

Grace Covenant Church | Constitution

Article I: Name and Principal Office

The name of the Corporation is Grace Covenant Church. The Corporation may also be referred to herein as “the Church.” The Church maintains its principal office at 215 Florida Ave. SE, Denham Springs, LA 70726. The Church is organized under the Louisiana Nonprofit laws for religious purposes. The Church shall comply with all Louisiana Nonprofit laws and maintain a registered office and registered agent in Louisiana.

Article II: Purpose

Grace Covenant Church is organized and shall be operated exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Specifically, the purpose of the Church is to glorify God by making disciples of all nations. To accomplish this aim, the members of the church gather in authentic and strategic relationships through gatherings of the entire membership and smaller groups. Church gatherings involve prayer, preaching of the Word of God, fellowship, participating in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and serving the community as representatives of Jesus Christ. The Church considers every member as gifted and called to participate in ministry locally and globally. Leadership will be devoted to equipping and mobilizing the membership for this task. As an autonomous local church, the Bible is the ultimate authority, and it is governed by its membership.

Article III: Membership

Section 1 - Qualifications

To qualify for membership, whether Adult Membership or Young Membership, in this church a person must be; a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must be able to affirm the Statement of Faith and commit to keeping the Church Covenant.

Section 2 - Admission

- A. **Adults:** To become a member, a candidate must be affirmed by the existing membership. He or she will first attend a time of instruction on the purpose, philosophy, and ministry of the church. Then he or she will have an interview with an elder who will answer any questions pertaining to membership and seek the following:
1. Affirmation of the believer's conversion to Christ through repentance and faith in the gospel;
 2. Confirmation of the believer's identification with Christ through believer's baptism;
 3. Agreement and submission by the believer to the teachings of scripture expressed in the Statement of Faith;
 4. Agreement and submission by the believer to keeping the responsibilities of

41 covenant membership through the signing of the Church Covenant.
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43 After the candidate is considered by the elders, and the elders agree to affirm and recommend
44 the candidate, he or she will be recommended to the membership at a Members Meeting along
45 with a presentation of their testimony. The membership will have a two week period to express
46 any concerns about receiving the candidate as a fellow member, and if none is expressed he or
47 she will be presented to the congregation as a member. If he or she was not previously baptized,
48 this presentation will be through baptism.
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50 **B. Children:** Any believer under the age of 16 is eligible for Young Membership. He or she will
51 not be expected to complete this “time of instruction” prior to admittance as a member, nor
52 sign the Church Covenant, nor be allowed to vote. Aside from these exceptions, becoming a
53 Young Member is the same as for adults. Young Members are to live in agreement and
54 submission to all of the privileges and responsibilities of full covenant membership. The elders
55 will involve the candidate’s parents/guardian in the interview. Young members who grow to
56 the age of 16 as members are eligible to become Adult Members by undergoing the “time of
57 instruction” and signing the Church Covenant, followed by affirmation of the congregation.
58 This process of becoming an Adult Member will be expected of a Young Member by the age
59 of 18, otherwise their membership will be terminated according to the terms below.
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61 **Section 3 - Removal of Membership**

62 Membership in this church body may be removed by the congregation in any of the following ways:

63 1. Death.

64 2. When a member joins another church and/or when a transfer letter request is received from
65 another church of like faith and belief. However, the congregation shall have authority to refuse
66 a member’s resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of
67 proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

68 3. Membership may also be removed as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not
69 necessarily, at the recommendation of the elders) upon the vote of at least 80% of the members
70 present at any regular or special meeting of the members. This removal may be carried out only
71 after faithful effort has been made by the church to bring said member to repentance and
72 restitution. If the member is deemed to be non-repentant, then the elders shall make the
73 recommendation to the congregation that the person’s membership be terminated. (Matt 18:15-
74 20; Galatians 6:1; 1 Cor 5:1-13).

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76 After a recommendation of church membership removal brought before the congregation by an elder,
77 there will be a two weeks affirmation period. If no grievance is expressed, the person's membership is
78 removed.
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80 **Section 4 - Church Discipline**

81 Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our
82 Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the
83 admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in

84 Matthew 18:15–17 and the example of scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be
85 contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

86 Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from
87 communion for a definite period, deposition from office or role, and excommunication (see
88 Matthew 18: 15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3: 14–15; 1 Timothy 5: 19–20; 1 Corinthians 5: 4–5).

