CONSTITUTION

of

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

as of April 13, 2026

"Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures…"
1 Corinthians 15:1 – 3 [ESV]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREAMBLE 6
ARTICLE I: THE RULE OF JESUS CHRIST 6
ARTICLE II: NAME 6
ARTICLE III: INCORPORATION 6
ARTICLE IV: PURPOSE 7
ARTICLE V: STATEMENT OF FAITH 8
Section 5.01 The Bible (The Scriptures) 8
Section 5.02 The Triune God (The Trinity) 8
Section 5.03 God the Father 8
Section 5.04 Jesus Christ (the Son) 8
Section 5.05 The Holy Spirit 9
Section 5.06 Man's Identity & Nature 9
Section 5.07 The Gospel 9
Section 5.08 Man's Response to the Gospel 10
Section 5.09 Water Baptism 10
Section 5.10 Man's Inheritance in the Gospel 10
Section 5.11 Sanctification 10
Section 5.12 Baptism in the Holy Spirit 11
Section 5.13 The Church 11
Section 5.14 The Lord's Supper 11
Section 5.15 Marriage 12
Section 5.16 The Consummation 12
ARTICLE VI: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP 13
Section 6.01 Qualifications 13
Section 6.02 Children of Members 13
Section 6.03 Duties and Privileges 13
Section 6.04 Termination or Transfer 13
ARTICLE VII: CHURCH LEADERSHIP 15
Section 7.01 Church Offices 15
Section 7.02 Elder Board 15
Section 7.03 Pastor/Elders 15
7.03.1 Qualifications 15
7.03.2 Duties 16
7.03.3 Selection Process 16
7.03.4 Hiring 16
7.03.5 Presentation of a Pastoral Candidate 16

7.03.6 Affirmation of Elders 17
7.03.7 Selection and Service 17
7.03.8 Resignation 17
Section 7.04 Non-Staff Elders 17
7.04.1 Qualifications 17
7.04.2 Service 18
7.04.3 Duties 18
7.04.4 Presentation of Candidates 18
7.04.5 Affirmation of Non-Staff Elders 18
7.04.6 Selection and Service 19
7.04.7 Resignation 19
Section 7.05 Lead Pastor 19
7.05.1 Qualifications 19
7.05.2 Tenure 19
7.05.3 Duties 19
7.05.4 Lead Pastor Candidates 20
7.05.5 Congregational Involvement 20
7.05.6 Presentation of Lead Pastor 20
7.05.7 Affirmation of Lead Pastor 20
Section 7.06 Change of Lead Pastor 21
7.06.1 Discipline 21
7.06.2 Resignation 21
7.06.3 Severability 21
7.06.4 Removal of Lead Pastor 21
7.06.5 Repositioning the Lead Pastor 21
7.06.6 Interim Lead Pastor 21
Section 7.07 Resolving Charges Against an Elder 21
7.07.1 Evaluation and Adjudication of Charges 22
7.07.2 Appeal of Elder Board Decisions 22
7.07.3 Restoring a Disciplined Elder to Service 23
Section 7.08 Change of Pastoral Role 23
7.08.1 Change of Role 23
7.08.2 Termination 23
ARTICLE VIII: DIACONATE MINISTRY 24
Section 8.01 Deacons 24
8.01.1 Qualifications 24
8.01.2 Responsibilities 24
8.01.3 Authority 24
Section 8.02 Deaconesses 24

8.02.1 Qualifications....24
8.02.2 Responsibilities....24
8.02.3 Authority....24
Section 8.03 Deacon and Deaconess Candidates....25
8.03.1 Presentation of Candidates....25
8.03.2 Affirmation of Candidates....25
8.03.3 Selection and Service....25
8.03.4 Termination of Service as a Deacon/Deaconess....26
8.03.5 Resignation....26
ARTICLE IX: CHURCH DISCIPLINE....27
Section 9.01 Discipline....27
Section 9.02 Agreement to Submit to the Process of Church Discipline....27
Section 9.03 Purposes of Discipline....27
Section 9.04 Process of Discipline....27
Section 9.05 Enactment of Discipline....28
Section 9.06 Removal or Transfer....28
Section 9.07 Restoration and Repentance....28
ARTICLE X: COOPERATION....29
Section 10.01 Cooperative Association....29
Section 10.02 Formal Affiliation....29
10.02.1 Recommendation to Affiliate....29
10.02.2 Affirmation of Formal Affiliation....29
10.02.3 Terminating Formal Affiliation....29
ARTICLE XI: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES....31
Section 11.01 Management Structures....31
Section 11.02 Committees....31
ARTICLE XII: MEMBERS' MEETINGS....32
Section 12.01 Members' Meetings....32
Section 12.02 Annual Members' Meeting....32
ARTICLE XIII: FISCAL MATTERS....33
Section 13.01 Fiscal Oversight....33
Section 13.02 Financial Board....33
13.02.1 Composition....33
13.02.2 Purpose....33
13.02.3 Qualifications....33
13.02.4 Term....33
13.02.5 Financial Board Candidates....34
13.02.6 Selection....34
13.02.7 Duties....34

13.02.8 Meetings.....34
13.02.9 Subcommittees.....34
13.02.10 Compensation Subcommittee.....34
Section 13.03 Fiscal Year.....35
ARTICLE XIV: AMENDMENTS.....36
Section 14.01 Amendments to the Constitution.....36
14.01.1 Recommendation to Amend the Constitution.....36
Section 14.01.2 Affirmation of Amendment.....36

PREAMBLE

We, the people of God who are members of Grace Community Church, united for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, adopt this Constitution as our principal article of governance in all spiritual matters for the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in submission to the Holy Bible as summarized in the Statement of Faith of this church. This Constitution specifies our church's Statement of Faith and ministry vision. Matters concerning the religious corporation and its organizational structure as well as policies and principles of function can be found in the Articles of Incorporation and the church's by-laws.

ARTICLE I: THE RULE OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ has purchased the church with his blood, and it is his possession. He alone is the King and Head of the Church. God the Father has raised Jesus from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. The Father has put all things under his feet and given him as head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all (Ephesians 1:20-23).

ARTICLE II: NAME

The name of this church is Grace Community Church (hereinafter referred to as "the church" or "this church").

