



GRACE

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS



Grace Bible Baptist Church
Catonsville, Maryland

CONSTITUTION

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PREAMBLE

Recognizing the need of reaching the world with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; desiring to propagate this Gospel; and to encourage and strengthen those who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Sin-bearer, Lord and Savior; we do ordain and establish the following articles to the realization thereof:

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this organization shall be Grace Bible Baptist Church, a non-profit religious corporation in the State of Maryland.

ARTICLE II

AFFILIATION

This organization shall establish and maintain membership with both the National and the Regional bodies of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America, Inc.

ARTICLE III

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following is a brief statement of those doctrines we hold to be essential and fundamental, being part of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Directors and all field workers of this organization subscribe to these without reservation and will propagate these truths in all ministries related to the work of this organization.

1. The Holy Scriptures—We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed. II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12-13.
2. The Godhead—We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. Deuteronomy 6:4; II Corinthians 13:4.
3. The Person and Work of Christ
 - a. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. John 1:1, 2 & 14; Luke 1:35.
 - b. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. Romans 3:24, 25; I Peter 2:24; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:3.
 - c. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. Acts 1:9, 10; Hebrews 7:25, 9:24; Romans 8:34; I John 2:1, 2.
4. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

- a. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. John 16:8-11; II Corinthians 3:6; I Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13-14.
 - b. We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth; and, that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. John 16:13; I John 2:20, 27; Ephesians 5:18.
5. The Total Depravity of Man—We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and, that man is totally depraved, and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22 & 23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12.
6. Salvation—We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. Ephesians 2:8-10; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:18-19.
7. The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers
- a. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. John 6:37-40; John 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 38, 39; I Corinthians 1:4-8; I Peter 1:5.
 - b. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. Romans 13:13, 14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15.
8. The Two Natures of the Believer—We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature, through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and, that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural. Romans 6:13, 8:12 & 13; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:10; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 3:5-9.
9. Separation—We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations is commanded of God. II Timothy 3:1-5; Romans 12:1 & 2, 14:13; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1.
10. Missions—We believe that it is the obligation of the saved to witness by life and by word to the truths of the Holy Scripture and to seek to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind. Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:19-20.
11. The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts
- a. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and, that the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today; and, that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established. I Corinthians 12:4-11; II Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12.
 - b. We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted. John 15:7; I John 5:14-15.
12. The Church
- a. We believe that the church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this present age. Ephesians 1:22 & 23, 5:25-27; I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 11:2.

- b. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. Acts 14:27, 20:17, 28:32; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11.
13. Dispensationalism—We believe in the dispensational view of Bible interpretation but reject the extreme teaching known as “Hyper-Dispensationalism,” such as the teaching which opposes either the Lord’s Supper or water baptism as a Scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age. Matthew 28:19 & 20; Acts 2:41 & 42, 18:8; I Corinthians 11:23 & 26.
 14. The Personality of Satan—We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the fall that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and, that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. Job 1:6 & 7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; Revelation 20:10.
 15. The Second Advent of Christ—We believe in that “Blessed Hope,” the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation and pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones; and in His subsequent return to earth, with His saints, to establish His Millennial Kingdom. I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 19:11-16, 20:1-6; I Thessalonians 1:10, 5:9; Revelation 3:10.
 16. The Eternal State
 - a. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29, 11:25 & 26; Revelation 20:5, 6, 12 & 13.
 - b. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. Luke 23:43; Revelation 20:4-6; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23, 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16 & 17.
 - c. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death, in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment. Luke 16:19-26; Matthew 25:41-46; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6 & 7; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 20:11-15.
 17. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper—We believe that baptism by immersion in water, and the Lord’s Supper are divine institutions and that it is the will of our Heavenly Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ, that these be observed in this age. Acts 8:36-39; Romans 6:3-4; Luke 22:19 & 20; I Corinthians 11:23-26.

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH POLICY

1. No person shall hold office who is not a member of the church.
2. No person who is divorced and remarried shall hold office.
3. No person who is a member of an oath-bound society shall hold office.

ARTICLE V

PROPERTY

1. Purchase Rights—This organization shall have the right to own, buy or sell tangible property both real and personal, in its own name by proper action and authorization of the congregation and official church board.

2. Non-Profit—No profit shall ever accrue to any person or persons from the assets, holding or other transactions in which this corporation may be involved.
3. Dissolution Provision—In the event of dissolution of this corporation, all its tangible assets and holdings of whatever sort, shall be distributed to such other non-profit religious corporations as are in agreement with the letter and the spirit of this Constitution and with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code of 1954, Section 501 (C), or any subsequent amendment thereto. All decisions in this event would be made by majority vote of the remaining Directors of the corporation.

