

# Constitution of Grace Community Church

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## **ARTICLE I Name**

The name of this church is "Grace Community Church [Baptist]".

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## **ARTICLE II Authority**

The Scriptures shall be our final court of appeal in all matters of church governance. It is understood that the Scriptures supersede the constitution and give definition where the constitution is silent or not exhaustive. Simply put, the constitution is subject to the application of Scriptures, not vice versa.

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## **ARTICLE III Government**

The government of this church is vested in its membership, executed through the church leadership.

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## **ARTICLE IV Incorporation**

This is a non-profit organization, incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan; the term of this corporation shall be perpetual. [Renewed May 3, 1965]

a.) Said organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and/or scientific purposes under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

b.) No part of the net earning of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

c.) Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the County in which the principle office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

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## **ARTICLE V Object**

To glorify God by becoming a community of grace and truth that leads people into spiritual integrity and unity through a balanced ministry of worship, edification, and evangelism [John 17; Ephesians 4; 1 Corinthians 12].

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## **ARTICLE VI Doctrinal Statement**

<http://www.solagrace.org/doctrine>

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## **ARTICLE VII Membership**

### **SECTION 1: Qualifications**

Persons to be received into membership of the church must be in agreement with and willingly submit to the church's doctrinal statement. They must accept the Bible as the Word of God, verbally inspired, infallible, and of full and final authority in all spiritual matters, and give satisfactory evidence of having been born again of the Spirit of God, and be consistent followers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and who have received the ordinance of water baptism by immersion.

### **SECTION 2: Procedure and Acceptance**

Candidates for membership must appear before the leadership, which shall recommend them to be accepted by vote of the church, before whom they will publicly assent to its covenant.

### **SECTION 3: Rights**

Active members, eighteen years of age or over, may vote in all transactions of the church.

Male members, twenty-five years of age or over, having faithfully attended public services of the church for the preceding year, and otherwise eligible may be elected to the church leadership.

If at any time it is appropriate to place a member on inactive status, the eldership may do so after appropriate contacts have been made.

A person must be a member of the church one year before holding any office.

### **SECTION 4: Termination**

Members may be removed from the membership by the elders after proper contacts have been made.

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## **ARTICLE VIII Officers and Committees**

### **SECTION 1: Church Officers**

The officers of the church shall be: the pastors, six or more elders and six or more deacons. The elders will choose an elder chairman and a combined church board chairman from its members to serve for one year. The deacons will choose a deacon chairman from its members to serve for one year.

### **SECTION 2: Elections**

[A] Nominating Committee: A committee consisting of the elder chairman, deacon chairman, and combined church board chairman, the senior pastor, and two members-at-large selected by the elders will prepare a list of qualified candidates for approval by the elders. The elders will select the appropriate number of men to fill the necessary positions.

[B] Selection: All officers shall be ratified by a ballot at the annual meeting by a three-fourths majority vote of members present.

### **SECTION 3: Pastors**

[A] Senior Pastor: A three-fourths majority vote by ballot of all voting members present shall be required to call a pastor. It shall be his duty to preach the Word, to care for the stated services of public worship, to administer the ordinances, and to promote the spiritual welfare of the church and those whom it serves. He shall be ex-officio member of all boards and committees. He shall make a report of the year's work at the annual meeting. If at any time his personal belief, preaching, teaching, or manner of life shall not be in full accord with the Scriptures and/or the doctrinal statement of this church, he will be confronted according to biblical process and his service as pastor may be terminated by the elders.

[B] Associate Pastors: A three-fourths majority vote by ballot of all voting members present shall be required to call an associate pastor. It shall be his duty to assist the pastor in the ministry of the church, with priority given to his specific area of ministry. He shall be directly responsible to the senior pastor. He shall be ex-officio member of all boards and committees. He shall make a report of the year's work at the annual meeting. If any time his personal belief, preaching, teaching, or manner of life shall not be in full accord with the Scriptures and/or the doctrinal statement of this church, he will be confronted according to Biblical process and his service as pastor may be terminated by the elders.

