



GRACE BIBLE  

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CHURCH

DOCTRINE & BY-LAWS

BOERNE, TEXAS

JULY 2024

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Please see the following checklist as you pursue membership at Grace Bible Church Boerne.

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## New Member Process

- Visit: [gbcboerne.org/membership](https://gbcboerne.org/membership)
- Sign up for the next GBC Fundamentals of the Faith class.
- Read “Doctrine & By-Laws” packet (this packet).
- Submit your application for membership.
- Complete elder interview (See elder to set up date/time).

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## Church Center

Church Center is our online member directory where you can find contact information and events calendar.

- Set up Church Center account.
  - Note: After member induction, you should receive an email with a link and instructions for setting up your account. (If you do not receive this email, please contact the Administrator).
- Download the Church Center app to your phone or other devices (optional):
  - <https://gbcboerne.churchcenter.com/directory>
- Create a profile for each of your children.
- Ensure information is up to date and available for others to see.
  - Hint: Adding a picture helps others get to know you better.

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## Online Giving

- Set up online giving here (Optional):  
<https://www.gbcboerne.org/give>

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## Homegroup

- Ask the elders about joining a homegroup.

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## **Philosophy of Ministry**

### ***Our Values***

While the full doctrinal statement of Grace Bible Church of Boerne is provided here, we are guided by eight non-negotiable Biblical pillars of how we do ministry that will not be compromised in any way or at any time.

#### ***1. A High View of God***

God is holy, righteous, and good; therefore, we must be holy. A failure to have a high view of God leads to a toleration of sin, a focus on man, and a church reflecting a man-centered ministry that attempts to please people rather than glorify God. The purpose of the church is to glorify God the Father through God the Son by the power of God the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:21; John 16:14-15).

#### ***2. A High View of Scripture***

The Bible is totally sufficient to live the Christian life, for all counsel and wisdom (1 Tim 3:16-17). It is the sole authority for the church, is relevant in every situation, contains all sound doctrine, and mandates the teaching of this sound doctrine in the church. We interpret it with a literal, grammatical-historical hermeneutic system and preach it expositionally, verse-by-verse through books of the Bible (2 Tim 2:15).

#### ***3. A Biblical View of Mankind***

Man was created in God's image to glorify God, but because of sin after the Fall of Adam and Eve, he seeks to glorify himself. His sin alienates him from God and thus he seeks fulfillment in the world's evil system. He is totally depraved and there is nothing good in man to commend himself to God.

#### ***4. A Biblical View of the Gospel***

The gospel was Jesus' message and the means by which God saves His elect. The gospel is the center of the life of the church and is a distinguishing mark of a true church. The church is to guard the gospel, which includes the key element of humble repentance of sin before the Lord and confession of having violated God's holy standards, along with trust in Christ alone as Redeemer. The gospel is the foundation for our exaltation and worship of Christ, for only God can change a sinner's heart and make him born again or born from above.

### ***5. A Biblical View of the Church and Church Leadership***

The local church is a body of believers gathered together under the care of an elder leadership, actively awaiting the return of Christ, while seeking to exalt Him in their lives. The church exists as a “called out” group of saints, to be separated from the defilement of the world to God. Leaders are to reflect the character of Christ as under shepherds of His flock as defined by 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. They are to teach, pray, lead, shepherd, and uphold sound doctrine. They must equip the saints to do the work of the ministry and reproduce themselves in the lives of others. GBC operates by the biblical mandate of leadership by qualified male elders.

### ***6. A Biblical View of Worship***

Worship is to be God-centered and gospel-focused. Worship is the supreme and only indispensable activity of the Christian Church. It alone will endure when the other activities of the church have ceased. Acceptable worship is always a response to God involving sacrifice. In worship we address God, mindful of His existence, character, and mercy to us through Christ.

### ***7. A Biblical view of Discipleship***

The church is to be the pillar and foundation of divine truth, providing a context of loving fellowship for the purpose of mutual edification. The church is not an entertainment venue, but instead it is a training center where people grow through application of teaching and using their spiritual gifts. It is to be a light in this dark world for the evangelization of the lost. This is what it means to “make disciples.”

### ***8. A Biblical View of Prayer***

Prayer recognizes GBC’s desperate need for God to guide, equip, and empower the church to accomplish its purpose in our community. Both corporately and privately, the church is to ‘seek God’s face’ in prayer for guidance, blessing, power, holiness, evangelism, spiritual growth, and more.



## Members' Statement of Faith

Since the time of the Apostles up until today, Christians have summarized doctrine (beliefs) in brief, definitive statements. We also believe it is necessary to set forth in a concise manner the cornerstone truths of our church as guided by Scripture. Our Statement of Faith outlines essential Christian beliefs, shows unity in Christ, and guards the church from error. All members of Grace Bible Church of Boerne therefore subscribe to the following statement:

*WE BELIEVE* that the Holy Scriptures, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, were originally given by God, divinely inspired, without error in the original writings, and constitute the only infallible, inerrant Word of God and are the authority in all matters of faith and practice.

*WE BELIEVE* that there is one God, Creator of all things, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*WE BELIEVE* in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ – God manifest in the flesh – and in His virgin birth, sinless life, divine miracles, vicarious and atoning death on the cross, bodily resurrection, ascension, and exaltation to the right hand of the Father, and in His bodily, visible and personal return to the earth in power and glory.

*WE BELIEVE* that Adam and Eve, created in the image of God, were tempted by Satan, chose rebellion against God, and fell into disobedience and sin. Adam's sin has passed to all people (Jesus Christ being the only exception), who as a result have a sinful nature, are unable to save themselves from the wrath of God and need to be saved.

*WE BELIEVE* that salvation is the free gift of God to unworthy sinners based on the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ as presented in the Holy Scriptures. Salvation is granted by God's grace alone by regeneration by the Holy Spirit, through faith in Christ alone and repentance from sin, and not on the basis of man's good works.

*WE BELIEVE* in the Spirit-filled life whereby the Holy Spirit, who permanently indwells all believers, enables them to live holy lives, to witness and to work for the Lord Jesus Christ despite opposition from the world, the flesh, and the devil. However, we deny the eradication of indwelling sin in the believer prior to glorification.

*WE BELIEVE* that Christ commanded His followers to make disciples of all the nations baptizing them in name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey all that Christ commanded.

*WE BELIEVE* in the spiritual unity of all true, born-again believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

*WE BELIEVE* in the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the unsaved; the unsaved to the resurrection of judgment and eternal punishment and the saved to the resurrection of life and eternal glory.

## What We Teach

### *Preamble*

The Elders of Grace Bible Church believe that our goal as a church is not to discover how little can be believed, but rather to study and teach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ commanded the Church to study the doctrines of Scripture so that we will be unified in the Christian faith and the knowledge of Him and brought to maturity in Him (Matthew 28:20; Ephesians 4:13; Colossians 1:28; Hebrews 5:12-14). As a result of knowing the truth taught in Scripture, the believer will be firmly established during the winds of confusion and false teaching which plague our world (Ephesians 4:14; 1 Timothy 4:1; 6:3-5). Doctrine has an impact on how we interact with those in authority above us (1 Tim 6:1), how we live a godly life (1 Tim 6:3), and how we speak (Titus 2:1). Most importantly, what we believe will have a direct effect on how other people see God (Titus 2:8).

