

Edition: March 2008  
**Constitution of Grace Chapel, Inc.**  
Articles of Incorporation

**Preamble**

We the members of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Waterford, Michigan, USA in our desire to establish a church to the glory of God and the furtherance of His Kingdom, do hereby ordain and establish the following articles as an instrument to regulate and govern the affairs and business of this New Testament assembly, to which articles we voluntarily submit ourselves.

**Article I**

This organization shall be known as Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Waterford, Michigan USA.

**Article II**

MISSION STATEMENT

Grace Chapel is a family of believers united in God's love in prayer, growing in faith and committed to scripture. Our mission is to honor God by serving Him and one another through Christ-centered worship, teaching, fellowship, and evangelism.

**Article III**

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT AND CHURCH COVENANT

**Section A—Doctrinal Statement**

**1. The Holy Scriptures**

We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the verbally (word for word) inspired (God breathed) and infallible Word of God. We teach the Bible is absolutely without error in the original writings and that it is the complete revelation, in 66 books, of God's will for the salvation of man (*Luke 24:27, 44; Romans 15:4, II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:21*). We teach that the Word of God is an objective (*Exodus 17:14*), timeless revelation (*I Thessalonians 2:13*) and constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

We teach that while there may be several applications of any given passage of scripture, there is only one true interpretation and it is to be found by diligently applying the grammatical-historical (grammar of that day) method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (*John 16:12-15; I Corinthians 2:7-15; and I John 2:20*). Recognizing that the Bible is the very Word of the living God to man and understanding the priority of knowing and obeying its truths, we are deeply committed to teaching the scripture with diligence and authority. There is no sharper sword (*Hebrews 4:12*).

We believe that God was active not only in the formation but also in the preservation of His Word (*Matthew 5:17-18, John 17:17, Romans 15:4, I Peter 1:24-25*). God's providential care has provided His people with ancient copies of scripture (in thousands of Hebrew and Greek manuscripts) that reassure us the Bible we study today is His pure, living and infallible

Word. Men come and go; civilizations rise and vanish; but Holy Scripture marches on triumphantly.

## **2. God, the Father**

We believe in one living and true God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect, absolute in power and eternally existing in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is infinite, eternal, sovereign and unchanging in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. Each person of the Godhead has precisely the same nature, (essence) attributes and perfections and is worthy of the same reverence and obedience. In the beginning God created out of nothing, the universe and all that it contains, thus manifesting the glory of His power, wisdom and goodness. By His sovereign power He continues to sustain His creation. In providence and mercy God is operating through history to fulfill His redemptive purpose (*Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; I John 1:14; & II Corinthians 13:14*).

## **3. God, the Son**

We believe that Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (*John 3:16*), true God and true man (*Philippians 2:5-8*). He was miraculously conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (*Luke 1:26-35*). He lived a sinless life (*Hebrews 4:15*). He died on the cross a voluntary substitutionary sacrifice for our sins, according to the scriptures (*Romans 5:8*). Further, He arose bodily from the dead (*John 20:20*), ascended into heaven (*Acts 1:9*) and is presently ministering at the right hand of the Father as our faithful High Priest and Advocate (*Acts 7:55 & 56; Hebrews 2:17; and I John 2:1-2*). He is the one mediator between God and man, the Lord of life, and only Savior (*I Timothy 2:5*). Christ will return personally and visibly, first to receive the believer to Himself (*I Thessalonians 4:16-17*), and then to establish His Kingdom on earth (*Matthew 25:31-32*).

We teach that upon the basis of the efficacy of Christ's death, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power and one day the very presence of sin, declared righteous, given eternal life, and admitted to the family of God (*John 10:15; II Corinthians 5:14-15; I Peter 2:24 & 3:18; & Romans 3:25 & 5:8*).