89 The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual
90 growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15: 5; 29: 15; I Corinthians 4: 14; Ephesians
91 6: 4; I Timothy 3: 4–5; Hebrews 12: 1–11; Psalm 119: 115; 141: 5; Proverbs 17: 10; 25: 12; 27:
92 5; Ecclesiastes 7: 5; Matthew 7: 26–27; 18: 15–17; Luke 17: 3; Acts 2: 40; I Corinthians 5: 5;
93 Galatians 6: 1–5; II Thessalonians 3: 6, 14–15; I Timothy 1: 20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1: 22);

94 For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (see
95 Proverbs 13: 20; Romans 15: 14; I Corinthians 5: 11; 15: 33; Colossians 3: 16; I Thessalonians
96 5: 14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; I Timothy 5: 20; Titus 1: 11;
97 Hebrews 10: 24–25);

98 For the purity of the church as a whole (see I Corinthians 5: 6–7; II Corinthians 13: 10;
99 Ephesians 5: 27; II John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21: 2);

100 For the good of our corporate witness to non–Christians (see Proverbs 28: 7; Matthew 5: 13–
101 16; John 13: 35; Acts 5: 1–14; Ephesians 5: 11; I Timothy 3: 7; II Peter 2: 2; I John 3: 10); and

102 Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5: 11; I
103 Kings 11: 2; II Chronicles 19: 2; Ezra 6: 21; Nehemiah 9: 2; Isaiah 52: 11; Ezekiel 36: 20;
104 Matthew 5: 16; John 15: 8; 18: 17, 25; Romans 2: 24; 15: 5–6; II Corinthians 6: 14–7: 1;
105 Ephesians 1:4; 5: 27; I Peter 2: 12).

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107 **Section 5 - Decision Making**

108 As a congregational church, the substantial decisions regarding the church are made by the members
109 either through a congregational vote or a congregational affirmation of the elders' recommendation.

110 **A. Congregational Affirmation**

111 Certain decisions of the membership do not require a vote by ballot, but instead members
112 express their affirmation of the elders recommendation. With such recommendations from the
113 elders, the members shall be given 14 days to express any concerns to the elders. If there is
114 more than one member who expresses concerns about the recommended action which are not
115 alleviated before the 14 days the action shall not be taken. Members may request and the elders
116 may decide at some point to bring the matter to a congregational vote.

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118 The following decisions are made by congregational affirmation:

- 119 1. Receiving new members (see III.2.A).
- 120 2. Removing members, except in the case of church discipline (see III.3).
- 121 3. Adopting the Annual Budget.

122

123 **B. Principles**

124 The process for church voting shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following
125 principles:

- 126 1. Unity is the goal in decision-making, not just a simple majority. Votes are not for the
127 purpose of individuals expressing preference, but to affirm or reject the suggested
128 direction of the established leadership.
129 2. Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the
130 process. Therefore votes should normally be called after members have had time to
131 consider and pray.
132 3. Candidates or issues are presented to the membership, normally by the elders.
133 4. All candidates for church leadership should be treated with the grace, kindness, and
134 honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members; The decision process shall express
135 that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within
136 the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.
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138 **C. Voting Requirements**

139 Any voting of the members shall take place at a regular members meeting or a special members
140 meeting. For a regularly scheduled members meeting there is no minimum number of attendees
141 required for a vote, but at a special called members meeting a quorum of at least 50% of the
142 membership must be present to vote.

143 The following decisions will require a congregational vote at a members meeting:

- 144 1. Installation of Elders, Deacons and Treasurer.
145 2. Removal of Elders, Deacons and Treasurer, except in the case of voluntary resignation.
146 3. Installation or removal of pastoral staff as outlined in Article V.
147 4. Any changes made to the Constitution, Statement of Faith, or Church Covenant.
148 5. Excommunication: the final stage of church discipline.
149 6. Any non-budget expenditure over the threshold set forth in the financial policy.
150 7. Any other issue the elders determine is prudent for the members to take responsibility.
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152 **D. Voting Process**

153 Names of candidates to serve in leadership, or the issue on which the church will vote shall be
154 presented at any regular corporate gathering or members meeting at least 14 days prior to the
155 members meeting in which the vote will take place.

156 Members are expected to pray for the candidate or issue at hand, seeking God's will for the
157 church. Any member with reason to believe that the recommendation is not the will of God for
158 this church should express such concern or objection to the elders as far in advance as possible
159 before the relevant members meeting.

