

The Constitution of

Grace Community Church

Greensboro, North Carolina

Approved 04/29/07

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the Church shall be "Grace Community Church", also known as "Grace Community Church, Inc.", a nonprofit corporation under the laws of North Carolina.

ARTICLE II: MISSION

The mission of the part of the body of Christ called Grace Community Church is. . .

To build the Kingdom of God by calling a diverse and unified community of believers to authentic love relationships with God and each other, and by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus and reflecting His character through relationships with the poor and the lost everywhere.

ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF FAITH

A. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES:

We believe the Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, to be the verbally inspired Word of God, written by men in God's control, without error and infallible in the original manuscripts, and the final authority in faith and life. (II Tim. 3:15-17; II Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 19:7-9)

B. THE TRINITY:

We believe in one God, eternally being in three persons--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--these three being identical in essence, and possessing the same attributes and perfections. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14)

C. THE CONDITION OF MAN:

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God in innocence and without sin, but that in Adam's sin humanity fell, inherited a sinful nature, became spiritually dead and alienated from God. Man of himself is incapable of remedying his lost and depraved condition. (Gen. 1:26; 2:1-24; Rom. 3:10-18; 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3)

D. THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST:

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of a virgin, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. This redemption He accomplished by voluntarily giving Himself as a sinless substitutionary sacrifice on the cross, thereby satisfying God's righteous judgments against sin. His bodily resurrection from the grave confirmed our redemption. He then ascended to the right hand of His Father where He intercedes on behalf of those who trust Him. (John 1:1, 2, 14, 18; Luke 1:34-35; Rom. 3:24-26; 8:34; Luke 24:12; II Cor. 5:14, 21; I Cor. 15:12-19; Rom. 8:34)

E. THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the divine Person through whom the world is convicted of sin, through whom new life is brought to those who are spiritually dead and in whom believers are baptized and thus placed into the one true Church, which is the body of Christ. The scriptures affirm that He is with us forever, that He seals us unto the day of redemption, that He bestows spiritual gifts upon us, and that He empowers us for service. (John 16:7-11; 3:5-8; I Cor. 12:7-11, 12, 13; John 14:16-17; Eph. 4:13, 30; Acts 1:8)

F. SALVATION:

We believe that salvation from the penalty of sin (justification), the power of sin (sanctification), and ultimately the presence of sin (glorification) is the gift of God's grace. It cannot be gained by meritorious works, but is freely bestowed upon all who put their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ at Calvary. All who so trust the Savior are forgiven of their past, present, and future sins and are born into the family of God by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. It is their privilege to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation. However, this assurance must not be the occasion for sin, for God in Holiness will not tolerate persistent sin in His children, and in infinite love He disciplines them. True faith in Christ is expressed by a fruitful, God-pleasing life. (Eph. 2:8-9; 1:7; John 1:12; I John 5:12, 13; Heb. 12:3-13; James 2:14-26)

G. THE CHURCH:

We believe that the true Church, called in Scripture the Body of Christ, is a spiritual organism into which every person who has trusted Jesus Christ for salvation has been baptized with the Holy Spirit. The Scripture also teaches the establishment and continuance of local churches, groups of redeemed individuals committed together for worship, instruction, fellowship and service. (Eph. 1:22-23; I Cor. 12:13; Acts 2:42)

H. THE ORDINANCES:

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted two ordinances to be observed by all believers until His return, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Their observance by all believers is urged. (Mat. 28:19; I Cor. 11:23-26)

I. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST:

We believe in the personal, imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church. (I Thess. 4:13-18; Mat. 24)

J. THE ETERNAL STATE:

We believe that at death the souls of those who have trusted Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming for the Church, to be with Him forever in glory. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgement when soul and body will be reunited, not to be annihilated, but to be separated from God forever in conscious punishment. (Luke 16:19-26; II Cor. 5:8; Mat. 25:46; I Cor. 15:35-44)

ARTICLE IV: GOVERNMENT

The government of the church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, shall be vested in its covenantors and the Board of Elders, whose authority is derived from and limited by the Scriptures, as summarized and described in the Articles of this Constitution. This Constitution is the By-Laws of Grace Community Church for the purposes of North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 55A.

ARTICLE V: COVENANTING

Covenanting in a local church is a confession before God and men of a living commitment to that group of believers - a commitment of responsibility for and to the other covenantors in the church. It should be entered into with solemnity and with joy.

