

BYLAWS
of
GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH, INC.

2247 Camino Carlos Rey
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87507

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ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership Eligibility

Any person who has been born again by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose character, conduct and reputation are in accord with his or her confession, has completed the Membership Class, who accepts the Constitution and Bylaws of Grace Community Church (hereafter referred to as the Church), and who is willing to support its ministry, mission and leadership, is eligible for membership.

Section 2. Membership Class

All Membership candidates must attend the Membership Class. The Membership Class clearly explains who and what GCC is. The membership Class should be taught in whole or at least in part by the Senior Pastor. The curriculum shall cover the following questions:

- What is a Christian?
- What are the symbols of salvation (baptism and communion)?
- What is a church?
- What are the purposes of the church?
- What are the benefits of being a member?
- What are the requirements for membership?
- What are the responsibilities of membership?
- What is the vision and the strategy of this church?
- How is the church organized?
- How can I get involved in ministry?
- What do I do now that I am a member?

Section 3. Becoming a Member

Membership of Grace Community Church consists of all persons who have attended the membership class and have signed a Membership Covenant that acknowledges their commitment to Jesus Christ and their commitment to the body of Grace Community Church.

Section 4. Discipline in Membership

In the case of any gross misconduct or clear teaching of heresy by a Church member, the disciplinary procedures of Matthew 18:15-17, II Thessalonians 3:14-15 and I Corinthians 5:11-13 are to be followed. The Board of Elders shall make the final determination of the facts and the application of the Biblical procedures.

Section 5. Withdrawal from Membership

Members who wish to withdraw from the Church shall make a request for withdrawal in writing to the Board of Elders. In addition, members who have not attended the Church for as long as one year shall be notified that they will be removed from the membership list unless they notify the Church that they can and will support the Church by regular participation in its ministry.

Section 6. Associate Membership

Anyone who comes to live in the area of the Church for a designated period of time, such as missionaries on furlough, those maintaining a part-time residence in Santa Fe, students, military personnel, etc., may apply for associate membership. Such membership would include all privileges found in the regular membership. *(For the purpose of determining a quorum, only the associate members physically present at a meeting shall be considered part of the membership count.)* Such persons would also be subject to the procedures of Church membership laid out in SECTIONS 1-4.

Section 7. Property Rights of Membership

- A.** All property belonging to the Church belongs to the Church members as a whole, thereby vesting in them property rights, which are subject to the Church's leadership.
- B.** Property and designated gifts, once given to the Church, are the property of the Church. Loaned property is expected to be returned to the owner.
- C.** Any member who has withdrawn or been dismissed from Church membership loses all property rights vested to Church members.
- D.** The private property of individual Church members shall be exempt from corporate debt.

ARTICLE II CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Section 1. The Church

The Church and its government are autonomous and shall not be under the control of any denomination or federation of churches. The Church considers itself to be part of the body of Christ as a whole and encourages the support of its ministry worldwide. This includes mission organizations, individual believers, cross-denominational efforts to evangelize, feeding & caring for the poor, providing emergency relief and other Christian activities.

Section 2. The Membership

- A.** The membership shall be allowed to affirm (agree to an action, show indication of support or nonsupport) those decisions, which are made by the Board of Elders.
- B.** The membership shall be responsible to vote (*make decisions*) on the following items of Church business before they are carried out:
 - (1) Annual budget(s),
 - (2) Expenditures not budgeted above 5 percent of the annual budget, except for emergency situations,
 - (3) Borrowing,
 - (4) Property disposal above \$5,000 per item,
 - (5) Significant program expansion or use of Church facilities,
 - (6) Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws (Cf. **Article IX of the Constitution**).
 - (7) The calling or dismissal of Pastoral Staff.
 - (8) Other issues which are properly brought before the membership in accord with these by-laws.
- C.** Both affirmation and vote must come from two-thirds (2/3) of all members eighteen years of age and older present at a Business or Special Meeting as defined in Article VI.

Section 3. The Elders

The Elders are entrusted by God with the responsibility of shepherding and overseeing the flock and, thus, constitute the governing body of the Church. All affairs of the Church shall be exercised by or under the leadership of the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE III ELDERS, DEACONS, DEACONESSES, CORPORATE OFFICERS, & STAFF THEIR APPOINTMENT AND DUTIES

Section 1. Pastor/Asst. Pastors

- A. Qualifications:** The Pastor/Teacher is an Elder and, therefore, his qualifications are given in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, I Peter 5:1-4.
- B. Appointment:** A pulpit committee shall be appointed by the elders for the purpose of securing a candidate for the position of pastor and assistant pastor. Prospective candidates shall be sought out and interviewed by the committee and a qualified candidate recommended to the Church.