## **4. God, the Holy Spirit**

We believe that the prime ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. He is sovereignly active in the regeneration of the believer (*John 3:1-8 and Titus 3:5*). He baptizes (*I Corinthians 12:13*), seals (*Ephesians 1:13*), and indwells every believer (*Romans 8:9*). He is the source of guidance, instruction, giftedness and power whereby the believer is enabled to live a godly life (*Ephesians 5:18 & Galatians 5:16, 22-26*). We teach that the Holy Spirit alone administers spiritual gifts to the church, not to glorify Himself or the gifts by ostentatious displays, but to magnify Christ and implement His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (*Acts 1:8; I Corinthians 12:4-11; and II Corinthians 3:18*). His present ministry also includes convicting the world of the reality of sin, of righteousness through Christ and of the judgment to come (*John 14:16-17, 16:7-15; I Corinthians 6:19, 12:13; Ephesians 2:22, 4:30, 5:18; II Thessalonians 2:7; & I John 2:20-27*).

We believe that there are two kinds of spiritual gifts: 1) temporary, confirming, sign gifts (e.g. tongues, miracles, healings and prophecy, etc.) and 2) permanent, edifying, speaking and serving gifts (e.g. teaching, service, giving, leadership, exhortation, mercy etc.). With the New Testament revelation complete, the confirming gifts were no longer necessary, gradually ceased and are not regarded as normative for the church today (*Acts 2:43, 19:11-*

12; *I Corinthians 13:1-13, 14:20-22; II Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:1-4; II Timothy 4:20; James 5:14; & I Peter 4:10-11).*

Note: We acknowledge that believers differ over certain specifics concerning spiritual gifts and have purposed not to make this a test of fellowship.

### **5. Concerning Man**

We believe that man was directly and immediately created in the image and after the likeness of God (*Genesis 1:26*). He was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence (volition), self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (*Genesis 1:26-28, 2:15-25; I Thessalonians 5:23; & James 3:9; James 1:21-27*). Man, through the sin of disobedience to the revealed will of God lost his innocence; incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death; became subject to the wrath of God; became inherently corrupt; and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God, apart from Divine grace (*Genesis 3*). We teach that all men are in Adam and that the consequence of that sin has been transmitted (imputed) to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the one unique exception. All men thus are sinners by divine declaration, by nature, and by choice (*Jeremiah 17:9 and James 2:10*). Man, therefore, in his natural state is condemned to an eternal death (*Romans 6:23*). Only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained. (*Genesis 3:1-19; Psalms 14:1-3 & 51:5; John 3:6; Romans 3:10-23, 6:23, & 8:6; Ephesians 2:1-5; John 3:36; & I John 3:8*)

### **6. Salvation, Full and Free**

We believe that the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for the justification and salvation of all who believe. We teach that only such as receive Jesus Christ by faith are born of the Holy Spirit and thus become the children of God. Salvation is wholly a work of God's free grace through the shed blood (i.e. sacrificial and substitutionary death) of His Son. It is not a result, in whole or in part, of human will, works or goodness (*Titus 3:5; & Philippians 1:6*). Salvation brings the forgiveness of sin (*Romans 4:7-8*), a declaration of righteousness before God (*Romans 4:6*), a new nature (*II Corinthians 5:7*) and the promise of eternal life (*Romans 6:23*). It must be personally appropriated by genuine repentance and faith (*Leviticus 17:11; Isaiah 53:1-12, 64:6; Matthew 26:28; John 3: 7-18; Romans 5:6-9; II Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7 & 2:8-10;*

We teach that salvation will be demonstrated by repentance, faith and righteous living. Good works are its proper evidence and spiritual fruit will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit through faithful obedience to the Word of God (*I Corinthians 6:19-20, Ephesians 2:10 & 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12; Colossians 3:16; II Peter 1:4-10*). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ (*I I Corinthians 3:18*) and will be climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (*Romans 8:17; I Peter 1:23; & I John 3:2-3*)

### **7. Safe in the Savior**

We believe that those who put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation have the promise of eternal life as a present possession (*John 5:24*). Authentic believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit (*Ephesians 1:13*), kept by the power of God and secure in Christ forever (*John 5:24, 6:37-50, 17:15 & 20; Romans 5:9-10, 8:1 & 31-39; I Peter 1:5; & Jude 1:24*). It is the high privilege of the believer to have a present and continuing assurance that he possesses salvation (*John 10:28-30; & I John 5:13*).

