording a measure of leadership. The Board of Elders exercises supervision over the affairs of the local church, especially as to preserving the unity, peace, and doctrinal purity of the assembly in the New Testament. Elders are required to meet rigorous requirements as to background, reputation, character, and spiritual maturity. These requirements are spelled out in 1 Tim. 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
3. In the light of the Scriptures, elders are seen to be directly chargeable to God for the welfare of the local church and for each individual in it (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17). Such a responsibility would be crushing without the love, honor, support and prayers of the flock (Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Tim. 5:17) and the promise of ultimate reward for faithful service (1 Pet. 5:4). Elders are to exercise vigilance and discipline over themselves (Acts 20:28-30) but may also consider complaints from outside their number if confirmed by two or three witnesses (1 Tim. 5:19). Partiality in such cases is strictly forbidden (1 Tim. 5:21).

Section F. *Policy of Church Government*

Under the headship of Christ, the government of Grace Bible Church is invested in its active membership and executed through the Board of Elders, which has final responsibility and authority.

1. The Board of Elders shall act as the church’s sole authority in the interpretation of Scripture.
2. The Board of Elders shall have the management and control of all property belonging to the church. They shall not have the authority to sell, transfer, mortgage or purchase any

real estate of the church except by a 90% majority vote of membership present at a called congregational business meeting announced at least two consecutive Sunday mornings prior to the called meeting.

3. The Board of Elders shall have the authority to call such congregational meetings for the purpose of recommending such action as may call for a vote of the congregation and for the purpose of receiving advice or instruction from the congregation.
4. The Board of Elders of Grace Bible Church shall decide any matter by unanimous vote of the members present. A committee of Grace Bible Church shall decide any matter for a vote by a margin of no less than a 2/3 majority of those members present. No vote shall be taken, however, at any meeting of such boards or committees unless a quorum is present. A quorum shall consist of at least 2/3 of the members elected to such board or committee.
5. The elected offices within the government of Grace Bible Church that require nomination and vote by the congregation as hereafter detailed shall be the office of pastor, associate pastor, or other ministers, and the office of elder or deacon. Other employees or officers of the church may be appointed by or dismissed by the Board of Elders.
 - a. Nominations shall be made by a nominating committee chosen by the Board of Elders. Such nominating committee shall be chosen during the month of January of each year and shall consist of not Less than three (3) members consisting of men from the Board of Elders. The term of office for such committee shall be for one year. The nominating committee may place nominations, and/or candidates for vacancies existing within the elected offices of the church, at a called business meeting of the congregation. Nominations may also be made from the congregation up to one week prior to such business meeting provided that the nominations are in writing and signed by the person nominating. The nominating committee shall thoroughly investigate the qualifications and capabilities of all nominees with the final approval from the Elder Board, including any nominees from the congregation. The Board of Elders at their discretion may set guidelines and policies concerning qualifications and capabilities of the various elected offices.
 - b. Any vote of the congregation taken at a called business meeting shall require at least a 90% majority vote of the voting members present 16 years of age and older. Twenty five percent of the membership of the church shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business at any business meeting.
 - c. A pastor of Grace Bible Church may be called or dismissed at a called business meeting of the congregation after recommendation by the Elder Board. The call or dismissal of members of the Board of Elders and members of the Board of Deacons shall be in like manner.
 - d. Each duly elected member of the Board of Elders and the Board of Deacons shall serve for a term of three (3) years, unless otherwise specified at the time of election.

After having served such term, he may be reelected to either board in accordance with the above requirements for nomination and election.

Section G. *Policy on Unanimity*

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the administrator of the local church, and that believers are to walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16) and to be filled by the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Grace Bible Church to seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit before making any decision affecting church policy, practice, personnel, or property. We believe we can know the mind of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:12, 16). The Holy Spirit is One and the Body of Christ is one (Eph. 4:4).
2. Believers claiming to be filled with the Spirit should be one in mind, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." (1 Cor. 14:33) The Scriptures, in many passages, exhort believers to seek unity or oneness of mind (Eph. 4:3, 13; Psalm 133:1; 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27; 2:2; 4:2; 1 Pet. 3:8; Rom. 15:5-6). Therefore, a spirit of unanimity should be the goal of every meeting at Grace Bible Church.