ARTICLE III: INCORPORATION

The church located at 11611 Belair Road, Kingsville, Maryland 21087 is incorporated under the laws of the State of Maryland as a religious corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE IV: PURPOSE

This church exists by the grace of God and for the glory of God to fulfill the following purpose: **We exist to glorify God by making disciples of all peoples with the life-changing message of the gospel.**

We do this through:

A. *Teaching*: Growing together through the teaching and study of God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15, Acts 17:11, 2 Timothy 4:1-2).
B. *Worship*: Gathering in weekly congregational worship meetings, as well as encouraging regular small group, family, and individual worship (Colossians 3:16, Hebrews 10:24-25).
C. *Prayer*: Devoting ourselves to individual, family, and corporate intercession (Ephesians 6:18, 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Mark 11:17, Acts 2:42).
D. *Evangelism*: Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through the preaching of God's Word, personal evangelism, and other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture (Romans 10:13-14, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21)
E. *Sacraments*: Administering the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-26, Acts 2:38-39).
F. *Discipleship*: Discipling and equipping the saints for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12, Matthew 28:19-20).
G. *Missions*: Encouraging, supporting, and participating in gospel missions and church planting—locally, nationally, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19-20).
H. *Fellowship*: Encouraging and facilitating biblical community, prayer, and fellowship among believers (Acts 2:42-47, Hebrews 3:12-13, 10:24-25).
I. *Service*: Sharing the love of Christ by caring for the practical needs of the poor, the widows, the imprisoned, and the orphans in our midst, our community, and the world (James 1:27, Hebrews 13:3, Galatians 2:10, Isaiah 1:17).

ARTICLE V: STATEMENT OF FAITH

Section 5.01 The Bible (The Scriptures)

We accept the Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, as the written Word of God. The Bible is the only essential and infallible record of God's self-disclosure to mankind. It leads us to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Being given by God, the Scriptures are fully inspired by God. Therefore, as originally given, the Bible is inerrant (free of error in all it teaches). Each book is to be interpreted according to its context and purpose, and in reverent obedience to the Lord who speaks through it in living power. All believers are exhorted to study the Scriptures and diligently apply them to their lives. The Scriptures are the authoritative and normative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice, and doctrine. They are totally sufficient and must not be added to, superseded, or changed by later tradition, extra-biblical revelation, or worldly wisdom. Every doctrinal formulation—whether of creed, confession, or theology—must be put to the test of the full counsel of God in Holy Scripture.

Section 5.02 The Triune God (The Trinity)

There is one God, Creator of heaven and earth: infinite, eternal, almighty, and perfect in holiness, truth, and love. In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, co-existent, co-equal, co eternal. The Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Holy Spirit, yet each is true Deity. One God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is the foundation of Christian faith and life.

Section 5.03 God the Father

God the Father is the Creator of heaven and earth. By His Word and for His glory, He freely and supernaturally created the world from nothing. Through the same Word, He daily sustains all His creatures. He rules over all and is the only Sovereign. His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. He is faithful to every promise, works all things together for good to those who love Him, and in His unfathomable grace gave His Son, Jesus Christ, for mankind's redemption. He made man for fellowship with Himself, and intended that all creation should live to the praise of His glory.

Section 5.04 Jesus Christ (the Son)

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, was the eternal Word made flesh, supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. He was perfect in nature, teaching, and obedience. He is fully God and fully man. He was always with God and is God. Through Him all things came into being and were created. He was before all things and in Him all things hold together by the Word of His power. He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all

creation, and in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the only Savior for the sins of the world, having shed His blood and died a vicarious death on Calvary's cross for all mankind. By His death in our place, He revealed the divine love and upheld divine justice, removing our guilt and reconciling us to God. Having redeemed us from sin, on the third day He rose bodily from the grave, victorious over death and the powers of darkness, and for a period of 40 days appeared to more than 500 witnesses, performing many convincing proofs of His resurrection. He ascended into heaven where, at God's right hand, He intercedes for His people and rules as Lord over all. He is the Head of His body, the Church, and should be adored, loved, served, and obeyed by all.

Section 5.05 The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. Through the proclamation of the gospel, He persuades men to repent of their sins and confess Jesus as Lord. By the same Spirit, a person is led to trust in divine mercy. The Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus Christ in faith, brings about the new birth, and dwells within the regenerate. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify the Son, who in turn came to glorify the Father. He will lead the Church into a right understanding and rich application of the truth of God's word. He is to be respected, honored, and worshiped as God the Third Person of the Trinity.

Section 5.06 Man's Identity & Nature

God made man—male and female—in His own image, as the crown of creation, that man might have fellowship with Him. Tempted by Satan, man rebelled against God. Being estranged from His Maker, yet responsible to Him, he became subject to divine wrath, inwardly depraved and, apart from a special work of grace, utterly incapable of returning to God. This depravity is radical and pervasive; it extends to his mind, will, and affections. Unregenerate man lives under the dominion of sin and Satan. He is at enmity with God, hostile toward God, and hateful of God. Fallen, sinful people, whatever their character or attainments, are lost and without hope apart from salvation in Christ.

Section 5.07 The Gospel

The Good News of the Gospel is revealed in Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the Gospel, His resurrection is the power of the Gospel, and His ascension is the glory of the Gospel. Christ's death is a substitutionary and propitiatory sacrifice to God for our sins. It satisfies the demands of God's holy justice and appeases His holy wrath. It also demonstrates His mysterious love and reveals His amazing grace. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man. There is no other name by which men must be saved.

Section 5.08 Man's Response to the Gospel

Man's response to the Gospel is rooted and grounded in the free and unconditional election of God in choosing a people for His own pleasure and glory. It is also true that the message of the Gospel is only effectual to those who genuinely repent of their sins and, by God's grace, put saving faith in Christ. The Gospel of grace is to be sincerely preached to all men in all nations. Biblical repentance is characterized by a changed life, and saving faith is evidenced by kingdom service or works.

Section 5.09 Water Baptism

Baptism is only intended for the individual who has received the saving benefits of Christ's atoning work and become His disciple. Therefore, in obedience to Christ's command and as a testimony to God, the Church, oneself, and the world, a believer should be immersed in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Water baptism is a visual demonstration of a person's union with Christ in the likeness of His death and resurrection. It signifies that his former way of life has been put to death. It also vividly depicts a person's release from the mastery of sin. He has been raised in newness of life and become a new creature in Christ.