A. QUALIFICATIONS FOR COVENANTORS:

any person who desires to unite with this Church shall meet with at least two Elders after receiving a copy of the Constitution of the Church. They are also required to attend the classes of instruction offered by the Church for new covenantors. Covenanting shall be open to all who shall give satisfactory testimony of their personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, acknowledge their full submission to the Statement of Faith, and express their intention to abide by the Covenant of Fellowship and the Constitution of the Church, by communicating their commitment to the Elders. All those who commit to this fellowship who have not yet been baptized will be asked to do so. The suggested minimum age for covenantors is twelve (12).

B. RECOGNIZING COVENANTORS:

Upon the recommendation by the Board of Elders, the congregation shall recognize an applicant as a covenantor at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Church. It shall be the responsibility of the Clerk to maintain a current roll of covenantors and review it with the Board of Elders at least every October.

C. TERMINATION OF THE COVENANT AGREEMENT:

Termination of a covenant agreement may be made in any of the following ways:

1. Death - The names of deceased covenantors shall be removed from roll.
2. Transfer - Covenantors in good standing shall be granted, upon request, a letter of transfer to another church of their choice.
3. Resignation - Upon receiving a covenantor's notice of resignation, the Board of Elders shall accept the resignation and the former covenantor's name shall be removed from the roll of covenantors.
4. Removal
 - a. Absence or Lack of Commitment - Any covenantor who consistently absents himself from the gatherings of the Church or who otherwise demonstrates a lack of genuine commitment to the provisions of the Covenant of Fellowship shall be contacted by the Board of Elders and requested to renew his commitment to the Church. Any covenantor who fails to respond to the efforts of the Board of Elders to renew his covenant agreement or who fails to respond to correspondence directed to him at his last known address, shall be removed from the roll of covenantors.
 - b. Discipline - To maintain the peace and purity of the Church, the Scripture permits the removal of any person from the roll of covenantors for disciplinary reasons (Rom. 16:17; I Cor. 5:1-13; II Thess. 3:6; II Tim. 2:16-21). After the Board of Elders has, without avail, made reasonable attempts at restoration (Matt. 18:15-16; Gal. 6:1), the Board of Elders shall, after careful and prayerful consideration, remove the person from the roll of covenantors or select and implement an appropriate lesser form of discipline. Persons who have been removed to maintain the peace and purity of the Church, but who demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Elders a genuine attitude of repentance, may be restored to fellowship in accord with the regulations which govern the reception of covenantors.

ARTICLE VI: ORDINANCES

A. BAPTISM:

Baptism was commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19) and practiced by the apostles in the New Testament. It is an outward and visible sign of the grace of God. We understand baptism to be a multi-faceted symbol of His grace.

1. It is a symbol of our union with Christ in His death and resurrection. It is a funeral marking our union with Him in death to sin and a celebration marking our union with Him in resurrection to new life. (Rom. 6:3, 4)
2. It is a public identification with the covenant family of God, marking us as members of the body of Christ and initiating us into the fellowship of Christ's Holy Church. (I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Gen. 17:1-4)
3. It is a symbol of the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 22:16)
4. It is a symbol of receiving the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)

The church shall accept as valid any regular form of water baptism if it is in agreement with the considered convictions of the individual believer, but the Church shall encourage believer's baptism. Infant baptism will be considered after the believing parents of the child meet with the Board of Elders.

B. THE LORD'S SUPPER:

The Lord's Supper shall be administered regularly, the elements being used as emblems of His body and blood. We understand communion to be a commemoration of His death, a thanksgiving celebration, a symbol of hope that looks forward to His coming again, a reminder of His mercy and grace, and a time of communion with Him in which we offer our lives to Him, just as He offered His life to us. The Lord's Supper is intended for all believers and only for believers.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS

The Officers of the Church shall be divided into four categories and shall consist of active covenantors: (A) Board of Elders; (B) Pastoral Staff; (C) Deacons; and (D) Staff Deacons.

A. ELDERS:

1. Qualifications - A man who is twenty-five years of age or older, who, after much prayer and careful consideration believes himself called by the Holy Spirit to the office of Elder, and is recognized by the Board of Elders as qualified under the stipulations of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 may be a candidate for the Office of Elder.