160 The ballot shall have three options:

- 161 1. I have prayerfully considered and support this candidate/decision.
162 2. I am unsure, and submit to the will of the congregation.
163 3. I have prayerfully considered and disapprove of this candidate/decision.

164 Members should not plan to select option 3 on the ballot without bringing their concern before
165 the elders, preferably before the voting takes place.

166 The moderator of the members meeting shall declare official any decision receiving a 80%
167 majority of all votes cast by a secret ballot (option 1 or 2). Abstentions will not be considered

168 as votes cast. The decision shall take effect immediately, unless another date has been
169 specifically designated.

170 **Article IV: Church Officers**

171 The Biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons. In addition, our church recognizes the
172 administrative position under this constitution of treasurer. All officers must be members of this
173 church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

174 **Section 1 - Elders**

- 175 A. **Responsibilities:** Elders are called to serve among and provide spiritual protection for the
176 Church body and are accountable to Christ and the Church membership. Elders are to provide
177 oversight to the Church through prayer, the ministry of the Word, pastoral care, and are to set
178 the example for all Church members by their obedience to the mission of Christ and His
179 Church (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 6:3-4; 20:28-31; 1 Corinthians. 4:14-16; 1 Timothy. 3:2,
180 5:17; Hebrews. 13:7, 17; 1 Peter. 5:1-4). Elders shall prioritize participating in elder meetings
181 in accordance with Article VI section 5 and the current established practices.
- 182 B. **Qualifications:** Elders must be men that give evidence of spiritual maturity and service for an
183 extended period of time. They should be gifted and willing to serve in this office. The
184 qualifications for Elders are contained in Acts 14:23; 15; 20; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17-22; Titus
185 1:5-9; and 1 Peter 5:1-4.
- 186 C. **Selection:** Elder candidates may be nominated by any member to be considered. If the elders
187 deem it necessary for a new elder, they will choose from the members nominated who shall go
188 through the candidacy process. An elder candidate shall complete a questionnaire and
189 participate in a qualification process as implemented by the elders. As led by the Holy Spirit,
190 and a unanimous vote of the elders the proposed elder shall be presented to the Church
191 membership for a minimum of a fourteen (14) day review. If there is no just cause brought
192 forward during the review period, the candidate shall then be presented to the Church
193 membership at a Members Meeting for a vote in accordance with Article III Section 5.
- 194 D. **Term:** Elders serve a term of 3 years, and may serve a second consecutive term if elected by
195 the members. After two consecutive terms an elder must take a one year break before being
196 elected to another term.
- 197 E. **Removal:** An elder may be removed from office as an elder by voluntary resignation or by a
198 vote in accordance with Article III section 5.

199 **Section 2 - Deacons**

- 200 A. **Responsibilities:** In accordance with the meaning and practice of the New Testament Church,
201 deacons are to be leading servants in the Church. Deacons are members of the Church
202 responsible for supporting the elders in the ministry of the Word, caring for the needs of the
203 Church and community, and promoting the unity of the Church (Acts 6:1-6). The duties of
204 deacons include, but are not limited to, administering aid to help the poor and needy in times of
205 crisis and distress, overseeing the hospitality ministries, assisting in administering the
206 ordinances of the Gospel and overseeing the care and maintenance of the Church properties.
- 207 B. **Qualifications:** Deacons shall be those members of the Church, both men and women, that
208 serve in roles of service and leadership as designated by the elders. The qualifications for
209 deacons are outlined in 1 Tim. 3:8-12. Deacons should be members who have a good reputation
210 among the church and community, which will be tested first by the elders and affirmed by the
211 congregation through a vote.

- 212 C. **Selection:** Selection of new deacons begins with the recognition of a ministry need in the
213 church, either a new role or a role being vacated by a deacon. This need to enhance the unity
214 and mission of the church may be recognized by the elders or brought to their attention by any
215 member. Any qualified member can be nominated as a deacon candidate by any member to the
216 elders. If the elders deem it necessary for a new deacon, they will choose from the members
217 nominated who shall go through the candidacy process. A deacon candidate shall complete a
218 questionnaire and participate in an interview process as implemented by the elders. As led by
219 the Holy Spirit and affirmed by a unified vote of the elders according to Article VI Section 3.C
220 the proposed deacon shall be presented to the Church membership for a minimum of a fourteen
221 (14) day review. If there is no just cause brought forward during the review period, the
222 candidate shall then be presented to the Church membership at a Members Meeting for a vote
223 in accordance with Article III Section 5.
- 224 D. **Term:** Deacons serve a term of 3 years, and may serve a second consecutive term if elected by
225 the members. After two consecutive terms a deacon must take a one year break before being
226 elected to another term.
- 227 E. **Removal:** A deacon may be removed from office as a deacon by voluntary resignation or by a
228 vote in accordance with Article III section 5.