Section 5.10 Man's Inheritance in the Gospel

Salvation, the free gift of God, is provided by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone, for the glory of God alone. Anyone who repents and looks to Christ and His substitutionary death receives the gift of eternal life and is declared righteous by God as a free gift. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him. He is justified and fully accepted by God. Through Christ's atonement for sin, an individual is reconciled to God as Father and becomes His child. The believer is forgiven the debt of his sin and, via the miracle of regeneration, liberated from the law of sin and death into the freedom of God's Spirit.

Section 5.11 Sanctification

The Holy Spirit is the active agent in our sanctification and seeks to produce His fruit in us as we are conformed to the image of Christ. Though indwelling sin remains a reality, as we are led by the Spirit, we grow in the knowledge of the Lord, freely keeping His commandments, and endeavoring to live in the world so that all people may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. All believers are exhorted to persevere in faith, knowing they will have to give an account to God for their every thought, word and deed. The spiritual disciplines, especially Bible study, prayer, worship, and confession, are vital means of grace in this regard. Nevertheless, the believer's ultimate confidence to persevere is based in the sure promise of God to preserve His people until the end, which is most certain.

Section 5.12 Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit indwells, sanctifies, and empowers believers for Christian witness and service. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the receiving of the Person of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation and includes both the indwelling and filling of the Spirit. A believer's being filled with the Spirit, and any number of manifestations of the same, may also occur at various times subsequent to salvation. Speaking in tongues, prophesying, and the manifestation of other spiritual gifts may accompany both initial and subsequent fillings of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit desires to fill each believer and provide power to witness, and imparts His supernatural gifts for the edification of the Body and the work of ministry in the world. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are earnestly to be desired and expected.

Section 5.13 The Church

God, by His Word and Spirit, creates the Church, calling sinful men out of the whole human race into the fellowship of Christ's Body. By the same Word and Spirit, He guides and preserves that new redeemed humanity. The Church is not a religious institution or denomination. Rather, the Church universal is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ and have personally appropriated the Gospel. The Church exists to worship and glorify God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It also exists to serve Him by faithfully doing His will on the earth. This involves a commitment to see the Gospel preached and churches planted in all the world for a testimony. The ultimate mission of the Church is the making of disciples through the preaching of the Gospel. [When God transforms human nature, this then becomes the chief means of society's transformation.]

Upon conversion, newly redeemed men and women are added to a local church, in which they devote themselves to teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and prayer. All members of the Church universal are to be a vital and committed part of a local Church employing their God-given gifts for ministry and service in relation to one another and the world. In this context they are called to live out the New Covenant as the people of God, and demonstrate the reality of the kingdom of God. The ascended Christ has also given spiritual gifts and gifted leaders to the Church, including pastors, for the equipping of Christ's body that it might mature and grow in love. Through these gifts, all members of the Church are to be nurtured and equipped for the work of ministry. Women play a vital role in the life of the Church, but in keeping with God's created design, they are not permitted to teach or to have authority over a man.

Section 5.14 The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is to be observed only by those who have become genuine followers of Christ. This ordinance symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood on our behalf and is to be observed repeatedly throughout the Christian's life as a sign of

continued participation in the atoning benefits of Christ's death. As we partake of the Lord's Supper with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we remember and proclaim the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls, and signify our unity with other members of Christ's body.

Section 5.15 Marriage

Marriage was created and ordained by God as a covenantal union between one man and one woman, established at creation and affirmed by the Lord Jesus and His apostles. Marriage is intended to reflect the union between Christ and the Church. Both men and women are made in the image of God and therefore have equal dignity and worth. It is also true that a husband and a wife have been given different roles within the marriage relationship in order to fulfill God's design. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church, while a wife is to submit herself to the loving leadership of her husband just as the Church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. Sexual acts outside of the bounds of marriage—including fornication, adultery, homosexuality, polygamy, and any other sexually immoral practices—are prohibited by God and unprofitable for man.

Section 5.16 The Consummation

The Consummation of all things includes the visible, personal, and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the translation of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the just and the unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. In the Consummation, Satan with his hosts and all those outside Christ are finally separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal punishment, but the righteous, in glorious bodies, shall live and reign with Him forever. Married to Christ as His Bride, the Church will be in the presence of God forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then shall the eager expectation of creation be fulfilled and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God who makes all things new.

ARTICLE VI: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 6.01 Qualifications

Membership in this church shall be based upon:

A. A confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
B. The testimony of believer's baptism.
C. A commitment to and willingness to submit to the doctrinal outlook of the church, as expressed in the Statement of Faith.
D. A commitment to and signature of the Membership Agreement.
E. Completion of membership classes and appropriate application forms and a meeting with an elder confirming these qualifications.

Upon meeting the qualifications above, and upon approval of the Elder Board, individuals will be admitted into membership and will be welcomed into the church.

Section 6.02 Children of Members

Given the nature of the responsibilities and accountability involved with church membership, members must be at least 18 years of age or have graduated from high school. Minor children of members may enjoy all the age-appropriate privileges and responsibilities of membership (except for taking part in formal affirmations at membership meetings) as a part of their parents' family if they live in the same household and are under their parents' authority. Upon a child's 18th birthday (or graduation from high school), he or she must individually fulfill all the qualifications for admission to membership in the church. He or she will have a two year period until their 20th birthday to fulfill these requirements. If upon his or her 20th birthday these requirements are not fulfilled, he or she will no longer be considered a member.

Section 6.03 Duties and Privileges

Members are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Membership Agreement. Each member is 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. Members should also strive to attend members' meetings, pray for the concerns of the church, and submit to the spiritual leadership of the elders, as they in turn submit to Christ (Hebrews 13:17).

Section 6.04 Termination or Transfer

Members may be removed from membership at their request by informing an elder of the church of their intention to withdraw and the reasons for their withdrawal. If a member requests withdrawal of membership because of specific problems or disappointments with the church, the elders shall attempt to resolve those matters so that the member may remain

in the church and enjoy greater fruitfulness and personal spiritual growth. If the elders are unable to resolve those matters, they shall offer to assist the member in locating a church of like faith and practice that can respond more effectively to his/her gifts and needs and the Elder Board will end the individual's membership.

Members of the church in good standing, at their request, shall be given letters stating their standing in the church and indicating their termination of membership. A member failing to share in the fellowship and responsibilities of the church for an extended period of time may forfeit membership by decision of the Elder Board.