2. Selection

- a. Nomination - At least six weeks before the spring congregational meeting, the name of each Elder whose term will expire at the spring congregational meeting and will not be a candidate for an additional term, the name of each Elder whose term will expire at the spring congregational meeting and will be a candidate for an additional term, the names of the Elders whose terms are not expiring, and the number of additional Elders that the Board of Elders determines is needed shall be published by announcement from the pulpit by the Chairman of the Board of Elders or published in written form. The scriptural passages dealing with the qualifications for an Elder shall likewise be published and explained. Nominations may be submitted to the Board of Elders by any voting covenantor of the church. The Board of Elders may require nominees to submit written applications.
- b. Confirmation by the Board of Elders – The existing Board of Elders shall prayerfully select from among the nominees an appropriate number of candidates who possess the qualifications of an Elder, desire to serve, and possess the gifts that best fit the needs of the church.
- c. Confirmation by the Congregation - The Board of Elders shall publish the names of the candidates to the congregation at least three weeks before the spring congregational meeting. The announcement shall include substantial and relevant information about each candidate. From that time until one week before the spring congregational meeting, objections to and questions about the candidates may be put to the Board of Elders privately. Those who dissent must do so on the ground that the candidate is lacking in one or more of the qualifications Scripturally required for the office. Upon hearing objections or questions the elders may decide the candidate no longer satisfies biblical qualifications, and thus may have him removed from further consideration. However, the elders may conclude that the candidate is qualified to remain in the process. If the covenantor feels led to continue to oppose the candidacy, he may submit to the Elders a written statement expressing his concerns. If approved by the Elders, the statement will be read aloud by the Chairman of the Board of Elders or his designee at the spring congregational meeting. At the congregational meeting, in the absence of the candidates and their families, the Chairman of the Board of Elders shall allow covenantors to testify on behalf of the candidates. Secret confirmation ballots shall be cast by the covenantors present, and these shall be taken into consideration by the elders before affirming a candidate. An eighty percent (80%) majority shall be required to confirm each candidate.
- d. Appointment - Should a vacancy occur during the church year, the Board of Elders may appoint an Elder to serve until the next spring congregational meeting.

3. Term of Office - The Elders shall be elected for terms of two years unless otherwise specified at the time of election. Having received the consent and support of the other members of the Board, an Elder may leave his office before his term has expired. Their terms shall be arranged on a rotating basis so that, as nearly as possible, the terms of one-half (½) shall expire each year. An Elder who has served for three consecutive two year terms will not serve another term on the Board of Elders until one year has passed.
4. Organization/Meetings/& Quorum - At the last meeting of the Board of Elders before the spring congregational meeting, and whenever vacancies require it, the Board of Elders shall elect from their number a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Church Clerk. The Board of Elders may appoint such teams as are necessary for the effectual oversight of the activities of the Church. The regular meetings of the Board of Elders shall be held at least monthly at such time and place as the Board may determine. Special meetings may be called at the request of the Chairman of the Board to all members of the Board, or called by a majority of the Elders. Notice of a special meeting of the Board shall be given at least one day prior to the meeting. A majority of all the Board members shall constitute a quorum of the Board, and acts as the entire Board, unless otherwise specifically required by law or by this Constitution. All decisions of the Board of Elders require a 3/4 majority vote unless otherwise specified in this Constitution. No absentee or proxy votes will be permitted.
5. Duties - The Elders are servants called to obey God in leading and exercising final authority over the Church concerning her spiritual direction, teaching, care, and protection. It shall be the duty of the Board of Elders to care for the Church in its spiritual condition, to guard the purity of doctrine and life of the Church, to discipline the Church in accordance with the Word of God, to examine all who seek to be covenantors in the Church, to act for the Church in the acceptance and dismissal of covenantors, to maintain an active covenantor roll, to provide for the counsel of the erring, to provide for the care of the needy, to provide for comfort of the sick and afflicted, to share in the responsibility of supplying the pulpit, to oversee the regular services of the Church, to be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper and baptism, to appoint other such officers and teams as may be necessary, and to inform the congregation of all major decisions made in their meetings. The Board of Elders shall comprise the ruling body of the Church and shall have the power and authority to act on behalf of the Church, and wherever required by law, shall be the directors of the nonprofit corporation, Grace Community Church, Inc. as specified in North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 55A, except as limited below. The Board of Elders, in the person of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Church Clerk, shall represent the Church in all matters pertaining to the civil law as directed by the Church. Wherever required by law, the Chairman shall have the powers of a President, the Vice Chairman shall have the powers of a vice president and the Clerk shall have the powers of a Secretary, as officers of Grace Community Church, Inc., as set forth in North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 55A.

a. Church Clerk - The Clerk shall record or have recorded the minutes of all congregational meetings as well as meetings of the Board of Elders and make a summary of such minutes available to the congregation. The Clerk shall provide for the safekeeping of all papers and documents of the Church except those committed to a Board of Deacons, delivering the same with all records kept by the Clerk to his successor.