Section H. *Policy on Evangelism*

1. Evangelism means presenting the good news of God's deliverance from sin through faith in the finished work of Christ (Rom. 3:23-24). When this information is received in faith salvation results (John 1:12). Without faith on the part of the hearers, no evangelistic activity can succeed (Heb. 4:2).
2. The Scriptures teach that because of satanic blindness to the gospel of grace (2 Cor. 4:3-4), unregenerate man cannot comprehend salvation without the aid of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 4:6). God has put in the hands of the Holy Spirit the responsibility of convicting men of their sin and their need for a Savior (John 16:7-11). The Holy Spirit's part is to draw men (John 6:44; 12:32), to convict them (John 16:8), and to regenerate them (Titus 3:5).
3. The believer's part is to witness in word (1 Pet. 3:15), in life (Acts 1:8, Phil. 2:15-16), and in works (Matt. 5:16); and to be involved in intercessory prayer for unsaved individuals (John 15:16; 16:23-24; Luke 11:9; James 5:16; Rom. 8:26-27).
4. It is the policy of Grace Bible Church to discourage the substitution of mere human activities or devices for the involvement of individual believers in prayer and preparation for being used of the Holy Spirit in true, Scriptural evangelism.
5. It is the policy of Grace Bible Church to present the gospel in every service, but to avoid human schemes designed to compel or coax decisions.
6. It is the policy of Grace Bible Church to encourage believers to become involved in worldwide evangelization through financial support of foreign missionaries or other individuals or organizations engaged in Scripturally sound efforts to extend the Gospel or build up believers.

Section I. *Policy on Ordinances*

In obedience to Scripture, two ordinances are observed by Grace Bible Church:

1. The ordinance of baptism is administered to any believer upon his request (Acts 8:36) and is encouraged upon all believers as a testimony (Rom. 6:3-6; Acts 2:38), identification (Gal. 3:26-27), and to assure a clear conscience toward God (1 Pet. 3:21)
2. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper is observed monthly, with an invitation extended to all believers who are in fellowship, and has as its purpose to "proclaim the Lord's death until He comes," keeping His person and work central (1 Cor. 11:23-34).

Section J. *Policy on Church Discipline*

1. Church discipline is a process the local church initiates when known unconfessed sin exists among those to whom we minister. It is action that is designed to keep the Body pure of immorality (1 Cor. 5:1-13), false teaching (Titus 1:9-11; Gal. 1:8-9; 1 Tim. 1:19-20, 6:3-5; 2 John 9-11), and divisiveness (3 John 9-10; 1 Tim. 5:19-21; Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-11; Matt. 18:15). It is carried out in the spirit of love and humility with restoration of the believer who is sinning as its aim (Matt. 18:15-20; 2 Cor. 2:7-8; Gal. 6:1).
2. Members of this church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18. Before such dismissal, however, (a) it shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring individual's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct such erring individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring individual does not heed this warning, then (b) the warning member shall again go to the erring individual, seeking his or her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. The first and second warnings may occur with no specified time interval. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then (c) it shall be brought to the attention of the Board of Elders. If the Board of Elders determines — after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18, 1 Timothy 5:19 — that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she has refused to repent, then the Elders shall inform the church and the congregation thereof at a called member meeting in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect may be given at a regularly scheduled worship service. If, however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the church in its collective call to repentance, then (d) he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service. If the erring individual,

after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the Board of Elders then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.

3. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the elders in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline, (i.e., the informing of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance) or to the fourth stage of church discipline, (i.e., the dismissal from the fellowship and/or membership of the church) when one or more of the following have occurred:
 - a. Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e. openly and to the offense of the whole Church (1 Cor. 5:1-5)
 - b. Where the disciplined party has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the elders, then chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the elders (Rom. 16:17)
 - c. Where the disciplined party has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10-11).
4. The members of this church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of the dismissal or because of public statements to the congregation at the third or fourth stages of church discipline. Members who are under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraphs, forfeit and waive the right to resign from this church. Resignations from membership are possible only by members who are in good standing and who are not under any disciplinary action.
5. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the elders (or a duly constituted subcommittee thereof), a member, non-member, regular attender, or other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.