Note: It is also the solemn duty of every professing Christian to “examine themselves to see if they are in the faith” (*II Corinthians 13:5*) and to “make their calling and election sure” (*II Peter 1:10*) while never using their Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living (*Galatians 5:1 & 16-21 & Romans 6:1-12*).

### **8. Concerning Satan**

We believe that Satan is a created being once holy and enjoying heavenly honors and that he fell because of pride and rebellion to his present state (*Isaiah 14:12-17 & Ezekiel 28:1-19*). He is the author of sin and father of lies (*Genesis 3:1-19 & John 8:44*). He is the believer’s accuser and adversary (*I Peter 5:8*). He is the tempter and deceiver of nations (*Matthew 4:1 & Revelation 12:9*). Further, we teach that Satan has been judged through the death of Christ on the cross (*John 12:31*). He will be eternally condemned to the Lake of Fire (*Revelation 20:10*).

### **9. Angels, Elect and Evil**

We believe that angels are created beings and therefore are not to be worshipped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (*Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1: 6, 7, & 14; Hebrews 2: 6-7; Revelation 5:11; Revelation 19:10 & 22:9*).

Further, we teach that when Satan fell, he incurred the judgment of God involving numerous angels (*Revelation 12:3-4*) in his fall. These demonic beings, along with all the powers of darkness are destined with Satan to final defeat and eternal punishment in Hell, a place prepared for the devil and his angels (*Matthew 25:41; Ephesians 6:12; Job 1:6-7; and Ezekiel 28:11-19*).

### **10. Concerning the Church**

We teach that all who place faith in Jesus Christ are immediately baptized by the Holy Spirit into one united, universal and spiritual Body—the Church (*I Corinthians 12:12-13*), of which Christ is the Head (*Ephesians 1:22, 4:15 & Colossians 1:18*), and which is His espoused Bride (*II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32 & Revelation 19:7-8*). We teach that the formation of this Body began on the Day of Pentecost (*Acts 2:1-21 & 38-47*) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own (*I Corinthians 15:15-47 & I Thessalonians 4:13-18*). We believe the church then, is a unique spiritual organism (*Mat 16:18*), made up of all born again believers in this present age (*Ephesians 2:11-22 & 3:1-6*). Further, we teach that the church universal is made visible by the establishment and continuity of local churches and that the members of this one united spiritual Body of Christ are commanded to associate themselves together in local assemblies (*Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; I Thessalonians 1:1; I Corinthians 11:18-20; & Hebrews 10:25*).

The Church (local) is an organized body of believers where the gospel is taught faithfully, where the ordinances are observed regularly and where church government is functioning biblically. The ordinances of the Church are *water baptism (immersion)* and the Lord’s Supper (*Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; & I Corinthians 10:16-17 & 11:23-26*). They are not to be regarded as a means to salvation. Christian baptism is the testimony of a believer, showing forth in solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and resurrected Savior and our union with Him in His death, burial and resurrection (*Romans 6:1-11; Acts 8:36-39;*

*& Mark 10:33-45*). We teach, in addition, that the Lord’s Supper is the commemoration, celebration, and proclamation of His death until Christ returns, and should be preceded always by vigorous self-examination (*I Corinthians 11:23-28*).

### **11. Things to Come**

We believe that Christ has gone to prepare a place for believers and He will come again to receive them (*John 14: 1-3*). The “blessed hope” of the believer is the personal, bodily, pre-millennial and eminent (pre-tribulational) return of our Lord and this should have a vital bearing on the personal life and service of every Christian (*Acts 1:11; I Corinthians 15:51-52, Philippians 3:20; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; & Titus 2:11-14*).

Note: We acknowledge that believers differ over certain specifics about the second coming of Christ and have purposed not to make this a test of fellowship.

### **12. Death and Afterwards**

We believe that at death the souls of those who have trusted in Christ pass immediately into the presence of God (*Philippians 1:23*). We teach that there is a separation of soul and body (*II Cor 5:8*) and that such separation will continue until the first resurrection (*Revelation 20:4-6*) when spirit, soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (*I Thessalonians 4: 16-17; Philippians 3:21; & I Corinthians 15:35-44 & 50-54*). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ (*II Corinthians 5:8*).