- 1) The Elder Board and the Finance Committee shall determine the financial and material arrangements regarding a prospective pastor or assistant pastor.
- 2) The Pastor's term in office is indefinite and he shall be called for no specific length of time.
- 3) The Asst. Pastor term is also indefinite, subject to annual review.

C. Duties: Under the direction of the Sr. Pastor, the pastoral staff shall be responsible for the general oversight of the spiritual welfare of the Church.

- 1) The Sr. Pastor is to lead the saints into a life of discipleship by instruction from the Word of God and by the example of faith and good works.
- 2) The Sr. Pastor is the under-shepherd of Christ, is accountable to God and willingly accepts submission and accountability to the Board of Elders.
- 3) The Sr. Pastor shall have open invitation to address and vote in all committees of the Church.
- 4) The Sr. Pastor shall report at the Annual Celebration as to the work and condition of the Church ministry. (Cf. **Article 6, Sec 2**)
- 5) The Sr. Pastor shall arrange for and conduct all public and regular services of the Church.
- 6) The duties of the Asst. Pastor(s) shall be determined by the Sr. Pastor and any delegation of Sr. Pastor duties shall be performed under the direct supervision of the Sr. Pastor.

D. Meeting to Call or Dismiss a Pastor/Asst. Pastor: The call or dismissal of a pastor or assistant pastor shall come before the Church at a specially called business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the pulpit at all services on the two preceding Sundays and a written notice mailed to the membership 10 days prior to such meeting. A quorum of 60% of the qualified membership residing in the greater Santa Fe area and an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership present and voting shall be necessary for the call or dismissal of Pastoral staff. The Church shall meet for the purpose of prayer regarding these decisions at a time prior to the meeting to vote.

E. Procedure of Ordination: The Board of Elders maintain the right to confirm and ordain pastors, missionaries, Christian workers and ministers into their specific ministries. Candidates shall appear before the Elder Board, which will ascertain the competence of each candidate. After determining the candidates standing, the Elder Board shall appoint an Ordination Committee. This committee shall consist of at least two elders, the Pastor and three other mature Christians from the membership. The Ordination Committee shall determine the level of responsibility that each candidate's position requires.

Pastoral Ordination: An Ordination Committee consisting of the elders and other Pastors in the local vicinity of like faith and practice, who have reviewed this constitution and have no major disagreement with it, shall examine and ordain pastors into the Gospel Ministry.

Section 2. Elders

A. Qualifications: An Elder must possess the qualifications of an Elder listed in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and I Peter 5:1-4. In addition, each Elder must (i) be a member of the Church, (ii) have demonstrated servant leadership ability and (iii) have attended the Church for at least one year. Servant leadership is modeled for the Church by the personal example of the Lord. Relevant passages are: Luke 22:24-27, John 13:5-16, Philipians 2:5-7.

B. Nominations and Selection:

- (1) Elders are called by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28), therefore, all men of the congregation who desire to lead the flock and are scripturally qualified are eligible for nomination and review. The Board of Elders shall nominate, review and approve or disapprove men for the office of Elder.
- (2) The approved nominees shall be presented to the Church at least two consecutive Sundays prior to a properly called meeting. During the two-week period, Church members will consider the nominees' qualifications and pray regarding this matter. Any member who has a biblical reason that any approved nominee should not be considered must present his or her reason to the Board of Elders for consideration.

- (3) The Board of Elders will present the approved nominees to the congregation for affirmation at any properly called business meeting. If the approved nominees are affirmed, they shall assume office immediately.
- (4) The Board of Elders shall be responsible to attempt to restore a fellow elder in the event of sin as instructed in Matt. 18 and 1 Tim 5. If the restoration attempts are not successful, the Board of Elders shall remove the unrepentant elder.