We recognize that any doctrinal statement is but a fallible human effort to summarize an infallible divine revelation. But this in no way detracts from the importance of such a statement. We do hold firmly to these truths as we see them and call on others to search the Scriptures to see if these things are so. For this reason the Elders are annually required to sign a statement affirming agreement with this Doctrinal Statement. The affirmations which follow carefully specify our teaching position with regard to major biblical doctrines and thus provide a framework for preaching and teaching at Grace Bible Church, as well as an anchor to protect against theological drift.

We do not believe that all things in this doctrinal statement are of equal weight, some being more essential, some less. We do not believe that every part of this affirmation must be affirmed in order for one to be saved. Therefore, we desire to be charitable with those who may interpret secondary issues in a different manner.

This doctrinal statement does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Grace Bible Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Elders is Grace Bible Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

## **The Holy Scriptures**

We teach that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word, absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed (2 Timothy 3:16). We teach the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17). We teach that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

We teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

## **God**

We teach that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4), an infinite, all-knowing Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

## ***God The Father***

We teach that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1-31; Ephesians 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Ephesians 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither the author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4-6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as His own all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

## ***God The Son***

We teach that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30;14:9).

We teach that God the Father created according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

We teach that in the incarnation the eternal Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, without altering His divine nature or surrendering any of the divine attributes, and while never ceasing to be fully God or ceasing to be equal in essence with the Father, made Himself of no reputation by taking on a full human nature consubstantial with our own, yet without sin (Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26.)

We teach that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:35) and thus born of a woman (Gal 4:4-5), so that the two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the divine and the human, were joined together in one person, without confusion, change, division, or separation. He is therefore very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man (Romans 1:3-4; 9:5; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:15.)

We teach that in His incarnation, Christ fully possessed His divine nature, attributes, and prerogatives (Colossians 2:9; Luke 5:18-26; John 16:30; 20:28). However, in the state of His humiliation, He did not always fully express the glories of His majesty, concealing them behind the veil of His genuine humanity (Matt 17:2; Mark 13:32; Phil 2:5-8). According to His human nature, He acts in submission to the Father (John 4:34; 5:19, 30; 6:38) by the power of the Holy Spirit (Isa 42:1; Matt 12:28; Luke 4:1, 14), while, according to His divine nature, He acts by His authority and power as the eternal Son (John 1:14; 2:11; 10:37; 14:10-11). Before Christ's incarnation, His internal divine glory was clearly manifested in heaven. After the incarnation during His earthly ministry, His internal divine glory was still present, though temporarily veiled by Him being in the form of a servant. At His resurrection, He maintained His human form but also had restored to Him the external manifestation of His glory (Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24).

We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Romans 3:25; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).

We teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

We teach that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His Body, unto Himself at the rapture, and returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23):

- Believers (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31-46)
- Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15)

As the Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), the Head of His Body the church (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18), and the coming universal King, who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31).

## ***God The Holy Spirit***

We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity, including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), eternality (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-10), omniscience (Isaiah 40:13-14), omnipotence (Romans 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 10:15-17).

We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), the written revelation (2 Peter 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).

We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost, when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; 15:26) to initiate and complete the building of the Body of Christ, which is His church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher, who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible (2 Peter 1:19-21). Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

We teach that the miraculous and revelatory gifts of the Spirit were temporary gifts, given to the early church for three purposes: (1) As a sign by which God authenticated His messengers during a time of transition from Israel to the church (Matthew 10:1,7; Acts 2:22; 43; 8:6, 13; 14:3; Romans 15:18-19; 2 Corinthians 12:2; 14:21-22; Hebrew 2:3-4). That purpose was no longer necessary once the transition was complete and the church was firmly established. (2) As a

means by which to give additional revelation to the church (2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 1:1-2); which was promised by Jesus Himself (John 14:23-26; 16:12-15). That purpose ceased to be necessary once the canon was completed. (3) As a means by which to edify others in the church (1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:3-5, 12, 17,26; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11). This is still a purpose of spiritual gifts, but it does not necessitate the continuation of the foundational gifts (e.g. the miraculous sign gifts and revelatory gifts).

We teach that gift of tongues was the supernatural ability to speak in real human languages that were not previously learned (Isaiah 28:11; Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 14:9-11, 21). The gift of tongues was primarily as a sign for unbelieving Israel (Isaiah 28:11; 1 Corinthians 14:21-22). Secondly, when the tongue was translated by the gift of interpretation it was for the edification of the church (1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 12, 26).

We teach that the gift of prophecy was the supernatural ability to give a fully accurate and fully authoritative declaration of divine revelation (1 Corinthians 12:10; Acts 11:27-28; 21:10; Revelation 1:3). We also teach that prophecy in the New Testament is to be held by the same standard in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:21-22; Jeremiah 23:14; 1 John 4:1-6).

We teach that the gift of healings was the supernatural ability to lay hands on a sick person and see that person immediately and fully recover (1 Corinthians 12:9). This is the same pattern of healing which was seen in Christ and the Apostles (Mark 1:42; 8:14-15; 12:24; John 11:47-48; Acts 4:16-17); and the healing was not based on the recipients faith since some who were healed had no faith (Mark 8:5-11; Luke 17:11-19; John 5:1-16; Acts 16:18). We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted (Luke 18:1-8; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

We teach that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to the church for the common good of all believers. Since each gift is given according to God's sovereign will and discretion, the possession of any gift is of grace and does not constitute spiritual maturity. The proper use of the gifts are for the edification of the body; to promote united worship of God in the congregation, giving preeminence and glory to Jesus Christ, and continually to facilitate the growth of each member of the body into maturity in Christ. (Isaiah 28:11; John 16:14; Acts 4:8, 31, Romans 8:23, 12:1-21; 1 Cor. 12:11-13, 13:8, 14:21; Eph. 1:13, 4:7-16).



## **Man**

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9). Since creation man is made up of two parts, a material (or physical) part and a non-material (or spiritual) part, which are mysteriously linked together by God at conception. In the Bible the immaterial part of man is referred to as either a “soul” or a “spirit,” both being used interchangeably in Scripture (Genesis 2:7; Job 7:11; Ps 42:6; Isaiah 26:9; Matthew 10:28; Luke 1:46-47; James 2:26; 3 John 2).

We teach that God’s intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God’s fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God’s purpose for man in the world (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11). We teach that in God’s love and wisdom, men and women were appointed differing and complementary roles in marriage as a picture of Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:22-33; Genesis 2:18).

We teach that in Adam’s sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, became subject to the wrath of God. Because of Adam’s sin man also became inherently corrupt, totally depraved, a slave to sin, and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace (Gen 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:21-23; John 8:34; Romans 1:18-32; 3:9-18; 6:6; 8:8; Ephesians 4:17-18).

With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man’s salvation is thereby wholly of God’s grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

We teach that, because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam’s sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; 5:10-12).

## **Salvation**

We teach that salvation is wholly of God by grace, through faith, on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His life of perfect righteousness and His shed blood, and not at all on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

## **Election**

We teach that election is the sovereign act of God which occurs through faith, by which, before the foundation of the world, He unconditionally chose in Christ all those whom He would ever graciously regenerate, save, and sanctify (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2).

