

How We Function

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of Grace Church of Rootstown

Rootstown, Ohio

Revised September, 2024

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Preamble

We, the members of Grace Church of Rootstown (hereinafter the "Church"), do ordain and establish the following Constitution and By-laws. This is a legal and practical document to set forth how the Church functions.

Article I. Organization

The formal, legal name of this local Church shall be Grace Church of Rootstown. The purposes of our existence are to provide and maintain worship (Acts 2:41-47¹), discipleship (Colossians 1:9-12²), service (Ephesians 4:11-13³), and evangelism (Matthew 28:18-20⁴; Acts 1:8) for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31⁶), as defined in Article II. We do this by making disciples of all nations, baptizing believers, teaching them all that Christ commands, maintaining the unity of Spirit in the bond of peace, and being salt and light. This Church shall be guided by a group of elders subject to the Doctrinal Statement, attached hereto as Appendix A and incorporated herein by reference.

In all matters of polity and practice, we shall act upon our conviction that the New Testament local church is not dependent upon the leading of any ecclesiastical or denominational organization but is an autonomous, self governing fellowship, in direct submission to the authority of Christ as the head of this Church, the agency of the Holy Spirit as the helper, and the word of God as conclusive in all matters of faith, fellowship, and function.

We believe that the local church, including this Church, is central to the plan of God and the life of the family of God. We believe that God has designed the church as an inter dependent community of gathered believers. We believe that we are to have the same love for this Church that Christ did, which motivated Him to die for the church. We believe that the church is the pillar and support of the truth and that we, as members of the church, are always to defend sound doctrine. We believe that this Church is to function as a family of families in all things.

In addition, we adhere to: (1) the authority of the Scripture, which is God breathed and that no human endeavor or decree can override; (2) the autonomy of the local church in which the local church is accountable to Jesus Christ as the head of this Church and the mandates of Scripture; (3) the priesthood of believers in which every believer has access to our great High Priest, Jesus Christ; (4) the ordinances of believer's baptism by immersion and the observance of the Lord's Supper or communion; and, (5) Church membership, in which individuals who have a clear testimony in Christ and publicly identified themselves through believer's baptism choose to fellowship with this Church. This Church will continue to hold fast to all of these doctrinal truths.

Article II. Statement of Purpose

This Church exists to glorify God by bringing people to intimately know and bear witness to Christ through the proclamation of God's Word. We also do this by serving Christ as He established, expands, and strengthens this Church. We also do this by doing all those things as described in Article I of this document.

To implement this purpose legally, the Church is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio, so that it may own, provide and/or maintain a place of worship (including suitable real estate and

buildings), receive, hold and disburse gifts, bequests and funds, and/or do all and sundry things necessary or incident to carry on such purposes.

Article III. Membership in our Family of Families

Section 1: Eligibility

Those persons who profess salvation and demonstrate having been regenerated by the Holy Spirit through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, have been baptized as a believer as an act of obedience to Christ, and have met the requirements for membership, are eligible to apply for membership in this Church, which is a family of families (John 1:12⁷; John 3:16⁸; John 6:37⁹; Romans 10:9-10¹⁰; Titus 3:5¹¹).

Section 2: Requirements

All individuals who desire membership in this Church must be interviewed by the elders, fill out and sign an application for membership, complete a short course of instruction about membership, and agree to abide by and adhere to the doctrinal practices of this Church as outlined in this Constitution and By-laws. The elders will publicly present successful candidates as new members.

If, after meeting with a prospective member, the elders determine that the applicant fails to meet the requirements, membership shall be denied. The decision made by the elders at that time shall be final and binding upon all persons and there shall be no appeal to any court. Such decision shall not bar an applicant from asking for reconsideration at a later time.

