

# GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH BYLAWS

## ARTICLE 1 NAME AND PURPOSE

### 1.01—NAME

This congregation of believers shall be known as Grace Baptist Church of Syracuse, NY. It is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the state of New York.

### 1.02—ORGANIZATION

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, for such purposes including, but not limited to, proclaiming the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; establishing and maintaining religious worship; educating believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture; and maintaining missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

The first service was held at 1025 North Townsend Street in the Seventh Day Adventist Church, under the direction of Reverend Gary Welling. The date of the first service was January 7, 1981. Soon thereafter, the church was formally organized, and also incorporated in the state of New York.

### 1.03—OBJECTIVE

#### **Section 1 - The Teaching and Preaching of the Bible: God's Holy Word**

This church, believing in the Bible as the inspired Word of God and as the sole authority for faith and practice declares its purpose:

- a) To maintain regular services for public worship.
- b) To proclaim earnestly the gospel message and to urge its personal acceptance, both privately and publicly.
- c) To promote systematic Bible study and teaching for Christian service and soul winning.
- d) To cooperate heartily, by prayer, giving and service, in the effort of seeing the gospel of Jesus Christ preached throughout the World.
- e) To pray for one another that we may ever live according to the will of God, as revealed in His Word.
- f) To promote Christian friendship and fellowship.

#### **Section 2 - To Fulfill the Great Commission Given By the Lord Jesus Christ to His Church in Matt. 28-16-20, Which is Threefold:**

- a) To win souls to Jesus Christ.
- b) To baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- c) To teach them the Word of God and the cardinal doctrines of God's Word.

#### **Section 3 - The Purpose of the Church in a Community, or What the Church Owes the Community**

The church has the duty, owes it to the community, to promulgate the full truth of the Bible, to urge the truth lovingly, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in the community at large. To do this, a program of New Testament evangelism and visitation must be maintained. In no other way can the gospel be taken "to every creature".

#### **Section 4 - The Church in the Midst of Apostasy**

This church will teach and preach the truths generally as the Baptists through the years have taught, i.e.

- a) The sufficiency and supremacy of the Bible in all things pertaining to faith and practice.
- b) The autonomy of the local church.
- c) A regenerate and baptized membership.
- d) The priesthood of every believer.
- e) The separation of church and state.

This church will give special emphasis to the need of returning to biblical doctrine, fellowship, discipline and organization, holy living for every believer, and the exposure of the religious apostasy which is ever engulfing and polluting Christianity. This church is to uphold and teach what the Bible reveals. It is not a place for mere intellectual discussion, nor for the discussion of all sorts of problems, save as the Bible and the principles it teaches have application to these problems. It is the purpose of the church to seek to bring the community up to the level of God's standard, but must never lower its standards to those of the community. This church is never to cooperate or unite with forces of apostasy in any way or form whatsoever. (1Cor. 6)

#### **Section 5 - The Church and the Holy Spirit**

We desire, since Jesus Christ is both the foundation and builder of the church (Matt. 16:16-18), that He shall ever be honored and glorified in our midst, and that the Holy Spirit shall ever have full freedom in His present ministry of making Christ known.

##### **1.04—CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love: to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We, also, engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We, further, engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and being mindful of the rule of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We, moreover, engage that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## **ARTICLE 2 STATEMENT OF FAITH**

### **2.01—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members, staff and volunteers. All literature, whether print or electronic, used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith. All activities permitted or performed in any facilities owned, rented or leased by this church, or engaged in by any member of the church staff (volunteer or paid), and all decisions of the administration of this church shall not conflict with the Statement of Faith. In all conflicts regarding interpretation of the Statement of Faith, the pastor, on behalf of the church, has the final authority.

### **2.02—STATEMENT OF FAITH**

#### **A. Beliefs on Doctrine**

##### **1. OF THE SCRIPTURES**

We believe that the HOLY BIBLE was written by men supernaturally inspired; That it has truth without any admixture of error for its matter; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

**1.a** By the "Holy Bible" we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written does not only contain and convey the Word of God, but IS the very Word of God.

**1.b** By "inspiration" we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally and verbally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

(2Tim. 3:16-17; 2Pet. 1:19-21; Acts 1:16; Acts 28:25; Psa. 119:160; Psa. 119:105; Psa. 119:130; Lu. 24:25-27; Jn. 17:17; Lu. 24:44-45; Ps. 119:89; Pro. 30:5-6; Ro. 3:4; 1Pet. 1:2-3; Rev. 22:19; Jn. 12:48; Is. 8:20; Eph. 6:17; Ro. 15:4; Lu. 16:31; Ps. 19:7-11; Jn. 5:45-47; Jn. 5:39.)

##### **2. OF THE TRUE GOD**

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son and The Holy Spirit.

