

Grace Baptist Church

By-Laws

Preamble

These by-laws are adopted, ordained and established for our government and plan of worship and service. No by-laws shall be approved which are contrary to the Articles of Incorporation or the Constitution of this Church.

Article A- Membership

SECTION 1 – Receiving of members:

(a) Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, having studied the views and practices of this church, (namely the Constitution and By-Laws) and can enter into conformity with them to preserve and promote the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace may be received into membership upon completion of the following:

- (1) Regular attendance at Grace Baptist Church for a minimum of 3 months.
- (2) An interview with and the recommendation of the Pastor and Board of Deacons.
- (3) An affirming vote of the membership.

(b) Candidates for membership:

- (1) New Converts; After regeneration is witnessed to and manifest in their lives, and desire is expressed to be obedient to Him by baptism in water may apply for church membership.
- (2) Transfer from another Baptist Church; requesting that the church clerk write for their letter of transfer.
- (3) Confession of faith; those who have been scripturally baptized but do not have access to a letter of transfer.
- (4) Restoration; Persons excluded from this church may be restored after making due confession to the Lord and His church and giving satisfactory evidence of repentance for their faults.

SECTION 2- Duties, privileges and rights of members.

- (a) It shall be the duty of each member of this church to keep the covenant obligations as set forth in the Constitution and assist fellow members in keeping theirs, to honor and esteem their pastor, to pray for him fervently and daily, to be subject to him in the scriptural exercise of his official authority, to manifest a proper consideration for his reputation and in proportion to ability, to contribute toward the church and it's ministry.
- (b) Voting shall be restricted to those 16 years of age and older, including voting on a pastor; and in the case of legal matters, the age shall be the State of Washington's legal age.

SECTION 3- Dismission of members.

- (a) By death: The clerk shall be informed and take the name from the roll, noting the date when the Lord called the soul.
- (b) By letter; Any member in good and regular standing who desires a letter of dismissal and transfer to any other church of like faith and practice is entitled to have it sent to the pastor or to the Church clerk of the one which he wishes to unite. The name of the church which he unites shall be noted by the church clerk and the date when his name is taken from the roll.
- (c) By Erasure: Any person who unites with another church without requesting a letter of dismission shall have his name erased from the roll and shall be notified of such action if their address is known.
- (d) In all cases involving gross immorality, and in case of delinquency through failure to comply with covenant obligations, a member may be excluded from membership when so recommended by the Deacons and by a two-thirds vote of members present, voting by secret ballot.

SECTION 4- In-Active Members.

- (a) Any member who does not evidence an interest in the church by attending its services or supporting it financially; or contacting it by letter upon being absent from the locality within a period of 6 months shall be contacted if possible by the Deacons of Fellowship and notified and his name placed on the inactive list unless interest is shown. Any inactive member shall forfeit his right to vote.

SECTION 5- Discipline of Members.

Discipline is of two sorts, according as offenses are private or public.

- (a) Private offenses are to be dealt with according to the rule of Matt. 5:23-24, 18:15-17.
- (b) Public offences are to be dealt with according to the rule of 1 Cor. 5: 3-5, 13 and II Thes. 3:6. The church is not an insurance company whose object is to protect and shield its disorderly members. It is a society whose end is to represent Christ in the world, and to establish His truth and righteousness. Christ commits His honor to its keeping. The offender who is only anxious to escape judgment and who pleads to be forgiven without delay, often shows that he cares nothing for the cause of Christ which he has injured, but that he has at heart, only his own selfish comfort and reputation. The truly penitent man will rather request the church to exclude him in order that it may free itself from the charge of harboring iniquity. He will accept exclusion with humility, will love the church that excluded him, will continue to attend its worship, and in due time seek and receive restoration. There is always a way back into the church for those who repent. But the scriptural method of insuring repentance is the method of immediate exclusion.

Article B

Officers, Their Election And Duties

The officers of this church shall be: Pastor; who shall serve as Moderator, Deacons, Clerk, Treasurer and Financial Secretary, and any other officers that the church shall deem wise and necessary.