We teach the bodily resurrection of all mankind (*Daniel 12:2; Revelation 20:11-15 & John 5:28-29*): the saved to eternal life in heaven (*Romans 8:10-11 & 19-23; II Corinthians 4:14; John 5:29, Daniel 12:2 & Revelation 20:6*) and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment in hell.

We teach that the souls of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hell (*Job 3:13-19 & Luke 16:19-26*) where they are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (*Luke 16:19-26 & Revelation 20:1-15*). When the soul and resurrected body are united, they shall then appear at the great White Throne Judgment (*Revelation 20:11-15*) and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire (*Matthew 25:41-46*) and cut off from the life of God forever (*II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Daniel 12:2; & Matthew 25:41-46*).

### **13. Concerning the Christian Life**

We believe that the Christian is called in the Word of God to a life of service and a life separated from the sin of this world (*Romans 6:1-2; I Corinthians 6: 18-19; II Corinthians 6:17-18; and Galatians 5:1-21*). We teach that all the saved should live in such a manner as to not bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord and that separation of all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practice is commanded of God (*Romans 12:1-2; II Timothy 3:1-5; I John 2:5-17; & I Corinthians 5:9-13*).

This can only be accomplished by believers living in dependence upon the Holy Spirit so as to reproduce in themselves the fruit of the Spirit. In the church every member should be a minister (*Romans 12:1-8 & Ephesians 4:7-16*). Every believer should aim at being fruitful in spiritual service and live for the glory of God (*John 15:1-8*).

Note: This church recognizes that it cannot bind the conscience of its members in areas where scripture is silent. Rather, each believer is to be led in those areas by the Holy Spirit and godly counsel to which we are both ultimately responsible. The priesthood of every believer is acknowledged. Biblical teaching is that the church is to be marked by love and unity, not “arguing and dissension.” All members, therefore, shall refrain from advocating doctrines that are not in keeping with those held by the local body.

## **Section B - Church Covenant**

We affirm with full confidence that God has led us to become a part of this local Body of believers in Jesus Christ called Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Mi. USA. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, children of God and members of one another, we covenant (*Ecclesiastes 5:4-5*):

1. To love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind and to worship and serve Him only (*Matthew 4:10 & Matthew 22:37-38*).
2. To faithfully engage in personal Bible Study and the spiritual disciplines so as to be approved unto God, workmen who need not be ashamed while eagerly promoting scriptural knowledge and godliness, establishing family devotions wherever possible (*Ephesians 6:4, I Timothy 4:7-8, II Timothy 2:15 & I Peter 2:2*).
3. To pray with and for one another and for all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ; sharing our burdens, sorrows, and joys (*Matthew 6:9-15, Luke 18:1, 9-14, John 16:23-24, Ephesians 6:18, I Thessalonians 5:17, James 1:6, 4:3, 5:16 & I John 5:14-15*).
4. To walk together in Christian love (*John 15:12, I Corinthians 13:4-13, Ephesians 5:1-2 & Hebrews 13:1*).
5. To exercise Christian care, watchfulness and accountability toward one another (*Matthew 18:15-19, Romans 12:9-20, I Corinthians 12:12-26, Ephesians 5:21, Galatians 6:1-10 & I John 3:14*).
6. To be thoughtful and kind to one another, being remarkably slow to take offense and breathlessly quick to forgive and to seek forgiveness (*Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 18:15-19, Ephesians 4:32 & II Corinthians 2:6-7*).
7. To serve, as the Lord enables, in the work of the Church, while promoting its witness to the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ (*I Corinthians 12:4-11, Ephesians 4:7-16, Romans 12:3-8 & I Peter 4:10*).
8. To guard the scriptural unity, purity and peace of the Church and its growth both spiritually and numerically by avoiding cliques personality cults and giving prominence to some instead of preference to all (*John 17:20-23, I Corinthians 1:10-13, 11:17-22, Ephesians 4:1-6, Philippians 2:1-4 and Colossians 3:12-15*).
9. To contribute, as the Lord directs, to the financial support of the Church, to the relief of the needy, and to the evangelization of all people (*I Corinthians 16:1-2, II Corinthians 8:1-15, 9:1-15, Ephesians 4:28 & Philippians 4:14-19*).
10. To bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (*Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Psalms 127, Proverbs 22:6 and Ephesians 6:4*).
11. To support church leadership, who must give an account while considering the outcome of their way of life, to be respectful of their counsel, and pray regularly for them (*I Peter 5:1-4, Hebrews 13:7, I Thessalonians 5:12 and I Timothy 5:17*).