ARTICLE VII: CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Section 7.01 Church Offices

There are two church offices listed in the New Testament (Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:1-13): pastor/elder (hereinafter referred to as elder) and deacon. On this basis, Grace Community Church has established both the office of elder and the office of deacon.

Section 7.02 Elder Board

Grace Community Church is an elder-led church. The leadership model of the elder board shall always be based on the biblical principle of a plurality of elders, where each elder has an equal vote and equal weight in the decision-making process. The responsibility for the leadership and governance of the church shall reside with the Elder Board of the church. The Elder Board is responsible for governing the church and tending the flock as overseers. Specifically these responsibilities include:

A. Oversight of the preaching and teaching of God's Word.
B. Administration of church discipline and judicial processes.
C. Oversight of the strategic long-term goals and objectives of the church.
D. Ensuring the biblical administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
E. Clarification and guarding of church doctrine and practices, including the formulation of church policies and approval of any recommendations for revisions to the Church Constitution.
F. Evaluation of the elders, including the preparation and/or revision of job descriptions.
G. Identification and hiring of non-pastoral staff as needed to fulfill the mission and objectives of the church.
H. Delegation to the management structures of the pastoral team such responsibilities as it deems appropriate.
I. Oversight of the Financial Board and the process of establishing the church budget.
J. Oversight of the membership rolls of the church.
K. The receipt, management, and stewardship of the resources received for the accomplishment of the church's mission.
L. Shepherding and knowing the flock and seeking their input and feedback as part of how they lead and govern the church.

Section 7.03 Pastor/Elders

<u>7.03.1 Qualifications</u>

An elder shall be a man (1 Timothy 2:12, 1 Timothy 3:1-7) and a member of the church, or willing and eligible to become a member of the church, and a man whose character and gifts conform to the biblical qualifications presented in 1 Timothy 3:1-7,

Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. In addition, the gifts and experience of the individual under consideration shall match the needs of the church and the duties of the position.

We affirm that "the creation narrative in Genesis 1:27 views men and women as equally created in the image of God. Therefore, men and women have equal value to God and have equal value as persons, and equal value to the church."[1] We encourage women to full and free participation in the various ministries of the church, and desire to take full account of the wisdom that God has given to women with respect to the life of the church. (1 Timothy 2:12). However, Scripture teaches that the role of elder is reserved for men.

7.03.2 Duties

Specific duties will be set forth in job descriptions and/or annual ministry plans for all elders. When considering the addition of a new elder, the Elder Board shall approve a ministry job description, prior to his hiring. In fulfilling these duties, all vocational elders are accountable to the Elder Board. Ultimately, elders will give an account to God for their performance (Hebrews 13:17).

7.03.3 Selection Process

The Elder Board is responsible for determining the leadership needs of the church and hiring men to meet those needs, with the input and affirmation of the congregation as described elsewhere in this Constitution.

7.03.4 Hiring

The Elder Board may select and hire qualified men from within the church or from other churches and denominations to become pastoral candidates when the Elder Board has approved both the candidate's assessment (character/gifting) and the candidate's job description. All outside candidates must become members.

7.03.5 Presentation of a Pastoral Candidate

After serving as a pastoral candidate for a period of time determined by the candidate's training, progress and/or spiritual maturity, a candidate will be assessed by the Elder Board and begin a confirmation process defined by the Elder Board. After the candidate has successfully completed the confirmation process, the Elder Board shall present the name of the candidate it is recommending as an elder to the congregation for affirmation at least four (4) weeks prior to a members' meeting. A 2/3 majority vote of the Elder Board will be required to bring the candidate before the congregation for affirmation. Members will be invited to affirm or express concerns about the candidate.

Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for the office, based on scriptural principles (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4), should express concerns to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting. If the Elder Board concludes that the candidate meets the qualifications, he will be presented to the congregation for affirmation. Affirmation of the candidate will take place either by a vote of church members at the members' meeting or by written vote prior to the members' meeting. Where a written affirmation process is utilized, the Elder Board will allow a minimum of three weeks for church members to submit their votes prior to the end of the voting period. The voting period shall come to an end no later than one week prior to the members' meeting. In the case of a written affirmation process the results of the written vote will be announced at the members' meeting and no further vote will be taken.

[1] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, Zondervan, 1994, p. 937.

7.03.6 Affirmation of Elders

Upon affirmation by 66% of the members who vote, the candidate will be installed as an elder with the laying on of hands before the church congregation (1 Timothy 5:22). If a candidate is unable to receive affirmation, the candidate will not be installed as an elder.

7.03.7 Selection and Service

Once a man has been affirmed by the congregation as an elder of the church and has been installed before the congregation, he will be recognized as an elder. He is expected to serve as an elder indefinitely, subject to performance evaluation.

7.03.8 Resignation

Any elder may resign by submitting his resignation in writing to a member of the Elder Board. The letter will be distributed to the other members of the Elder Board, and the elder's resignation shall be effective upon formal acceptance by the Elder Board or at such a date as the board shall set.

Section 7.04 Non-Staff Elders

The Elder Board may at such times as deemed beneficial to the church, recognize non staff elders to serve on the Elder Board.

7.04.1 Qualifications

A non-staff elder shall be a man (1 Timothy 2:12) and shall be a member of the church for at least one year, whose character and gifts conform to the biblical qualifications presented in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. In addition, the gifts and experience of the individual under consideration shall match the needs of the church.

7.04.2 Service

The church may recognize as many qualified non-staff elders as the Elder Board deems useful.

7.04.3 Duties

When considering the addition of a new non-staff elder, the Elder Board shall approve a ministry role description. In fulfilling their duties, non-staff elders are accountable to the Elder Board. Ultimately, all elders will give an account to God for their performance.

7.04.4 Presentation of Candidates

After a candidate has been nominated by the Elder Board as a non-staff elder candidate, theElder Board shall present the name of the candidate(s) to the congregation at least four weeks prior to a members' meeting for affirmation. A ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board will be required to bring the candidate before the congregation for affirmation. Members will be invited to affirm or express concerns about the candidate(s).

Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for the office, based on scriptural principles (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4), should express concerns to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting. If the Elder Board concludes that the candidate meets the qualifications, he will be presented to the congregation for affirmation.