(Ex. 20:2-3; Gen. 17:1; Gen. 17:6; Eph. 4:6; Jn. 4:24; Ps. 147:5; Ps. 83:33; Ps. 90:2; Jer. 10:10; Ex. 15:11; Rev. 4:11; 1Tim. 1:17; Rom. 11:33; Mk. 12:30; Mt. 29:19; Jn. 15:26; 1Cor. 12:4-6; 1Jn. 5:7; Jn. 10:30; Jn. 17:5; Acts. 5:3-4; 1Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6; Eph. 2:18; 2Cor. 13:14.)

### **3. OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

That the Holy Spirit is a divine person; equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature, that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the Evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness; that He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the New Birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer.

(Jn. 14:16-17; Mt. 28:19; Heb. 9:14; Jn. 14:26; Lu. 1:35; Gen. 1:1-3; 2Thes. 2:7; Jn. 16:8-11; Jn. 15:26-27; Acts 5:30-32; Jn. 3:5-6; Eph. 1:13-14; Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lu. 3:16; Jn. 1:33; Acts 11:16; Lu. 24:49; Jn. 16:13; Jn. 14:26; Ro. 8:16; 2Thes. 2:13; 1Pet. 1:2; Ro. 8:26-27.)

### **4. OF THE DEVIL, OR SATAN**

We believe that Satan was once holy, and enjoyed heavenly honors; but thought pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and drew after him a host of angels; that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy God of this world. We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and his Christ, the accusers of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy; the lord of the anti-Christ; and the author of all the powers of darkness—destined however to final defeat at the hands of God's Son, and to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels.

(Is. 14:12-15; Ez. 28:14-17; Rev. 12:9; Jud. 6; 2Pet. 2:4; Eph. 2:2; Jn. 14:30; 1Thes. 3:5; Mt. 4:1-3; 1Pet. 5:8; Zech. 1:3; 1Jn. 3:8; Mt. 37:39; Lu. 22:3-4; Rev. 12:10; 2Cor. 11:13-15; Mk. 13:21-22; 1Jn. 4:3; 2Jn. 7; 1Jn. 2:22; Rev. 13:13-14; 2Thes. 2:8-11; Rev. 19:11, 16, 20; Rev. 12:7-9; Rev. 20:1-3; Rev. 20:10; Mt. 25:41.)

### **5. OF THE CREATION**

We believe in the Genesis account of creation and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms; that all animal and vegetable life was made directly, and God's established law they should bring forth only "after their kind."

(Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Acts. 4:24; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 11:3; Jn. 1:3; Rev. 10:6; Rom. 1:20; Acts. 17:23-26; Jer. 10:12; Neh. 9:6; Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 2:21-23; Gen. 1:11; Gen. 1:24.)

## **6. OF THE FALL OF MAN**

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from sinless and happy state, in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint, but of choice; and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

(Gen. 3:1-6; Gen. 3:24; Ro. 5:12; Ro. 5:19; Ro. 3:10-19; Eph. 2:1; Eph. 2:3; Ro. 1:18; Ez. 18:19-20; Ro. 1:32; Ro. 1:20; Ro. 1:28; Gal. 3:22.)

## **7. OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH**

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner; born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and that He is the Son of God, and God, the Son.

(Gen. 3:15; Is. 7:14; Mt. 1:18-25; Lu. 1:35; Mk. 1:1; Jn. 1:14; Ps. 2:7; Gal. 4:4; 1Jn. 5:20; 1Cor. 15:47.)

## **8. OF THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN**

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our Sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that, having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior.

(Eph. 2:8; Acts. 15:11; Ro. 3:24; Jn. 3:16; Mt. 18:11; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14; Is. 53:4-7; Ro. 3:25; 1Jn. 4:10; 1Cor. 15:3; 2Cor. 5:21; Jn. 10:18; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 1:4; 1Pet. 2:24; 1Pet. 3:18; Is. 53:11; Heb. 12:2; 1Cor. 15:20; Is. 53:12; Heb. 7:25; 1Jn. 2:2.)

## **9. OF GRACE IN THE NEW CREATION**

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

(Jn. 3:3; 2Cor. 5:17; Lu. 5:27; 1Jn. 3:6-7; Acts 2:41; Acts 16:30-33; 2Pet. 1:4; Ro. 6:23; Eph. 2:1; 2Cor. 5:19; Col. 2:13; Jn. 1:12-13; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9.)

## **10. OF THE FREENESS OF SALVATION**

We believe in God's electing grace; that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

(1Thes. 1:4; Col. 3:12; 1Pet. 1:2; Titus 1:1; Ro. 8:29-30; Mt. 11:28; Is. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Ro. 10:13; Jn. 6:37; Is. 55:6; Acts 2:38; Is. 55:7; Jn. 3:15-16; 1Tim. 1:15; 1Cor. 15:10; Eph. 2:4-5; Jn. 5:40; Jn. 3:18; Jn. 3:36.)

