



**CONSTITUTION  
BYLAWS  
CHURCH COVENANT**

Last modified: February 9, 2018



# Grace Life Church

## CONSTITUTION

### **Preamble**

This Constitution is made to:

- Preserve and secure the principles of our faith.
- Respect and honour each individual member of the church.
- Provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing church members.

### **Article I: Name and Location**

The name of this organization is Grace Life Church of Beausejour Inc. (hereafter called Grace Life Church). Grace Life Church currently meets at 1035 Park Ave, Beausejour, MB. Grace Life Church's mailing address is Box 656, Beausejour, MB, R0E 0C0. Grace Life Church shall have full power and authority to change the principle office and meeting place from one location to another. Grace Life Church is established and operated exclusively for charitable purposes by advancing religion and will devote all resources (financial, personal, and property) to carry out its activities.

### **Article II: Purpose**

The purpose of Grace Life Church is:

- To establish, maintain and support a house of worship with services conducted in accordance with the tenets and doctrines of the Christian faith.
- To support and maintain missions and missionaries in order to propagate the Christian faith.

In keeping with this purpose, Grace Life Church's objective is to glorify God by obeying the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). The process is designed to produce disciples of Jesus Christ, which involves these values and practices:

### **Article III: Statement of Faith**

#### **THE BIBLE**

We believe the Bible to be the complete and sufficient Word of God; that the sixty-six books, as originally written, comprising the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired by the Spirit of God and were entirely free from error; that the Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice and the true basis of Christian union.

#### **GOD**

We believe in one God, Creator of all, holy, sovereign, eternal, existing in three equal Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

## **JESUS CHRIST**

We believe in the absolute and essential deity of Jesus Christ, in His eternal existence with the Father in pre-incarnate glory, in His virgin birth, sinless life, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, triumphant ascension, mediatorial ministry and personal return.

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe in the absolute and essential deity and personality of the Holy Spirit Who convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; Who regenerates, sanctifies, illuminates and comforts those who believe in Jesus Christ.

## **SATAN**

We believe that Satan exists as an evil personality, the originator of sin, the archenemy of God and man.

## **MAN**

We believe that man was divinely created in the image of God; that he sinned, becoming guilty before God, resulting in total depravity, thereby incurring physical and spiritual death.

## **SALVATION**

We believe that salvation is by the sovereign, electing grace of God; that by the appointment of the Father, Christ voluntarily suffered a vicarious, expiatory and propitiatory death; that justification is by faith alone in the all-sufficient sacrifice and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and that those whom God has effectually called shall be divinely preserved and finally perfected in the image of the Lord. Saving faith is of necessity accompanied by repentance, which involves the recognition of, sorrow over, and the turning away from all known sin, with a new desire to live in obedience to Jesus Christ.

## **FUTURE THINGS**

We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust; in the eternal blessedness of the redeemed and in the judgment and conscious, eternal punishment of the wicked.

## **THE LOCAL CHURCH**

We believe that a church is a company of baptized believers, called out from the world, separated unto the Lord Jesus, voluntarily associated for the ministry of the Word, the mutual edification of its members, the propagation of the faith and the observance of the ordinances. We believe it is a sovereign, independent body, exercising its own divinely awarded gifts, precepts and privileges under the Lordship of Christ, the Great Head of the church. We believe that its officers are elders and deacons.

## **ORDINANCES**

We believe that there are only two ordinances for the church regularly observed in the New Testament in the following order:

- Baptism, which is the immersion of the believer in water, whereby he obeys Christ's command and sets forth his identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.
- The Lord's Supper, which is the memorial wherein the believer partakes of the two elements, bread and fruit of the vine, which symbolize the Lord's body and shed blood, proclaiming His death until He comes.

#### **THE LORD'S DAY**

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's day and that, in a special sense, it is the divinely appointed day for worship and spiritual exercise.

#### **MARRIAGE**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female and that these two genders are distinct and complimentary. We believe that marriage is the union of one man and one woman in exclusive union for life, to the exclusion of all other definitions.

#### **THE CHURCH AND STATE**

We believe in the entire separation of church and state. We believe in religious liberty; that every man has the right to practice and propagate his beliefs. We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honoured and obeyed, except only in the things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience and Prince of the kings of the earth.