12. To walk circumspectly in the world, to provide things honest in the sight of all men, to be faithful in engagements, exemplary in behavior, denying all ungodly and worldly lusts (*Romans 12:1-2, 9:21, Ephesians 5:3-18, Galatians 5:16-26, I Thessalonians 4:1-8 & Titus 2:11-14*).
13. To endeavor by word, example and prayer to win others to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (*Matthew 5:13-16, 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, I Corinthians 9:19-23, Philippians 2:14-16, Colossians 4:2-3, I Timothy 2:1-4 & II Timothy 2:10*).

**Article IV**  
**ORGANIZATION**

**Section A-Form of Government**

Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Michigan, USA is an independent and self-governing body, free from the controlling powers of any denomination, association, or church conference. We shall endeavor to maintain a brotherly spirit toward all Bible believing groups regardless of affiliation. No dues or assessments can be imposed upon Grace Chapel without its express consent.

Under the Headship of Christ, the government of Grace Chapel shall be vested in the Elder Board, with the following qualifications:

The Elders shall be elected by vote of the congregation who shall have within its authority the dismissal of elders based upon scriptural grounds and procedures (*Matthew 18, 1 Timothy 5:17-20*)--see Section C

The congregation shall vote on the calling and dismissing of the senior pastor.

- The congregation shall vote on the ordination of pastors.
- Any revision to this constitution shall be subject to congregational vote.
- Church discipline shall be carried out ultimately by a vote by the congregation.
- The congregation shall vote on the approval of the annual budget.

**In sum, the active members of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Waterford, Michigan, USA, who have been appointed and/or elected on to the Elder Board, Deacons, Councils, and Committees by the congregation, shall administer the general rule and direction of the ministry of Grace Chapel.** All leaders are fully accountable to the congregation and function as servant-leaders that govern by scripture and personal example. Church leaders are strictly charged to never “lord it over the church” but instead are to give oversight through love, wisdom, godliness, and humility (*Matt. 20:20-28, Mark 10:35-45*).

**Section B-Structure and Duties**

**Elder Board**

a. Definition:

1. Pastor - The Senior Pastor is the only remunerated staff member to serve on the Elder Board.
2. Lay Elders - non-remunerated Elders who serve on the Elder Board but who are not on the church staff. Acts 20:17, I Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17, Titus 1:5-7, Hebrews 13:7-17 and I Peter 5:1-4.

b. Composition:

1. The Elder Board shall be comprised of at least four lay Elders and the Senior Pastor. All voting.
2. Additional lay Elders can be recommended by the Elder Board subject to congregational vote.

3. Each lay board member shall serve a term of three (3) years staggered, **unless stated otherwise at the time of the election.**

c. Qualifications:

To qualify for the position of Elder, an individual:

1. Shall be a male possessing the attitudes and character described in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and I Peter 5:1-4;
2. Shall be in agreement with the Doctrinal Statement;
3. Shall meet the Leadership Guidelines for Elders/Deacons (see Appendix A), and
4. Qualifications

Shall have been an active member of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Inc., Waterford, Michigan, USA for a minimum of one (1) year immediately prior to his beginning of service on the Elder Board.

OR

Shall have been an active member of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Inc., Waterford, Michigan, USA for a minimum of six (6) months immediately prior to his beginning of service on the Elder Board, have been a member in good standing in his prior church and have a letter of recommendation from that church's Senior Pastor.

d. Duties (see Appendix B-the New Testament Role of Elders):

The Elder Board shall serve with the ministerial/professional staff in insuring the fulfillment of the mission statement of this church. In so doing, the Elder Board:

1. Shall ensure that the Bible in all its truth is accurately taught and applied throughout the church;
2. Shall be responsible for the general spiritual oversight of the congregation, setting policies and giving direction to all church ministries;
3. Shall minister to the needs of individuals and families through visitation, counseling, teaching, discipline, and other related activities;
4. Shall serve as the nominating committee for specific temporary committees; and
5. Provide leadership and direction as they see fit in manners pertaining to the councils.