6. Limitations - The Board of Elders shall not assume any of the following prerogatives without expressed congregational consent:

- a. To amend this Constitution;
- b. To call any members of the Pastoral Staff;
- c. To purchase, sell, or mortgage real property;
- d. To make any unbudgeted expenditure(s) totaling more than 5% of the operating budget per year;
- e. To incur debt, except to meet promptly such fixed current expenditures as may be necessary to secure continuity in the work of the Church;
- f. To adopt an annual budget; or
- g. To infringe upon any other right reserved to the congregation by law or by the articles of this Constitution.

7. Terminations - An individual's term as an Elder shall be terminated when one of the following occurs:

- a. Death;
- b. Early leave of office with support and consent of the Board of Elders;
- c. Resignation;
- d. Refusal to fulfill the responsibilities designated in this Constitution and so declared by vote of the Board of Elders at a duly called meeting of the Board of Elders;
- e. Absence from three consecutive business meetings of the Board for reasons declared inadequate by vote of the Board of Elders at a duly called meeting of the Board of Elders; or
- f. Declaration by a vote of the Board of Elders at a duly called meeting that an Elder has done any of the following: (1) shown himself by person or attitude to be disturbing the purity, peace, or unity of the Church; (2) admitted to changing his views regarding the Statement of Faith; or (3) failed to live in harmony with the standards expressed in the Covenant of Fellowship and the Constitution of the Church.

B. PASTORAL STAFF:

1. Selection - Upon recommendation of the Board of Elders, the congregation may call such paid pastoral staff as shall be considered necessary for the most effective ministry of the Church. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to choose a candidate to recommend to the congregation for the pastorate. The candidate of their choice shall be a man qualified as an Elder, of satisfactory Biblical training, high moral reputation and evident spiritual discernment and gifts who is or will become independent of any denominational authority and who will subscribe without reservation to the Statement of Faith, Covenant of Fellowship, and Constitution of the Church. After a consensus by the Board of Elders and a recommendation to the Congregation by them, a member of the pastoral staff shall be elected by an eighty percent (80%) majority of votes cast on a secret ballot at a congregational meeting duly called and constituted for the express purpose of considering such a recommendation. Only one candidate shall be considered at any one meeting.
2. Termination - A member of the pastoral staff may at any time dissolve the pastoral relationship effective one month (or other period accepted by the Board of Elders) after giving notice to the Elder Board. The Board of Elders may terminate a member of the pastoral staff, following the principles, as applicable, outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, I Timothy 5:17-21, and other Scriptures. These principles will be followed whether or not the termination proceedings were initiated due to pastoral staff moral failure.
3. Duties and Privileges - The Teaching Pastor will be a permanent member of the Board of Elders. Annually, other pastoral staff may serve on the Board of Elders at the discretion of the Board of Elders. The counsel and advice of the pastoral staff shall be considered by the officers of the Church and in all the ministries of the Church and the position of pastoral leadership shall be held in honor and respect by all the covenantors. With the Board of Elders, they shall oversee the spiritual welfare of the congregation and exercise watchful care for the needs of the congregation. Their individual responsibilities shall be stipulated in writing in conjunction with the Board of Elders, according to the manifest needs of the Body and the gifts and ministries entrusted by God to each one. Such individual ministry descriptions shall be subject to at least annual review, to consider change in response to the changing needs of the fellowship.

C. DEACONS:

1. Qualifications - A man or woman who is twenty-one years of age or older, who, after much prayer and careful consideration believes himself or herself called by the Holy Spirit to the office of Deacon and who is recognized by the Board of Elders as qualified under the stipulations of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 may be a candidate for the office of Deacon.