We teach that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:19-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the very means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will always result in what God determines. All whom the Father has elected He will effectually call to Himself. All whom the Father effectually calls to Himself will come in faith. And all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; Romans 8:30).

We teach that God's election of totally depraved sinners is unconditional and is according to the sovereign freedom of God's own will. Election is not related to any initiative of the sinner's own part, or to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, or even in response to their foreseen faith. Rather, election is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Romans 9:11, 16; Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign, but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Romans 9:11-16). This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:25-28; 2 Timothy 1:9).

## **Redemption**

We teach that redemption was fully and efficaciously accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ. Through His perfect life of obedience to God and His suffering and death, Christ purchased the forgiveness of sins and the gift of perfect righteousness for all those who would ever repent and trust in Him for salvation (Romans 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 3:18; Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21). In His atoning death, Christ bore in their place the punishment due to them because of their sin (Isaiah 53:4-6; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24), thereby satisfying the demands of divine justice and fully propitiating the wrath of God against them (Romans 3:21-26; 5:9; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 4:10). Thus it can be truly said that "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1; Colossians 2:13-14).

We teach that all three Persons of the Trinity are entirely unified in the work of redemption (Romans 8:1-11; Galatians 4:4-6; Titus 3:4-6). We teach that redemption of the elect was decreed by the Father in eternity past (Ephesians 1:4; John 6:37-40; 10:29; 17:6, 9, 19-21), was entirely and actually accomplished by the Son in the fullness of time, and is applied to the sinner by the Holy Spirit in His work of regeneration. Thus, by His atoning work, Christ rendered the salvation of the elect definite, such that none for whom Christ died will ever perish (John 10:14-15; 27-30). And by His regenerating work, the Holy Spirit renders the salvation of the elect actual, applying the benefits of Christ's efficacious work to all whom the Father has chosen. Thus, the Lord laid down His life for His sheep (John 10:14-15, 26-30), for His friends (John 15:13), purchasing the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 9:11-12, 15; Revelation 5:9); giving Himself up for His bride, the church (Ephesians 5:25).

We teach that the death of Christ establishes the Christian's duty to proclaim the gospel to all, confidently announcing that whoever believes will be saved (Matthew 28:18-20; John 3:16; 6:37; Revelation 22:17).

### **Regeneration**

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished monergistically, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23).

We teach that in his natural state, the unrepentant sinner cannot see the glory of Christ and His gospel, and thus refuses Him who is most precious because he is blind to His value (2 Corinthians 4:4). Yet through the sovereign miracle of regeneration, God shines in the heart of His elect to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6). The eyes of his heart being thus enlightened, for the first time the sinner properly esteems the worthlessness of sin and the infinite worth of Christ. As a result of this divine quickening, the repentant sinner, so enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Therefore, we teach that regenerating grace is irresistible because the glory of God in the face of Christ, properly perceived, is irresistible.

### ***Justification***

We teach that justification before God is the act of God (Romans 8:33) in which He declares righteous those who, by His irresistible grace, repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7), turn to Christ in faith (Acts 16:31; 20:21;

Romans 1:16; 3:22, 26; Galatians 3:22) and confess Him as sovereign Lord (Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11).

We teach that the sole basis of the believer's justification is the righteous life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Christ's righteousness consists in His rendering perfect obedience to all of God's commandments, thus attaining as a man to the perfect standard of God's righteousness in thought, word, and deed (Isaiah 53:9, 11; Matthew 3:15; Romans 3:21–22; 8:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 4:15). This includes His obedience unto death on the cross in order to pay the penalty for sin (Philippians 2:8), as well as His resurrection from the dead by which His righteousness is vindicated (Romans 4:25). It is this perfect righteousness, both in His life and death, with which believers are clothed in union with Christ and which is the sole ground of our acceptance with God (Romans 3:24, 8:21; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:27; Philippians 3:8-9).

In justification, righteousness is not infused into the believer, nor is it attained by any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; 4:6; 5:18-19). Rather, the perfect righteousness of Christ is counted, reckoned, or imputed to the believer through the instrumentality of faith (Romans 3:28; 4:4–5; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9). Neither the possession of faith nor the act of believing is that which is imputed; rather, faith is the instrument through which Christ's righteousness is imputed.

We teach that along with the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer, God also imputes the believer's sin to Christ, such that through His suffering and death, Christ paid the penalty of the believer's sin by bearing the wrath of God in his place (Galatians 3:13; Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24). By this double imputation, God declares sinners righteous by faith alone, while never setting aside the demands of His holy justice (Matthew 5:17; Romans 3:31; 10:4). In this way, He is vindicated as both "just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

### ***Sanctification***

We teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that there is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought into greater conformity with the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the

empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23).

In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

We teach that the child of God will ultimately be fully sanctified in Christ when he shall see the Lord and be “like Him” in his resurrected, glorified body (John 17:17; Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18, 7:1; Ephesians 4:24, 5:25-27; Colossians 1:22; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Hebrews 10:10, 14, 12:10).

### ***Security and Assurance.***

We teach that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God’s power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24). Those who once professed faith and subsequently deny the Lordship of Jesus Christ demonstrate by their going out from us that they were never truly saved (1 John 2:19).

We teach that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God’s Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14).

Genuine salvation is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works are the proper evidence and fruit of regeneration (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10), and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). Such a conformity is climaxed in the believer’s glorification at Christ’s coming (Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

### ***Separation.***

We teach that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness shall increase (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).

We teach that, out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. We also teach that separation from all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices is commanded of us by God (Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

We teach that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Hebrews 12:1-2) and affirm that the Christian life is a life of obedient righteousness that reflects the teaching of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:2-12) and a continual pursuit of holiness (Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 2:12-13; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10).

### **The Church**

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), of which Christ is the Head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We teach that the formation of the church, the Body of Christ, began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

We teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Ephesians 2:11-3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32), a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32).

We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25).

We teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, pastors, overseers, and shepherds; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 5:1-2) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

We teach that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

We teach the importance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual accountability of all believers to each other (Matthew 18:5-14), as well as the need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Titus 1:5). We teach that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The elders should determine all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government as well (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), by instruction of the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42) and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42). We teach the calling of all saints to the work of service (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12).

We teach the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:7-12), and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32). We also teach that, whereas the elements of Communion are *only representative* of the flesh and blood of Christ, participation in the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ, who indwells every believer, and so is present, fellowshiping with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16).

## **Angels**

### ***Holy Angels.***

We teach that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14; 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9).

### ***Fallen Angels.***

We teach that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-15).

We teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13-14; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:9-10); that he is the prince of this world, who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20); and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).



## **Last Things**

### ***Death.***

We teach that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Revelation 6:9-11), that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8), that there is a separation of soul and body (Philippians 1:21-24), and that, for the redeemed, such separation will continue until the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17), which initiates the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4-6), when our soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord (Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8).

We teach the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15).

We teach that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15), when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28-29). They shall then appear at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15) and shall be cast into hell, the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41-46), cut off from the life of God forever (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

### ***The Rapture of the Church.***

We teach the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ before the seven-year tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13) to translate His church from this earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:11) and, between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

### ***The Tribulation Period.***

We teach that immediately following the removal of the church from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16), and that these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matthew 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). At that time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be

raised and the living will be judged (Daniel 12:2-3; Revelation 20:4-6). This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:15-31; 25:31-46).