Affirmation of the candidate will take place either by vote of church members at the members' meeting or by written vote prior to the members' meeting. Where a written affirmation process is utilized, the Elder Board will allow a minimum of three weeks for church members to submit their votes prior to the end of the voting period. The voting period shall come to an end no later than one week prior to the members' meeting. In the case of a written affirmation process the results of the written vote will be announced at the members' meeting and no further vote will be taken.

7.04.5 Affirmation of Non-Staff Elders

Upon affirmation by 66% of the members who vote, the candidate will be installed as a non-staff elder with the laying on of hands before the church congregation (1 Timothy 5:22).

If a candidate is unable to receive affirmation, the candidate will not be installed as anon-staff elder.

7.04.6 Selection and Service

Once a man has been affirmed by the congregation as a non-staff elder of the church and has been installed as an elder, he will be recognized as an elder. He is expected to serve as an elder indefinitely, subject to evaluation of the pastoral team and the Elder Board.

7.04.7 Resignation

Any non-staff elder may resign by submitting his resignation in writing to the Elder Board. The elder's resignation shall be effective upon formal acceptance by the board or at such a date as the board shall set. If a non-staff elder is no longer able to fulfill his responsibilities, he will be asked to tender his resignation by the Elder Board.

Section 7.05 Lead Pastor

7.05.1 Qualifications

The leadership model of the elder board shall always be based on the biblical principle of a plurality of elders, where each elder has an equal vote and equal weight in the decision-making process. The elder board may at such times as deemed beneficial to the church have a member of the elder board serve in the role of a lead pastor. The Lead Pastor will be a member of the church or must be willing and eligible to become a member of the church and a man whose character and gifts conform to the biblical qualifications presented in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. In addition, the gifts and experience of the individual under consideration shall match the needs of the church. Whenever possible it would be preferred that the Lead Pastor be identified from within the church. If there is no suitable candidate for the Lead Pastor role from within the church an outside candidate will be considered.

7.05.2 Tenure

The Lead Pastor shall be called for an indefinite term of office.

7.05.3 Duties

The job description of the Lead Pastor will be determined by the Elder Board. His primary duty will be to serve as the church's primary preaching and teaching elder (1 Timothy 5:17, Ephesians 4:11-12, 2 Timothy 4:1-2, Titus 1:9) thereby preparing God's people for works of service. The Lead Pastor shall be directly accountable to the Elder Board, which will advise, assist, and evaluate him in his work. Ultimately, the Lead Pastor will give an account to God for his performance (Hebrews 13:17).

7.05.4 Lead Pastor Candidates

In the event that a new Lead Pastor is to be called, the Elder Board shall present a candidate to the congregation. A ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board will be required to bring the candidate before the congregation for affirmation.

7.05.5 Congregational Involvement

The Elder Board will lead the church in becoming familiar with the character and ministry of any candidate being seriously considered as the next Lead Pastor, through preaching and the sharing of information about his training and experience.

7.05.6 Presentation of Lead Pastor

Once the Elder Board has selected a Lead Pastor candidate, they shall present the name of the candidate to the congregation at least eight weeks prior to a members' meeting. Members will be invited to affirm or express concerns about the candidate.

Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for the role of Lead Pastor, based on scriptural principles (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4), should express concerns to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting. If the Elder Board concludes that the candidate meets the qualifications, he will be presented to the congregation for affirmation.

Affirmation of the candidate will take place either by vote of church members at the members' meeting or by written vote prior to the members' meeting. Where a written affirmation process is utilized, the Elder Board will allow a minimum of three weeks for church members to submit their votes prior to the end of the voting period. The voting period shall come to an end no later than one week prior to the members' meeting. In the case of a written affirmation process the results of the written vote will be announced at the members' meeting and no further vote will be taken.

7.05.7 Affirmation of Lead Pastor

Upon affirmation by 66% of the members who vote, the candidate will be installed as Lead Pastor with the laying on of hands before the church congregation (1 Timothy 5:22).

If a candidate is unable to receive affirmation, the candidate will not be installed as Lead Pastor.

Section 7.06 Change of Lead Pastor

7.06.1 Discipline

In the event that discipline of the Lead Pastor becomes necessary, the Elder Board shall assume responsibility for the disciplinary process in keeping with scriptural instructions (1Timothy 5:19-21), as well as the process stipulated in Section 7.07 and Section 9.01.

7.06.2 Resignation

In the event that the Lead Pastor tenders his resignation to the Elder Board, the board shall consider whether it should accept the resignation. If the reasons for the resignation are deemed insufficient, then the Elder Board shall seek to dissuade the pastor from his resignation. If the pastor remains resolved to resign, the board shall accept the resignation and inform the church.

7.06.3 Severability

The remaining elders may continue to serve the church when the Lead Pastor retires, resigns, or is removed for any reason.

7.06.4 Removal of Lead Pastor

Recommendation for the change of the Lead Pastor may be initiated by the Elder Board or the Lead Pastor. The recommendation will be confirmed by a ⅔ majority vote of all non-staff and vocational elders. The Lead Pastor will relinquish his position at a time that is determined by the Elder Board.

7.06.5 Repositioning the Lead Pastor

When a Lead Pastor relinquishes his position, the Elder Board will reassess and determine the future role of the former Lead Pastor.

7.06.6 Interim Lead Pastor

In the event that there is a vacancy in the Lead Pastor position, the Elder Board may appoint an interim Lead Pastor from its current staff until a new Lead Pastor is selected. An interim Lead Pastor shall normally not serve longer than one year.

Section 7.07 Resolving Charges Against an Elder

Any charge(s) against an elder because of moral impropriety or heresy shall be investigated by the Elder Board. Upon a ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board that the charges are of a substantive nature, a hearing will be scheduled to investigate them.

7.07.1 Evaluation and Adjudication of Charges

The Elder Board shall carefully evaluate the evidence and determine whether the charges were significant enough and have sufficient merit to warrant formal adjudication. In such cases the Elder Board will adjudicate the charge against the elder according to scripture (James 3:1; and 1 Timothy 5: 19-21).