C. Term of Office: Each Elder shall serve for three years, offices ending on different years over a three-year period.

D. Duties:

- (1) Together with the Pastoral staff, they shall provide spiritual direction and administrative oversight of the Church.
- (2) Communicate to the body regularly what the Lord has done and is doing through the Church body, as well as the vision and direction for the future. Provide a written report to the Church at the Annual Celebration; updating the Church on what God has done as it relates to the vision and direction of the Church ministry.
- (3) Appoint and remove all non-pastoral paid staff of the Church, define their duties, and fix the terms of their service and their compensation
- (4) Approve any person involved in a teaching ministry in the Church.
- (5) Establish policies and practices for the Church consistent with its purposes.
- (6) Provide pulpit supply in the absence of the Pastor/Teacher and take full charge of all services not conducted by him.
- (7) Assist the Pastor/Teacher in the administration of the ordinances of Baptism and Communion.
- (8) Attend all properly called Elder meetings or provide notice of inability to attend prior to such meeting.
- (9) Maintain minutes of their meetings.
- (10) Faithfully attend Church worship services, participate in Church activities, and provide an example of Christian maturity.
- (11) Settle disputes between members of the Church.
- (12) Oversee functions of Deacon/Deaconess Boards, other officers and committees.
- (13) They shall have the authority to disburse non-budgeted funds of up to 2.5% of the operating budget on an individual basis, not to exceed 5% annually. The Elders will be required to demonstrate the reasons for such expenditures to the congregation in the next business meeting.

Section 3. Deacons

A. Qualifications: Deacons shall be men that meet the qualifications of I Timothy 3:8-13, where they are recognized as a group of spiritually mature men, who function under the authority of the Board of Elders. In addition, they shall be members of the Church and shall have attended the Church for at least one year.

B. Nomination and Appointment: The procedure for nominating and selecting Deacons follows the same procedure as for Elders, outlined in **Article III, Section 2**, of these Bylaws.

C. Term of Office: Each Deacon shall serve for one year.

D. Organization/Operation Procedures: The Deacons shall be accountable to the Board of Elders.

- (1) An appropriate number of Deacons, as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be appointed. They shall elect their own secretary and chairman.
- (2) They shall hold regular meetings, which any Elder or Deacon may call.
- (3) They shall maintain minutes of their meetings.
- (4) A majority of Deacons shall constitute a quorum at Deacons meetings.

E. Duties: Their primary function is to assist the Elders in shepherding the flock. Some of their major responsibilities include:

- (1) Assisting the Pastoral staff and Elders during the communion and baptismal services.
- (2) Assisting in the general visitation ministry of the Church, giving special attention to those who are sick, orphans, widows, and others with special needs (aged, shut-ins, etc.)
- (3) Maintaining contact with all Church members.
- (4) Protecting and managing the Church property.
- (5) Attending all properly called Deacon meetings or providing notice of inability to attend prior to such meeting.
- (6) Faithfully attending Church worship services, participating in Church activities and providing an example of Christian maturity.
- (7) Performing other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders.

Section 4. Deaconesses

A. Qualifications: Deaconesses shall be women that meet the qualifications of I Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:3-5, where they are recognized as a group of spiritually mature women, who function under the authority of the Board of Elders. In addition, they shall be members of the Church and shall have attended the Church for at least one year.

B. Nomination and Appointment: The procedure for nominating and appointing Deaconesses follows the same procedure as for Elders, outlined in **Article III, Section 2**, of these Bylaws.

C. Term of Office: Each Deaconess shall serve for one year.

D. Organization/Operation Procedures:

- (1) An appropriate number of Deaconesses, as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be appointed. They shall elect their own secretary and chairperson.
- (2) They shall meet regularly and at the call of the chairperson, Pastor, Board of Elders, or Board of Deacons.
- (3) They shall maintain minutes of their meetings.
- (4) A majority of Deaconesses shall constitute a quorum.

E. Duties: Their primary function is to assist the Elders in shepherding the flock. Some of their major responsibilities include:

- (1) Assisting in the preparation of the communion elements.
- (2) Assisting the Pastor at baptismal services.
- (3) Assisting the Elders and Deacons in their ministries.
- (4) Assisting the Deacons in general visitation ministry of the Church, spiritual care of the Church, and care of the sick and needy.
- (5) Attending all properly called meetings of the Deaconesses or advising of inability to attend prior to such meeting.
- (6) Faithfully attending Church worship services, participating in Church activities and providing an example of Christian maturity.
- (7) Performing other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders.