ARTICLE VI

RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

1. Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of a new creation, and adopting the view of faith and practice held by this church, upon baptism, may be received into its membership.
2. Members from other churches holding the same faith may be received by letter of recommendation and dismissal from their respective church.
3. Persons having been members of a fundamental church, having no regular letter of dismissal, may be received by giving satisfactory evidence of a change of life, Christian conduct, and scriptural faith.
4. Members from whom fellowship has been withdrawn may be restored to membership on a confession of their errors and giving evidence of true repentance.

ARTICLE VII

GENERAL DUTIES OF MEMBERS

1. It is the duty of the members to contribute to the support of the Gospel and the maintenance of the church on the first day of the week, in proportion as the Lord has prospered them; also to attend regular meetings of the church, either called for worship or the transaction of business.
2. The legal voting membership of the church shall consist of all persons born of the Spirit, in good standing, who shall have met membership requirements of the church and subscribed regularly to its format, and whose name shall appear on the church roster. No person under sixteen (16) years of age shall be allowed to vote in any church business meeting.

ARTICLE VIII

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH AND THEIR DUTIES

1. We believe the scripture requires only two (2) offices in the church, the Pastor and Deacons, and we accept them as God-given. These others, however, are necessary to the organization of the church. The Pastor shall be elected by the church, and shall act as a moderator of all business meetings. His term of office shall be indefinite. The Pastor may terminate pastorate by giving thirty (30) days notice. It will be the duty of the Pastor to preach the Gospel as set out in the tenet of faith of the church. If, at any time, his personal belief, preaching, or teaching shall not be in full accord with the doctrinal standards of the church, his service as Pastor shall be terminated.
- *2. Three (3) deacons, whose term of office shall be two (2) years, shall be recommended by the Pastor and voted on by the church at each annual meeting.

* As amended at called Congregational Meeting on 3/20/1974, "at least three ..."

The members of the Board of Deacons shall be men of good moral character, who in every way practice the Doctrines of Faith as announced by our Church, and who shall at all times cooperate with the Pastor in the promotion and teaching of the Doctrines of Faith, and who assist and encourage all members to practice and live by the tenets of said Doctrines of Faith, to the end that the entire membership may live under the Holy Scriptures.

The deacons are to be servants of the church. It shall be the duty of the deacons to look after the poor of the church, to visit the sick, to assist in the preparation and distribution of the elements of the Lord's Supper. It shall be their duty to act as a pulpit committee, to secure the service of someone to supply the pulpit when the church is without a pastor, and to investigate the record of and to consult with in regard to terms, salary, etc., any candidate for the pulpit, reporting their findings to the church for formal action. They shall see that the church building shall be kept in proper condition, opened and properly heated and lighted for the meetings of the church.

- *3. Four (4) trustees, whose term of office shall be one (1) year, shall be elected by the church at each annual meeting. It shall be the duty of the trustees to hold true all properties of the church and to see that they are properly insured and to meet note requirements.

*As amended at called Congregational Meeting on 3/20/74, "four (4) trustees, whose term of office shall be two (2)..."

- **4. Treasurer, whose term of office shall be one (1) year, shall be elected from the Board of Deacons at each annual meeting. It shall be the duty of the treasurer, working with the pastor, to receive all monies and to pay all bills by check to be signed by the treasurer/pastor or trustee. The treasurer shall keep a true book of accounts, and each month give an itemized report to the church.

** As amended at called Congregational Meeting on 3/20/74, "treasurer, whose term of office shall be two (2) ..."

5. Church Clerk, whose term of office shall be one (1) year, shall be elected from the Board of Deacons at each annual meeting. The clerk shall keep a firsthand record of the proceedings of the church, take charge of and preserve all records and keep a register of all members of the church. This book is to be kept in the church proper.
6. The church may have a financial committee and secretary as and when the need arises and to be dissolved when duty has been performed.

ARTICLE IX

MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

1. Special meeting for business may be called (by the Pastor, and by majority vote of the members in active service present), at any regular service of the church.
2. The church shall regularly meet every Lord's Day for the worship of Almighty God.
3. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be offered as and when the Lord leads.
4. One evening of each week it shall be the duty of the members to meet for prayer, worship, and Bible Study.
5. The time of the annual meeting. The election of the church officers shall be conducted the first Wednesday after the first Sunday of March. In case of failure to hold election as above, it shall be held the next called business meeting. Officers to be elected by an open ballot, and by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. Vacancies caused by death, resignation, or removal, shall be filled at an election at the first called meeting following the one at which such vacancy shall have been announced.