#### **Article IV: Affiliation**

Grace Life Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denomination control. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation and inter-dependence with other churches, our church gladly affirms and serves alongside other churches of like faith.

#### **Article V: Government**

The government of Grace Life Church is vested in its members under the leadership of its Elders. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization. It recognizes the needs for mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches.

#### **Article V: Incorporation**

Grace Life Church shall be incorporated as a nonprofit organization under the Corporation Act of Manitoba. The names listed as legal directors shall be Elders and Deacons, with a minimum of three directors total.

#### **Article VI: Records and Reports**

Grace Life Church will maintain the following records and reports:

- Adequate and correct books and records of accounts (financial records).
- Minutes of the proceedings of its congregational meetings and all other teams.
- A record of its members, giving their names and addresses.
- Contribution statements for contributors.
- Reports of annual review of all church financial books, records, and proceedings.

#### **Article VII: Membership**

Church membership shall be open to all who profess personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and who agree to support the statements of belief and objectives of Grace Life Church and to abide by its constitution, bylaws and church covenant. Members under 18 years of age shall not be permitted to vote but shall retain all other privileges and responsibilities of membership.

#### **Article VIII: Nonprofit Status and Dissolution**

Grace Life Church shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other accretions to the organization shall be used solely to promote its purposes. Upon dissolution and after the payment of all debts and liabilities, all remaining assets will be given to a qualified donee described in subsection 149.1(1) of the Income Tax Act.

#### **Article IX: Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at a regular congregational meeting and then circulated to the membership. Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws shall be two-thirds vote of members of Grace Life Church who are qualified to vote and are present in the congregational meeting with a quorum to discuss and vote for this matter. Providing the amendment passes the first vote, a second vote will be held 30 days after. Should it pass a second reading the amendment will be accepted.



# Grace Life Church

## BYLAWS

### **Bylaw 1: Church Government**

#### **Section A: Organizational Guidelines**

1. The Church is an autonomous body and is governed by its members under the leadership of the Board of Elders.
2. The organization of the Church shall consist of the Board of Elders which includes the Senior Pastor. The Board of Elders is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Church, including oversight of all ministries and committees. The Deacons, who under the leadership of the Board of Elders, lead the Church in service to the Membership.
3. In order to comply with the laws of Canada and the Province of Manitoba, the Board of Elders are responsible to ensure that all required officers are in place.
4. The Board of Elders may deem the establishment of ministries, committees or paid positions (including, but not limited to, additional pastoral staff, office staff, etc.) to be necessary. It is the responsibility of the Board of Elders to ensure that each ministry, committee or paid position has a job description that clearly defines their role in fulfilling the stated mission of the Church.

#### **Section B: Board of Elders**

1. The affairs of the Church shall be governed by a Board of Elders, which includes the Senior Pastor.
2. All Elders, including any pastors on the Board of Elders, are accountable to God, the Word of God, and each other.
3. Qualifications for service on the Board of Elders are as follows. Men who:
  - a. Meet the qualifications set forth for elders in Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4 and for overseers in 1 Timothy 3:1-17;
  - b. Fully embrace the Church's doctrinal beliefs and are able to defend them;
  - c. Have been regular, resident members in Grace Life Church for at least one year prior to taking office.
4. The Board of Elders will oversee all the teaching ministries of the church.
5. Elder nomination: It is the responsibility of all members to identify potential candidates for the position of Elder. Elder nomination forms shall be made available for use at any time. These forms are to be completed, signed and returned to the Board of Elders.
6. It is the role of the existing Elders to disciple, train and mentor qualified individuals that are identified by the nomination process. The names of those involved shall be made public once the training program begins (1 Timothy; Titus). Any comments or concerns regarding a potential Elder should be brought forward to the existing Board of Elders during this period of training and examination. The existing Board of Elders will make determinations about the suitability of the Elders in training.