Section 5. Corporate Officer

A. To constitute a legal corporation, the State of New Mexico requires three officers: 1) **the President**; 2) **the Clerk of Corporation**; and 3) **the Treasurer**. The Pastor shall always serve as President. In addition, each Elder shall serve as a Vice President. The Board of Elders shall appoint, direct and replace the Clerk of Corporation and the Treasurer.

- (1) **President:** Represents the Church in corporate matters, ensures that the corporate obligations are met, and is authorized to sign documents on behalf of the Church.
- (2) **Vice President:** In the absence of the President, a Vice President, appointed by the Board of Elders, will assume the functions of the President.
- (3) **Clerk:** Responsible for the corporate record keeping activities of the Church.

(4) **Treasurer:**

- a) Responsible for maintaining all financial records of the Church and providing regular reports on the status of the Church finances, including receipt and disbursement of funds, bank reconciliation, monthly statements of financial position for all funds and supplemental statements as required. Reports will be provided monthly to the Board of Elders and annually to the Church at the Annual Celebration
- b) Responsible for the disbursement of all Church funds in accordance with budgeted guidelines, of any special fund(s), and of moneys under the direction of the Board of Elders. Responsible for maintaining appropriate disbursement ledgers.
- c) Has authority to sign checks for Church funds.
 - i. Checks written for \$1,000 or more require a second signature.
 - ii. Has authority to expend funds for non-budgeted items up to \$100 without approval of the Board of Elders.
- d) Obtain and dispose of any loans on behalf of the Church.
- e) Arranges financial protection of Church assets.
- f) Assumes the functions of the President in the absence of the President and the Vice Presidents.

B. The Corporate Officers function as the trustees for the Church and shall be recognized as the legally constituted board to meet State and other regulatory requirements.

Section 6. Non-pastoral Paid Staff

Any non-pastoral paid staff person must be a Christian whose character, conduct and reputation are consistent with his/her profession of faith. All non-pastoral staff positions serve under the direction of the Pastoral staff, which will have full responsibility for supervising and evaluating performance. All non-pastoral staff positions require a detailed job description defining the duties, responsibilities and scope of the position. The terms of employment must be in writing and address all compensation and time-off policies. Remuneration for such positions must be within the approved budget of the Church.

ARTICLE IV COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS

A. Establishment and Dissolution: Committees and organizations shall be established or dissolved for the purposes determined by the Board of Elders and shall be accountable to and report to the Elders. The Elders must approve their policies, procedures and degree of authority. Sponsors of new activities shall submit their plans to the Board of Elders for approval.

B. General:

- (1) Elders shall appoint no less than three to a committee, all of whom will serve a one-year term. Each committee shall elect its own secretary and must keep minutes of all committee meetings, presenting a copy to the Board of Elders.
- (2) The Board of Elders will either appoint or approve the chairperson.
- (3) The chairperson recommends new members for its committee to the Board of Elders for approval.
- (4) Committees are responsible for planning and implementing activities within the scope of their responsibility.

C. Partial listing of possible committees:

- (1) Ushers Committee
- (2) Missions Committee
- (3) Worship Committee
- (4) Music Committee
- (5) Maintenance and Operations Committee
- (6) Christian Education Committee

- (7) Building Committee
- (8) Finance Committee
- (9) Audit Committee

ARTICLE V FINANCIAL

Section 1. Receipt, Investment and Disbursement of Funds

- A.** The Corporation shall receive all moneys, or properties, or both, whether designated or undesignated, transferred to it for the purpose for which the Corporation was formed (as shown in the ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION). However, nothing contained herein shall require the Board of Elders to accept or receive for the Church any money or property of any kind if it shall determine in its discretion that receipt of such money or property is contrary to the expressed purposes of the Corporation as shown by said article. The Board of Elders determines the acceptability of a gift. For designated sums or projects exceeding \$5,000, the Board of Elders shall inform the Church of its acceptance or its refusal and the reason for refusal. Any change of use regarding designated funds should not take place without approval of the donor and the Board of Elders. In the case of a deceased donor, the Board of Elders shall be solely responsible for the disposition of designated funds.
- B.** The Corporation shall hold, manage and disburse any funds or properties received by it from any source, whether designated or undesignated, in a manner that is consistent with the expressed purposes of this Corporation.
- C.** All receipts will be counted within the day received and deposited into the appropriate bank account in a timely manner.