Section 3: Expectations of Members in our Family of Families

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we do most solemnly and joyfully commit to participate in all of the "one anothers" of the New Testament as one body in Christ and to actively participate with the Church as a family of families. We, as members, therefore commit by the aid of the Holy Spirit:

- A. To walk together in Christian love (Ephesians 5:2¹²; Colossians 3:14¹³);
- B. To exercise Christian care and watchfulness over one another (1 Corinthians 12:25¹⁴; Galatians 6:1¹⁵);
- C. To pray with and for one another, sharing our burdens, sorrows, and joys (Acts 2:42¹⁶, 1 Timothy 2:1¹⁷, James 5:16¹⁸, Galatians 6:2¹⁹, Romans 12:15²⁰, 1 Corinthians 12:26²¹);
- D. To be thoughtful and courteous to one another, to be slow to take offense, and to be quick to forgive and seek forgiveness (Ephesians 4:25, 32²²; Colossians 3:13²³; Matthew 5:23-24²⁴);

- E. To guard the spiritual and scriptural purity, peace, and prosperity of the Church, and witness as to the saving grace of God (1 Corinthians 6:13²⁵; 2 Timothy 1:14²⁶; Matthew 18:15-20²⁷; Ephesians 4:13²⁸; Matthew 5:16²⁹);
- F. To assist, through the gifts of the Spirit, in the work of the Church, and to witness as to the saving grace of God (Romans 12:6-8³⁰; 1 Corinthians 12:7³¹; 1 Peter 4:10³²);
- G. To contribute to the financial support of this Church, the relief of the needy, and the evangelism of all people as the Lord leads (2 Corinthians 9:7³³; Deuteronomy 15:11³⁴; Galatians 2:10³⁵; Philippians 4:15-16³⁶);
- H. To love and to pray for all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 13:34-35³⁷; 1 Thessalonians 3:12³⁸; 1 Timothy 2:1³⁹; James 5:16⁴⁰);
- I. To engage regularly in personal Bible reading and prayer (2 Timothy 2:15⁴¹; 1 Peter 2:2⁴²; Matthew 6:6⁴³; James 1:5⁴⁴);
- J. To bring up children as they are entrusted to our care in the training and admonition of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6⁴⁵; Ephesians 6:4⁴⁶);
- K. To walk circumspectly in the world, to provide things honest in the sight of all men, to be faithful in engagements, exemplary in deportment, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts (Colossians 4:5⁴⁷; Titus 2:11-12⁴⁸, Titus 3:8⁴⁹; 1 Peter 2:12⁵⁰; 1 Timothy 2:1-4⁵¹);
- L. To endeavor by example, by work, and by prayer, to win others to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (1 Thessalonians 1:7-8⁵²; Matthew 5:16⁵³; 1 Peter 2:12⁵⁴; 1 Timothy 2:14⁵⁵);
- M. To commit to regularly pray for, loyally support, and properly submit to the elders of this Church who lead the work of this Church in the keeping of Scripture (1 Thessalonians 5:12⁵⁶; Hebrews 13:7, 17⁵⁷);
- N. To stimulate one another to love and good deeds, to encourage one another, and assemble together with this Church (Hebrews 10:24-25⁵⁸); and
- O. To unite, as soon as possible, with a local church of like faith, should we leave this Church for any reason.

In addition, each member of this Church understands and will follow the responsibilities set forth in Titus 2:2-8⁵⁹, including:

- P. Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in doctrine and in steadfastness, and are to mentor and instruct younger men;
- Q. Older women are to be reverent in behavior, not given to much wine, and are to teach good things to younger women;

- R. Younger men are to be self-controlled; and
- S. Younger women are to love their husbands and children, be self-controlled, chaste, homemakers, and obedient to their husbands.

Section 4: Membership Rights

Members shall be involved in worship and service within the Church and shall be entitled to all membership privileges as part of this family of families as defined in this Article including being considered for (1) affirmation of the appointment of the positions of elder and deacon, (2) the affirmation of a new pastor-teacher, and (3) affirmation of any amendments to the Constitution and By-laws of the Church. Only males shall be considered for the position of elder or deacon.