229 Section 3 - Treasurer

- 230 A. **Responsibilities:** The treasurer shall serve as the treasurer of the Corporation. The treasurer
231 shall ensure the proper receipting of all money received by the Church, keep proper records of
232 the source and purpose of all such funds, ensure all disbursements and bills are paid according
233 to the budget of the Church or as otherwise approved by the accounting policies, and preserve
234 all financial records of the Church including such records as may be required by any
235 governmental agency or authority. The treasurer is responsible for submitting the initial draft
236 of an annual budget to the elders.
- 237 B. **Qualifications:** The treasurer shall be a member of the Church and preferably a deacon. The
238 treasurer should be particularly gifted or skilled in standard accounting practices.
- 239 C. **Selection:** Any qualified member may be nominated as a treasurer candidate. The elders shall
240 affirm this persons qualifications through an interview process. As led by the Holy Spirit and
241 affirmed by a unified vote of the elders according to Article VI Section 3.C the proposed
242 treasurer shall be presented to the Church membership for a minimum of a fourteen (14) day
243 review. If there is no just cause brought forward during the review period, the candidate shall
244 then be presented to the Church membership at a Members Meeting for a vote in accordance
245 with Article III Section 5.
- 246 D. **Term:** The treasurer shall serve a term of 3 years and may serve a second consecutive term if
247 elected by the members. After two consecutive terms, the treasurer must take a minimum of
248 one year break. In the absence or incapacity of the treasurer, the elders shall delegate the duties
249 either to staff or a lay member until a new treasurer can be nominated and approved by the
250 membership.
- 251 E. **Removal:** The treasurer may be removed from office as treasurer by voluntary resignation or
252 by a vote in accordance with Article III section 5.
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Article V: Staff

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In order to achieve the overall vision of the Church, as set forth by the elders, it is necessary to have staff. Staff are those that are financially compensated, whether part time or full time, by the Church. All staff must be members of this Church prior to assuming their responsibilities. If they are not current members then they shall complete the membership process during the selection process. While the term elder and pastor are interchangeable in scripture, we use the term pastor to distinguish staff elders from lay elders.

262 Section 1 - Lead Pastor

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- A. **Responsibilities:** The lead pastor shall serve as an elder alongside other elders and perform the duties described in Article IV Section 1.A. The lead pastor role is a “first among equals” and considered a full-time position. He shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. He shall have the primary oversight of the preaching and teaching ministry of the Church. He shall include other men in the preaching and teaching ministry of the Church as the Holy Spirit leads. He shall have the primary responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case by case basis as approved by the elders, be delegated to another staff member. In the absence or incapacity of the lead pastor, the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated by the elders to existing staff. The lead pastor reports to the elders.
- B. **Qualifications:** The lead pastor shall serve as an elder alongside other elders and meet the qualifications outlined in Article IV Section 1.B.
- C. **Selection:** In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. The elders may establish a team to search for lead pastor candidates to recommend to the elders. The elders shall examine and affirm that the lead pastor candidate gives complete and total affirmation to the authority and sufficiency of the Bible as well as affirming our Statement of Faith, Constitution and Church Covenant. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential lead pastor. As led by the Holy Spirit and affirmed by a unified vote of the elders according to Article VI Section 3.C the proposed candidate shall be presented to the Church membership for a minimum of a fourteen (14) day review. If there is no just cause brought forward during the review period, the candidate shall then be presented to the Church membership at a Members Meeting for a vote which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife in accordance with Article III Section 5.C.
- D. **Term:** The lead pastor shall not be subject to the triennial affirmation or to any term limitation as set out for elders.
- E. **Removal:** The lead pastor may be removed from staff by voluntary resignation or by a vote in accordance with Article III Section 5.C.