### ***The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign.***

We teach that, after the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; 2:29-30) and establish His messianic kingdom for 1,000 years on the earth (Revelation 20:1-7). During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; Revelation 19:11-16).

This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (Daniel 7:17-27; Revelation 20:1-7).

We teach that the kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17) to restore them to the land that they temporarily forfeited through their disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-26), but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Romans 11:25-29).

We teach that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Isaiah 11; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38), and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (Revelation 20:7).

### ***The Judgment of the Lost.***

We teach that following the release of Satan after the 1,000-year reign of Christ (Revelation 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Revelation 20:9). Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10), whereupon Christ, who is the Judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne Judgment.

We teach that this resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment (John 5:28-29), they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

***Eternity.***

We teach that after the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved (2 Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new earth, wherein only righteousness dwells (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15; 21:1-27; 22:1-21). Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Revelation 21-22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28), that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Corinthians 15:28).

*Adopted April 18, 2015*

*Revised April 2, 2022*

## **Elders Statement On Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage, and Sexuality**

We teach that marriage was given by God as part of His common grace, and that it has no meaning other than as He has provided (Gen. 2:18–24). We teach that marriage is subject to the curse of the Fall but that believers, living in obedience to the Scripture and under the control of the Holy Spirit, can begin to experience peaceful, productive, and fulfilled marriage as intended by God (Gen. 3:16; 1 Peter 3:7).

We teach that the marriages of believers are to illustrate the loving relationship of Christ and His church, with the husband loving his wife as Christ loves the church and the wife submitting to her husband's loving leadership as the church submits to Christ (Eph. 5:18–33).

We teach that as believers' marriages are to illustrate Christ's relationship with His church, believers should choose to marry those who share their faith and regenerate life (2 Cor. 6:14).

We teach that the term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in scripture (Gen. 2:23–24).

We teach that marriage is always a public, formal, and officially recognized covenant between a man and a woman. We teach that without such a covenant, which may include a "common law marriage," where valid in specific cases under pertinent law, prolonged conjugal cohabitation does not establish, and is not equivalent to, marriage (John 4:18).

We teach that where no such covenant exists, or can be discerned, between a cohabiting couple prior to coming to faith in Christ, family units should be preserved to the extent possible and, if otherwise appropriate, solemnization encouraged. We teach that where a valid marriage has been established prior to coming to faith in Christ, the couple should remain married (1 Cor. 7:24).

We teach that God hates divorce, permitting it only where there has been unrepentant sexual sin (Mal. 2:14–16; Matt. 5:32, 19:9) or desertion by an unbeliever (1 Cor. 7:12–15). We teach that remarriage is permitted to a faithful partner, but only when the divorce was on biblical grounds.

We teach that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We teach that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (Heb. 13:4).

We teach that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, pornography, any attempt to change one's sex or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God (Lev. 18:1–30; Matt. 5:28; Rom. 1:26–29; 1 Cor. 5:1, 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1–8).

We teach that homosexuality, in particular, is subject to God's wrath of abandonment, is a matter of choice and not inherited status, and epitomizes man's ungrateful rebellion against God (Rom. 1:18–28).

We teach that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of the church. We teach that the faithful proclamation of the Scripture, including the call to repentance, does not constitute hate speech, or hateful and harassing behavior, but is instead a fundamental part of the church's loving mission to the world (Matt. 28:16–20; 2 Cor. 5:11–20; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1–2).

We teach that God offers redemption and forgiveness to all who confess and forsake their sin, including sexual sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We teach that His forgiveness is total and complete (Ps. 103:11–12, 130:3–4; Is. 43:25, 44:22; John 5:24; Col. 2:13–14) and that God imputes the full righteousness of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21) to the believing sinner. We teach that the forgiven sinner has been cleansed from the guilt of sin, set apart unto God, or made holy, and justified before Him (1 Cor. 6:9–11).

We teach that any man or woman who has received that forgiveness is “in Christ” and is a “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17)

## **By-Laws**

### **Article I: Location of Offices**

The name of this Corporation is Grace Bible Church. It is a Texas nonprofit religious Corporation with the principal offices in Kendall County, Texas.

### **Article II: Purpose**

This Corporation is organized for exclusively religious purposes. Our commission is summarized as follows:

- And Jesus came up and spoke to them saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)
- “And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.” (Colossians 1:28)

### **Article III: Statement of Faith/Doctrinal Statement**

The Statement of Faith and Doctrinal Statement of this Corporation are attached hereto and made a part hereof for all purposes. Each member of the congregation is required to give full assent to the attached Statement of Faith, as mentioned in Article V, Section 2 and 4. Each person in the office of elder or deacon or full time staff is required to give full assent to the attached Doctrinal Statement, as mentioned below in Article VI, Section 3 (b) and Article VII, Section 2. In addition, each person serving in the role of teacher or ministry leader is asked to give full assent to the attached Doctrinal Statement. If full assent cannot be given, upon Elder examination of said differences and upon Elder approval, on a case-by-case basis, that person may be allowed to serve in the role of a teacher or ministry leader, with the understanding that at no point can he or she contradict the Doctrinal Statement while carrying out a teaching or leadership role.

At the direction of the Elders, the Statement of Faith is supplemented and clarified by the Doctrinal Statement, “The Elders Statement on Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage and Sexuality,” the Doctrinal Distinctives issued by the Elders, and such other doctrinal statements as may be subsequently issued by the Elders.

## **Article IV: Corporate Membership**

### ***Section 1. Corporate Members***

The Corporation shall have no members as that term is used in the Texas Non-Profit Act. Any action which would otherwise require approval by any or all members shall only require 2 approvals of the Board of Elders. All rights which would otherwise vest in the members shall vest in the Board of Elders.

### ***Section 2. Members of the Fellowship***

Nothing contained in Section I of this Article shall be construed to limit the right of the Corporation to refer to persons associated with the Corporation as “members” even though such persons are not corporate members, and no such reference in or outside of these By-laws shall constitute anyone being a member, within the meaning of the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act.

## **Article V: Church Membership**

### ***Section 1. Purpose of the Fellowship***

The congregation of Christian believers who have applied for membership and have been duly accepted shall constitute a spiritual body, united for the spiritual purposes set forth in the Articles of Incorporation and these By-laws.

### ***Section 2. Active Membership***

To qualify for membership in Grace Bible Church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized by immersion in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible, who has passed his or her eighteenth (18) birthday, and who has successfully completed any new member’s class required by the Board of Elders. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The Board of Elders shall be responsible for determining each person’s qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person’s profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the Board of Elders deem appropriate.

### ***Section 3. Voting Privileges***

Membership in this church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights in the Corporation but shall only entitle the member to vote at a meeting of the members on those matters that the Board of Elders submits to the church membership for affirmation (see Article VI, Section 1 and Article IX, Section 1). Voting privileges are restricted to church members who are in good standing, who are not under any disciplinary action. Membership shall not be assignable *inter vivos* by any member nor shall membership vest to any personal representative, heir, or devisee.