Section 5: Discipline and Restoration

The purpose of Church discipline and restoration is to affect a return to a biblical standard of conduct or doctrine in a member* who errs (Galatians 6:1⁶⁰), to maintain purity in the local Church (1 Corinthians 5:6⁶¹), and to deter sin (1 Timothy 5:20⁶²). As in any family, an erring member must be disciplined for his own sake and for the sake of the family, as the actions and attitudes of the individual family member are a reflection of the family as a whole. Any member of this Church who conducts himself or herself in a manner inconsistent with biblical teaching shall be dealt with as follows, according to Matthew 18:15-18⁶³:

- A. It is the duty of any member of this Church who has knowledge of an erring member's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct the erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
- B. If the erring member does not heed this warning, the warning member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two other members as witnesses to warn and correct, seeking repentance and restoration.
- C. If the erring member still refuses to heed the warning, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the elders, who, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall, if necessary, make an appropriate report to the Church encouraging the family of families to pray for repentance and restoration of the erring member.
- D. If the erring member refuses to heed the warnings of the elders and the Church, he or she shall be dismissed from the Church pursuant to the Scriptures and treated as an unbeliever. The family of families shall be encouraged to pray for the repentance and restoration of the erring member.

It is clearly understood that the discipline process will continue to conclusion (unless the member repents) whether the erring member leaves the Church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership. There shall be no appeal of the discipline process which shall be final and binding upon all persons. The purpose of church discipline is to bring one to repentance and, ultimately, back into fellowship within this family of families.

*or a regular attendee, as applicable.

Section 6: Termination

Membership may be terminated in one of three ways:

- A. By physical death;
- B. By exclusion: If a member habitually absents himself or herself from the gatherings of the Church without valid reason, or if due to relocation that member ceases to maintain a vital contact with the Church, or the member requests, that member may be excluded from membership. If an excluded member applies again for membership, the procedures set forth in this Article at Section 2 will again be followed; or
- C. By dismissal as a final step of Church discipline. The elders shall only apply the above-mentioned dismissal in strict accordance with the Scriptures.

Article IV. Church Leadership

The officers of this Church shall be elders and deacons. All Church officers must be active members of the Church and meet the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

The government of this Church, the conduct of its business, the supervision of its general work, its organization, and its spiritual life, shall, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and consistent with the Bible, be vested with the elders.

Section 1: Elders

Qualifications of elders

Elders lead this Church as a family of families and therefore elders must be men who are above reproach and meet the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7⁶⁴ and Titus 1:6-9⁶⁵, and be active members of this Church. Elders shall be desirous of serving in that office (1 Timothy 3:1⁶⁶) and shall be:

- A. Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2⁶⁷; Titus 1:6-7⁶⁸);
- B. Husband of one wife, a one-woman man (1 Timothy 3:2⁶⁹; Titus 1:6⁷⁰);
- C. Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2⁷¹);
- D. Sober-minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2⁷²; Titus 1:8⁷³);
- E. Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2⁷⁴);
- F. Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2⁷⁵; Titus 1:8⁷⁶);
- G. Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2⁷⁷; Titus 1:9⁷⁸):

- H. Not given to strong drink (1 Timothy 3:3⁷⁹; Titus 1:7⁸⁰);
- I. Not violent; not pugnacious (1 Timothy 3:3⁸¹; Titus 1:7⁸²);
- J. Patient, moderate, forbearing, and gentle (1 Timothy 3:3⁸³);
- K. Not a brawler; uncontentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3⁸⁴; Titus 1:7⁸⁵);
- L. Not covetous; not a lover of money: not greedy of base gain (1 Timothy 3:3⁸⁶; Titus 1:7⁸⁷);
- M. Rules well his own house; his children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God (1 Timothy 3:4⁸⁸; Titus 1:7⁸⁹);
- N. Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6⁹⁰);
- O. Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7⁹¹);
- P. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7⁹²);
- Q. Loving what is good (Titus 1:8⁹³);
- R. Just, fair (Titus 1:8⁹⁴);
- S. Holy, devout (Titus 1:8⁹⁵); and
- T. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8⁹⁶).