ARTICLE X

THE MANNER OF CONDUCTING BUSINESS

1. Every business meeting shall be opened and closed by prayer.
2. No second motion may be entertained until the one under consideration has been disposed of; except a motion of amendment, adjournment or "puts the question."
3. Any speaker who introduces any matter foreign to the subject under discussion shall be ruled out of order.
4. Discourteous language or remarks adapted to injure the reputation or feelings of any member shall be ruled out of order and shall forfeit the speaker's right to the floor.
5. The moderator may speak upon any subject under discussion.
6. Every active member wishing to speak shall rise and respectfully address the moderator.
7. Every proposition presented for action of the church must be introduced by motion of one member and seconded by another.
8. No member shall speak more than twice upon the same subject.
9. All questions shall be decided by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.
10. For procedure that is questionable, Robert's Rules of Order should be used.

ARTICLE XI

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

1. In case offense is given one member of the church by another, the offended member shall proceed strictly according to the rule laid down by our Savior in Matthew 18:15-17.
 - a. Any member of the church who shall willfully absent himself or herself or withdraw his or her support, or is out of harmony with the policy of the church, or not willing to follow the leadership of the pastor, automatically becomes a non-active member. A non-active member shall not be allowed the privilege of having a word in the church meeting of business or a vote in any business meeting.
 - b. Unscriptural conduct or radical departure from the tenets of the faith held by the church shall be considered sufficient grounds upon which said person may be placed as an inactive member. Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 16:17-18; I Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 1:8-9.
 - c. When a member is out of fellowship, such person shall be notified by letter, notifying them that they are considered out of fellowship, and in 30 days from date, unless noticed activity is shown, such person shall be placed in an inactive membership list. Such decisions shall be made by the pastor and deacons.
 - d. A member shall be considered inactive if such person is out of service more than three (3) months in succession without just cause.
2. If any member of the church shall be publicly guilty of any crime of gross impropriety or if common rumor charges such crime or impropriety against a member, it shall be the duty of the member knowing and hearing of it to visit the Pastor, informing him of the report, and that member and the Pastor shall visit the accused and inform such member that, unless immediately righted, such member is to be recommended by the Pastor to be placed in the inactive roll of the church.

3. If a member, having erred, voluntarily confesses to the church and manifests repentance, nothing further shall be entertained against such member.
4. No member, if absent, shall have fellowship censured at the same meeting at which charges are preferred against such member.
5. A member in good standing against whom charges are preferred, shall have the privilege of speaking in defense.
6. Members who join other churches without a letter from this church shall be erased from membership roll after such statement is made at a meeting for business and a majority vote of those present authorizing the church clerk to do so and a proper record kept as to why erased.

ARTICLE XII

REGARDING THE BIBLE SCHOOL

1. Believing the Bible School is an integral part of the church, the Pastor shall appoint the teachers and assistants.
2. Teachers and assistants should be consecrated Christians, not conforming to this world, but transformed. They shall be expected to attend prayer night, Sunday evening services, and all teacher meetings unless providentially hindered.
3. Teachers should subscribe to the Statement of Faith.

ARTICLE XIII

THE MISSION OF THIS CHURCH

1. To preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and as far as often, and as truly as is possible by the grace of God; that by every honest means as a church, we shall endeavor to reach the world with the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
2. To baptize all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and give satisfactory evidence that such is really true, and upon such an act become members of the church.
3. To reach, exhort, and admonish all believers until they are provoked unto Holy Living and personal soul winning.

ARTICLE XIV

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

That if, or when, any officer or teacher of this church decides that he cannot accept or support the declared articles of faith and policy of this church, that such a person shall declare his position by declining to accept office or resigning from the office which he holds.

If any member of this church has cause for any complaint against the leadership and management of this church, he is required to take such complaints to the Pastor first. If necessary, it shall be taken then to the Deacons.

ARTICLE XV

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS A MEMBER MAY BE ASKED TO MEET WITH THE BOARD OF DEACONS

1. Unchristian conduct and constant violation of adopting Church covenant.
2. Holding forth teaching doctrines contrary to those held by the church as set forth in the Articles of Faith.
3. Unbridled tongue—definition set forth in Church Covenant and James 3.
4. Active opposition to the policy of leadership of the church, or conduct that creates dissention or division within the church.
5. If said individual shows no sign of repentance, the Pastor or Board of Deacons may recommend to the church that his name be dropped from the roll whereupon he will cease to be a member of the church.

ARTICLE XVI

AMENDMENTS

These rules may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those active members voting at any business meeting of the church, providing notice of such intention shall have been given at the meeting preceding.