### ***Section 4. Applications for Membership***

All requests for membership shall be made to an Elder or other person designated by the Elders. Each applicant shall attend and complete any new member's class required by the Board of Elders. Upon completion of the new member's class, the person shall be given an application for membership, along with a copy of the Statement of Faith contained in the Articles of Incorporation and a copy of the Bylaws. An elder shall meet with the applicant following receipt of the application and each applicant shall give full assent to the Statement of Faith and subscribe to the Bylaws before becoming a church member. Any questions about or disagreements with the Statement of Faith or Bylaws must be indicated on the membership application. The Board of 3 Elders will evaluate these questions or disagreements to determine whether the request for membership will be approved.

### ***Section 5. Denial of Membership***

If, upon review of an application for membership or after meeting with a prospective member, the Board of Elders determines that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, or that there is a lack of evidence of godly lifestyle, or that they are convinced of unbiblical doctrine which could be divisive, membership shall be denied. The decision made by the Board shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.

### ***Section 6. Admission of Applicants***

Applicants admitted to membership shall, if possible, present themselves at a worship service designated by the Preaching Pastor and Board of Elders, at which service such applicants shall publicly affirm their Membership Commitment and be publicly acknowledged as members.



## ***Section 7. Responsibilities and Privileges of Members***

(a) Each church member, in accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, shall be privileged, and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church who are members of this congregation.

(b) Members shall be responsible for faithful support of the body of Christ, the church (II Cor. 9:6-15; Heb. 10:24-25) and a ministry of support and encouragement to one another (Gal. 6:2; Col. 3:12-17). Members shall seek to exercise their spiritual gifts for the mutual benefit of all the church body (I Cor. 12:7) and shall submit to the loving rule of the Elders (I Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:7, 17). Members are always encouraged to contact an Elder if they wish to meet with the Board of Elders to discuss any matter of concern related to the church.

(c) Membership shall be required to hold the office of elder or deacon, to nominate elders or deacons, to vote on such matters presented to the membership by the Elders, as described in Article VI, Section 1 and Article IX, Section 1, and to hold substantive and/or ongoing teaching or other leadership positions in the church as determined by the Board of Elders.

## ***Section 8. Church Discipline***

(a) The threefold purpose of church discipline is:

- Supremely, for the glory God by maintaining purity in the local church, which reflects His character to the world (John 15:8; 1 Corinthians 5:6-7; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 2 John 10),
- For the edification of believers by deterring sin (1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11).
- For the promotion of the spiritual welfare and restoration of the offending believer by calling him or her to repent and return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct. (Matthew 18:15; Luke 17:3; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; Titus 1:13-14).

(b) 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, (1) 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 (2) 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. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then (3) 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, I Timothy 5:19, and Titus 3:10, 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 regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect shall 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 (4) 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.

(c) 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) and then 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:

- (1) Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e., openly and to the offense of the whole Church (I Cor. 5:1-5).
- (2) Where the first and second stages of church discipline have effectively occurred simultaneously.
- (3) 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); or (4) Where the disciplined party has been warned once by the Elders, or a duly constituted committee thereof, to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10-11).

(d) 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 paragraph, 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 discipline or action.

(e) 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 attendee, 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.

(f) 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), the names of any members who have not attended a worship service, Sunday School class session or small group meeting at Grace Bible Church for a period of three months or longer may be removed from the membership rolls.

(g) Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elders, membership may be immediately revoked, and notification sent to member by mail.

### ***Section 9. Regular Meetings***

A regular annual meeting of the church members shall be held at the principal office of the church (as the same shall be from time to time designated in the minutes of the Board) by September 31 of each year. At such regular annual meeting, the members shall consider reports of the affairs of the church and transact such other business as the Elders determine shall be brought before the meeting.

### ***Section 10. Special Meetings***

Special meetings of the members may be called at any time by order of the Board of Elders or by a quorum of the members of the Board of Elders.

### ***Section 11. Notice of Meetings***

Notice of a regular annual meeting shall be given from the pulpit for two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. In addition, thereto, notice shall be published in the regular church bulletin for two successive Sundays prior to such meeting. Notice of special meetings shall be given from the pulpit at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting and shall also be published in the regular church bulletin on the Sunday immediately preceding the meeting.

## ***Section 12. Quorum***

At all meetings of the members, whether regular, special, or adjourned, the members present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

## ***Section 13. Voting Rights***

Those admitted to the church membership do not constitute a legislative body, nor do they constitute members in the Corporation, and they cannot vote, pass resolutions binding upon the Corporation, nor shall they have any equity in the real property of the Corporation, or right to vote on its disposal. Said property of the Corporation is dedicated to religious and charitable purposes as outlined in the Articles of Incorporation.

## **Article VI: Elders**

### ***Section 1. Powers***

The premise of the government and general oversight of this congregation is biblical eldership, exercised by the Board of Elders made up of men who meet the biblical qualifications and who lead, shepherd, and oversee the church in a spirit of love, humility, and unity. The Board of Elders, as they submit to the Holy Spirit, shall be responsible, except as mentioned elsewhere in these By-laws, for final decisions after sharing of information and gathering input, as explained below, from the congregation and arriving at a Spirit-led, unanimous decision among themselves. The only head of the church is Jesus Christ as He rules in the affairs of His Church by the leading of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God through human agency. It is the duty of each elder of the church to seek humbly the mind of Christ in all things and to lead in a gentle, godly, and wise manner as enabled by the Holy Spirit.

Subject to limitations of the Articles and these By-laws and of pertinent restrictions imposed by law, all the activities and affairs of the Corporation shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, who are responsible for shepherding and having oversight of the flock. Additionally, the Board of Elders shall function as “The Board of Directors” as that term is used by applicable law. Without prejudice to such general powers, but subject to these same limitations, it is hereby expressly declared that the Board shall have the following powers in addition to the other powers enumerated in these By-laws:

- (a) To select and remove all the officers, agents, staff, and non-elder employees of the Corporation (see Section 5 below for removal of elders), prescribe such duties for them consistent with the Scriptures, with law, with the Articles of Incorporation, or with these By-laws; and fix the terms of their offices and their compensation, if any. Additional pastoral staff shall not automatically be Elders but must meet the qualifications for elders as listed in Article VI, Section 4.

(b) To make such disbursements from the funds and properties of the Corporation as are required to fulfill the purposes of this Corporation as are more fully set out in the Articles of Incorporation thereof, and generally to conduct, manage, and control the activities and affairs of the Corporation and to make such rules and regulations consistent with the Scriptures, with law, with the Articles of Incorporation or with these By-laws, as they may deem best.

(c) To adopt, make and use a corporate seal, and to alter the form of such seal from time to time as they may deem best.

(d) To establish policies and practices for the church consistent with the purposes of this Corporation.

(e) To assist the teaching pastor in the administration of the ordinances of Baptism and Communion. Each serving Elder is authorized to solemnize marriages.

(f) The Board of Elders shall poll the membership (in such manner as the Board of Elders shall determine) prior to taking the following actions:

(1) purchase, construction, or sale of real estate

(2) non-budgeted monetary commitments equal to more than 15% of the total fiscal year budget.

(3) establishment of full-time salaried positions

(4) calling of pastoral staff

(5) approval of the annual budget

(6) installment of elders and deacons, as discussed below in Section 3 (d).

The results of the polling of the membership shall be prayerfully considered by the Board of Elders as they make the final decision regarding the above matters.