Duties of Elders

As overseers of the local church, and, specifically, this Church, it shall be the duty of the elders to:

- A. Be devoted to prayer and the study of God's Word and sustain a caring ministry for the flock, which involves serving to help facilitate the Church's spiritual growth, praying for the sick, and shepherding the congregation (Acts 6:4⁹⁷; 2 Timothy 2:15⁹⁸; James 5:14⁹⁹; Acts 20:28¹⁰⁰; Acts 20:35¹⁰¹; Hebrews 13:17¹⁰²);
- B. Teach and exhort as well as refute those who contradict the truth, which involves ensuring that all instructors, adult teachers, children's teachers and student ministry leaders are properly qualified (John 2 1:17¹⁰³; 1 Timothy 3:2¹⁰⁴; Titus 1:9¹⁰⁵; Acts 20:28-31¹⁰⁶; 1 Timothy 4:13¹⁰⁷; Timothy 5:17¹⁰⁸; Hebrews 13:7¹⁰⁹);
- C. Lead by Christ-like example, which involves: (1) consistently modeling biblical character, attitudes, values, and behavior among the congregation, (2) providing and inviting the opportunity for frequent and ongoing contact with members of the congregation, and (3) conducting the affairs of the Church in an atmosphere of openness and mutual sensitivity, focusing as much on nurturing one another as on

decision-making. (1 Peter 5:1-3¹¹⁰; Hebrews 13:7¹¹¹; 1 Timothy 4:6-16¹¹²; 2 Corinthians 2:4¹¹³);

- D. Oversee the affairs of the Church (Acts 20:28¹¹⁴, Acts 15:22¹¹⁵; 1 Timothy 3:1,4,5, 4:14, 5:17¹¹⁶; Titus 1:7¹¹⁷; 1 Peter 5:1-2¹¹⁸), which involves: (1) maintaining the legal status of the Church; (2) being responsible for the direction of all disbursements and securing of all funds necessary to meet the current expenses of the Church; (3) together with the other elders, administering the ordinances in accordance with the word of God; (4) sharing in the pastoral care of the congregation along with the other elders; (5) performing marriages as he may deem appropriate at his discretion in accordance with the laws of God and the State of Ohio; (6) officiating at funerals of members of the Church and non-members as he may deem appropriate at his discretion; (7) admonishing the unruly, encouraging the faint-hearted, and helping the weak (1 Thessalonians 5:14¹¹⁹); (8) exercising legal care and biblical stewardship of all Church property and assets; (9) conducting the Annual Family Meeting of the Church; (10) presenting the approved budget to the congregation at the Annual Family Meeting of the Church; (11) recommending, approving and appointing officers of the Church; (12) approving all candidates for Church membership; (13) Appointing the duly affirmed pastor-teacher; (14) calling and appointing any and all other qualified elders to meet the needs of the family of families; (15) being responsible for the hiring, employment, terms, and compensation assignment of responsibilities, direction, oversight, and termination of employment of all Church staff; (16) approving all subordinate ministries, organizations, and counsels of the Church; and (17) communicating to the family of families on a regular basis concerning the activities, vision and concerns of the elders;
- E. Perform other constitutional, scriptural, and general duties of oversight as may be appropriate (Acts 20:28¹²⁰; Acts 15¹²¹; 1 Timothy 3:1¹²²; 1 Peter 5:1-3¹²³; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13¹²⁴).

Section 2: Deacons

The deacons shall consist of members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13¹²⁵. A deacon shall be a man of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to strong drink, not fond of sordid gain, holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, first tested and found above reproach.

The deacons shall assist the elders in the shepherding of the saints, aid in the general spiritual care of the family of families, and perform such other duties as assigned by the elders.