## **11. OF JUSTIFICATION**

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification; that Justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us.

(Ro. 13:7; 2Sam. 23:3; Ex. 18:21-22; Acts 23:5; Mt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1Pet. 2:13, 14; 1Pet. 2:17; Acts 4:19-20; Dan. 3:17-18; Mt. 10:28 Mt. 23:10; Rev. 10:6; Phil. 2:10-11; Ps. 72:11; Acts 13:39; Is. 53:11; Zech. 13:1; Ro. 8:1; Ro. 5:9; Ro. 5:1; Titus 3:5-7; Ro. 1:17; Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Ro. 4:1-8; Heb. 10:38.)

## **12. OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH**

We believe that Repentance and Faith are solemn obligations, and inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior.

(Acts 20:21; Mk. 1:15; Acts 2:37-38; Lu. 18:13; Ro. 10:13; Ps. 51:1-4, 7; Is. 55:6-7; Lu. 12:8; Ro. 10:9-11.)

## **13. OF THE CHURCH**

We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word; that its officers of ordination are pastors or elders whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the scriptures; we believe the true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission; First, to make individual disciples; Second, to build up the church; Third, to teach and instruct as He has commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order; we hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is scriptural for true churches to co-operate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its co-operation; on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

(Acts 2:41; Acts 2:42; 1Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 4:11; 1Cor. 12:4; 8-11; Acts 14:23; Acts 6:5-6; Acts 15:23; Acts 20:17-28; 1Tim. 3:1-7; 1Tim. 3:8-13; Mt. 28:19-20; Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23-24; 1Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 15:22; Jude 3-4; 2Cor. 8:23-24; 1Cor. 16:1; Mal. 3:10; Lev. 27:32; 1Cor. 16:2; 1Cor. 6:1-3; 1Cor. 5:11-13.)

#### **14. OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER**

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer; in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with the authority of the local church, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is a prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation and to the Lord's supper; in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

(Acts 8:36-39; Mt. 3:6; Jn. 3:23; Ro. 6:4-5; Mt. 3:16; Mt. 28:19; Ro. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Acts 2:41-42; Mt. 28:19-20; 1Cor. 11:23-28.)

#### **15. OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS**

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation.

(Jn. 8:31-32; Col. 1:21, 23; 1Jn. 2:19; Mt. 13: 19-21; Ro. 8:23; Mt. 6:30; Ps. 121:3; Heb. 1:14; 1Pet. 1:5; Phil.1:6; Jn. 10:28-29; Jn. 16:8; Ro. 8:35-39.)

#### **16. OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED**

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all and under the curse and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.

(Mal. 3:18; Gen. 18:23; Ro. 6:17-18; Pro. 11:31; 1Pet. 4:18; Ro. 1:17; 1Cor. 15:22; Acts 10:34-35; 1Jn. 3:7; Ro. 6:16; 1Jn. 5:19; Gal. 3:10; Ro. 7:6; Ro. 6:23; Pro. 14:32; Lu. 16:25; Mt. 25:34, 41; Jn. 8:21; Lu. 9:26; Jn. 12:25; Mt. 7:13-14.)

#### **17. OF THE RESURRECTION AND RETURN OF CHRIST AND RELATED EVENTS**

We believe in and accept the sacred Scriptures upon these subjects at their face and full value. Of the Resurrection, we believe that Christ rose bodily "the third day according to the scriptures;" that He ascended "to the right hand of the throne of God;" that He alone is our "merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God;" "That this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" – bodily, personally and visibly; that the "dead in Christ shall rise first;" that the living saints " shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump;" "that the Lord

God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David;" and that "Christ shall reign a thousand years in righteousness until He hath put all enemies under His feet."

(Mt. 28:6-7; Lu. 24:39; Jn. 20:27; 1Cor. 15:4; Mk. 16:6; Lu. 24:2; Acts 1:9; Lu. 24:51; Mk. 16:19; Rev. 3:21; Heb. 8:1; Heb. 12:2 Heb. 8:6; 1Tim. 2:5; I Jn. 2:1; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 5:9-10; Jn. 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1Thes. 4:16; Mt. 24:27; Mt. 25:13; Jas. 5:8; Mt. 24:42; Heb. 9:23; 1Thes. 6:16; 1Cor. 15:42-44, 52; 1Thes. 4:17; Phil. 3:20-21; Lu. 1:32; Is. 9:6-7; Acts 13:29-30; 1Cor. 15:25; Is. 32:1; Is. 11:4-5; Ps. 72:8; Rev. 20:1-4; Rev. 20:6.)

## **18. OF MISSIONS**

The command to give the gospel to the world is clear and unmistakable and the Commission was given to the churches.

(Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15; Jn. 20:21; Acts 1:8; Ro. 10:13-15.)