Administrative duties of the Elder Board shall include:

1. Providing administrative oversight to the ministerial/professional staff;
2. Hiring, setting compensation, and when necessary discharging professional staff personnel for whom it has administrative oversight;
3. Maintaining a policy for fringe benefits, vacations, and sick leave for all paid employees;
4. Assisting the Senior Pastor in administering the church ordinances;
5. Appoint a head usher for services of the church;
6. Administrating a benevolence fund with keen discernment and confidentiality;

7. The Elders shall be responsible for pulpit supply (guest speaker in absence of pastor's speaking) in cooperation with the Senior Pastor.
8. Providing guidelines for application by the Deacons in authorizing use of the facilities and grounds for non-church functions;
9. Appointing committees for which it has administrative oversight;
10. Overseeing the nominating process for electing members to leadership positions;
11. Approval of members to lay ministries according to their spiritual gifts, interests and motivation;
12. Presenting approved members to appropriate council for lay ministry;
13. Acting on behalf of and at the direction of the church in legal matters related to its duties as described herein in accordance with the law.

e. Meetings:

1. The Elder Board shall meet at least once per month.
2. At the first meeting of each new year (based on the commencement of date of new terms of office) a chairman shall be elected whose responsibility shall be to chair all meetings of the elders and the congregation and to represent the Elders and the congregation in matters of business outside Grace Chapel. In addition, a vice-chairman and secretary shall also be elected.
3. The majority of the Elder Board must be present to constitute a quorum.

f. Vacancies:

1. Should a man be led to resign his duties as an Elder or should a vacancy occur due to a move, health reasons, or death.
2. **The position may remain vacant until the next election or the Elder Board may choose to** appoint someone to serve in the vacant position until the next election.

g. Church Discipline of an Elder:

1. Any request for church discipline of an Elder must follow the procedure of I Timothy 5:18-19, Philippians 2:14.
3. Disciplinary action should follow the steps described in Matthew 18:15-17 with the clarification that prior to bringing the matter before the church it shall be reviewed by the remaining Elder Board.
4. Following the action of the Elder Board, if the issue has not been satisfactorily and Biblically resolved, the Elder Board must bring the matter before the congregation for final settlement in accordance with Matthew 18:17.

h. Resolution:

In matters requiring resolution between the Elder Board and other councils or committees, the **Elder Board (because as Elders** they are scripturally charged with the spiritual oversight of the church) shall have precedence.

## Deacons

### a. Composition:

1. There shall be no fewer than five (5) Deacons.
2. Each Deacon shall serve a term of three (3) years staggered, unless stated otherwise at the time of the election.

### b. Qualifications:

1. To qualify for the office of Deacon, an individual:
  - a. Shall be a male, exhibiting the characteristics described in Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13. If married his wife must also demonstrate the character qualities of I Timothy 3:11;
  - b. Shall be in agreement with the Doctrinal Statement;
  - c. Shall meet the Leadership Guidelines for Elders/Deacons (see Appendix A); and
  - d. Shall have been an active member of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, MI, USA for a minimum of at least one (1) year, immediately prior to beginning his term of service as a Deacon.

OR

Shall have been an active member of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Inc., Waterford, Michigan, USA for a minimum of six (6) months immediately prior to his beginning of service as a Deacon, have been a member in good standing in his prior church and have a letter of recommendation from that church's Senior Pastor.