A deacon shall be called from among the male members by the unanimous decision of the elders and affirmed by the active members of the Church.

Section 3: Selection and Dismissal of Church Leadership

A. Elders

An elder shall be called from among the male members by a unanimous decision of the present elders, and affirmed by members of the Church. Elder candidates for this position must desire to serve (1 Timothy 3:1¹²⁶); be qualified to serve (1 Timothy 3:1-6¹²⁷; Titus 1:7-9¹²⁸), be examined and affirmed (1 Timothy 3:10; 5:22¹²⁹), and maintain themselves in a manner worthy of their calling and congruent with the moral and ethical standards of the Word of God both in the administration of their office and in their personal lives (1 Timothy 5:18-20¹³⁰).

The elder's tenure shall be for an indefinite period of time, subject to his ability and availability to serve. An elder who is unable to carry out his duties, may at the direction of the other elders, be required to step down from the office of elder, until he is able to once again fulfill his calling.

An elder may be removed from office, based upon a decision by three-fourths (3/4) of the elders, at any time based upon moral, doctrinal, or other biblical disqualification (1 Timothy 3:1-6¹³¹; Titus 1:7-9¹³²) or failure to fulfill the biblical responsibilities of the office of elder. The elder being considered for removal shall not be entitled to vote as to that decision nor counted as any part of that three-fourths (3/4) required for removal. All elders are subject to the biblical process of Church discipline (Matthew 18:15-20¹³³) and if unresponsive to the correction of the Church will be publicly rebuked in the presence of the entire congregation (1 Timothy 5:19-20¹³⁴).

The board of elders shall consist of men meeting the qualifications of Scripture and appointed as provided herein and in the Church's Doctrine Statement.

B. Pastor-Teacher

The Church, and the elders, shall recognize among themselves those who are set aside for the working at teaching and preaching, termed vocational elders, and those who function as non-vocational elders (1 Timothy 5:17¹³⁵). The vocational elders are those who are employed pastors of the Church. At least one elder shall be designated as the pastor-teacher.

Pastor-teacher is a gifted man for the purpose of perfecting the saints, for the work of the ministry, and edifying the Church (Ephesians 4:11-12¹³⁶). His primary responsibilities are the systematic teaching and preaching of the word of God (1 Timothy 4:13¹³⁷) and to labor in the word and in doctrine (1 Timothy 5:17¹³⁸).

In the event that a new pastor-teacher is needed to serve at the Church, the elders may select a suitable pastoral-teacher. The pastor-teacher must gain unanimous approval from the elders before recommendation to the active members of the Church for affirmation. The elders may recommend only one pastor-teacher to the family of families at a time. The pastoral candidate shall be affirmed by the active membership at a properly convened meeting of the Church, notice of which shall have been given from the pulpit two successive Sundays preceding this meeting. An affirmation of the members to the elders shall be necessary to call and appoint the pastoral candidate. The pastor-teacher shall be free to resign, but shall give a thirty-day written notice to the Church, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon with the remaining elders.

The pastor-teacher's tenure shall be for an indefinite period of time, subject to his ability and availability to serve. In the event the pastor-teacher is unable to carry out his regular assignments, he may at the direction of the other elders, be required to step down from service for a period of time, until he is able again to fulfill his calling.

The pastor-teacher may also be removed from office, in the same manner as the removal of any other elder at any time based upon moral, doctrinal, or other biblical disqualification (1 Timothy 3:1-6¹³⁹; Titus 1:7-9¹⁴⁰) or failure to fulfill the biblical responsibilities of the pastor-teacher. The pastor-teacher is subject to the biblical process of Church discipline (Matthew 18:15-20¹⁴¹) and if unresponsive to the correction of the Church will be publicly rebuked in the presence of the Congregation (1 Timothy 5:19-20¹⁴²).

C. Other Pastoral Staff

Additional and qualified vocational pastoral staff may be added at any time by the unanimous decision of the elders based upon the identified needs and necessary operation of the Church.