## **19. OF THE GRACE OF GIVING**

Scriptural giving is one of the fundamentals of the Faith. 2Cor 8:7, "Therefore as ye abound in everything, in faith, and in utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. "We are commanded to bring our gifts into the storehouse (common treasury of the church) upon the first day of the week. 1Cor 16:2 "Upon the first day of the let every one of you lay by him in store, as God Hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." Under grace we give, and do not pay, the tithe: "Abraham GAVE a tenth part of all" – "Abraham GAVE the tenth of the spoils" – Hebrews 7:2, 4 – and this was four hundred years before the law, and is confirmed in the New Testament; Jesus said concerning the tithe, "These ye ought to have done" Mt. 23:23. We are commanded to bring the tithe into the common treasury of the church.

(Lev. 27:30; Mal. 3:10; Acts 4:34-35, 37.)

## **20. OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS, AND CHURCH WORSHIP**

God bestows to all believers gifts according as it pleases Him, for the purpose of the edification of the Body of Christ. We believe that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament scriptures were completed and their authority became established. We believe God hears and answers the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted. A believer who gathers with others should come with a heart attitude of worshiping God in spirit and in truth. Christ is the head of the Church and He should have the preeminence in worship.

(1Cor. 12:4-11; 2Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-12; Jn. 15:7; 1 Jn. 5:14-15; Jn. 4:24; 1Cor. 13:10; 1Cor. 14:22; 2Tim. 3:16.)

## **21. OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the



will of our Lord Jesus Christ; who is the only lord of the conscience and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth.

(Ro. 13:7; 2Sam. 23:3; Ex. 18:21-22; Acts 23:5; Mt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1Pet. 2:13-14 1Pet. 2:17; Acts 5:29; Acts 4:19-20; Dan. 3:17-18; Mt. 10:28; Mt. 23:10; Rev. 10:6; Phil. 2:10-11; Ps. 72:11.)

## **B. Beliefs on Cultural Issues**

### **1. Marriage and Sexuality**

**1.a.** We believe that the term “marriage” has only one, legitimate meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, covenantal union, as delineated by Scripture. Marriage ceremonies performed in any facility owned, leased or rented by this church will be only those ceremonies sanctioned by God, joining one man with one woman as their genders were determined at birth. Whenever there is a conflict between the church’s position and any new legal standard for marriage, the church’s statement of faith, doctrines and biblical positions will govern. (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:22-23; Mark 10:6-9; I Cor. 7:1-9)

**1.b.** We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage as defined in (a) above. We believe that any other type of sexual activity, identity or expression that lies outside of this definition of marriage, including those that are becoming more accepted in the culture and the courts, are contradictory to God’s natural design and purpose for sexual activity. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9-10; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

**1.c.** We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two-distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God and the rejection of one’s biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person. (Genesis 1:26-27)

### **2. Family Relationships**

**2.a.** We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and elders) of the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

**2.b.** We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a wonderful gift and heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate training and discipline. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1

Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

3. **Divorce and Remarriage.** We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce except on the grounds of adultery. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Mark 10:11-12; Rom. 7:1-3; I Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6; I Cor. 7:10-16)
4. **Abortion.** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion is murder and constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:13-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:36, 44)
5. **Euthanasia.** We believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, facilitates premature death, is assuming a decision that is to be reserved for God. We do not believe that discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome is euthanasia. (Ex. 20:13; 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)
6. **Love.** We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; I Peter 3:8-9; 1 John 3:17-18)
7. **Lawsuits within the Church.** We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits within the Church. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)
8. **Protection of Children.** We believe that children are a heritage from the Lord and must be absolutely protected within the church from any form of abuse or molestation. The church has zero tolerance for any person, whether paid staff, volunteer, member, or visitor, who abuses or molests a child. (Ps. 127:3-5; Matt. 18:6; Matt. 19:14; Mark 10:14)

### ARTICLE 3 MEMBERSHIP

#### SECTION 3.01—QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Those seeking membership must, through their actions, words, lifestyle and affiliations, evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Candidates for membership will be required to attend a pre-membership class led by a member of the pastoral staff or appointee, in which they will review the Statement of Faith, the bylaws of this church, general church practices and policies, and expectations of members. At the conclusion of the class, candidates will be interviewed by the pastor, pastoral staff and/or appointee prior to being recommended for membership, to ensure they fully subscribe to the Statement of Faith contained herein and agree to submit to the authority of the church and its leaders. After such recommendation, membership will be granted upon the recommendation of

the pastor and a majority vote of the church members present at the time the candidate is presented before the congregation for membership, and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- By baptism at this local church following a profession of faith as a believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;
- By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith; or
- By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion in another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice.
- By restoration. Any member, who has lost his membership for any reason and has shown fruit of repentance, may be restored to membership upon the recommendation of the pastor and the vote of the church.

