

Constitution

ARTICLE I: The Name

The name of the church shall be "Grace Bible Church of Barrington, New Jersey".

ARTICLE II: Object

The object of this church is the salvation of souls, the edification of Christians through the teaching of God's Word, the world-wide proclamation of God's saving Grace expressed in the shed blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, the promotion of Godly worship, the defense of "The Faith Once For All Delivered" and cooperation with Christian activity functioning in harmony with God's Holy Word -- the Bible -- until He comes.

ARTICLE III: Doctrine

The following is the official Doctrinal Statement of the Grace Bible Church

1. We believe in the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Old and New Testaments. This inspiration guarantees the infallibility and inerrancy of the text in the original writings. We believe in the miraculous preservation of the text in its transmission to us today. We hold the Bible as authoritative and sufficient for all matters of faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; John 10:35).
2. We believe in one God existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, co-equal and eternal (Matt. 3:16-17, 28:18-19; John 1:1; Acts 5:3-4; Heb. 1:1-3,8; Rev. 1:4-5).
3. We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death but also that spiritual death which is separation from God; that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and in case of those who reach moral responsibility, become sinners in thought, word and deed (Gen. 1:26-27, 3:1-13; Eph. 2:1-10; Rom. 3:9-26, 5:12-14).
4. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary and is true God and true Man. We believe that as Man He was truly tempted in all points as we, but being God, He could not sin (John 1:1-29; Luke 1:30-35; Isa. 7:14).
5. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His death, burial and bodily resurrection (1 Tim. 2:6; Rom. 3:25-26, 5:8; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Heb. 10:5-14; 1 Pet. 2:24).
6. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord; in His ascension into the heavens and in His present life there for us as a High Priest and Advocate (Luke 24:36-43; Acts 1:9; Heb. 4:14-16; 1 John 2:1-2).
7. We believe in that blessed hope, the personal, visible, and pre-millennial return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
8. We believe that all who by faith receive the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become the children of God. They are immediately baptized, indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit and thereby secured unto the day of redemption (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8-9; John 1:12-13,3:5-16; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13-14).
9. We believe in the eternal security and everlasting blessedness of the saved and the eternal conscious punishment of the lost (Rom. 8:38-39; 1 John 5:13; Luke 16:23-26; Rev. 20:10).
10. We believe that Christ instituted the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Believer's Baptism by immersion. We believe that the Lord's Supper is symbolic of the death of Christ and that Believer's Baptism is symbolic of His burial and resurrection. These ordinances are to be observed until He comes.

Moreover, we believe that neither of these ordinances has any saving merit (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

ARTICLE IV: Membership

Section I - Any person who has accepted Christ as his Savior, has given assurance of his desire to live a consistent Christian life, has been obedient to the Lord in the ordinance of Believer's Baptism by immersion (Acts 2:41; 1 Cor. 12:13), has given assurance of his willingness to receive the ordinance of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:26), has given assurance of his willingness to abide by this constitution and is in agreement with the doctrinal standards of this church, shall be eligible for membership.

Section II - Persons can be received into membership by confession of faith, conditioned upon an examination satisfactory to the Council of Elders. Such persons shall be publicly welcomed by the Congregation at a service designated for that purpose by the Council of Elders.

Section III - Members are expected to strive conscientiously to live according to light given them by the Holy Spirit through God's Word and to support wholeheartedly the services and activities of the church.

Section IV - It shall be within the province of the Council of Elders to order a review of the church membership whenever they deem it necessary. At this time, members who seem to manifest inconsistency or flagrant sin in their Christian lives, a wrong attitude toward the Church's doctrinal standards, or to show indifference toward the life and work of the church, shall be investigated for the purpose of remedying any weakness in their Christian lives. It shall be within the province of those investigating to recommend to the Council of Elders that the person, or persons in question, be either dropped from the membership roll or placed on a passive membership roll.

Section V - Persons on a passive roll may not be entitled to hold office, vote in church matters, or serve in any ministry within the church.

Section VI - Persons on a passive roll may be restored to full membership standing by action of the Council of Elders.

Section VII - Letters transferring membership may be granted by the Council of Elders to any evangelical church, but only when the church to which transfer is desired is stated and when such request is made by a member in good standing on the active roll of this church.

Section VIII - The name of any person dropped from the roll of the church for any reason shall be reported at a regularly convened Congregational meeting.