D. Officers

The officers of the Church shall be a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary and a Treasurer to fulfill the corporate duties as legislated by the State of Ohio. The Church may also have, at the discretion of the board of elders, other officers as may be from time to time appointed by the elders in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

- The Chairman, a member of the elder board, shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Church and shall, subject to the control of the board of elders, have general supervision, direction and control of the activities and officers of the Church. He shall preside at all meetings of the board of elders, which are to be conducted according to the scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8¹⁴³ and shall preside at all family meetings. He shall be an ex officio member of all standing committees, if any are appointed, and shall have such other powers and duties as may be prescribed by the board of elders.
- The Vice-Chairman, a member of the elder board, in the absence or disability of the 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 may be prescribed for him by the board of elders.
- The Secretary, a member of the elder board 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, its committees and all meetings described in Article V, with the time and place of holding, whether regular or special, and if special, how authorized, the notice thereof given, and the proceedings thereof. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, at the principal office the original and a copy of the Constitution of this Church, as amended to date. The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings required by this Constitution to be given, 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 Church, a membership register, showing the names of Church members and their addresses.

- The Treasurer, a member of the elder board, shall ensure the stewardship of the physical and financial resources of the Church, “taking precaution that no one should discredit us in our administration ... for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men” (2 Corinthians 8:20-21¹⁴⁴). He shall select "men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6:3¹⁴⁵) to implement and accomplish this responsibility and shall oversee their work. The Treasurer shall ensure that all financial activities and transactions of the Church are consistent with this Constitution and By-Laws as well as the laws of the State of Ohio. 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 Church. The books of account shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by any elder and the Treasurer shall deposit, or cause to be deposited, all monies and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the Church with such depositories as may be designated by the board of elders. He shall disburse, or cause to be disbursed the funds of the Church as may be ordered by the board of elders, shall render, or cause to be rendered, to the Chairman and the elders, whenever they request it, an account of all the transactions and of the financial condition of the Church, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the board of elders.

The officers of this Church shall be chosen on a periodic basis 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 elected and qualified. The board of elders shall determine the beginning and length of term of service of all officers.

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner as determined by the elders. In the case of absence or inability to act of any officer of the Church 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 whom the board of elders may select.

E. Deacons

The men who hold this office are to be approved by the elders and recommended to the active members of the Church for affirmation during a service or meeting at any point during the year. Each person who will hold this office shall be put before the congregation for affirmation of his service and commitment to the Church and then at the proper time appointed by the elders.

A deacon shall serve an indefinite period of time, subject to his ability and availability to serve. A deacon who is unable to carry out regular assignments, may at the direction of the board of elders, be required to step down from the office of deacon until he is able to once again fulfill his calling.

A deacon may be removed from office, by the elders in the same manner as the removal of an elder, based upon moral, doctrinal, or other biblical disqualification (1 Timothy 3:7-13¹⁴⁶) or failure to fulfill the biblical responsibilities of the office of deacon.

There shall be no limit to the number of deacons.

Article V. Meetings

Section 1: Types of Meetings

There shall be three types of designated meetings of this Church:

A. Annual Family Meeting

The Annual Family Meeting shall be held during the first quarter of the year or any such other time during the year as the elders may determine. The elders shall be responsible for the selection of the date on which the Annual Family Meeting will be held. Notice of the date of the Annual Family Meeting shall be announced at least two successive Sundays prior to the date. Items to be covered in this meeting shall include, but shall not be limited to, a current financial statement and such other matters as the elders may determine. At the time notice of the meeting is given to the congregation, the congregation may request any other appropriate matters to be discussed at such meetings, subject to approval of the elders. Such matters shall then be addressed at the meeting.

B. Congregational Meetings

Other family meetings may be called at any time deemed necessary by the elders. Notice of the date of any such meeting shall be given prior to the date of such meeting.

