

# *Bylaws of Grace Bible Church*

## **PREAMBLE**

Recognizing that God has called His people to meet, worship, and serve together in structured groups which Scripture refers to as churches, and that it is God's desire that all things in the church be done decently and in order (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:40), the elders of Grace Bible Church have set forth the following Bylaws as a basis of that structure and order.

## **ARTICLE I NAME**

This organization shall be known as Grace Bible Church, Inc. of Tulsa, Oklahoma (hereafter referred to as the "Church").

## **ARTICLE II PURPOSE AND COVENANT**

The purpose and covenant of Grace Bible Church are as follows: We, the Members of Grace Bible Church, do affectionately welcome all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ into fellowship with us in the blessings of the Gospel. Being rooted and grounded in love, we covenant together to stand firm in one spirit and one mind, by God's grace, striving together for the faith of the gospel. With all humility, gentleness, and patience, we will show forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We commit to each other to grow in personal and collective holiness, dedicating ourselves to the personal and collective accountability of discipleship. We have read the Bylaws of Grace Bible Church and understand and agree that our church government is vested in the elders. Because we believe that the Scriptures stand as the sole, final authority in the church, we understand that the Bylaws serve only as a general guide of ministry to be determined by the elders. We submit to the loving oversight and discipline of the members and officers of Grace Bible Church. We will give cheerfully

This page intentionally left blank

to this church as God has prospered us. We dedicate our families to live for the Lord, and we purpose to advance the kingdom of God through the investment of our time, talents, resources, and reputation.

## **ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section A. Definition of Membership**

The New Testament teaches that all true Christians are members of one another (Ephesians 4:25) and members of the body of Christ (Ephesians 3:6, 5:30; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27). Thus, all baptized disciples who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who manifest a walk consistent with their confession, and who meet regularly in an assembly of believers for worship and instruction are members of the body of Christ.

In the providence of God, we may expect that Christ will add to the membership of Grace Bible Church either by a person's conversion or by the movement of a believer from another church. A person who desires membership in Grace Bible Church will be interviewed by the elders to determine the genuineness of the person's conversion and his or her willingness to accept the responsibilities of membership. Upon the elders' determination that the person meets the New Testament qualifications for membership, a public testimony will be required of their faith in Christ and their commitment to the responsibilities of membership. This public testimony may be presented personally or read to the congregation by another individual.

### **Section B. Responsibilities of Membership**

Believing that the Lord Jesus Christ purchased men from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation for God with His own blood, we recognize that His church is the community of all true believers for all time. As such, our first and primary responsibility is to proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. To that end, His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness by the authority and sufficiency of the Scriptures and the help of the Holy Spirit.

This page intentionally left blank

This page intentionally left blank

Members are required to be baptized, obliged to be habitual in personal reading of and meditation on the Scriptures, to be consistent in prayer, and to render in their daily lives a loyal obedience to the commandments of the Word of God so as to bear witness to their faith in Christ by consistent Christian conduct and verbal testimony. Members are obliged to follow and love Christ, to make a habit of faithful attendance when the church gathers, to financially support the work with sacrificial giving, and to submit to the elders of Grace Bible Church in the matters in which their rule in the church is biblical and appropriate. Members should know one another so as to love, serve, comfort, exhort, and encourage, as this is our Lord's provision for each one to be built up in the faith. Members should refrain from speaking against one another, but instead strengthen each other by their words and their spiritual gifts.

### **Section C. Voting Privileges of Membership**

Membership shall not vest in any member any ownership rights in the Church, but shall only entitle the member to vote at a meeting of the members on those matters that the elders choose to submit to the church membership for affirmation. In such cases, voting privileges are restricted to members who are in good standing, who are not under any disciplinary action, and who have passed their eighteenth (18) birthday. Membership shall not be assignable by any member nor vested to any personal representative, heir, or devisee.