Section IX - All persons who have signed the church roll prior to October 16, 1936, shall be constituted charter members of the church.

Section X - Only members in good standing shall be entitled to hold office, vote in church matters and be eligible for regular teaching ministry (1 Cor. 12:12.28; Eph. 4:11-12).

ARTICLE V: Government

Section I - The government of this church shall be executed through the Council of Elders in all spiritual matters and through the Board of Trustees in all material matters.

Section II - The Council of Elders shall be the executive of the Congregation in its dealings with employees of the church, including vocational officers and ministers, such as properly come under its jurisdiction, affiliated organizations, branch works and any denomination and organizations.

Section III - The Council of Elders shall handle and consider suggestions, recommendations, and grievances upon the part of any member or organization affiliated with the church.

Section IV - The Council of Elders shall direct the examination and reception of applicants for church membership and pass upon their fitness.

Section V - The Council of Elders shall have the administration of all benevolence funds.

Section VI - The Board of Trustees shall have supervision over all business transactions of the church, its organizations and branch works. It shall also have supervision over such employees as may properly come under its jurisdiction.

Section VII - The Board of Trustees shall have the management and control of all property belonging to the church. It shall not encumber with loan, transfer, sell, or purchase any real estate for the church except by express authorization conveyed through a majority vote of the membership present at a constitutionally called Congregational meeting.

Section VIII - The Board of Trustees shall have authority to appoint individuals or committees for the transaction of its business.

Section IX - The Board of Trustees shall perform such other duties as may be defined by this Constitution and shall at all times be subject to the majority vote of the voting members present at a regularly called Congregational meeting.

Section X - The deciding factor in any vote taken in a meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be a majority vote of the members present.

(Previous Section XI combined with Article IX:Section V)

Section XI - A mandatory one year sabbatical is required to be taken by each Lay Elder and Trustee upon serving two consecutive three year terms.

Section XII - In the event of the dissolution of this Corporation, all of its tangible assets and holding shall be distributed to such other existing non-profit religious corporations as would be in agreement with the letter and spirit of the Corporation. All decisions in this event would be made by a majority of the membership at a duly constituted Congregational meeting.

ARTICLE VI:Lay Officers

Section I - There shall be elected as officers of the church four or more Lay Elders, six or more Trustees, and a church Treasurer. The calling of Lay Officers shall be affirmed upon three-fourths of the vote of the voting members present at a constitutionally called meeting of the Congregation, after recommendation by the Council of Elders.

Section II - The term of office for the Elders, Trustees, and the Treasurer shall be three years.

A. Any officer's service may be terminated for cause at any time by a majority vote of the Congregation after a fair and impartial hearing, conducted under the supervision of the Council of Elders at a meeting of the Congregation called in accordance with Section V of Article IX.

B. All officers shall serve until their successors are elected except as provided in paragraph A of Section II, Article VI.

ARTICLE VII:Vocational Officers and Ministers

Section I - Based upon the needs of the Church, Vocational Elders and Vocational Ministers may be called to Grace Bible Church upon three-fourths of the vote of the voting members present at a constitutionally called meeting of the Congregation, after recommendation by the Council of Elders.

A. Vocational Elders, by definition, are called to the Office of Elder of the Church and shall be considered members of the Council of Elders upon their calling. (Such functions may include Preaching Pastor, Ministry Oversight Pastor, et al)

B. Vocational Ministers are those individuals employed by the Church to perform the ministerial functions of their calling. (Such functions may include Youth Pastor, Minister of Music, Director of Christian Education, Director of Children's Ministries, et al)

1. Vocational Ministers are not called to the Office of Elder of the Church and shall not be considered members of the Council of Elders, though they may be called upon to participate as deemed necessary by the Council.

2. In the course of time, and as need arises, a qualified Vocational Minister may be called to serve as a Vocational Elder in the Church.

3. The change in title may, but would not necessarily require a change in ministry function.

4. The call of a Vocational Minister to the Eldership of the Church shall be affirmed upon three-fourths of the vote of the voting members present at a constitutionally called meeting of the Congregation, after recommendation by the Council of Elders.

C. At the time of their calling to a position at Grace Bible Church, the individual being called and the congregation shall be fully aware of the nature of the call, whether to a position of Officer or Minister.