(g) Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the Board of Elders shall have no power to borrow money on behalf of the Corporation, nor shall the Corporation borrow money at any time. The Board of Elders may approve revolving accounts (i.e., credit cards or leases) for expenses to certain administrative elders or staff and facility rentals.

(h) To administer church discipline according to Biblical criteria and to arbitrate disputes between members.

## ***Section 2. Number of Elders***

The authorized number of Elders of the Corporation shall not be less than three (3) until changed by an amendment to these By-Laws. In any event, the number of authorized Elders shall include both 'full-time' or otherwise 'paid' Pastor/Elders and 'un-paid' or 'lay' Elders. Any change or amendment to this Section of the Bylaws shall require unanimous approval of the Board of Elders.

In the event that there are less than three elders, the elder(s) shall appoint one or more men from inside or outside the congregation, as stewards, such that the number of stewards and elders together are not less than three. Stewards must be elder qualified men serving with Kerrville Bible Church, or elder qualified men serving with other like-minded churches and approved by the elders such that there would be a minimum of three (3) people overseeing the church. The stewards shall assist the elder(s), on a co-equal basis with the elder(s) in making decisions for the Corporation.

In the event there are no elders serving this church, the congregation will nominate three or more men (on a co- equal basis with the same power and authority) from inside or outside of the congregation as stewards, to make decisions for the Corporation, with each official member of the congregation having three votes, and the top three candidates receiving votes becoming the stewards.

In the event that stewards (off-site elders) are appointed, their responsibilities would be as listed in the statement titled "Responsibilities of Off-Site Stewards," incorporated herein by reference.

## ***Section 3. Selection and Tenure of Office***

Method of Selection:

- (a) Members may nominate candidates to the Board of Elders. The existing Board of Elders shall consider candidates on the basis of their apparent qualifications to serve as an Elder.
- (b) The candidates shall complete a written application, give full assent to the Doctrinal Statement, be personally interviewed by the Board of Elders to confirm their qualifications and to ascertain their willingness to serve, and complete any other preliminary requirements as determined by the Board of Elders.
- (c) The Board of Elders' recommendation of all new candidates shall be submitted to the congregation for Consideration, along with copies of the written application. During the following two weeks anyone may voice his or her support or objections regarding any candidate privately to an Elder.
- (d) After this two-week period the membership shall be polled regarding the recommendation of the Board of Elders. This polling shall be done by secret ballot with any disapproval including the signature of the dissenting individual so that any conflicts

might be resolved. This poll is only for the purpose of providing the Elders with information on the member's desires.

(e) The Board of Elders shall approve or disapprove the candidates at its next regular meeting after the two-week waiting period. The Board of Elders' decision shall be final.

(f) The approved candidates shall be recognized before the congregation at an installment service.

Each elder shall serve until he resigns or is removed as hereafter provided. Any Elder who resigns or has been removed shall be subject to the above selection procedure before being reinstated as an Elder.

#### ***Section 4. Qualifications***

Each member of the Board of Elders must be an active male member of this church and possess the qualifications described in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He shall be:

(1) Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6-7)

(2) A "one-woman man" (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6)

(3) Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2)

(4) Sober-minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8)

(5) Of good behavior, orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)

(6) Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8)

(7) Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9)

(8) Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)

(9) Not violent, not pugnacious (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)

(10) Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3)

(11) Not a brawler, uncontentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)

(12) Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)

(13) Rules well his own house; his children still in the home are faithful, not accused of dissipation or rebellion to God (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6 – HCSB, NKJV, NET).

(14) Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6).

(15) Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7).

- (16) Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
- (17) A lover of good men and things (Titus 1:8)
- (18) Just, fair (Titus 1:8)
- (19) Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)
- (20) Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)

The term “pastor” and “elder” may be used synonymously since the New Testament teaches that the titles Pastor (shepherd), Elder, and Overseer are terms of the same office and have equal authority and responsibility to teach and equip the congregation (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1). For distinguishing of roles and responsibilities not all Elders must be equally gifted to teach, equally trained (i.e., seminary), supported financially, or serve in the same capacity or roles as the pastoral staff of the church (1 Tim 5:17). As a first among equals, the Teaching Pastor shall oversee for the Lord’s Day services and pulpit ministry as described in Article IX, Section 3.

#### ***Section 5. Removal of Elders***

Any Elder may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture including 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), after thorough corroborating investigation by the remaining Elders, in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, (including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19-21). The Elder Board (not including the elder under question) must be unanimous in its vote to dismiss an elder. When an Elder is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service as prescribed in I Timothy 5:20.

#### ***Section 6. Place of Meetings***

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary provided in these By-laws, any meeting (whether regular, special, or adjourned) of the Board of Elders of the Corporation may be held at any place within or without the state of Texas.

#### ***Section 7. Regular Meetings***

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held without call or notice at such times and places as may be designated by the Board. The Elders shall meet at least once a month.



### ***Section 8. Special Meetings***

Special meetings of the Board of Elders may be called at any time by order of the Teaching Pastor, the Chairman or by a quorum of the members of the Board of Elders.

### ***Section 9. Notice of Special Meetings***

Special meetings of the Board shall be held upon three (3) days' notice by first class mail, or a twenty-four hour notice given personally or by telephone or email or other similar means of communication. Any such notice shall be addressed or delivered to each Elder or at such Elder's address as it is shown upon the records of the Corporation or as may have been given to the Corporation by the Elder for such purpose of notice.

### ***Section 10. Quorum***

A majority of the Board of Elders must be present to constitute a quorum.

### ***Section 11. Participation in Meetings by Conference Telephone***

Members of the Board may participate in a meeting through use of conference telephone or similar communications equipment, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another.

### ***Section 12. Adjournment***

A majority of the Elders present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any Elder's meeting to another time and place. Notice of the time and place of holding an adjourned meeting need not be given to absent Elders if the time and place be fixed at the meeting adjourned, except as provided in the next sentence. If the meeting is adjourned for more than forty-eight (48) hours, notice of any adjournment to another time or place shall be given prior to the time of the adjourned meeting to the Elders who were not present at the time of the adjournment.

### ***Section 13. Action Without Meeting***

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Board shall individually or collectively consent in writing to a duly prepared resolution to such action. Such consent or consents shall have the same effect as a unanimous vote of the Board and shall be documented by attaching the signed resolution with the minutes of proceedings of the Board.

### ***Section 14. Rights of Inspection***

Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect and copy all books, records, and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of the Corporation of which such person is an Elder, for a purpose reasonably related to such person's interest as an Elder. Counseling records of an Elder are such Elder's personal property and not the property of the Corporation.

### ***Section 15. Decisions of the Board of Elders***

Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration by unanimous vote in a spirit of 11 humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself and the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures.

### ***Section 16. Fees and Compensation***

Elders (as such) shall not receive any compensation for their services; however, nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any Elders from serving the Corporation in any other capacity and receiving compensation.

Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from Grace Bible Church of Boerne shall not be in a position to determine the nature or amount of said compensation.

## **Article VII: Other Councils and Committees**

### ***Section 1. Councils and Committees***

The Board may appoint various councils and committees from within its membership, the staff, and from the church at large. These councils and committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Board.