### **Section D. Discipline of Membership**

Because part of our debt of love is to help one another walk consistently in righteousness and turn away from sin, any member of Grace Bible Church who is found in sin may expect to be reproved and corrected according to the pattern our Lord Jesus Christ outlined in Matthew 18:15-20 (See also Romans 16:17-19; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-16; 1 Timothy 5:17-21; 2 Timothy 2:23-26; Titus 3:10-11; 2 John 9-11). Each and every member is expected to render this duty to the others. First, the sinning member should be confronted privately, in a spirit of gentleness (Galatians 6:1-2). If the member does not turn from that sin, then the confronting member must, in love, take one or two others with him and repeat the confrontation in their presence. These additional witnesses may help to render both good judgment and add their appeal to repentance

(Deuteronomy 19:15-20; 2 Corinthians 13:1-2). If the sinning member still does not turn from sin, then this group of witnesses shall inform the elders so that a date may be scheduled to tell the matter to the church, so that members may in love, exhort, reprove, correct, and pray for the one in sin.

If, after the matter is told to the church, and after having been given sufficient time to repent, the sinning member continues to refuse to obey the commandments of our Lord, the elders will remove that member from the body, publicly announcing the removal to the church. This action will cancel all privileges of membership (fellowship with the church, attendance at meetings, immediate disqualification from holding any office or ministry of service in the church, participation in the Lord's Supper) until such time as the church is satisfied that the person has returned to the Lord with genuine repentance. At that time the person is to be heartily and zealously received back into membership in the spirit of love and forgiveness (2 Corinthians 2:7-8).

### **Section E. Termination of Membership**

Any member in good standing may voluntarily request withdrawal from membership by informing the elders of the reasons for their decision. If those reasons involve specific problems or disappointments with the church, the elders shall attempt to resolve those matters so that the member may remain a part of the church and enjoy greater fruitfulness and personal spiritual growth. Members may also be removed from membership by the decision of the elders for the following reasons: If they persistently neglect the meetings of the church without adequate reason over a period of at least six months, or if they are removed by excommunication as described in section D. If a member requests withdrawal from membership while in the process of church discipline, such a request will not be granted until the disciplinary process described in Section D has been performed.

Because the New Testament instruction for Christians is that we all be members of a local church, the elders will always strongly recommend that any member who resigns will soon commit to another church of like faith. If the member has resigned in good standing, at the member's request, the elders may provide a letter commending them to their new church home.

### **Section C. Notice of Meetings**

Notice of an annual meeting will be given in the church bulletin no less than two successive Sundays preceding the day appointed. Notice and stated purpose of a special meeting shall be given in the church bulletin at least one week prior to the meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS**

Any member of Grace Bible Church may propose amendments to the Bylaws by written request to the elders. The elders shall review all requests and may seek congregational examination and comment. Such amendments must be approved by unanimous agreement among the elders.

## **ARTICLE IX ORDINANCES**

### **Section A. The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper will be administered as frequently as the elders shall order. Participation is open to all who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, regardless of membership at Grace Bible Church.

### **Section B. Baptism**

Baptism may be administered by any elder or any man approved by the elders upon a request made to the elders. The mode of baptism is immersion in water.

## **ARTICLE X ORDINATION**

Ordination refers to the unanimous recognition by an ordination council of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualification to serve. The Ordination Council shall be composed of the elders and other men as they may invite to participate. Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office.

of Grace Bible Church, Inc. as may be required from time to time related to all legal matters affecting the Church as a corporation. The Secretary will have the duty to maintain, or cause to be maintained, the minutes of the meetings of the elders and deacons and meetings of general membership as prescribed by the Bylaws or as otherwise directed by the elders.

### **Section G. Treasurer**

The Treasurer will be chosen by the elders of the Church from either the elders or the deacons of the Church and will serve as the Treasurer of Grace Bible Church, Inc. as may be required from time to time related to all legal matters affecting the Church as a corporation.

The Treasurer will have the duty to keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct accounts of the properties and business transactions of the Church. He will deposit, or cause to be deposited, all funds contributed to the church for any purpose with such depositories as may be directed by the elders. He will disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Church as directed by the elders. He will make, or cause to be made, the financial reports at each regular meeting of the elders and deacons and at the annual meeting of the members.