[C] Assistant Pastors: A three-fourths majority vote by ballot of all voting members present shall be required to call an assistant pastor. It shall be his duty to assist the pastor in the ministry of the church, with priority given to his specific areas of ministry. He shall be directly responsible to the senior pastor. He shall make a report of the year's work at the annual meeting. If any any time his personal belief, preaching, teaching, or manner of life shall not be in full accord with the Scriptures and/or the doctrinal statement of this church, he will be confronted according to biblical process and his service as a pastor may be terminated by the elders.

#### **SECTION 4: Elders**

The elders shall be chosen for a term of three years; a one year extension option may be offered up to a maximum of three additional years, at the termination of which they shall not be eligible for reelection to any church office until one year has expired.

The elders are responsible for the oversight of the flock. The focus of their ministry is to pray for, represent, feed and administrate within the flock [[Acts 6:4](#); [20:17](#); [1 Timothy 3:4](#); [5:7, 17](#); [1 Peter 5:2-3](#)]. The function of the office is primarily pastoral [[Acts 20: 28](#); [1 Peter 5:2](#)], educational [[1 Timothy 3:2](#); [5:17](#)], officiative [[James 5:13ff](#)], Representative [[Acts 20:17](#)], and administrative [[1 Timothy 5:7, 17](#); [1 Peter 5:2-3](#)]. With this biblical mandate, the elders are responsible for the initiation and administration of policy pertaining to the ministry of the church.

The elders shall also serve as the pulpit committee. They shall have charge of the work of supplying the pulpit and arranging for the regular services in the absence of the pastor. They shall be the medium through which pastors shall be engaged upon vote of the church.

They shall assist in administering the ordinances of the church.

They shall endeavor by God's grace to live and serve in full conformity with the standards set forth in the constitution for their particular office and the qualifications as outlined in the Work of God [[1 Timothy 3:1-7](#)].

#### **SECTION 5: Deacons**

The deacons shall be chosen for a term of three years; a one year extension option may be offered up to a maximum of three additional years, at the termination of which they shall not be eligible for reelection to any church office until one year has expired.

The deacons are to carry out the directives of the elders in the areas of service to the needs of the flock [[Acts 6:2-4](#)].

They shall make the necessary preparation for the ordinances of the church. They shall administer the benevolence fund.

They shall endeavor by God's grace, to live and serve in full conformity with the standards set forth in this constitution for their particular office, and the qualifications as outlined in the Word of God [[1 Timothy 3:8-13](#)].

#### **SECTION 6: Finance Committee**

The finance committee shall be appointed by the elders and shall consist of at least one elder, at least four deacons, the treasurer and the financial secretary.

The finance committee shall ordinarily meet monthly to administrate the finances of the church. They can allocate the expenditure of up to fifteen hundred dollars [\$1,500] beyond the approved budget without approval of the elders. Expenditures of three thousand dollars [\$3,000] beyond the approved budget or more must be submitted to the church for approval. The finance committee shall have charge of collecting and counting the finances of the church. and shall appoint an auditor who shall examine the treasurer's book and make a report at the annual meeting.

#### **SECTION 7: Clerk**

The clerk shall be chosen annually by the elders. He shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the church and of all leadership meetings. He shall also keep a register of the members of the church, with date of their reception and removal, record baptisms, marriages and deaths, and make a full report to the church at the annual meeting. He shall remain in office until his successor is appointed.

#### **SECTION 8: Treasurer**

The treasurer shall be a member of Grace Community Church [Baptist]. He/she shall be chosen by and be directly responsible to the eldership. The treasurer shall keep systematic accounts of all accounts of all monies received and disbursed for the support, benevolent interests, and organizations of the church. The treasurer shall make a report at the monthly finance committee meeting, at which time he/she shall present vouchers for all disbursements, and at other times at requested. Financial reports shall be make at the quarterly business meetings. The treasurer shall remain in office until a successor is appointed.