D. Vocational Elders and Ministers shall serve until their call is terminated by resignation or by request of the Congregation. When resigning, Vocational Elders and Ministers shall provide at least thirty days notice prior to terminating their service. If the congregation terminates a Vocational Elder's or Minister's service, the church shall continue the individual's salary for a minimum of thirty days.

Section II - The Council of Elders, at their discretion, may appoint a search committee to assist in the search for a Vocational Elder or Vocational Minister. The committee shall consist of two Elders, two Trustees, and a minimum of four members of the Congregation.

ARTICLE VIII:Duties of Officers

Section I - Council of Elders

A. Composition, Term, and Calling - The Council of Elders shall be composed of men, both Lay Elders and Vocational Elders. The Council of Elders shall be composed of at least 4 members, with the number of Elders at any time determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men in the church. There shall be at least twice as many Lay Elders as Vocational Elders. Each Elder shall be called by the membership of the Church as described in Articles VI and VII of this constitution.

B. Responsibilities - The fundamental responsibility of the Elders is to devote themselves to prayer and the Word. The Elders are responsible for governing the Church, teaching the Word and tending the flock of God in this Church. (1 Tim 3:2, 4-5; 5:17; Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2; Eph 4:11-12)

The responsibilities of the Elders shall include the following: examining prospective members; overseeing the process of Church discipline; examining prospective candidates for office; scheduling and providing a moderator for business meetings; providing for reporting and recording of official Church business; overseeing the work of appointed church agents and committees; conducting worship services; administering the ordinances of the Gospel; equipping the membership of the Church for the work of the ministry; teaching the whole counsel of God both formally and informally; correcting error; overseeing, coordinating and promoting the ministries of the Church; and mobilizing the Church for world missions.

The Elders shall faithfully perform all other duties designated by this constitution or pertaining to their office. They shall endeavor by God's grace to live and serve in full conformity with the standards set forth

in this constitution for their particular office and especially as found in the Word of God. (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9)

C. Organization - The Council of Elders shall organize itself however it determines to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The Elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function. The Elders must meet at least once per month. Unless the Council provides otherwise, meetings of the Council may be held immediately upon notice. A quorum for meetings of the Elders is defined as at least one-half of the Lay Elders plus at least one-half of the Vocational Elders, except for matters on which only Lay Elders are entitled to vote in which case a majority of the Lay Elders shall constitute a quorum. The Council shall annually select its Chairman and Vice-Chairman from among its Lay Elders.

D. Committees and Appointees – The Council of Elders has the authority to create committees and positions to which it may delegate any specified aspect of its responsibility. The Council of Elders has the authority to dissolve any committee or position which it created. The Council of Elders also has the authority to appoint Officers, Vocational Ministers, or other members of the congregation to serve as members of such committees and to act as its agents in such positions. (For example, such committees and positions may include a Missions Committee, Christian Education Committee, etc.)

Section II - Any Vocational Minister or any employee of this church shall perform duties as may be designated by the Council of Elders, Board of Trustees or their authorized representatives.

Section III - The Clerk of the Council of Elders, elected by the Council of Elders, shall keep an accurate record of all Council of Elders meetings and Ecclesiastical meetings of the Congregation. He shall be responsible for the keeping of the records of church membership, admissions, dismissals, deaths, baptisms, marriages and ordination services. He shall have oversight of the custody of the church seal, shall carry on and maintain a complete record of all correspondence and such other records as may pertain to his office. He shall also have responsibility for any other papers, records, or other documents as directed by the Congregation or the Council of Elders.

Section IV - The Trustees shall have the care of the physical properties and finances of the general and building funds of the church. They shall endeavor, by God's grace, to live and serve in full conformity with the standards set forth in this Constitution for their particular office.

Section V - The President of the Board of Trustees, elected by the Trustees from their own body, shall preside at the meetings of the Board.

Section VI - The Secretary of the Board of Trustees, elected by the Trustees from that body, shall keep an accurate record of all Board meetings and meetings of the church Corporation and shall perform the other such duties as his office requires.

Section VII - A Treasurer will be nominated by the Board of Trustees with approval of the Council of Elders, and will be approved by congregational vote for a three year term. The Treasurer will serve as a member of the Board of Trustees for the duration of the term served as Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be a person capable of performing the duties of the office, and his spiritual qualifications shall meet the standards as set forth in the doctrinal statement and Constitution of this church.