## **ARTICLE VII MEETINGS**

### **Section A. Annual Meetings**

An annual meeting of the membership will be held in a predetermined month of each year. The purpose of the annual meeting will be for hearing reports, reviewing a recommended budget, and transacting other business as called for by the elders.

### **Section B. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the membership may be called for any reason and at any time by the elders.

## **ARTICLE IV ELDERS**

The government of Grace Bible Church shall be vested in men who have been called to shepherd, oversee, lead, and care for the local church. These men are referred to as elders.

### **Section A. Qualification**

The elders of the church shall be men who meet the qualifications specified in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:2-3.

### **Section B. Selection**

Recommendations to fill the office of elder may be submitted by church members to existing elders at any time. The elders shall review all recommendations and determine each candidate's qualifications. The names of candidates for eldership will be published in the church bulletin for four weeks to allow for congregational examination and comment. After this period, the elders will give final approval or disapproval. A unanimous vote among the elders is required for approval of a man to eldership.

### **Section C. Term of Office**

The term of an elder's office shall be ongoing. If an elder ceases being a member of Grace Bible Church, his term shall automatically expire. Elders will be equally accountable to each other and to the congregation to continuously review each elder's life in view of the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:2-3.

### **Section D. Duties**

It shall be the duty of the elders to govern all the ministries of the church which shall include, but not be limited to: the work of shepherding and overseeing of the souls of the members of the church; the teaching ministry which includes their own teaching and also the selection and oversight of other teachers and teaching materials for adults and children; the direction of worship services and meetings to be God-exalting and honoring; and the provision of leadership in matters of discipline. All these duties are to be done faithfully as servants unto the

Lord, not for their own benefit but as unto the Lord, seeking to build up the body of Christ and to present every member of the church mature and complete in Christ.

## **ARTICLE V DEACONS**

The deacon ministry of the church shall be conducted by a number of men as determined by the elders.

### **Section A. Qualification**

Deacons shall be men who are members of the church and meet the qualifications specified in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

### **Section B. Selection**

Recommendations to fill the office of deacon may be submitted by church members to the elders at any time. The elders shall review all recommendations and determine each candidate's qualifications. The names of candidates for deacon will be published in the church bulletin for four weeks to allow for congregational examination and comment. After this period, the elders will give final approval or disapproval. A unanimous vote among the elders is required for approval of a man to the office of deacon.

### **Section C. Term of Office**

The term of a deacon's office shall be ongoing. If a deacon ceases being a member of Grace Bible Church, his term shall automatically expire. Deacons will be equally accountable to the elders and to the congregation for continuous review of each deacon's life in view of the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

### **Section D. Duties**

While it is the duty of all church members to serve one another in love, deacons are expressly gifted and called by Christ to assist the elders in the shepherding of the saints, to aid in the general care of the church, and to perform other duties as assigned by the elders.

## **ARTICLE VI CORPORATE OFFICERS**

### **Section A. Officers**

The officers of Grace Bible Church, Inc. will be a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

### **Section B. Election of Officers**

The officers of Grace Bible Church, Inc. will be chosen annually by the elders. Each officer shall hold his office until he resigns, or becomes otherwise disqualified to serve, or until his successor is appointed.

### **Section C. Subordinate Officers**

The elders may appoint other officers as may be required for the business of Grace Bible Church, Inc. Such officers will have authority to perform appointed duties for a period as the elders may determine.

### **Section D. Chairman**

The Chairman will be chosen by and from the elders of the Church and will serve as the President of Grace Bible Church, Inc. as may be required from time to time related to all legal matters affecting the Church as a corporation. He will preside at the meetings of the elders and deacons.

### **Section E. Vice-Chairman**

The Vice-Chairman will be chosen by and from the elders of the Church and will serve as the Vice-President of Grace Bible Church, Inc. as may be required from time to time related to all legal matters affecting the Church as a corporation. In the absence or disability of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman will preside at the meetings of the elders and deacons.

### **Section F. Secretary**

The Secretary will be chosen by the elders of the Church from either the elders or the deacons of the Church and will serve as the Secretary