### ***Section 2. Deacons***

The Deacons shall consist of male members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and shall be appointed in the same manner as for Elders, as set forth in Article VI, Section 3 of these By-laws, except that no written application shall be required of deacons. Each Deacon shall serve until he resigns, is removed or his term (as set forth from time to time by the Elders) expires. The Deacons shall assist the Elders in the shepherding of the saints, aid in the general care of the church, be responsible for the protection, management and upkeep of Grace Bible Church property and perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders. A Deacon shall be a man of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not fond of sordid gain, holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, first tested and found beyond reproach. Deacons are asked to give full assent to the attached Doctrinal Statement. If full assent cannot be given, upon Elder examination of said differences and upon Elder approval, on a case-

by case basis, that person may be allowed to serve in the role of a deacon, with the understanding that at no point can he contradict the Doctrinal Statement while carrying out the office of a deacon.

### ***Section 3. Removal of Deacons***

Any Deacon may be removed from office at any regular or special meetings of the Board if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including I Timothy 3:8-13), after thorough corroborating investigation by the Elders, in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18.

## **Article VIII: Officers**

### ***Section 1. Officers***

The officers of the Corporation shall be a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Corporation may also have at the discretion of the Board of Elders, other officers 12 as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of this article. All officers of the Corporation must be active church members in good standing.

### ***Section 2. Appointment***

The officers of the Corporation, except such officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 or Section 5 of this Article, shall be chosen by, and shall serve at, the pleasure of the Board of Elders. Each officer shall hold his office until he shall resign, be removed, or become otherwise disqualified to serve, or until his successor shall be appointed and installed.

### ***Section 3. Subordinate Officers***

The Board of Elders may appoint, and may empower the Chairman to appoint, such other officers as the business of the Corporation may require, each of whom shall hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in the By-laws or as the Board of Elders may from time to time determine.

### ***Section 4. Removal and Resignation***

Any officer may be removed, either with or without cause, by the remainder of the Elders at any time, at any regular or special meetings of the Board, or by any officer upon whom such power of removal may be conferred by the Board of Elders. Any officer may resign at any time without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the Corporation under any contract to which the officer is a party, by giving written notice to the Board of Elders, or to the Chairman, or to the Secretary of the Corporation. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or

at any later time specified therein; and unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

### ***Section 5. Vacancies***

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in the By-laws for regular election or appointment to such office, provided that such vacancies shall be filled as they occur and not on an annual basis.

### ***Section 6. Inability to Act***

In the case of absence or inability to act of any officer of the Corporation and of any person herein authorized to act in his place, the Board of Elders may from time to time delegate the powers or duties of such officer to any other officer or person whom the Board may select.

### ***Section 7. The Chairman***

The Chairman shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation and shall, subject to the control of the Board of Elders, have general supervision, direction, and control of the activities and officers of the Corporation. He shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Elders, which are to be conducted according to scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8. He shall be an ex-officio member of all the standing committees, including the Executive Committee, if any, and shall have such powers and duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders or the By-laws. The Chairman must be an Elder.

### ***Section 8. Vice-Chairman***

In the absence or disability of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall perform all the duties of the Chairman, and when so acting shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all the restrictions upon, the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as from time to time may be prescribed for him by the Board of Elders or the By-laws. The Vice-Chairman must be an Elder.

### ***Section 9. Secretary***

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, a book of minutes at the principal office or such other place as the Board of Elders may order, of all meetings of the members, the Board and its committees, with the time and place of holding, whether regular or special, and if special, how authorized, the notice thereof given, the names of those present at the meetings, the Board and committees' meetings, and the proceedings thereof. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, at the principal office in the State of Texas the original and a copy of the Corporation's Articles and By-laws, as amended to date.

The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Board and any committees thereof required by these By-laws or by law to be given, shall keep the seal of the Corporation in safe custody, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as prescribed by the Board.

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept at the principal office of the Corporation, a church membership register, or a duplicated membership register, showing the names of the members and their addresses.

### ***Section 10. Treasurer***

The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct accounts of the properties and business transactions of the Corporation. The books of account shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by any Elder.

The Treasurer shall deposit, or cause to be deposited, all monies and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the Corporation with such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Elders. The Treasurer shall disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Corporation as may be ordered by the Board of Elders, shall render to the chairman and the Elders, whenever they request it, an account of all church transactions and of the financial condition of the Corporation, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders. The Treasurer shall make financial reports as requested by the Board and at the annual meeting of members.

## **Article IX: The Teaching Pastor**

### ***Section 1. Calling***

1. The Board of Elders shall designate a special search committee to assist in the calling process. This committee shall consist of Elders, Deacons, and members (both men and women) who are appointed by the Board of Elders. The Search Committee shall elect their own Chairman and Secretary.

2. The committee shall solicit applications from candidates for review. After evaluating candidate applications and sermons the committee shall decide which candidates to interview.

The committee shall assess the man according to following qualifications:

- He must meet the Biblical requirements of an Elder in Article VI, Section 4.
- He must have a credible testimony of faith.
- He should be a graduate of a conservative, evangelical school, or have equivalent knowledge, skills, and experience.

- He must be in full, wholehearted agreement with the Doctrinal Statement, Church Covenant, Core Value and Distinctives, and any doctrinal positions/statements in writing which the Board of Elders has previously made public.

3. After the candidate interviews are conducted the search committee shall present a candidate to the church. The church then shall be given an adequate opportunity to assess the preaching, shepherding, and leadership gifts of any potential candidates.

4. After the assessing of the candidates' gifts by the congregation, the search committee will vote to recommend a candidate for Elder Board approval or continue the search. The vote to recommend a candidate to the Elder Board must have 75% approval among the search committee.

5. The Board of Elders shall seek the opinion of the congregation by polling them, using a standardized polling form. Polling forms may be obtained and handed in within a two-week period, during which time any individual within the congregation may voice his support or objections of any candidate. The results of the polling of the congregation shall be prayerfully considered by the Board of Elders as they make the final decision about calling the candidate.

6. Upon considering the polling of the church members, and after prayerful consideration, the Board of Elders will vote at their next regular meeting or at a special called meeting after the two week waiting period. To extend a call to a candidate, the Board of Elders' vote must be unanimous.

### ***Section 2. Dismissal: (See Article VI, Section 5)***

Resignation: All resignations must be submitted in writing to the Board of Elders for their consideration at least thirty (30) days in advance of desired date of resignation. The Board of Elders may prescribe severance pay or other benefits as they shall determine.

### ***Section 3. Duties***

The Teaching Pastor shall automatically be a member of the Board of Elders, shall be an ex-officio member of all councils and committees and shall be responsible to the Board of Elders. The Teaching Pastor shall arrange for and conduct all public and regular services of the church and shall be responsible, with the help of the other Elders, for the leadership and general oversight of the spiritual welfare of the church. The Teaching Pastor shall oversee all pastoral 15 staff. In the absence of the Teaching Pastor, the Board of Elders shall be responsible to arrange for the public and regular services of the church, as well as oversee pastoral staff.

## **Article X: Settlement of Disputes**

### ***Section 1. General***

In any dispute arising between church members, pastors, or staff pertaining to any matters of spiritual teaching or practices, church finances, or title to property purchased with church contributions, the dispute shall be resolved by the Board of Elders of the church. A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.