7. Upon the recommendation of the Elders, candidates are to be elected by not less than 2/3 membership vote at a regularly scheduled meeting upon completion of the training process.
8. An Elder may be removed from the Board by the remaining Elders if that Elder is subject to Corrective Discipleship as outlined in Bylaw 6, or fails to uphold the qualifications of an Elder as outlined in Bylaw 1.B.3.
9. An Elder shall not vote in a situation where he is in conflict of interest.
10. The Board of Elders shall select from within itself to fill positions, such as Chairman. The Senior Pastor shall not serve as Chairman.
11. The Board of Elders shall meet when required, preferably twice a month. The chairman may, at any time, summon a meeting of the Board, or he shall, upon the written request of any two Elders, summon a meeting of the Board, provided that the date and time of such meeting is communicated to all the Elders by the chairman or secretary.
12. It is the goal that all decisions should be unanimous. If unanimity is not reached, the minority shall submit to the majority.
13. It is the responsibility of the Board of Elders to prepare the agenda for all congregational meetings and make it available to members at least one week before such a meeting. The Board of Elders will appoint a chairman for meetings of the Church.
14. The Board of Elders is responsible for overseeing Corrective Discipleship as outlined in Bylaw 6.
15. In the absence of a pastor, the Board of Elders shall ensure that the pastoral responsibilities are fulfilled. In case of pastoral vacancy, it is the responsibility of the Board of Elders to oversee the filling of that vacancy.
16. The Board of Elders is responsible for ensuring that all applicants for membership are examined and make appropriate recommendations to the Membership. The Board of Elders shall give appropriate time for people in the congregation to respond before making a decision.
17. The board of elders has the responsibility of ensuring that the Articles of Incorporation and the present bylaws are respected in all aspects of the life of the Church.

### **Section C: Senior Pastor**

1. **Qualifications:** The pastor must be a man who meets the qualifications for elders as set forth in scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7; 2:12; Titus 1:6-9).
2. **Call:** The candidate shall undergo examination of his doctrinal position by the Board of Elders. Upon recommendation of the Board of Elders, the pastoral candidate shall be presented to the Membership for ballot vote. The candidate must receive no less than a 2/3's majority vote.
3. **Terms of Employment:** Terms of employment (i.e. salary, sabbatical, benefits, etc.) shall be negotiated and documented by the Board of Elders.
4. **Term of Office:** The term of office shall be indefinite. It is to be clearly communicated to all candidates that generally the church looks for a long-term ministry commitment on the part of its pastors.

5. Evaluations: Scheduled evaluations of the pastor's ministry are to be conducted by the Board of Elders for the purpose of improving the effectiveness of the pastor's ministry. Open discussions regarding all areas of the pastoral ministry shall be had throughout the year in an effort for ongoing improvements.
6. Duties: As a spiritual leader of the congregation, his primary responsibilities are those of the ministry of the Word, leadership, mentoring and intercessory prayer (Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Timothy 5:17; Acts 6:4). It is the responsibility of the Board of Elders to provide a detailed job description which enables the pastor to give priority to these responsibilities.
7. Termination: In case of moral failure, doctrinal deviation or unethical practice, the Board of Elders has the authority to recommend that the membership remove the staff member immediately, with not less than a 2/3 vote at a regularly scheduled meeting. Severance shall be granted in accordance with the laws of Manitoba.

#### **Section D: Deacons**

1. The physical needs of the Church shall be attended to by the Deacons.
2. All Deacons are accountable to God, the Word of God, and the Board of Elders.
3. Qualifications for service as a Deacon are as follows. Men who:
  - a. Meet the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
  - b. Fully embrace the doctrinal beliefs set forth by the Church and are able to defend them.
  - c. Have been regular, resident members in Grace Life Church for at least one year prior to taking office.
4. There is no minimum or maximum number of Deacons, but is determined according to present need by the Board of Elders.
5. It is the responsibility of all members to identify potential candidates for the position of Deacon. Deacon nomination forms shall be made available for use at any time. These forms are to be completed, signed and returned to the Board of Elders.
6. The Board of Elders is responsible for ensuring that all qualified nominated individuals are discipled, trained and mentored. The names of those involved shall be made public once the training program begins. Any comments or concerns regarding a potential Deacon should be brought forward to the Board of Elders during this period of training and examination.
7. Upon completion of the training process and upon recommendation of the Board of Elders, the deacon candidate shall be presented to the Membership for ballot vote. The candidate must receive no less than a 2/3's majority vote.
8. Deacons may be removed from their office by the Board of Elders if that Deacon is subject to Corrective Discipleship as outlined in Bylaw 6, or fails to uphold the qualifications of a Deacon as outlined in Bylaw 1.D.3.