SECTION 1- Pastor

- (a) The pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by the vote of 70% or more of the active membership present and voting, 16 years of age and over, upon the recommendation of the pulpit committee. His election shall be by secret ballot at a regular or special meeting of the church with notice of intention on the calling of a pastor at said meeting given at all church meetings during the two preceding weeks.
- (b) The pastor shall be recognized as the undershepherd of Christ's local church and its chief officer, and shall preach the Word of God. He shall administer the ordinances of the New Testament, shepherd the Church and lead it in the fulfillment of its sacred task. He shall maintain at all times a Godly deportment that no reproach may come through him upon the body of Christ. Pastors and teachers have the liberty to use only the King James Version, the New King James Version, the New American Standard Version or the New International Version for all church sponsored functions. No gender neutral bible translations can be used when a person is officially representing Grace Baptist Church in a teaching position.
- (c) The pastor shall be entitled to vacation with pay each year of service at Grace Baptist Church according to the following schedule: 1-3 yrs. (2 weeks), 4-7 yrs. (3 weeks), 8-11 yrs. (4 weeks), 12-16 yrs. (5 weeks), 17 yrs. and on (6 weeks).
- (d) The pastor may engage himself for outside commitments for no more than 2 weeks every six months except by special action of the church.
- (e) The relation between the pastor and the church shall be a permanent one until dissolved at the option of either by giving one month notice or less by mutual consent. The severance of the relation between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular business meeting of the church, provided that the matter has first come before the Board of Deacons, and that recommendation has been made from the Board for consideration of the church. A four-fifths majority vote of membership present and voting by secret ballot shall be necessary to decide the matter. Any desire on the part of the church, be it individual or group, to dismiss the pastor, shall be referred to the Board of Deacons before coming to the attention of the church. The Board of Deacons shall then deliberate upon the request in private sessions, the pastor and complainant(s) being absent. After these meetings of the Deacons, the matter shall then be recommended to the church that a secret ballot be cast for or against the dismissal of the pastor. A notice of intent to sever relationship between church and pastor shall be posted at least two weeks prior to the business meeting.

SECTION 2- Deacons

- (a) The qualifications for the office of Deacon are set forth in I Timothy 3: 8-13 and Acts 6: 2-4. They shall also be members of this church in good and regular standing, willing to assume the office and faithful in the discharge of their several duties.
- (b) Their Election:
 - (1) They shall be elected at the annual business meeting for a term of 2 years.
 - (2) A minimum of three (3) deacons shall be elected by secret ballot.
- (c) Their Duties:
 - (1) The board of deacons shall have general oversight of the life of the church, including but not limited to such duties as aiding the pastor in the performance of his duties, control of the spiritual

and moral use of the Church property, and shall provide Christian instruction and minister to the church members. They shall also act in the capacity of a prudential committee for the church in co-operation with the Pastor in all matters of discipline, following the direction of the New Testament in humility and prayer.

- (2) All meetings of the board will be open to church members, except when the board is meeting as a prudential committee.
- (3) They shall help in the administration of the Lord's Supper and Baptism.
- (4) In the absence or in the illness of the Pastor they shall secure a substitute in his place being aware of their solemn responsibility to secure no speaker who cannot subscribe to the views of the Declaration of Faith.
- (5) As a Prudential Committee. This is the discipline committee of the church, working together with the pastor, and the duties of this committee are as follows: At a fixed time of each year to look over the list of members, initiate labor in the case of delinquents, and after the proper steps have been taken to take action.
- (6) It is advisable that the church require all complaints to be made through this committee. If the committee after proper presentations and review by the board, fails to satisfy the complaint, an individual member may appeal directly to the assembled church. The action of this committee in regard to individuals discipline shall be governed according to the teaching of Christ in the New Testament.
- (7) Any member of the church desiring an audience with the Board must make the request through the chairman or the pastor.

SECTION 3- Trustees

- (a) Qualifications: The trustees shall be selected for their spirituality, demonstrated business ability and interest in the work of the church. They shall be members of the church in good and regular standing, willing to assume the office, and faithful in the discharge of their several duties.
- (b) There shall be not less than three trustees, and this board shall consist of the deacons of the church.
- (c) Their duties:
 - (1) The board of trustees shall hold in trust all the property of the church and shall be responsible for the upkeep and management of the same and shall perform other such duties as are imposed on trustees by the laws and statutes of the State of Washington.
 - (2) They shall not sell or encumber the real estate or other property of the church unless authorized to do so by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a meeting of the church, called for the purpose of considering such a transaction. Such notice of meeting being posted for a period of two weeks. All such meetings of the church must be called in accordance with the provisions of the laws of the State of Washington, which govern the selling or encumbering of church property.
 - (3) The Board of trustees shall serve as a Budget and Finance Committee with the Pastor. It shall be the duty of this committee to recommend to the church at its annual meeting a proposed budget of anticipated receipts and expenditures, covering all the regular work of the church. In such a campaign, the members of this committee shall not only act as advisors, but also as co-operating workers.

SECTION 4- Church Clerk and Financial Secretary.