## **Article XI: Other Provisions**

### ***Section 1. Endorsement of Documents, Contracts***

The Board of Elders, except as in the By-laws otherwise provided, may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents, to enter into any contract or execute any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized by the Board of Elders, no officer, agent or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the Corporation by any contract or agreement, or to pledge its credit, or to render it liable for any purpose or to any amount.

Subject to the provisions of applicable law, any contract, conveyance, or any other instrument in writing and any assignment or endorsement thereof executed or entered into between this Corporation and any other person, when signed jointly by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and as authorized by the Board of Elders, shall be valid and binding on this Corporation in the absence of actual knowledge on the part of the other person that the signing officers had no authority to execute the same.

### ***Section 2. Amendments***

These By-laws may be amended, and new and additional By-laws may be made from time to time at any time by the Board of Elders in the exercise of the power granted to said Board of Elders in these By-laws. A unanimous approval by the Board of Elders shall be required to effect such alterations or repeal.

### ***Section 3. Record of Amendments***

Whenever an amendment or new By-law is adopted, it shall be copied in the book of minutes with the original By-laws, in the appropriate place. If any By-law is repealed, the fact of repeal with the date of the meeting at which the repeal was enacted or written assent was filed shall be stated in said book. The congregation shall be notified of any and all amendments in such manner as the Board of Elders shall determine.

## **Article XII: Receipt, Investment, and Disbursement of Funds**

### ***Section 1.***

The Corporation shall receive all monies or other properties transferred to it for the purposes for which the Corporation was formed (as shown by the Articles of Incorporation). However, nothing contained herein shall require the Board of Elders to accept or receive any money or property of any kind if it shall determine in its discretion that receipt of such money or property is contrary to the expressed purposes of the Corporation as shown by said Articles.

### ***Section 2.***

The Corporation shall hold, manage, and disburse any funds or properties received by it from any source in a manner that is consistent with the expressed purposes of this Corporation.

## **Article XIII: Corporate Records and Reports**

### ***Section 1. Records***

The Corporation shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books, and records of its business and properties. All such books, records, and accounts shall be kept at its principal place of business in the State of Texas, as fixed by the Board of Elders from time to time.

## **Article XIV: Dissolution**

Upon dissolution of this Corporation, the Board of Elders shall cause the assets herein to be distributed to another organization with purposes similar to that identified in Article II of these By-laws and Article IV of the Articles of Incorporation. (However, notwithstanding the above, no portion of the distribution of the assets upon dissolution shall go to an organization of which any elder is a director, shareholder, officer, trustee, or employee. This article may not be amended without the unanimous approval of the Board of Elders and the approval of 75% of the membership present at a meeting called for that purpose.)

## **Article XV: Miscellaneous Provisions**

### ***Section 1. Instruments in Writing***

All checks, drafts, demands for money and notes of the Corporation and all written contracts of the Corporation shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, as the Board of Elders may from time to time by resolution designate.



**Article XVI: Facility Use**

***Section 1. Marriages and Weddings***

All who are ordained, licensed, commissioned, or otherwise authorized by this church to solemnize marriages may do so, in the exercise of religious freedom, only where the participants are one man and one woman (Gen. 2:21–24; Matt. 19:4–6; Mark 10:6–9). Grace Bible Church facilities may be used for weddings only where both prospective spouses are church members in good standing; church facilities are not available to the general public for that purpose.

***Section 2. Use of Restroom Facilities***

All lavatories, restrooms, bathrooms, or bathroom facilities of Grace Bible Church shall be designated for use by specific gender. "Gender" shall be defined as the physiological sex – male or female – of an individual at the time of their birth. Violation of this policy (excluding young children or special-needs children accompanied by a parent or legal guardian) shall result in the immediate expulsion of the offending individual(s) from the grounds of Grace Bible Church.

**Certificate by Secretary**

The undersigned, being the secretary of the Grace Bible Church of Boerne, hereby certifies the foregoing code of By-laws was duly adopted by the initial directors of said Corporation effective on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ by the unanimous consent of the directors without a meeting as authorized by Article 9.10(B) of the Texas Business Corporation Act.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Secretary

Adopted April 1, 2015.  
Last revised October 2021.

## **Responsibilities of Off-Site Stewards**

### ***1. Decisions***

Assist, and make decisions with, the Grace Bible Church elder(s).

### ***2. Accountability***

Assist the Grace Bible Church elder(s) in holding the Teaching Pastor and all other elders for the church accountable to the qualifications of elder (section VI.4).

### ***3. Church Discipline***

Assist, and make decisions with, the Grace Bible Church elder(s) in church discipline matters.

Discipline issues will be kept confidential between the Grace Bible Church and the Off-site elders unless and until discipline is raised to step 3, when the discipline matter will be disclosed to the church. All discipline implemented by this church shall be in keeping with, and as authorized by pertinent and specific scripture and Article V Section 8 of Grace Bible Church of Boerne Bylaws.

### ***4. Leadership Meetings***

Participate, to the extent possible, in regularly scheduled church leadership meetings, with the Grace Bible Church elder(s) and the Grace Bible Church ministry leaders.

### ***5. Unity***

Assist, and make decisions with, the Grace Bible Church elder(s) in a manner that reflects the unified leadership by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To that end and recognizing that divine leadership of the church will be undivided and consistent with scripture, all decisions (other than in matters of facilities maintenance delegated to church administration) shall be made with unanimity between all elders (including both Grace Bible Church elder(s) and offsite elders). Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration and by unanimous vote in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.

Especially in the area of financial decisions (budgeting, salaries, etc.), every effort will be made to maintain unanimity between all elders (Grace Bible Church (s) and offsite elders).

### ***6. Raising Up Elders***

During the time period that the number of Grace Bible Church elder(s) is less than three (3), leadership training shall be held and shall be open to all men. Service, and recognition, as an elder shall not be automatically awarded upon the completion of such training, or on the completion of any specific amount of that training. Service and recognition as an elder shall depend on the presence of the character and ability required by pertinent scripture and these bylaws.

## Members Covenant

Having been brought by Divine Grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give ourselves to Him, we do now seriously and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

By God's grace ...

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.  
(Eph. 4:1-3; Col. 3:14-15)

We will walk in brotherly Christian love, caring for, watching over, admonishing, and encouraging one another as occasion may require. (Eph. 5:15-21; Col. 1:28-29, 3:16; Phil. 1:9-11; Heb. 3:12-13)

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. (Heb. 10:24-25)

We will pray for ourselves and others. (1 Thess. 5:16-18; 1 Tim. 2:1-8)

We will seek to raise our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example seek the salvation of our family and friends. (Eph. 5:6-21, 6:1-4; Col. 4:5-6; 1 Thess. 1:8)

We will rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep and strive with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows. (Romans 12:9-15; Gal. 6:1-2; 1 Cor. 12:14-26)

We will live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. As we have been raised with Christ, so we have on us a special obligation to lead a new and holy life. (Titus 2:11-14; Romans 6:1-7)

We will work together for a faithful gospel ministry in this church, sustaining its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the church, including the relief of the poor and the spread of the gospel here and throughout all nations. (Mat. 28:18-20; I Cor. 14:40, 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8 – 9)

If the Lord moves us from this place, we will unite ourselves with another biblical church. (1 Cor. 12:12-13; Heb. 10:24-25)

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen. (2 Cor. 13:14).