## **Bylaw 2: Membership**

### **Section A: Entry into Membership**

1. All candidates for Membership must:
  - a. Have been interviewed by a member of the Board of Elders or a Pastor who has accepted their confession of faith.
  - b. Be in agreement and acceptance of the doctrinal positions of the Church.
  - c. Agree to submit to the discipleship and discipline of the Church body in all aspects of life.
  - d. Be baptized by Grace Life Church or have been previously baptized upon profession of faith in Christ by a church of like faith. Baptism will ordinarily not be granted apart from membership.
2. Upon recommendation of the Board of Elders, all qualifying candidates will be accepted into the Membership with not less than a 50% vote of eligible members at a regularly scheduled member meeting.
3. If a candidate is under the age of 18, they have all the privileges and responsibilities of Membership, but do not have a vote at Membership Meetings.

### **Section B: Privileges of Membership**

Members in good standing with the Church have the following privileges and responsibilities:

1. Discipleship: all Members have the privilege and responsibility of being discipled and have the opportunity to disciple others within the congregation.
2. Service: all Members have the privilege and responsibility of serving in positions in the Church according to the qualifications laid down for these positions.
3. Financial Support: all Members have the privilege and responsibility of donating financially to the Church through tithes and offerings.
4. Meetings: all Members 18 years of age or older have the privilege of participating in discussions and votes at Membership Meetings.

### **Section C: Inactivity**

1. Members who have been inactive in the congregation for six months or more will be ineligible to vote at Membership Meetings.
2. Inactivity is defined as non-attendance, or willful withdrawal from Discipleship, Service or Financial Support as described above.
3. Inactivity may result in Corrective Discipleship.

### **Section D: Termination of Membership**

A person shall cease to be a member of the Church by:

1. Transfer: Members may request a letter of recommendation to another church from the Board of Elders if they wish to transfer membership.
2. Withdrawal: Members may request the termination of their membership in writing to the Board of Elders and may be released subject to the recommendation of the Board of Elders.

3. Dismissal: Would take place if the procedures for Corrective Discipleship have failed to bring that person to repentance. Refer to Bylaw 6.
4. Release: An inactive Member will be released from Membership by reason of transfer, withdrawal or dismissal upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders with not less than a 50% vote of eligible members at a regularly scheduled member meeting.
5. Death.

#### **Bylaw 4: Meetings**

1. There shall be a minimum of one Membership Meeting per year to accept the budget. Other meetings can be called by the Board of Elders as deemed necessary.
2. Written notice of a meeting's time, place and purpose must be given to the Membership two weeks in advance.
3. Quorum for these meetings is made up of those in attendance.
4. Emergency Meetings may be called by the Board of Elders in extraordinary circumstances. All voting Members must be contacted by the Board of Elders by phone or email with a minimum of 24 hours' notice. If required, proof of contact by the Board of Elders will be given. Quorum is made up of those in attendance.

#### **Bylaw 5: Financial Policies**

Fiscal Year:

1. The fiscal year of the Church shall commence on January 1 and end on December 31.
2. Bookkeeping: Records consistent with the laws of the province of Manitoba and with normal accounting practice will be kept.
3. Audits: The financial records of the church will be internally reviewed annually. The Board of Elders may from time to time appoint an outside auditor for such period as deemed necessary.
4. Ethics in Financial Matters: All financial matters, including the handling of offerings, the transaction of business, and the respect of government regulations, will be carried out so as to be above reproach in the eyes of men and God and with the highest respect for the law of our land. The Church will adhere to the principles set forth by the Canadian Council of Christian Charities. All offerings will be counted by at least two (2) people, not including the treasurer.
5. Budget: The Church operates on a general budget system and all offerings, unless otherwise specified, flow into the general treasury. The budget must be accepted by the Membership at an annual Membership Meeting. Special authorization must be granted by the Board of Elders any time expenditures on a particular line of the budget exceeds forecast amounts. Anything deemed significant by the Board of Elders will be brought to the Congregation for approval. Church sponsored projects or funds that are not in the regular budget must be approved by the Board of Elders.
6. Borrowing: No borrowing may be contracted either for general operating expenses or for special projects without the express consent of the Membership expressed by a vote at a general meeting.