### c. Duties:

1. Deacon, except as otherwise provided herein, shall have responsibilities for:
  - a. Making recommendations to the elders by reporting to the Elder Board;
  - b. Sending a representative to the Financial Committee, Appointing such officers and committees for which it has administrative oversight as elsewhere authorized herein;
  - c. Keeping the property of the Church in good repair and appearance;
  - d. Hiring and discharging of custodial help with the **explicit advise and consent of the Elder Board**;
  - e. Serving as custodian of all church equipment, including vehicles;
  - f. Assisting the Elder Board as requested in the shepherding responsibility of the church, especially with regard to its widows, elderly, and benevolence;
  - g. *The deacons may spend up to but not exceeding \$1000 without the approval of the elders, as special needs arise in their duties.*

## Councils

### a. Definition:

1. A "Council" shall be an administrative/advisory body of the Elder Board that has frequent, regular responsibilities.
2. The councils of Grace Chapel shall be:
  - a. Missions Council; and
  - b. Christian Education Council
3. Other councils may be established as deemed necessary by the members of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, MI, USA.

### b. Composition

#### 1. Missions Council:

- a. Council shall consist of not fewer than five (5) members that are elected by the Congregation.
- b. Each council member shall serve a term of three (3) years staggered, unless a shorter period is stated at the time of the election.

#### 2. Christian Education Council:

- a. Council shall consist of the Ministerial Staff that are involved in Christian education as well as any other member that is serving as an educational program coordinator as approved by the CE Council, Ministerial Staff, and the Elder Board.
- b. Each council member shall serve a term consistent with the calling that he/she feels from the Lord to participate in this ministry or until such time that the CE Council, Ministerial Staff and Elder Board feel that a change is necessary.

### c. Qualifications:

To qualify for any Council of Grace Chapel, an individual:

1. Shall *profess Jesus as their Savior and Lord, be baptized and live a life that shows evidence to their profession (See Appendix A)*;
2. Shall be in agreement with the Doctrinal Statement; and
3. Shall have been an active member of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Inc., Waterford, Michigan, USA for a minimum of one (1) year immediately prior to their term of service on the Council on which he/she is serving.

OR

Shall have been an active member of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Inc., Waterford, Michigan, USA for a minimum of six (6) months immediately prior to their term of service on the Council on which he/she is serving, have been a member in good standing in his prior church and have a letter of recommendation from that church's Senior Pastor.

### a. Responsibility:

#### 1. Missions Council shall be responsible for:

1. Reporting to the Elder Board;
2. Guiding the missionary program of the church;

3. Maintaining communication between the Church and its missionaries;
  - d. Keeping the Church informed concerning the welfare and ministry of its missionaries; and
  4. Preparing and overseeing an annual Missions budget for submission to the Budget Committee.
5. Christian Education Council shall be responsible for:
- a. Reporting to the Elder Board
  - b. Setting the standards and policies for Christian Education, including operating procedure.
  - c. Recruiting teachers and various workers throughout the Christian Education ministry, according to procedures agreed upon by the Christian Education Council and the Elder Board.
  - d. Selecting all Christian Education curriculum and material and presenting it to the Elder Board for approval.
  - e. Working in cooperation with the Deacons in matters regarding the use of the physical facilities for education.
  - f. Preparing and overseeing an annual Christian Education budget for submission to the Budget Committee.

## Committees

### a. Definitions:

1. A "committee" shall be a group of people, elected or appointed to consider, investigate, take action on, or report on specific matters or tasks.
2. Established Committees: Committees as defined in the Constitution of Grace Chapel, Inc..
3. Miscellaneous Committees: In addition to the established committees, leadership may initiate miscellaneous, temporary committees as may be deemed useful for specific purposes.

### b. Established Committees

#### 1. Nominating Committee

- a. The Nominating Committee shall consist of two members from the Elder Board, plus the Senior Pastor, and one member from each of the Councils. In addition, the congregation shall elect up to two (2) members at large, who have been members of Grace Chapel for a minimum of one (1) year. **The two (2) members at large shall be elected by congregational vote, for a term of one (1) year, effective March 1.** The Nominating Committee shall elect one (1) of its committee members to serve as the Chairperson of the committee.
- b. Active members of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, MI, USA, shall nominate fellow active members of said church to fill available ministry positions. Names for consideration should be submitted in writing to the Nominating Committee at least six (6)

weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. No nominations shall be made from the floor at the time of election.