A. If it is determined that the matters are non-scandalous issues of personal offense, the offense will be handled according to standard biblical practice involving offenses between two believers. Mediation will be provided by an elder designated by the Elder Board who is not personally involved in the offense.
B. If the charges are scandalous in nature, a hearing will be scheduled to investigate the charges. A ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board is necessary in order to find an elder guilty of any charge brought against him. The accused elder will not be permitted to vote on matters pertaining to the investigation. If the accused elder is found guilty on one or more charges, the Elder Board shall determine the consequences and the appropriate communication to the church (1 Timothy 5:20).
C. If the accused elder is found not guilty of all charges, the Elder Board shall determine what communication, if any, needs to be made to the congregation.

7.07.2 Appeal of Elder Board Decisions

If either party is not satisfied with the decision reached by the Elder Board, he or she may appeal for a further hearing by an arbitrator from outside of the church.

A. If an appeal is filed for outside arbitration, a review committee will be assigned to investigate the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the request. In the event a review committee is formed, it shall consist of five individuals who are and have been members of the church in good standing for a minimum of a year and not part of the staff or Elder Board. Both parties shall have the opportunity to recommend members of the review committee subject to the approval of both the Elder Board and the party bringing the charge.
B. The review committee will review the evidence and the previous decision and make a recommendation as to whether outside arbitration should be pursued. If the recommendation is to do so, a qualified outside arbitrator will be identified by the Elder Board subject to the approval of both parties. The Grace Community Church Financial Board will define reasonable limits to the church's financial liability for costs associated with the engagement of an outside arbitrator.
C. Both the Elder Board and the party bringing the charge will agree in writing to

abide by the decisions of the outside arbitrator.

7.07.3 Restoring a Disciplined Elder to Service

An elder who has been removed from office by disciplinary action may, depending on the circumstances and only after evidencing the fruit of repentance over time, be considered by the Elder Board and the congregation for a return to service in the office of elder, following the selection and affirmation procedures for elders outlined in Sections 7.03.5 and 7.03.6 of this constitution.

Section 7.08 Change of Pastoral Role

7.08.1 Change of Role

The Elder Board may, after a period of assessment, recommend the change in status of a vocational elder to a non-staff elder. This change must be affirmed by ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board.

7.08.2 Termination

If it is decided after a formal evaluation process that either a vocational or a non-staff elder is (1) no longer functioning effectively or fruitfully in his role or (2) is found to no longer qualify for his position because of personal or moral failure, he may be removed from the office of elder. This change must be affirmed by a ⅔ majority of the Elder Board.

ARTICLE VIII: DIACONATE MINISTRY

Section 8.01 Deacons

Deacons are members of the church who fulfill the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-10 & 12 and serve under the direction and oversight of the Elder Board.

8.01.1 Qualifications

In accordance with 1 Timothy 3:8-10 & 12, deacons shall be men of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain, holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, first tested and found blameless, and (if married) faithful husbands who manage their families well.

8.01.2 Responsibilities

Deacons, under the direction and oversight of the Elder Board, shall attend to the ministry needs of church members and, if it seems wise and appropriate, may also address the ministry needs of non-members and those in our community. Deacons may also perform other duties as determined by the Elder Board.

8.01.3 Authority

The Office of Deacon is not a governing or teaching office; however, a person holding the office is not necessarily prohibited from teaching in the church.

Section 8.02 Deaconesses

Deaconesses are women in the church who fulfill the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:11 and serve with the deacons under the direction and oversight of the Elder Board.

8.02.1 Qualifications

In accordance with 1 Timothy 3:11, deaconesses shall be women of dignity, not slanderers, sober-minded, and faithful.

8.02.2 Responsibilities

Deaconesses shall serve alongside the deacons in the execution of their responsibilities, especially as it relates to ministry to women.

8.02.3 Authority

Scriptures reserve certain activities in the church, namely teaching and exercising authority (1 Timothy 2:12), for the men of the church. Deaconesses will be assigned responsibilities in such a way as to not violate these scriptural teachings.

Section 8.03 Deacon and Deaconess Candidates

Candidates for diaconate ministry can be recommended by the elders or by members of the congregation.

8.03.1 Presentation of Candidates

Candidates for diaconate ministry will be tested according to 1 Timothy 3:10. After the candidate has been nominated by the Elder Board as a candidate for diaconate ministry, the Elder Board shall present the name of the candidate(s) to the congregation at least four weeks prior to a members' meeting for affirmation. A ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board will be required to bring the candidate before the congregation for affirmation. Members will be invited to affirm or express concerns about the candidate(s).

Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for diaconate ministry should express such concern to the Elder Board as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting. If the Elder Board concludes that the candidate meets the qualifications he/she will be presented to the congregation for affirmation.

Affirmation of the deacon candidate will take place either by a vote of church members at the members' meeting or by written vote prior to the members' meeting. Where a written affirmation process is utilized, the Elder Board will allow a minimum of three weeks for church members to submit their votes prior to the end of the voting period. The voting period shall come to an end no later than one week prior to the members' meeting. In the case of a written affirmation process the results of the written vote will be announced at the members' meeting and no further vote will be taken.

8.03.2 Affirmation of Candidates

Upon affirmation by 66% of the members who vote, the candidate will be installed as a deacon/deaconess with the laying on of hands before the church congregation (1 Timothy 5:22).

If a candidate is unable to receive affirmation, the candidate will not be installed as a deacon/deaconess.

8.03.3 Selection and Service

Deacons and deaconesses shall serve one term lasting three years. After this they must be reaffirmed by the Elder Board.

Deacons and deaconesses may take sabbaticals from service as needed upon approval of the Elder Board.

8.03.4 Termination of Service as a Deacon/Deaconess

The following are reasons for Deacons/Deaconesses to have their service as a Deacon/Deaconess terminated prior to the conclusion of their three year term.

8.03.5 Resignation

Any deacon/deaconess may resign by submitting his/her resignation in writing to the Elder Board. The resignation shall be effective upon formal acceptance by the Elder Board or at such date as the Elder Board shall set.

A. If a deacon/deaconess is not able to fulfill his/her responsibilities, he/she will be asked to tender his/her resignation to the Elder Board. This requires a ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board.
B. Persistent conduct that violates the biblical qualifications for the office. This requires a ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board.
C. Persistent disagreement with the doctrinal outlook of the church as expressed in the statement of faith. This requires a ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board.

ARTICLE IX: CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Section 9.01 Discipline

Discipline is the exercise of authority given by the Lord Jesus Christ to the church and exercised by the elders to instruct and guide its members and to promote the church's purity and welfare.