### **SECTION 3.02—PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Only members of at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly-called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church may only exercise voting privileges in those areas that are defined and limited by these bylaws. Members may not vote to initiate any church action; rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and Leadership Board.
- B. This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the Leadership Board. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor and Leadership Board shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The Leadership Board shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him.
- C. Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the Leadership Board) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor, (or in his absence, an individual designated by the Leadership Board), be treated as a trespasser.
- D. A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church and committee meetings, provided he shall have made a written request upon the church and the church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date. Board meeting minutes and discipline committee meetings, as well as other information involving privacy interests, such as, but not limited to donor records, lists of names and addresses of church members, individual benevolence, individual salaries, health information, background checks, and social security numbers, are exempt from this provision and are not subject to inspection or copy without a court order. The church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and materials, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

### **SECTION 3.03—AUTOMATIC TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

- A. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding three months. This provision may be waived at the discretion of the pastor and the Leadership Board upon the showing of good cause.
- B. The membership of any individual shall automatically terminate without notice if the member adopts opinions—verbally, in print, or in any other manner or medium—that are in direct contravention to the church’s Statement of Faith or Church Covenant. Since agreement with the church’s Statement of Faith and Church Covenant is a requirement for membership in this church, the member’s non-conforming statements will be treated as the member’s resignation by the pastor and the Leadership Board.
- C. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.
- D. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if a member files a lawsuit in violation of Section 2.02(B)(7).
- E. The membership of an individual will automatically terminate upon his or her death.
- F. For any memberships terminated in accordance with the above provisions, with the exception of memberships terminated under (E) above, the church may send a letter informing the prior member of the termination, but this is not required.

### **SECTION 3.04—TRANSFER OR RESIGNATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 3.05 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church. A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastor.

### **SECTION 3.05—DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER**

- A. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders the spiritual growth and testimony of an individual in the local church or the body as a whole, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
- B. If reconciliation is not reached, a second member is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
- C. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (A) and (B) have been taken, the two members aware of the offense shall bring the issue before the pastor and the Leadership Board, as representatives of the church body in keeping with Matthew 18.
- D. The pastor and Leadership Board shall attempt to meet with the offending brother. If reconciliation is not reached, the pastor and Leadership Board, as representatives of the church body, shall, upon a majority vote of those present at a meeting of the Leadership Board, terminate the individual’s

membership without further notice to the individual(s). Unless the matter involves an issue of safety or security to the members of the church at large, the specifics of the matter shall not be addressed in a public forum or with the general church membership.

- E. The pastor and Leadership Board shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline. If the pastor or a Leadership Board member is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not be permitted to vote on his own membership termination.
- F. For any memberships terminated in accordance with this provision, the pastor may cause a letter to be written informing the prior member of the termination, although he is not required to do so.
- G. The procedures provided in this section are based on Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

### **SECTION 3.06-- AFFILIATED CO-LABORER**

Those desiring fellowship, accountability and opportunities for service with this assembly on a temporary basis but who maintain membership in a like body of believers outside this locality, may be granted affiliated co-laborer status with this church. The affiliated co-laborer may be eligible to serve in certain capacities determined by the pastor and Leadership Board and may attend member fellowship events. This affiliation does not, however, grant membership or the rights of membership to the individual(s) so granted. Affiliated co-laborers shall not be entitled to hold any office, vote in or have any say in any church matter, and shall not be counted for quorum purposes. A person wishing to become an affiliated co-laborer with this assembly must make a request to the pastor, who will determine if affiliated co-laborer status should be granted to the individual. If the pastor so determines, the person may be granted co-laborer status upon a majority vote of the Leadership Board.

## **ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 4.01—DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS**

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the chairman of the Leadership Board shall serve as vice president of the corporation; the church secretary shall serve as secretary of the corporation; and the church treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the corporation.

### **SECTION 4.02—CHURCH OFFICERS**

The church officers are pastor(s), Leadership Board members, secretary, treasurer, and any other officers the church deems necessary.

### **SECTION 4.03—ELIGIBILITY FOR CHURCH OFFICERS**

- A. The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith set forth in Article 2. All church officers, upon request of the pastor, shall affirm in writing their agreement with the Statement of Faith.

- B. All church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their offices.
- C. Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office or position. Affiliated co-laborers with this ministry are not eligible for such election or appointment.

#### **SECTION 4.04—ELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS**

The annual election of officers by the church membership shall occur during the month of February at the annual church business meeting. Officers of the church must be elected by a majority of the eligible membership present at a regular or special church business meeting. The pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other church officers, subject to a confirmation vote by a majority of the eligible church membership, present and voting at any regular or special church business meeting. Members may submit nominations for corporation officers to the pastor and the Leadership Board. The pastor and the Leadership Board shall then serve as the nominating committee for all general elections of officers.