2. Term of Office - Deacons shall be elected for terms of two years unless otherwise specified at the time of election, except the Church Treasurer who will be appointed by the Board of Elders.
3. Selection - The number of Deacons shall be determined by the Board of Elders based on the needs of the body. The procedure for nominating and electing the Deacons and for filling unexpired terms shall be the same as that for the Elders, except that the Board of Elders shall announce not only the number of Deacons needed, but shall also specify the specific Deacon positions which need to be filled. A nomination must specify not only a nominee's name, but also the Deacon position (Deacon Board member or Ministry Team Chairman) to which the candidate is nominated. The Board of Elders' announcements and covenants' voting shall likewise be position-specific.
4. Organization - Each Deacon shall be elected or appointed to serve in one of the following positions: (1) member of the Finance Board; (2) member of the Church Property Board; (3) Chairman of a Ministry Team whose members are covenants; or (4) Treasurer.
 - a. Deacon Boards. The Finance Board and Church Property Board are Deacon Boards whose members are all Deacons and which report directly to the Board of Elders. At the last meeting of each Deacon Board before the spring congregational meeting, and whenever vacancies require it, each Board shall elect from their number a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman. The regular meetings of the Boards shall be held at least monthly at such time and place as each Board may determine. Special meetings may be called at the request of the Board of Elders, the Chairman of a Deacon Board, or a majority of the Deacons on a Deacon Board. Notice of a special meeting of a Deacon Board shall be given at least one day prior to the meeting. A majority of a Deacon Board's members shall constitute quorum and the acts of the majority of the Board present and voting shall be the acts of the entire Board unless otherwise specifically required by law or by the Constitution. Each Deacon Board shall annually draft its ministry description for review and approval by the Board of Elders.
 - b. Church Treasurer. The Church Treasurer shall be a member of the Finance Board.
 - c. Ministry Team Chairman. The Deacons who lead Ministry Teams shall report to the Board of Elders, a member of the pastoral staff, another Deacon, or a Staff Deacon, as designated by the Board of Elders. Deacon-led Ministry Teams, such as the Missions Team, Mercy Team, Benevolence Team, Outreach Team, and Worship Team shall be created by the Board of Elders based on the needs of the Church. The responsibilities of the Ministry Teams shall be stipulated in writing and reviewed at least annually by the Board of Elders and the Ministry Teams.

5. Duties - The Deacons shall be responsible for the physical oversight of the Church and shall assist the Elders in the administration of the Church. All major actions of the Deacon Boards shall be subject to approval by the Board of Elders and shall be presented to the Board of Elders at its monthly meeting by the Chairman of each Deacon Board or his appointee.

Deacons shall hold themselves in readiness to assist the Board of Elders in guiding the spiritual life of the Church and in performing any other necessary duties.

a. Finance Board. It shall be the duty of the Finance Board to oversee and manage all matters pertaining to the finances of the Church subject to the authority of the Elders. The Finance Board shall meet promptly all obligations incurred by the Church. The Finance Board shall present for adoption at the fall congregational meeting a budget of prospective operating expenses for the coming year, including proposed salaries for personnel of the Church as described in Article VIII.

b. Church Treasurer - The Treasurer can pay all bills for which such payment has been duly authorized, and shall keep a full account of all monies received and paid out, and submit written monthly, quarterly, and annual reports of the financial condition of the Church to the Finance Board and the Board of Elders. The Treasurer shall make the books available for audit at any time upon request by the Finance Board or the Board of Elders. The Treasurer may designate and supervise others to receive and disburse funds. The designees are subject to approval by the Board of Elders.

The Treasurer will arrange for a review of the church finances by an accounting firm that is independent of the church, every two years. The accounting firm is to be approved by the Finance Board. The review report is to be presented to both the Finance Board and the Board of Elders as well as made available to the congregation.

6. Termination - An individual's term as Deacon shall be terminated in the same manner as an individual's term as Elder is terminated.

D. STAFF DEACONS.

1. Qualifications - Meets the qualifications for deacon and demonstrates gifts sufficient to execute with excellence the duties of the specific staff deacon position for which he or she is a candidate and is independent of any denominational authority.

2. Selection - Upon recommendation of the Board of Elders, the congregation may call such paid staff deacons for specific positions as shall be considered necessary for the most effective ministry of the Church. The procedures for confirmation by the covenantors shall be the same as that for deacons.