292 Section 2 - Associate Pastor(s)

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- A. **Responsibilities:** An associate pastor shall serve as an elder alongside other elders and perform the duties described in Article IV Section 1.A. This is considered a full time position. He shall work to assist the lead pastor in the overall daily execution of the mission and vision of the Church. He shall perform any other duties as prescribed during the selection process or as approved by the elders. In the absence or incapacity of an associate pastor, the elders shall

- 298 assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated by the elders to existing
299 staff. The associate pastor reports to the lead pastor.
- 300 B. **Qualifications:** An associate pastor shall serve as an elder alongside other elders and meet the
301 qualifications outlined in Article IV Section 1.B.
- 302 C. **Selection:** In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an elder
303 must be followed. The lead pastor shall establish the responsibilities of the associate pastor and
304 the elders shall approve of the role and responsibilities. If a new position is being created that
305 requires budget change approval, then the congregation must affirm the position and budget
306 change at the recommendation of the elders. The elders may establish a team to search for
307 associate pastor candidates to recommend to the elders. The elders shall examine and affirm
308 that the associate pastor candidate gives complete and total affirmation to the authority and
309 sufficiency of the Bible as well as affirming our Statement of Faith, Constitution and Church
310 Covenant. As led by the Holy Spirit and affirmed by a unified vote of the elders according to
311 Article VI Section 3.C the proposed candidate shall be presented to the Church membership for
312 a minimum of a fourteen (14) day review. If there is no just cause brought forward during the
313 review period, the candidate shall then be presented to the Church membership at a Members
314 Meeting for a vote which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife in
315 accordance with Article III Section 5.C.
- 316 D. **Term:** The associate pastor shall not be subject to the triennial affirmation or to any term
317 limitation as set out for elders.
- 318 E. **Removal:** The associate pastor may be removed from staff by voluntary resignation or by a
319 vote in accordance with Article III Section 5.C.

320 **Section 3 - Assistant Pastor(s)**

- 321 A. **Responsibilities:** An assistant pastor shall serve as an elder alongside other elders and perform
322 the duties described in Article IV Section 1.A. This role may be part or full time. He shall
323 work with either the lead or associate pastor in the overall execution of the mission and vision
324 of the Church. He shall perform any other duties as prescribed during the selection process or
325 as approved by the elders. In the absence or incapacity of an assistant pastor, the elders shall
326 assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated by the elders to existing
327 staff. The assistant pastor reports to either the lead pastor or designated associate pastor.
- 328 B. **Qualifications:** An assistant pastor shall serve as an elder alongside other elders and meet the
329 qualifications outlined in Article IV Section 1.B.
- 330 C. **Selection:** In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an elder
331 must be followed. The lead or associate pastor shall establish the responsibilities of the
332 assistant pastor and the elders shall approve of the role and responsibilities. If a new position is
333 being created that requires budget change approval, then the congregation must affirm the
334 position and budget change at the recommendation of the elders. The elders shall examine and
335 affirm that the assistant pastor candidate gives complete and total affirmation to the authority
336 and sufficiency of the Bible as well as affirming our Statement of Faith, Constitution and
337 Church Covenant. As led by the Holy Spirit and affirmed by a unified vote of the elders
338 according to Article VI Section 3.C the proposed candidate shall be presented to the Church
339 membership for a minimum of a fourteen (14) day review. If there is no just cause brought
340 forward during the review period, the candidate shall then be presented to the Church
341 membership at a Members Meeting for a vote which shall include, if necessary, election to
342 membership of his wife in accordance with Article III Section 5.C.

- 343 D. **Term:** The assistant pastor shall not be subject to the triennial affirmation or to any term
344 limitation as set out for elders.
345 E. **Removal:** The assistant pastor may be removed from staff by voluntary resignation or by a
346 vote in accordance with Article III Section 5.C.

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348 Section 3 - Pastoral Assistant(s)