7. Honoraria: The Board of Elders will be responsible for setting the rate paid to visiting ministers.

#### **Bylaw 6: Corrective Discipleship**

1. Definition: Members of this Church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this Church, who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates scripture, shall be subject to Corrective Discipleship, which may include dismissal. The desired end of Corrective Discipleship in all of its forms is to encourage and enable that person to bring their lifestyle back into conformity with God's Word.
2. Goals:
  - a. The repentance and restoration of the errant believer; restoration to a lifestyle in conformity to the Bible and restoration to a loving relationship with other believers (Matthew 18:15-17; Luke 17:3,4; Galatians 6:1; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11; 2 Timothy 2:25; Hebrews 12:10,11).
  - b. Purify, edify, unify, and bring about spiritual growth in the Church (1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Titus 3:8-11).
3. Situations which call for corrective discipleship:

Corrective discipleship will be initiated in situations including, but not limited to, the following:

  - a. Teaching doctrinal deviations (Galatians 1:8,9; 1 Timothy 1:3,20; Titus 1:11, 3:10; 2 John 9- 11; Revelation 2:14-16).
  - b. Immorality (1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Revelation 2:14-16).
  - c. Creators of division (Romans 16:17; Titus 3:9,10; Matthew 18:15-21; Luke 17:3,4; Philippians 4:2; Proverbs 6:16-19).
  - d. Unbiblical public representation of Christ (2 Thessalonians 3:6-14; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Titus 1:10- 13; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; James 5:1-6).
  - e. Rebellion against Church Leadership (1 Thessalonians 5:12; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5). The Church Leadership is not exempt from Corrective Discipleship, as outlined in 1 Timothy 5:19-20.
  - f. Willfully neglecting the Church through lack of regular participation (Hebrews 10:23- 25).
4. Procedure:

Corrective Discipleship is the responsibility of all Christians, and begins with encouragement, exhortation and rebuke on an individual level. From that point, it progresses, as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, through the Board of Elders to the Membership, which ultimately may lead to the dismissal of the unrepentant person/people from Membership, as seen in Bylaw 2.C.

#### **Bylaw 7: Quorum and Decisions**

1. The quorum for all duly announced Church meetings consists of those members in attendance at the meeting.

### **Bylaw 8: Amendments**

1. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the Members present at a given Membership Meeting where a motion to amend has been presented.
2. Minor amendments of the Bylaws may be initiated by the Board of Elders
3. Major amendments of the Bylaws are to be made by a committee that shall consist of (at least) two representatives from the Board of Elders and three representatives from the Membership.
4. Amendments must be presented to and approved by the Board of Elders prior to being presented to the Membership. Members must be given notice of any proposed changes to the Bylaws at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote is to take place.



# Grace Life Church

## CHURCH COVENANT

As we trust we have been brought by divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the influence of His Spirit to give ourselves up to Him, so we do most solemnly covenant with each other, that God enabling us, we will endeavor to do the following: (John 1:11-12; Ephesians 2:1, 8-10; Romans 12:1-2)

We will walk together in brotherly love (John 13:34-35).

We will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully warn, rebuke, and admonish one another as the case shall require (Hebrews 3:12-14; Galatians 6:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5).

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor omit the great duty of prayer both for ourselves and for others (Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; James 5:16; Ephesians 6:18).

We will participate in each other's joys, and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows (Galatians 6:2; James 2:14-17; Romans 12:15-16).

We will earnestly endeavor to bring up children under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Ephesians 6:1-4).

We will seek divine aid to enable us to walk watchfully in the world, denying ungodliness and every worldly lust (Ephesians 5:15-21; 1 Peter 2:11-12; 1 John 2:15-17).

We will strive together for the support of a faithful evangelical ministry among us (Philippians 1:27; 1 Corinthians 15:58).

We will endeavor by example and effort to win souls to Christ (Acts 1:8; Matthew 5:12-16; Matthew 28:19-20).

We will seek to live to the glory of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light (Colossians 1:11-14; Galatians 1:1-5).