C. Elder Meetings

The elders shall meet on a regular basis throughout the year. There will be accurate minutes recorded and approved of each elder meeting. Non-confidential portions of the recorded and approved minutes shall be made available for congregational review.

Article VI. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws

The elders shall upon unanimous agreement recommend proposals to alter, amend, or rescind any provision of this Constitution and By-laws at a duly held meeting of the members of the Church. At all times the holy Scriptures are to be the basis for any decision herein.

The presence in person or by absentee ballot of forty percent (40%) of the Church's members who are eligible to affirm shall constitute a quorum at any Church meeting to consider any Constitutional or By-laws amendment. The Secretary shall be responsible for determining the number, which accurately represents the total membership of the Church. For purposes of determining a quorum, those members who are present and those who are absent but have submitted absentee ballots shall be counted.

Any proposal to alter, amend, or rescind any provision of this Constitution and By-laws shall be submitted by any active member of the Church to the elders. The elders shall duly consider any such proposal. If such proposal is approved unanimously by the elders, it will be presented to the members at an appropriate meeting date determined by the elders.

Article VII. Church Records and Reports

Section 1: Records

The Church 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 Ohio, as fixed by the board of elders from time to time.

Section 2: Inspection of Books and Records

Every elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect all books, records, documents of every kind, and the physical properties of this Church, and also of its subsidiary organizations, if any.

Section 3: Fiscal Year of the Church

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December in each year.

Article VIII. Confidentiality of Church Records

Except as provided herein, all members shall have the right, upon adequate notice made to the elders, to inspect Church records in the presence of one or more elders.

No member shall have the right to inspect Church records as to (i) the disciplining of any member; (ii) the hiring or firing of any employee; (iii) the need or problems of any member or employee; (iv) the financial contributions of any member; or (v) any other records which the board of elders may determine in its sole discretion to be in the best interests of the Church to keep confidential.

Article IX. Finances

The Church shall be supported by tithes, offerings, bequests and other gifts given by the congregation and friends and in such other manners as the board of elders may determine. The Church's missions program may also be supported through gifts given over and above the normal tithes and offerings.

Article X. Settlement of Disputes

In any dispute arising between Church members, pastors, or staff pertaining to any matter of spiritual teaching or practices, Church finances, or title to property purchased with Church contributions, the dispute shall be resolved by a consensus of those elders not actively involved in that dispute. A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration, in a spirit of humility, with each elder regarding one another before himself and striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3¹⁴⁷).

Article XI. Indemnification

The Church shall indemnify and hold harmless to the maximum extent permitted by and according to applicable law any and all officers, elders, deacons, and administrative staff for any expenses and liability actually and necessarily incurred in connection with any action, suit or proceeding against said persons. This indemnification shall include costs and attorney fees. The indemnification shall occur as the expenses are incurred and in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit or proceedings, on receipt of the indemnified person's promise: (1) to repay the amount advanced if proven by clear and convincing evidence in court that the officers', elders', deacons', or administrative staffs' conduct involved a deliberate intent to injure the Church's best interests; (2) and that person's cooperation with the Church in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

This indemnification shall be available to any of the above-named persons who is made or thereafter to be made a part to any action, suit or proceeding because of the person's relationship with the Church.

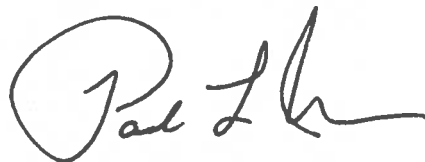
Article XII. Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of this Church, after all debts and obligations are satisfied, no portion of the assets of the Church shall accrue to the personal benefit of any individual. In the event of dissolution, any remaining assets of the Church shall be transferred to such other church or other religious organization as shall be determined by the board of elders, so long as such body is a non-profit entity with similar purposes and is an appropriate entity under applicable laws.

ADOPTED AS OF THIS DATE: October 13, 2024

Grace Church of Rootstown

Signature:



Chairman, Board of Elders

Signature:



Pastor-Teacher