Section VIII - The Treasurer shall be responsible for oversight of the banking of such funds each week to the accounts of the church in a bank or banks designated by the Board of Trustees. There shall be kept under his direction a ledger showing the cash account of all funds and a balance taken at the close of each month. There shall also be prepared in approved form, under his direction, a financial statement each month showing the true status of the various funds in these accounts to be approved respectively by the Council of Elders and the Board of Trustees. He shall also have prepared, in approved form, under his direction, a financial statement showing the true status of all funds for the fiscal year of the church for presentation at the annual meeting. He shall also oversee the custody of the legal papers to the property and finances of the church such as deeds, abstracts, insurance policies, bonds, notes, etc. which shall be kept in a depository designated by the Board of Trustees, and any access he may have to this depository

shall be made under the direction of the Board of Trustees. His books shall at any time be available to the Board of Trustees and must be submitted to audit at least once a year by an auditing committee composed of one representative from the Council of Elders , one from the Board of Trustees and may include individuals appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Section IX - Within one month after each annual meeting, it shall be the responsibility of the Clerk of the **Council of Elders** to ensure that all officers of the Church read and sign the doctrinal statement of the Church.

Section X - A Finance Committee will be appointed to prepare the budget of general expenses to present to the Congregation at the annual meeting. It shall consist of one Elder, two Trustees and the church Treasurer at a minimum.

ARTICLE IX:Meetings

Section I - The fiscal year of the church shall end on the 31st of March, and the Annual Meeting shall be held on a date to be agreed upon by the Council of Elders and the Board of Trustees. The meetings shall be announced to the Congregation at two regular Sunday services preceding the meeting..

Section II - The annual meeting shall consist of a meeting of the church Corporation and an Ecclesiastical meeting to be conducted by the Board of Trustees and the Council of Elders respectively.

Section III - The Chairman of the Council of Elders or a suitable substitute elected by a majority vote of the Council of Elders shall preside at the annual meeting of the Corporation. The minutes of the preceding annual meeting shall be approved and the reports of the Treasurer and the Auditing Committee rendered. Election of Trustees, shall take place in this meeting. Only active members who have attained the age of eighteen (18) years shall have the right to vote at this meeting. It shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Board of Trustees to record the minutes of the meeting of the Corporation.

Section IV - The Chairman of the Council of Elders or a suitable substitute elected by a majority vote of the Council of Elders shall preside at the Ecclesiastical meeting. The minutes of the preceding Annual Meeting and the reports of the Clerk of Council of Elders and all organizations of the church shall be made available. Election of Elders shall take place in this meeting. Also, such other business as may be necessary shall be transacted. Only active members who have attained the age of eighteen (18) years shall have the right to vote in this meeting.

Section V - The Council of Elders or the Board of Trustees may call a meeting of the Congregation for the handling of Ecclesiastical matters, for the transaction of business outside of the currently approved budget, or to call for a vote of the congregation, provided announcement of said meeting be given from the pulpit at the regular service(s) on the two Sundays immediately preceding said meeting.

Section VI - The Board of Trustees or the Council of Elders shall call a special Congregational business meeting upon the written request of twenty five percent of the members with power to vote; said meeting and its purpose to be announced as provided in Section V of Article IX and convened within three weeks after filing request.

Section VII - A majority vote of the voting members present at any constitutionally called Congregational meeting shall be required to render final decisions in any matter under consideration with the exception of the election of officers and any amendment to this Constitution.

Section VIII - The voting members present at a meeting called in accordance with the requirements of this Constitution shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business. All voting shall be by ballot unless otherwise agreed upon.

Section IX - In the conduct of all meetings any parliamentary questions not covered by this Constitution shall be decided by the latest edition of "Robert's Rule of Order".

ARTICLE X: Adoption and Amendments

Section I - The adoption of the Constitution shall be by a two-thirds majority at a regularly called meeting of the Congregation. As adopted, it shall automatically supersede all previous forms of government and constitutions.

Section II - This Constitution may be amended by two-thirds of the voting members present and voting at any regular or special Ecclesiastical meeting, provided the proposed amendment has been read to the Congregation at each service for the two Sundays preceding said meeting, and provided an exact copy of the proposed amendment has been conspicuously posted in the church exits on the four Sundays immediately preceding said meeting.