3. Duties - Staff deacons shall report to the Board of Elders, a member of the pastoral staff, a deacon, or another staff deacon. Staff deacons shall be responsible for portions or aspects of ministries as specified when they are hired. The responsibilities of a staff deacon shall be stipulated in writing and reviewed at least annually by the Board of Elders. Changes in responsibilities that fundamentally change the position for which a staff deacon was originally hired must be recommended by the Board of Elders and approved by an eighty percent (80%) majority at a properly called covenantors meeting.
4. Termination - A staff deacon may at any time resign effective one month (or other period accepted by the Board of Elders) after giving notice to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders may, after prayerful consideration and a determination that such action is in the best interests of the Church, terminate a staff deacon's deaconship and employment.

ARTICLE VIII: CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

A. REGULAR CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

1. Spring Congregational Meeting - The spring congregational meeting shall be held after January 1 and before April 30. Election of officers shall be included in the agenda of the spring meeting.
2. Fall Congregational Meeting - The Church fiscal year shall begin September 1 and end August 31 and the fall congregational meeting shall be held after conclusion of same. The proposed annual budget shall be posted in a conspicuous place on two consecutive Sundays prior to the fall congregational meeting.

B. SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Special congregational meetings may be called at any time at the request of the Board of Elders or at the written request, addressed to the Board of Elders, of not less than twenty percent (20%) of the covenantors of the Church. Announcements of any special business meeting shall be given from the pulpit or in the bulletin on two (2) consecutive Sundays, and notice of the time, place, and purpose of said meeting shall be announced in like manner. No business shall be transacted at such meetings except that stated in the announcement.

C. QUORUM & CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

1. A quorum for the transaction of business at all congregational meetings shall consist of those present. The majority vote of those covenantors present and voting shall prevail unless the vote of a greater number is required by law or by the Constitution.
2. In all special congregational meetings, the Chairman of the Board of Elders, or, in his absence, someone to be appointed by the Board of Elders, shall preside.

3. In the transaction of business, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall be used in all cases not covered by this Constitution.

D. VOTING

The Chairman of the meeting shall determine the method of voting, except in such cases where a secret ballot is specified in the Constitution. Eligibility for voting at congregational meetings shall be limited to covenantors. Absentee votes will be permitted. Absentee ballots will be provided two (2) weeks prior to a congregational business meeting. No proxy votes shall be permitted.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a three-quarter (3/4) majority of those covenantors present and voting by secret ballot at a duly called congregational meeting, provided the proposed amendment has been approved by the Board of Elders, or has been submitted by a petition signed by not less than twenty percent (20%) of the voting covenantors, and provided the proposed amendment has been conspicuously posted in written form for two consecutive Sundays.

ARTICLE X: COVENANT OF FELLOWSHIP

It is our joyful privilege to enter into this solemn covenant with God and with this local fellowship of believers. By God's enabling grace, we bind ourselves in covenant to these common purposes.

- A. To receive Christ as Savior and submit to Him as Lord endeavoring to reflect God in every way, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and pursuing together a manner of life consistent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God;
- B. To emphasize the importance of God's Word and prayer in our personal lives, in our families, and in our fellowship together;
- C. To attend as diligently as possible to the public worship of God with this Church, recognizing the value and importance of fellowship with other believers;
- D. To share in the financial support of this Church and its varied ministries by cheerfully, systematically, and proportionately contributing of our means as God supplies and directs;
- E. To pray regularly for the needs of the Church;
- F. To serve the Lord willingly through this Church with the abilities and time He provides, each being involved in a specific ministry to the needs of others, working together in Christian love and graciousness, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

- G. To commit ourselves to be responsible for the lives of the other covenantors of this Fellowship, in helping to bring them to maturity in Christ, encouraging them in truth and love;
- H. To be accountable to and to submit ourselves to the discipline and exhortation of this Church;
- I. To be ambassadors for Christ, and in love proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all mankind, being concerned for individuals' needs, both physical and spiritual;
- J. To accept the responsibilities of government in the Church as provided in the Constitution, giving prayerful consideration to the Spirit's leading in decisions of the Church, and attending as diligently as possible to decision-making meetings of the Fellowship;
- K. To seriously seek the wisdom and counsel of other covenantors of the Body before concluding any decision to dissolve this pledge and covenant.

COVENANT STATEMENT

I hereby acknowledge my submission to the Statement of Faith of Grace Community Church and I express my intention to abide by the Covenant of Fellowship and the Constitution of the Church. If at any time I find myself out of harmony with these stated beliefs, policies, or practices, and the differences cannot be resolved, the Board of Elders may drop my name from the roll of Church Covenantors.

Name_____ Print Name_____

Date_____