- (a) The offices of church clerk and financial secretary may be performed by one person.
- (b) This office shall be filled by a person who is competent to perform all the required duties of the office.
- (c) He or she shall be the official recorder and historian of the church. He or she shall maintain a correct and permanent record of all business meetings of the church and the board of deacons, sign all letters of dismissal, take charge of all church records, and maintain a register of members in which shall be noted such changes as may occur.
- (d) He or she shall keep a record of all monies contributed to the church and the expenditures as recorded in the board of deacons meeting. A separate account shall be kept for each contributor, and a financial statement for each contributing member shall be furnished upon request.

SECTION 5- Pulpit Committee.

- (a) Upon a vacancy in the office of Pastor, the Board of Deacons shall carefully select a list of 6 nominees, representative of the church in it's various departments, and the church in a regular or called business meeting shall elect, by secret ballot, from this list of 6 nominees a pulpit committee of 5 members. The pulpit committee when elected, shall organize by electing a chairman and a corresponding secretary who shall keep a record of the minutes of the committee and do the official correspondence. All members of the pulpit committee shall be pledged to not reveal any details of the deliberation.
- (b) The duties of this committee shall be:
 - (1) Contact prospective candidates as to their availability to a call.
 - (2) They shall investigate each prospective candidate as to his spiritual, educational and theological qualifications to serve the needs of this pastorate.
 - (3) They shall contact and follow through on all personal references given by the prospective candidate.
 - (4) Upon receiving his favorable word that he has prayerfully considered accepting the call if extended, they shall invite the candidate to preach. This invitation is to involve one Sunday (2 services minimum). These services to be announced to the church at least two weeks in advance.
 - (5) They shall call the church into business session within one week following the last service by the candidate and present the man for vote by secret ballot.
- (c) The pulpit committee shall be responsible for supplies while the church is without a pastor, and may engage an interim pastor who shall not be considered a candidate for the pastorate.
- (d) They shall maintain carefulness in all things for the good of this church and the church where the candidate is pastoring.
- (e) The committee shall be dissolved immediately upon the securing of a pastor.

SECTION 6- Meetings.

- (a) For Worship.
 - (1) Meetings shall be held for public worship each Sunday, and each Wednesday Evening for prayer, praise and Bible Study. The church may, by official action, arrange the date and place and time of any meeting. Special meetings for the purpose of promoting Evangelism, Bible Conferences and Missionary Conferences, etc., may be held on recommendation of the Board of Deacons.
- (b) For Business.
 - (1) The annual business meeting of the church for election of officers and the transaction of other business shall take place in January. The date of the annual meeting shall be set by the Board of Deacons. Officers shall assume their duties immediately upon election.

- (2) A quarterly business meeting will normally be scheduled following the morning worship service on the fourth Sunday of the first month of each quarter. Exceptions may be made by the board of deacons with such change being made in time to post the change and announce at regular church meetings at least 2 weeks prior to the revised date. Special business meetings for the transaction of business may be called by the Pastor or the Board of Deacons the scheduling of which must comply with section 9 if amendments are to be considered.
- (3) The Board of Deacons shall have at least one business meeting each month. The date to be decided by the board. Term of office to be from February 1st to February 1st.
- (4) Roberts rules of order are hereby adopted to govern all business meetings.
- (5) Twenty-five percent of the active voting membership shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 7- Licensing and Ordaining.

(a) Licensing.

- (1) Any member who, in the judgment of the church, gives evidence, by his Christian life, zeal, aptness to teach, that he is called of God to the work of the ministry: After having preached in the hearing of the church, may be given a license for a term of one year, subject to renewal, to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

(b) Ordaining.

- (1) If the church, upon a three-fourths affirmative vote of the members present and voting at a regularly called meeting, decide that a young man possesses the scriptural qualifications and training for ordination, that he gives evidence by his Christian life, zeal and aptness to teach that he is called of God to the work of ministry, it shall call a council of ministers and lay members to examine the qualifications of the candidate to which council the property of ordaining shall be referred. After receiving a favorable report from the council the church shall proceed with the ordination.

SECTION 8- Vacancies.

All offices, board and committee positions shall become vacant by resignation of the occupant, removal of residence beyond reasonable distance, disqualification of membership in this church, death or removal from office because of failure to perform adequately his covenant obligations or duties assigned to him. Removal from office shall be by a 2/3 affirmative vote of all secret ballots cast at a meeting of the congregation initiated for that purpose. Mid term Board of Deacon vacancies may be filled by appointment by the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 9- Amendments.

The by-laws may be repealed or amended or added to at any business meeting of the church, provided the amendment in writing has been approved by the Board of Deacons and posted for 2 weeks prior to the business meeting and announced at each regular meeting of the church. A ¾ majority vote of the members present and voting shall be required.