All members of the church will be taught and exhorted to conduct their lives according to the standards set forth in Scripture. Such conduct includes *individual* moral purity (Galatians 5:19-23, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Ephesians 4:25-32) and the promotion of *corporate* unity and doctrinal fidelity (Ephesians 4:1-3, Romans 16:17-18, Titus 3:10-11).

Section 9.02 Agreement to Submit to the Process of Church Discipline

Every member of the church consents to a willingness to support and, if necessary, submit to the process of church discipline outlined below and further detailed in the Grace Community Church Discipline Policy.

Section 9.03 Purposes of Discipline

The Church is commanded to pursue loving formal discipline of its members when they continue in serious and/or public (i.e. behavioral) sin. The purpose of church discipline includes the following:

A. To help members of the church conform individually and corporately to Christ, in order to protect the purity and unity of his Church, for the glory of God (Colossians 1:28; Ephesians 4:1-6; 1 Corinthians 10:31).
B. To help restore a wandering soul back to Christ (Matthew 18:12-14, 15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1-5).
C. To help protect the church from false teachers and division (Acts 20:28-31; Titus 1:10-11).

Section 9.04 Process of Discipline

Should any member persist in sin, Matthew 18:15-18, 1 Corinthians 5:5-7, and Galatians 6:1, shall inform the process of discipline to accomplish the purposes stated above.

A. First, one should go privately to his fellow member and show him his fault (Matthew 18:15).
B. If that fails, one should involve one or two others (this may include an elder) to establish the offense and further pursue repentance (Matthew 18:16).
C. If that fails, the matter should be brought to the elders of the church who will seek to evaluate the matter and pursue reproof and repentance where appropriate.
D. If that fails, the Elder Board should tell the appropriate segment of the church for further reproof (Matthew 18:17). The appropriate segment of the church will be

determined by the Elder Board, based on what will benefit the individual and the members of the church; in some cases, it could include the entire church.

E. If that fails, the Elder Board will inform the entire church membership for further reproof.
F. For further information regarding the church discipline process, see the Grace Community Church Discipline Policy.

The entire process of church discipline outlined above shall be carried out and enforced in a spirit of Christian love, care, and sensitivity (Matthew 18:21-22, Galatians 6:1, 2 Timothy 2:24-26).

Section 9.05 Enactment of Discipline

It is hoped that the preliminary steps of discipline outlined above will result in repentance. However, if there is no indication of repentance after these steps are taken, the unrepentant person's membership shall be terminated. This will be decided by the Elder Board after due consideration, personal appeals for repentance, and prayer. The reason for removal shall be communicated personally if possible or in a pastoral letter sent to the individual. The brother or sister will then be treated as an unbeliever**.** Although this will involve severance of fellowship, the church's posture should be to win the individual back to Christ. The church reserves the right to determine that some sins require the immediate termination of membership, as directed by 1 Corinthians 5.

Section 9.06 Removal or Transfer

If it appears to the Elder Board that a member has requested removal from membership merely to avoid church discipline, that request shall not be given effect until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded (Matthew 18:12-20).

Section 9.07 Restoration and Repentance

When the Elder Board concludes that an individual who has been placed under church discipline demonstrates genuine repentance, he or she will be restored into church membership and publicly welcomed back into the fellowship and community of the church family.

ARTICLE X: COOPERATION

Section 10.01 Cooperative Association

This church may voluntarily associate with other churches or organizations in accomplishing its mission and purpose at the discretion of the Elder Board.

Section 10.02 Formal Affiliation

If association with a group or family of churches should rise to the level of the possibility of formal affiliation such affiliation must be approved by the Elder Board and affirmed by the church membership.

10.02.1 Recommendation to Affiliate

Upon approval of the Elder Board**,** the Elder Board shall present a recommendation to formally affiliate with a particular group or family of churches to the congregation at least four weeks prior to a members' meeting for affirmation. A ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board will be required to bring the recommendation before the congregation for affirmation. Members will be invited to affirm or express concerns about the possible affiliation. Any member should express concerns to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.

Affirmation of the recommendation to formally affiliate will take place either by a vote of church members at a members' meeting or by written vote prior to the members' meeting. Where a written affirmation process is utilized, the Elder Board will allow a minimum of three weeks for church members to submit their votes prior to the end of the voting period. The voting period shall come to an end no later than one week prior to the members' meeting. In the case of a written affirmation process the results of the written vote will be announced at the members' meeting and no further vote will be taken.

10.02.2 Affirmation of Formal Affiliation

Upon affirmation by 66% of the members who vote, the recommendation to formally affiliate will be affirmed and the Elder Board will move forward with the appropriate steps to formalize the affiliation. If the recommendation is unable to receive affirmation, the church will not pursue formal affiliation with that group or family of churches.

10.02.3 Terminating Formal Affiliation

If the Elder Board should determine that it is in the best interests of the church to terminate a formal affiliation with a group or family of churches, the recommendation to terminate the affiliation must be approved by two thirds of the Elder Board. Upon

approval of the Elder Board, the recommendation to terminate the formal affiliation will be presented to the congregation following the same procedures as outlined in Section 10.02.1 and 10.02.2 above.

ARTICLE XI: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

Section 11.01 Management Structures

The Elder Board may establish management/leadership structures to provide oversight of ministry. These structures will report to and be accountable to the Elder Board.

Section 11.02 Committees

In order to promote efficient handling of Elder Board matters, the Elder Board may appoint various committees from within its membership, the other elders, the staff, and the congregation at large to accomplish the mission of the church. These committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and powers specifically delegated by the Elder Board. All councils and committees shall exist for the period specified by the Elder Board.

The general functions of committees are:

A. To bring recommendations to the Elder Board.
B. To provide a wider base of counsel and assistance to the elders.

ARTICLE XII: MEMBERS' MEETINGS

Section 12.01 Members' Meetings

The Elder Board will call members of the church together as necessary. Members' meetings will provide the elders an opportunity to present major initiatives and to discuss and seek input and feedback from the church on pertinent church issues. Members' meetings in which formal congregational affirmation is involved will be announced to the congregation at least four weeks in advance.