#### **SECTION 4.05—TERMS OF SERVICE FOR OFFICERS**

- A. The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular or special church business meeting by following the procedures outlined in Article 6, provided notice of the meeting shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to the meeting. A majority of the eligible members present and voting shall be required to remove the pastor from office. Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership.
- B. The term of service for all offices and positions in the church, except the pastor and other staff members, shall be one year, at the expiration of which the officers may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- C. A vacancy occurring in any office or on the Leadership Board, except in the case of the pastor, may be filled at any regular church business meeting by a majority vote of eligible members present.
- D. All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed, unless removed for disciplinary reasons.
- E. Members of the Leadership Board may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other Leadership Board members, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the Leadership Board.

#### **SECTION 4.06—CALLING A PASTOR**

Upon the resignation, death or dismissal of the pastor, the church shall seek a candidate who subscribes to the Statement of Faith and bylaw provisions of the church, and whose life aligns with the qualifications of a pastor as described in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The church shall abide by the following guidelines for calling a pastor:

- A. The Leadership Board shall select a pulpit committee to consist of all Leadership Board members and up to five other members elected by a majority vote of the Leadership Board. The pulpit committee shall interview potential candidates and will only consider men who completely subscribe to the Statement of Faith and who have read these bylaws.

- B. The interview process for selecting a pastoral candidate shall include, at a minimum, the following: a background check, a credit check, a reference check, and the filling out of a detailed application that explains the potential candidate's philosophy of ministry as well as his positions on issues of doctrinal significance.
- C. Prior to being announced to the congregation as a formal candidate, any man being considered as a pastoral candidate must preach at least one Sunday service. Thereafter, upon a majority vote of the pulpit committee, the pulpit committee will formally announce the candidate to the church, after which the candidate must preach at least two more regularly scheduled services and be available for a church-wide question/answer time prior to being voted upon by the church membership.
- D. Notice from the pulpit must be given 2 consecutive Sundays prior to a formal candidate's preaching services, and 2 consecutive Sundays prior to the church membership vote.
- E. The candidate must be elected as pastor by a majority vote of members present and qualified to vote. This vote shall be taken by written, secret ballot. The pulpit committee will only present for consideration to the membership one candidate at a time, and an up or down vote must be cast prior to consideration of other potential candidates.

## **ARTICLE 5 DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 5.01—THE PASTOR**

- A. The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God. He shall administer the ordinances of the church, act as moderator, or shall appoint a moderator, at all church meetings for the transaction of church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and watch over the spiritual interests of the membership. In all conflicts regarding interpretation of Scripture, the pastor has the final authority.
- B. The pastor and Leadership Board, on behalf of the church, shall institute committees and appoint the members of the various committees at the annual church business meeting or, in the case of a vacancy or newly created committee, at any duly-called special meeting. He shall serve as the president of the corporation. He shall publicly inform all newly elected officers of the functions and responsibilities of their respective offices. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the church and shall perform such other duties as generally appertain to the position of pastor. The pastor shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry God has given him.
- C. All appointments for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof, including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the church for any other purposes shall be under the control of the pastor, who, with the advice and counsel of the Leadership Board, shall be able to determine the appropriateness of all property use, as well as persons permitted to use the church property.
- D. The pastor shall be responsible to fill the pulpit for each regularly scheduled church service as well as any special services. In the event of his absence, he (or the chairman of the Leadership Board in the case of a vacancy in the office of pastor or where the pastor is temporarily unable to perform his duties) shall be responsible to invite speakers from within the membership or outside the church to preach in a manner consistent with the beliefs articulated in the Statement of Faith.

- E. The pastor and the Leadership Board shall be responsible to establish mandatory safety and security procedures for all ministries and programs. There will be a zero-tolerance policy with regard to abuse of minors; and any reasonable suspicions of child abuse alleged to be perpetrated by staff, volunteers, members or non-members will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement or child abuse prevention authorities. The pastor or his designee will be responsible to provide yearly child abuse prevention training for all staff and volunteers.

## **SECTION 5.02—THE LEADERSHIP BOARD**

- A. The Leadership Board shall assist the pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, in conducting the church services, and in performing all other work of the church. The Leadership Board is responsible for making preparations to observe church ordinances and shall consider applications for church membership and affiliated co-laborers. The Leadership Board shall disburse the benevolence fund in cooperation with the pastor, and shall assist him in all other evangelistic efforts of the church. The Leadership Board shall assist the pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries. They shall provide the pulpit supply and choose a moderator for church meetings if the pastor is unavailable or the office of pastor is vacant. Upon the death, resignation, or dismissal of the pastor, the Leadership Board may appoint a pulpit committee. The Leadership Board is not considered a board of directors. They serve on behalf of the church overseeing the material, financial business and administrative needs of the church.
- B. Following the annual church business meeting, the Leadership Board shall assemble and elect, from their own number, a chairman and a secretary for the Leadership Board.
- C. The pastor and the Leadership Board shall constitute the board of directors of the corporation. In addition to the various powers specifically granted the Board under these bylaws, the Board has authority to exercise the following powers, upon authorization by a majority vote of the eligible members at a duly-called business meeting:
1. To purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church.
  2. To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges.
  3. To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation.
- D. All powers of the Leadership Board, (whether deacons or other appointed group) shall be compatible with the laws of the state of New York.
- E. The Leadership Board shall, in conjunction with the pastor, conduct an annual ministry liability and safety review of the following policies and/or topics:
- Child protection, including but not limited to worker screening procedures, child abuse reporting procedures, and worker training on child abuse prevention