Section 2. Records

The Corporation shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books and financial records of its business and properties. All such books, records and accounts shall be kept at its principal place of business in the State of New Mexico, as fixed by the Board of Elders.

Section 3. Inspection of Books and Records

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

Section 4. Yearly Financial Audit

- A.** Each year a financial audit will be performed by an independent committee of Church members. Results of the audit will be reported to the Church membership within three (3) months after the close of the Church fiscal year.
- B.** Audit committee members will be appointed by the Board of Elders.
- C.** The Church fiscal year is April 1 through March 31.

Section 5. Financial Secretary

- A.** The Church shall elect a person to the position of Financial Secretary at the Annual Celebration Meeting who is a member of the Church, has been recommended by the Treasurer and approved by the Board of Elders. The term will be for one year with no limit on successive terms. Duties will be assigned by the Treasurer such as the collection, totaling, and depositing of all gifts received, paying of bills, disbursement of funds for normal operating expenses, and appropriate record keeping and issuing of receipts.
- B.** This position is supervised by the Treasurer

Section 6. Counters

- A.** The Counter(s) will be recommended by the Financial Secretary and Treasurer and approved by the Board of Elders. The term will be for one year with no limit on the number of successive terms. Duties will include assisting the Financial Secretary as required in collecting, totaling and depositing gifts received.
- B.** This position is supervised by the Financial Secretary.

Section 7. Bonding

All positions involved in handling Church moneys must be bonded in a reasonable manner with the approval of the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

Section 1. General Meetings

- A.** Worship Services, Sunday School Services and other public services shall be conducted at such times as decided by the Board of Elders
- B.** Business meetings, in addition to the Annual Celebration of the Church, shall be held in order to conduct the business of the Church in a timely manner. The Pastor/Teacher shall call such special meetings with the full consent of the Board of Elders, or by petition of a quorum consisting of twenty percent (20%) of the membership, after a review of such issues with the full Board of Elders.
- C.** Notices of all business or special meetings shall be given by announcement at the regular services of the Church two Sundays preceding the meeting and by written notice to members at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

Section 2. Annual Celebration

- A.** The Annual Celebration of the Church shall be held within the first two weeks of March at such a day and time set by the Board of Elders.
- B.** The order of the meeting shall be as follows:
 - (1) Reading of God's Word and prayer.
 - (2) Minutes of the previous meeting to be approved
 - (3) Report from the Pastor/Teacher
 - (4) Reports from various officers
 - (5) Reports from committees on their business
 - (6) Undecided, unfinished or tabled business
 - (7) Election, appointment or affirmation of officers and leadership.
 - (8) New Business - occasioned by the reports from officers and committees.
 - (9) New Business - proposed by members at the meeting and submitted in writing to the Board of Elders at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
 - (10) Affirmation of Corporate Officers for legal purposes.
 - (11) Pastor's closing remarks.

Section 3. Quorums

- A.** Unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws, members of this Church who attend a meeting of the Church shall constitute a quorum.
- B.** Any four (4) of six (6) members of the Board of Elders shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the Board of Elders. In the event of a larger or smaller Board, sixty percent (60%) of the entire Board of Elders shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. Voting

- A.** All Church members eighteen (18) years and over shall have the right to vote in all matters coming before the business meetings.
- B.** All matters, which require a vote, shall be determined by majority vote (one more than one-half of all the votes cast), except when otherwise specified in these Bylaws.

C. Signed absentee ballots shall be permitted from members and associate members currently living in the greater Santa Fe Area.

ARTICLE VII PROPERTY

Section 1. Power to Receive, Hold, Dispose of Property

All property obtained by gift or purchase shall be held in the name of the Church.

Section 2. Division in the Church

In case of a division in the Church, the name and property of the Church shall belong to those who abide by its Constitution and Bylaws. In the event of disagreement as to who is abiding, and independent counsel of like precious faith will be obtained by the majority vote of the Board of Elders. The decision of said counsel will be binding.

Section 3. Dissolution of the Church

In case of dissolution of the Church organization, the Board of Elders shall authorize the Corporate Officers to cause the assets herein to be distributed to another corporation with purposes similar to that identified in Articles II and III of the Church Constitution. (Cf. **Article X of the Constitution**)

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended or altered by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present at a regular or special meeting of the Church, providing notification of the proposed alteration or amendment has been made to the Church membership at least three (3) weeks prior to such meeting.