- 349 A. **Responsibilities:** A pastoral assistant shall work with the lead pastor and/or associate pastor(s)
350 in the overall daily execution of the mission and vision of the Church. This position may be
351 part or full time. Responsibilities of the pastoral assistant shall be established by the lead or
352 associate pastor and approved by the elders. In the absence or incapacity of a pastoral assistant,
353 the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated by the elders
354 to existing staff. The pastoral assistant reports to either the lead pastor or designated associate
355 pastor.
356 B. **Qualifications:** This position shall not be considered a pastor, though they may be recognized
357 as elders should they be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation, in accordance
358 with Article IV Section 1. Should the congregation recognize a pastoral assistant as an elder,
359 he will assume the title and responsibilities of assistant pastor as described in Article V, Section
360 3.
361 C. **Selection:** The lead pastor may hire additional staff to assist with pastoral ministry within the
362 approved budget. The lead pastor may delegate the hiring of pastoral assistants to associate
363 pastors at the approval of the elders. If a new position is being created that requires budget
364 change approval, then the congregation must affirm the position and budget change at the
365 recommendation of the elders. The lead pastor shall examine and affirm that the pastoral
366 assistant candidate gives complete and total affirmation to the authority and sufficiency of the
367 Bible as well as affirming our Statement of Faith, Constitution and Church Covenant. As led
368 by the Holy Spirit and affirmed by a unified vote of the elders according to Article VI Section
369 3.C the proposed candidate shall be hired.
370 D. **Term:** Pastoral assistants serve at the will of the elders with no term limit.
371 E. **Removal:** Pastoral assistants may be removed from staff by voluntary resignation or at any
372 time by a unified vote of the elders according to Article VI Section 3.C.

373 Section 4 - Administrative, Support or Other Staff

- 374 A. **Responsibilities:** Roles and responsibilities of all other staff shall be established by the hiring
375 pastor and approved by the elders. These positions may be part or full time. The positions
376 report to their managing pastor.
377 B. **Qualifications:** The qualifications of all other staff shall be established by the hiring pastor
378 and approved by the elders.
379 C. **Selection:** The lead or associate pastor(s) may hire additional staff to assist with overall
380 operations within the approved budget. If a new position is being created that requires budget
381 change approval, then the congregation must affirm the position and budget change at the
382 recommendation of the elders. The hiring pastor shall examine and affirm that the candidate
383 gives complete and total affirmation to the authority and sufficiency of the Bible as well as
384 affirming our Statement of Faith, Constitution and Church Covenant. As led by the Holy Spirit
385 and affirmed by a unified vote of the elders according to Article VI Section 3.C the proposed
386 candidate shall be hired.
387 D. **Term:** Other staff serve at the will of the managing pastor.

388 E. **Removal:** Other staff may be removed at any time at the will of the managing pastor.

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Article VI: Meetings

391 Section 1 – Worship Meetings

392 A. Worship services shall be held each Lord’s Day and may be held throughout the week as the
393 elders determine.

394 Section 2 – Members Meetings

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396 A. **Regular Meetings:** Meetings of members of the Church for conducting business of the Church
397 shall be known as Member Meetings. Such meetings may be called by the elders or members.
398 Member Meetings shall be held no less frequently than bi-monthly at such time and place in
399 Denham Springs, Louisiana, set by the staff pastors. The meeting dates shall be set annually in
400 December for the following fiscal year.

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402 There is no minimum number of attendees required for a quorum for Regular Meetings.

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404 B. **Special Meetings:** Special Members Meeting may be called by the elders or by written
405 petition of at least 10% of the membership requesting a special meeting.

406 Notification (which may include the church website, worship guides, and other electronic
407 means) of a Special Members Meeting shall be given to the Covenant Membership of the
408 Church not less than fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

409 A quorum of at least 50% of the membership must be present to have a Special Meeting.

410 All votes at a Members Meeting whether Regular or Special shall require 80% vote of those
411 present in accordance with any quorum requirements as outlined above.

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413 Section 3 – Elder Meetings

414 A. **Regular Meetings:** Elder meetings shall be scheduled to be held at the Church offices, or at
415 other locations as the elders may select, at least on a monthly basis with at least 4 days prior
416 notice, and may be held in person, by telephone, or other electronic means so persons
417 participating in the meeting can hear or understand one another.

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419 B. **Special Meetings:** Special meeting of the elders may be called by any two elder members
420 upon 48-hour notice and may be held in person, by telephone, or other electronic means so
421 persons participating in the meeting can hear or understand one another.

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423 When a decision requiring a vote is to be held at a meeting a quorum of at least 80% of the
424 elders must be present to have the vote. Abstentions from a vote are allowed, but they count
425 against the quorum.

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427 C. **Unified Voting:** Unless the action requires a unanimous vote as specified in the constitution,
428 all decisions among the elders shall be made by a vote of at least 80% of the elder members
429 whether present or not. Elders are encouraged to voice their dissent on a matter and even vote
430 accordingly if not persuaded during discussion and prayer, but should agree to trust the Spirit’s
431 work through the majority of the shepherds and joyfully submit and unify on every decision.
432 Any required or permitted actions by the elders may be taken without a meeting, if at least 80%
433 of the elder members, individually, or collectively consent in writing to the action, including
434 writing by electronic means. Such action by written consent or consents shall be filed with the
435 minutes of the proceedings of the elder meetings.