- Building safety
- Security measures
- Insurance
- Financial accountability
- Transportation
- Sexual harassment
- Policies listed in IRS Form 990, including:
  - a.i. Conflict of interest policy
  - a.ii. Whistleblower policy
  - a.iii. Document retention and destruction policy
  - a.iv. Church financial investment policy (if applicable)

F. Each Leadership Board member shall review the bylaws annually, and shall bring suggested changes to a meeting of the Leadership Board that has been designated for the purpose of reviewing the bylaws.

### **SECTION 5.03—CHURCH SECRETARY**

The church secretary, along with any assistant or co-officer or church clerk, shall:

- A. Certify and keep at the office of the church, the original bylaws or a copy, including all amendments or alterations to the bylaws, minutes of meetings, the membership roll, baptisms, and records of any special events which are of historical interest to the church; and shall deliver such documents to his or her successor upon leaving office.
- B. Maintain and file minutes of all church business and Board meetings, including the time and place of holding, the notice given, the names of those present unless a church-wide meeting, and an accurate record of all church business approved at each meeting. A copy of these minutes shall be kept as a permanent record of the church and shall be made available at all reasonable times to proper person on terms provided by law and pursuant to these bylaws.
- C. Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law; see that reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed.
- D. See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. In case of the absence or disability of the secretary, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the pastor or by the chairman of the Leadership Board.
- E. Serve as the secretary of the corporation and be a member in good standing.

### **SECTION 5.04—TREASURER**

The church treasurer, along with any assistant or co-officer, shall:

- A. Count, or cause to be counted, along with two other persons so appointed, and record in a permanent record all the monies received in offerings for the church. This shall be done following each service or day of services of the church.
- B. Convey in a timely manner all funds received to the person designated by the Leadership Board for verification and deposit in the bank, including moneys received from outside sources.

- C. Maintain a permanent weekly record of individual giving for all donations, offerings, contributions and gifts, and guard the confidentiality of these records. Issue an official receipt to each contributor at the end of the fiscal year.
- D. Keep in the church office an accurate and permanent record of all financial transactions of church funds. Make reports of itemized disbursements and the financial condition of the church as requested by pastor and the Leadership Board, and for annual, quarterly or otherwise special or regular business meetings; and deliver such records to his or her successor upon leaving office.
- E. Serve as treasurer of the corporation and be a member in good standing.

#### **SECTION 5.05—DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS**

- A. All officers shall prepare a written report of their work for the annual church business meeting and shall surrender all records in their possession to the church secretary at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church. All records are the property of the church and must be kept in the church office.
- B. Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the bylaws for a period of three months may be removed from his office, at the discretion of the pastor, and another may be appointed by the pastor to serve the un-expired term.

#### **SECTION 5.06—PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS**

Any one or more officers may participate in a meeting of the Leadership Board by means of a conference telephone, web-based conference, or similar communications equipment or device, by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time. Participating by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting for purposes of determining if a quorum is present.

### **ARTICLE 6 CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS**

#### **SECTION 6.01—ANNUAL CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING**

- A. The annual church business meeting, for the election of officers and the transaction of other business, shall be held on the second Sunday in February. A quorum shall consist of the eligible members present. Public notice of the meeting shall be given from the pulpit for two successive Sundays immediately preceding the meeting.
- B. The pastor or his designee shall serve as moderator of church business meetings. In the temporary absence of the pastor, or if the office of pastor is vacant, the Leadership Board chairman or his designee shall serve as moderator. In the event of a conflict of interest, the Leadership Board may substitute a moderator.
- C. The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling.
- D. For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers (or children, if circumstances so warrant) to leave the meeting room.

and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, he may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises and treat the person as a trespasser.

#### **SECTION 6.02—SPECIAL MEETINGS**

The pastor (or the Leadership Board if the office of pastor is vacant or if the pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special church business meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the church from the pulpit at least one Sunday and not less than one week prior to said meeting. A meeting for the calling of a pastor or for the discipline or removal of the pastor shall be called in accordance with the provision of Sections 4.05 and 4.06.