Congregational affirmation shall occur in the following instances:

A. Affirmation of a new lead pastor (Section 7.05.7)
B. Installation of pastor/elders (Sections 7.03.6 and 7.04.5)
C. Affirmation of deacons/deaconesses (Section 8.03.2)
D. Recommendations to formally affiliate or terminate formal affiliation with a group or family of churches (Section 10.02.2 and 10.02.3)
E. Changes to the constitution and Statement of Faith (Section 14.01.2)

Other significant matters deemed appropriate for congregational affirmation as determined by the Elder Board.

Section 12.02 Annual Members' Meeting

The Elder Board in conjunction with the Financial Board will schedule an annual members' meeting within three months after the end of the church fiscal year. The purpose of this meeting will include, but not be limited to the following:

A. A review of the state of the church finances.
B. A review of any recommendations to the church Constitution that were submitted during the previous fiscal year that were not approved by the Elder Board and put forward to the church membership for affirmation.

ARTICLE XIII: FISCAL MATTERS

Section 13.01 Fiscal Oversight

The Elder Board shall conduct its affairs with integrity in the sight of God and man and shall maintain prudent and responsible control and accountability over all the funds the church receives.

Section 13.02 Financial Board

13.02.1 Composition

The Financial Board shall be composed of no fewer than five non-staff members and no more than two members of the Elder Board. The Financial Board will be chaired by a non-staff board member who will serve a three year term subject to renewal upon a majority vote of the Financial Board and a ⅔ vote of the Elder Board.

The number of Financial Board members that comprise the Board may be expanded or reduced based on what best serves the needs of the church. Recommendations to expand or reduce the number of Financial Board members may be made by the Financial Board or the Elder Board and must be approved by a majority of the Financial Board and a ⅔ majority of the Elder Board.

Regardless of size, the Financial Board must always be constituted with an odd number of members.

13.02.2 Purpose

The Financial Board provides counsel to the Elder Board and the Board of Trustees in financial and business matters.

13.02.3 Qualifications

The Financial Board is composed of individuals of integrity who possess significant business, management, or financial knowledge, as well as proven character as followers of Christ. Each individual must be a member in good standing of the church.

13.02.4 Term

Each Financial Board member who is not a pastor/elder shall serve for a term of three years. A Financial Board member may serve additional terms, subject to the recommendation of the Financial Board and the approval of the Elder Board. The Lead Pastor will be a perpetual member of the Financial Board for as long as he serves in the Lead Pastor role.

The chairperson of the Financial Board shall serve a three year term. Should the chair be elected in the midst of an existing three year term as a Financial Board member, the

chairperson's term on the Board will reset to a new three year term from the point they begin to serve in the role of chairperson.

13.02.5 Financial Board Candidates

Candidates to serve on the Financial Board may be recommended by members of the church or by members of the Financial Board. The Financial Board will evaluate all recommendations and nominate the candidate or candidates best qualified to serve on the Financial Board from among the recommendations.

13.02.6 Selection

Candidates will be appointed to the Financial Board by agreement of the majority of the Financial Board and a ⅔ majority approval by the Elder Board.

13.02.7 Duties

The Financial Board shall monitor the financial affairs of the church, and serve in an advisory capacity to the Elder Board as follows:

A. Review monthly financial statements of the church and provide counsel to the Elder Board.
B. Make recommendations to the Elder Board regarding the church's use of substantial gifts, and the establishing of special offerings or funds.
C. Assist in preparation and review of the annual church budget to ensure that it is consistent with the approved ministry strategies, goals, and objectives of the church and fiscal propriety.
D. Coordinate with the Elder Board in the communication and distribution of specific financial information to the congregation such as Annual Expense Summaries, etc.
E. Review staff compensation and recommend changes to staff compensation.
F. Provide input and recommendations on financial matters as needed.

13.02.8 Meetings

The Financial Board shall meet to carry out its assigned duties four (4) times per fiscal year.

13.02.9 Subcommittees

The Financial Board shall establish such sub-committees as it deems necessary to best fulfill its responsibilities and functions and to best serve the needs of the church.

13.02.10 Compensation Subcommittee

The Financial Board will recommend, and the Elder Board will approve, a compensation subcommittee, which shall propose the salary and financial benefits for

all church staff. This subcommittee will be composed of Financial Board members. This subcommittee will propose salary and benefit packages based on comparisons with comparable churches and available salary and benefit surveys. Individual base salaries shall be recommended based upon each staff person's experience, years of service, responsibilities, and performance. Recommendations shall be submitted to the Financial Board for approval. After approval by the Financial Board, recommendations shall be submitted to the Elder Board for review and approval, and if approved, included in the annual budget.

Section 13.03 Fiscal Year

Unless otherwise amended by the Elder Board, the fiscal year shall begin on September 1 and shall end on August 31 of the following year. The Elder Board shall have the power to set, and from time to time change, the fiscal year of the church.

ARTICLE XIV: AMENDMENTS

Section 14.01 Amendments to the Constitution

This constitution may be amended by a ⅔ majority vote of the Elder Board, and subsequent affirmation by the congregation. Recommendations for amendments to this Constitution may be submitted in writing to the Elder Board by any member of the church or by a member of the Elder Board.

Amendments to this constitution must be approved at a meeting of the Elder Board for which each elder has received notice at least 30 days prior to the date of the meeting, and the notice must contain the proposed amendments(s) to the constitution to be considered at the meeting. If the recommended amendment is not approved by a ⅔ majority of the Elder Board, it will not be presented to the membership for affirmation.

Before adoption, any Elder Board-approved amendment to the constitution must be affirmed by a two thirds majority vote of the membership present at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing prior to the vote. The revised church constitution shall be made available to church members.

14.01.1 Recommendation to Amend the Constitution

Upon the approval of the Elder Board, the Elder Board shall present to the congregation at least four weeks prior to a members' meeting. Members will be invited to affirm or express concerns about the amendment.

Any member with reason to believe that the amendment is not biblically sound or helpful should express concerns to the Elder Board as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting. The board will follow up with all concerns expressed.

Affirmation of the amendment will take place either by a vote of church members at the members' meeting or by written vote prior to the members' meeting. Where a written affirmation process is utilized, the Elder Board will allow a minimum of three weeks for church members to submit their votes prior to the end of the voting period. The voting period shall come to an end no later than one week prior to the members' meeting. In the case of a written affirmation process, the results of the written vote will be announced at the members' meeting and no further vote will be taken.

Section 14.01.2 Affirmation of Amendment

Upon affirmation by 66% of the members who vote, the amendment will be approved and incorporated into this constitution.