Section K. *Miscellaneous Policy*

1. It is the policy of Grace Bible Church to stress the importance of the family unit in God's program for His children. Church activities should not be scheduled so as to unduly disrupt family activities. The sanctity of marriage and the father's leadership under the headship of Christ are emphasized (Eph. 5:22-6:4; Col. 3:18-21).
2. It is the policy of Grace Bible Church to teach believers to recognize and develop their spiritual gifts as essential in the building up of the church (Rom. 12:4-8; Eph. 4:8-15; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

3. It is the policy of Grace Bible Church to recognize the priesthood of every believer (1 Pet. 2:5), whereby he is competent to dedicate his own body (Rom. 12:1-2), offer his own worship in word (Heb. 13:15), and in substance (Heb. 13:16), confess his own sins (1 John 1:9), and maintain a godly walk (1 John 1:7). Believers are to exhort and encourage one another (Heb. 10:25) and to seek to restore one another (Gal. 6:1).
4. The fellowship and worship in Grace Bible Church shall center around the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, “the head of the body, the church...that in all things He might have the preeminence” (Col. 1:18). No man, group of men, movement, or denomination must be allowed to take precedence over Him or His claim to absolute sovereignty over our lives (Phil. 2:8-11). Public services of Grace Bible Church will emphasize the Person and the work of Christ, the Word of God, and edification of believers through teaching, admonishing, singing and the mutual encouragement and comfort occasioned by gathering together in the name of Jesus Christ (Col. 3:16). All such services shall be conducted in such a manner as to glorify Him (Col. 3:17; Gal. 6:14).
5. Growth of every Christian in Grace Bible Church to spiritual maturity is the aim of the church, not growth in numbers attending (Eph. 4:13). Competition with other churches is incompatible with the aims and policies of Grace Bible Church (1 Cor. 3:7-9). Competition with the attractions of the world is vain and futile (1 Cor. 1:18; Luke 16:8).
6. The constitution of Grace Bible Church shall not be amended or revised unless by a vote of no less than 90% of the members present at a congregational called business meeting announced and published in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order.
7. A congregational called business meeting of Grace Bible Church may be called only by the Board of Elders. Notice of any such meeting shall be given at a regular church meeting on two consecutive Sunday mornings, prior to the called meeting. The conduct of the various boards and congregational business meetings shall be governed by the procedures set out in this constitution, however, those procedural questions not covered by the constitution shall be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Robert’s Rules of Order.

8. Policy on Marriage

- a. Definition: Marriage is a lifetime commitment that one man and one woman make to one another where God joins them together as one flesh in order to fulfill His intended purposes (Gen. 2:23-24).
- b. Facility Use: Based upon this definition, no portion of the grounds or physical plant of Grace Bible Church shall be utilized for the purpose of performing a marriage ceremony — civil, military, or otherwise — which purports to wed two individuals of the same sex. No portion of the grounds or physical plant of Grace Bible Church shall be used for the celebration or acknowledgement of such a union by the means of a reception or any other gathering.

- c. Officiating of Weddings: No marriage ceremony between two individuals of the same sex shall be performed by any member of the staff, elder, deacon, or representative of Grace Bible Church, either on or off the premises.
- d. Counseling and Other Ministries: All church ministries, including counseling, will seek to uphold the biblical definition of marriage and call people to follow and obey the biblical view.

9. Policy on Gender

- a. Definition: Gender is a spiritual/biological aspect of a person, established by God in a person's creation, revealed most fundamentally in a person's biological sex and rooted in the reality that God made both male and female in His image and likeness (Gen. 1:27). Furthermore, the full breadth of what it means to be either male or female is comprehensively revealed in the Scriptures as biblical masculinity and biblical femininity, each involving character, duties, and responsibilities before God. In other words, men and women need the Bible in order to fully understand and realize what it means to be male or female as God intends.
- b. Gender is a static, objective, fixed spiritual and biological reality. A person's gender remains permanently fixed in the fundamental doctrine of creation as an image-bearer made as either male or female, revealed in the person's biological sex at birth. Gender is not subjective, fluid, user-selectable, or based upon the feelings or perceptions of the individual.
- c. For all functions at Grace Bible Church, such as counseling, church offices (pastor/elder and deacon) nursery workers, and Bible studies or other events or facility usage (including restrooms) that are gender specific, a person's gender will be defined according to the above definition.