#### **SECTION 6.03—VOTING AT MEETINGS**

Voting at any church business meeting is limited to eligible members in good standing with the church who are physically present at the meeting. Absentee voting is not permitted, and any member who is undergoing church discipline at the time of a vote is not permitted to vote. A majority vote will constitute the requisite number of votes for passage of amendments and motions, whether by the Leadership Board voting at a Leadership Board meeting or by the members voting in a church business meeting.

#### **SECTION 6.04—MOTIONS**

Members who desire that a certain motion be made or subject matter be discussed during an annual, regular, or special business meeting must file a written recommendation with the pastor and Leadership Board two weeks prior to the set meeting, who will then consider the proposal and proceed according to their conscience and what they understand to be in the best interests of the church. All other motions will be presented by the pastor and/or chairman of the Leadership Board (or other moderator if the office of pastor is vacant) unless the pastor and/or the Leadership Board has delegated authority to another member and/or officer to raise certain motions. No motions will be made from the floor.

#### **SECTION 6.05—FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the church shall begin January 1st and end December 31st.

### **ARTICLE 7 EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES**

#### **SECTION 7.01—PURPOSE**

The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To help fulfill this responsibility of imparting biblical truth and furthering the Great Commission, this church shall establish and maintain an educational program (either a Sunday School and/or a weekday educational program) for the purposes of winning souls to Christ and teaching Bible doctrine, godly worship, and biblical Christian living. To this end, the church shall engage in educational ministries.

#### **SECTION 7.02—CHURCH PARTICIPATION**

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for

the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor and Leadership Board, on behalf of the church, may permit non-church members to participate in church educational programs or courses of instruction if they deem it in the best interest of the church.

### **SECTION 7.03—AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT OF FAITH**

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church and shall be taught and presented in full agreement with the Statement of Faith of the church and the inerrant Word of God. The church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or who expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith or who adopts or lives a lifestyle inconsistent with the beliefs and practices of the Statement of the Faith or this church, whether in or out of the classroom.

## **ARTICLE 8 COMMITTEES**

### **SECTION 8.01—COMMITTEES**

The pastor and Leadership Board, on behalf of the church, may designate or form any committees and may appoint members and/or chairpersons of said committees as considered by the pastor and Leadership Board to be in the best interests of the church. These committees may be standing or temporary (special) committees.

### **SECTION 8.02—ACTIONS OF COMMITTEES**

Committees, whether standing or special, have no authority to act on behalf of the corporation. Their primary function is to research and recommend. Committees shall make available upon request all records and materials to the pastor and Leadership Board, who shall have the right to overrule any plans or decisions made by the committee. Each committee shall have a secretary that keeps minutes of each meeting and shall timely submit the minutes to the pastor and church secretary to be filed with church records. If deemed appropriate by the pastor and Leadership Board, the committee secretary, in conjunction with the chairman, shall submit an annual report to the church of the decisions and plans of the committee.

## **ARTICLE 9 DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS**

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. If the church receives a designated contribution for these funds or for any other designated purpose, the church will attempt to honor the designation; however, all designated contributions shall be deemed advisory rather than legally mandatory in nature and shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the pastor and the Leadership Board. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Section 1.02.

## **ARTICLE 10 BINDING ARBITRATION**

### **SECTION 10.01—SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION**

Members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration any legal matters within the church, which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bring any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

## **SECTION 10.02—ARBITRATION PROCEDURES**

The procedures for arbitration shall be as adopted by the Leadership Board. If the Leadership Board has not adopted procedures, the church will use arbitration procedures provided by the National Center for Life and Liberty. This arbitration provision is ecclesiastical and faith-based in nature, and is intended to operate under the rules and guidelines of this local church. It is not intended to operate under any state or federal guidelines for arbitration.

## **ARTICLE 11 TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS**

### **SECTION 11.01—PRIVATE INUREMENT**

No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Section 1.02 hereof.

### **SECTION 11.02—POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT**

No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

### **SECTION 11.03—DISSOLUTION**

Upon the dissolution of the church, the Leadership Board shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all assets of the church to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as the Leadership Board shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to tax-exempt organizations that agree with the church's Statement of Faith.

### **SECTION 11.04—NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The church shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin. While [church name] does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national and ethnic origin in its membership or employment policies, as a religious institution it reserves the right to deny membership or employment or to terminate the membership or employment of persons whose

lifestyle, words, actions or otherwise do not align with the church's statement of faith, standard of conduct or other policies of this organization.

#### **SECTION 11.05—LIMITATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the church shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes stated in Section 1.02.

#### **ARTICLE 12 AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the eligible members present and voting at any regular church business meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been announced from the pulpit for at least two consecutive Sundays, and at least fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken. Proposed amendments or changes must be made available to voting members for review at least one week prior to the meeting at which the vote to amend the bylaws will be taken. Amendments become effective immediately upon adoption.

These bylaws were adopted by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present.

These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of Grace Baptist church.