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437 In the event that there are less than 5 elders serving the church, a single dissenting vote is
438 allowed, so long as there is still a majority and the elders can unify on the decision.
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442 **Article VII: Process for Changing Legal Documentation**

443 Amendments to the Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, or Constitution must be approved by a vote
444 of the members at a members meeting or special members meeting called for that purpose. The
445 proposed amendments or a summary of such amendments shall be provided to the Church Covenant
446 Membership at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. The elders must prayerfully consider all
447 input from the covenant membership. This process does not pertain to the renewal or change of
448 officers with the Louisiana Secretary of State.

449 **Article VIII: Church Finances**

450 The fiscal year of the corporation shall be the calendar year, January 1 – December 31.

451 The financial planning of the Church shall be carried out through the medium of annual budgets for
452 carrying out the various programs of its work. Annual budgets shall be affirmed and adopted by the
453 Church upon the recommendation of the elders, or, if authorized by the elders, the deacons or other
454 committee.

455 Matters involving staff compensation shall be the responsibility of the lay members of the elders. The
456 elders may delegate this responsibility to non-staff deacons or members.

457

458 **Article IX: Alternative Dispute Resolution**

459 The Church believes that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to
460 resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Church (see Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians
461 6:1-8). Therefore, the Church strongly encourages any claim or dispute by or against the Elders,
462 Deacons, staff, employees, agents of the Church, volunteers, Church members or their families, or
463 vendors of the Church be resolved by biblically-based reconciliation and, if necessary, arbitration in
464 accordance with a Christian based dispute resolution program adopted by the elders. This process is
465 not a substitute for any Church discipline or restoration process and shall in no way affect the authority
466 of the Church to investigate reports of misconduct, conduct hearings, or administer discipline of
467 covenant members.

468 **Article X: Indemnification**

469 For purposes of this Article X, the term “Indemnified Person” shall include the Elders, Deacons,
470 Officers and employees of the Church, and any reference herein to Elders, Deacons, Officers and
471 employees shall include former Elders, Deacons, Officers and employees and their respective heirs,
472 executors, and administrators. The Church shall indemnify an Indemnified Person who is or was a
473 party to any proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she is or was such an Indemnified Person or is
474 or was serving at the request of the Church as an Elder, Deacon, Officer or employee of the Church
475 against all liabilities and expenses incurred in the proceeding except such liabilities and expenses as
476 are incurred because of His/her willful misconduct or knowing violation of the criminal law. Unless a
477 determination has been made that indemnification is not permissible, the Church may make advances
478 and reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred by an Indemnified Person in a proceeding upon
479 receipt of an undertaking from him or her to repay the same if it is ultimately determined that he is not
480 entitled to indemnification. Such undertaking shall be an unlimited, unsecured general obligation of
481 the Indemnified Person and shall be accepted without reference to such person’s ability to make
482 repayment. The elders may authorize the Church to make any other indemnification as it deems
483 necessary or appropriate.

484 **Article XI. Dissolution and Mergers**

485 “Dissolution” means the complete disbanding of the Church so that it no longer functions as a
486 congregation or as a corporate entity. Upon the dissolution of the Church, its property shall be applied
487 and distributed as follows: (1) all liabilities and obligations of the Church shall be paid and discharged,
488 or adequate provision shall be made therefore; (2) assets held by the Church upon condition requiring
489 return, transfer, or conveyance, which condition occurs by reason of the dissolution, shall be returned,
490 transferred, or conveyed in accordance with such requirements; (3) assets received and not held upon a
491 condition requiring return, transfer, or conveyance by reason of the dissolution, shall be transferred or
492 conveyed to one or more domestic or foreign corporations, societies, or organizations that qualify as
493 exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the
494 corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), and are engaged in
495 activities substantially similar to those of the Church; this distribution shall be done pursuant to a plan
496 adopted by the elders by a vote of 80%; and (4) any assets not otherwise disposed of shall be disposed
497 of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the parish in which the principal office of the Church is then
498 located, for such purposes and to such organizations as said court shall determine, provided such
499 organizations are in agreement with the Church’s Statement of Faith and basic form of government. In
500 the event of a merger of the Church with another church, the net assets of the Church shall be
501 contributed to the surviving entity.