#### **SECTION 9: Bible Study Hour Superintendent**

The Bible Study Hour Superintendent shall be chosen for a term of three years by the elders. He shall have general oversight of the Bible Study Hour.

#### **SECTION 10: Assistant Bible Study Hour Superintendent**

The Assistant Bible Study Hour Superintendent shall be approved by the elders at its first monthly meeting following the selection of the Bible Study Hour Superintendent, upon the recommendation of The Bible Study Hour Superintendent, to serve for one year.

#### **SECTION 11**

All officers of the church, officers in sub-organizations and Bible Study Hour teachers shall be members of this church.

#### **SECTION 12: Committees**

Any committees (missions, music, Christian education, hospitality, baptism, etc.) must be reviewed by the eldership. An elder or deacon shall be appointed to oversee each committee.

The missions committee shall be appointed by the eldership and shall consist of the pastor overseeing missions, and at least one elder and at least one deacon. Members-at-large and/or sub-committees may be appointed by the committee.

The Christian education committee shall be appointed by the eldership and shall consist of the pastor overseeing Christian education, the Bible Study Hour Superintendent, and at least one elder and at least one deacon. Members-at-large and/or sub-committees may be appointed by the committee.

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## **ARTICLE IX Organizations**

All organizations and ministry groups are regarded as integral parts of the church and shall be under the general oversight of the church leadership, and, specifically, under the oversight of those elders administrating the Ministry of Edification.

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## **ARTICLE X Meetings**

Public services shall ordinarily be held each week on Sunday.

The Lord's supper shall be observed ordinarily on the first Sunday of the month.

Special congregational meetings of the church may be called by the senior pastor or by a majority vote of the eldership. Notice of the meeting will ordinarily be published at least two Sundays preceding the day scheduled for the meeting.

The annual meeting shall be held in October to hear the yearly reports of officers, organizations and departments, to select officers, to approve the upcoming budget, and to adopt for the ensuing year.

Quarterly business meetings shall be held to hear all treasurer's reports, and to transact any business which may be necessary.

A regular meeting of the elder board and deacon board shall ordinarily be held during the second week of the each month. A quorum shall consist of a majority of members.

A quorum at any meeting of the church shall consist of a least twenty-five percent of eligible voting members of the church.

A majority vote of the members present shall ordinarily be decisive. Absentee ballots will be subject to elder approval.

Robert's Rules of Order shall ordinarily govern the conduct of a business meeting.

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## **ARTICLE XI Church Staff**

When the services of paid personnel, other than pastor, are needed in the operation of the church, the church shall hear the recommendation of the eldership, and authorize the creation of position and the salary. The church eldership shall then select the person to be employed in the position created.

It is also understood that all paid personnel, commonly known as the staff, shall be members of Grace Community Church [Baptist] and be directly responsible to the senior pastor in the performance of their duties. Loyalty to the church and its leadership will be expected and each staff member shall understand to continuance of his or her ministry shall be subject to the senior pastor and the eldership.

It is also understood that the employment or dismissal of a staff member is not subject to church action. The church votes only on the creation of the position and not the person.

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## **ARTICLE XII Property**

The right to any property that may be acquired by this church shall be and remain vested in that body of believers who shall remain faithful to standards of faith and doctrine contained in the constitution as adopted.

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## **ARTICLE XIII Amendments**

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any quarterly meeting of the church or at a meeting especially called for that purpose, the proposed amendment being inserted in the call.

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## **ARTICLE XIV Repealing Clause**

All by-laws or parts thereof heretofore passed, not included in these by-laws are hereby repealed.

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**ARTICLE XV  
Enacting Clause**

These by-laws shall become effective immediately upon adoption by the church, except, that all present officers shall complete the terms to which they have been elected.

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**ARTICLE XVI  
General Operations**

An operations manual will be maintained by the leadership to govern policy, procedures, and operation within the structure of the church. This document is subject to the elders' approval, amendment and oversight.

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