- c. The committee, or a representation of its membership, shall interview each perspective nominee as to qualifications and availability. A simple majority vote of the Nominating Committee shall qualify a name for nomination. The nominations shall be posted at least four (4) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.
- d. (d) All qualified nominees will be placed on the ballot regardless of the number of openings. Individuals may only be elected to one office.
- e. The Nominating Committee shall present at the Annual Meeting, a ballot that includes: the areas of ministry that have vacancies, the total number of nominees needed to fill those vacancies, the length of term for each vacancy and the names of approved nominees to fill each vacancy.
- f. A closed ballot election shall take place with the congregation. Absentee ballots are available upon written request. The nominees who receive the most votes from the congregational vote will be placed immediately into the ministry to which they have been elected.

## 2. Pulpit Committee

- a. The Pulpit Committee shall consist of the Elder Board, and
- b. The congregation shall elect from among the active, voting church members, three (3) additional committee members to assist in evaluating candidates for a particular position.
- c. The Pulpit Committee shall have one (1) of the Elders serve as the Chairman of the committee.**
- d. The Pulpit Committee shall ensure that each potential candidate gives unreserved acceptance to both the Doctrinal Statement and the Leadership Guidelines of the Church.
- e. When the Pulpit Committee is convinced that a potential candidate is suitable for a ministerial staff position, it shall bring the individual before the Church as a candidate.
- f. The Pulpit Committee shall announce the planned appearance of a candidate before the Church at least two (2) weeks prior to such appearance.
- g. Following the candidate's appearance, the Pulpit Committee shall bring a recommendation regarding the candidate's call and the terms thereof, such recommendation being presented at a Special Business Meeting. The recommendation will be evaluated and eventually voted upon by closed ballot.

## 3. Budget Committee

- a. The Budget Committee shall consist of two (2) members from the Board of Elders, and one (1) from the Deacons, Council of Missions, and Council of Christian Education. The Elders may appoint up to two members at large as desired.

- b. **The Budget Committee shall elect one (1) of its committee members to serve as the Chairperson of the committee.**
- c. The Budget Committee shall be responsible for:
  - I. Preparing the total church-operating budget,
  - II. Consulting with each Board, Council, or appropriate Committees in preparation of the budget,
  - III. Submitting a budget for final approval by the Elders, and
  - IV. Presenting the prepared budget to the membership for approval at the Annual Meeting.

#### 4. Building Committee

The Building Committee shall be appointed when needed for major renovations or construction. The size of the committee shall be determined by the reason(s) for its appointment and shall report to the Deacons. **The Building Committee shall elect one (1) of its committee members to serve as the Chairperson of the committee.**

#### 5. Financial Committee

This Committee shall consist of the following: Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Church Secretary, and others as appointed by this Committee and the Elder Board.

- a. **The Financial Committee shall elect one (1) of its committee members to serve as the Chairperson of the committee.**
- b. The financial committee is responsible to assure that accurate, clear, and permanent records of all moneys received and distributed are made. The committee will be responsible to define detailed policies related to recurring financial activities of the Church. The committee will oversee the funds received by the Church are used in support of Church expenditures authorized by the membership.
- c. The committee will make available as needed financial information (via reports) for Elder Board, Deacons, and Budget committee with respect to Church budget, expenditures, and accounts. The committee will oversee the entering of confidential offering records of donors on a weekly basis and validate the accuracy of the recordings. The committee will be responsible to assure the timely and accurate disbursement of yearly tax related information for the staff and congregation.

### **Officers and Staff**

#### 1. Clerk

- a. The Clerk shall be elected by congregational vote, for a term of one (1) year, effective **March 1**.
- b. The Clerk shall keep an accurate and permanent record of all business meetings.

## 2. Financial Secretary

- a. The Financial Secretary shall be appointed by the Elder Board. The Elders shall notify the Congregation each September that the volunteer applications are being accepted for the next calendar year. The individual shall begin a term of one (1) year effective January 1<sup>st</sup> which includes the preparation of any year end reporting.
- b. The Financial Secretary shall:
  - I. Be responsible for keeping a clear, accurate and permanent record of all money received and disbursements made.
  - II. Maintain an accurate, permanent and confidential record of offerings, for which the donor is known. An annual statement of each donor's recorded giving shall be made available for his/her private use by January 31<sup>st</sup> at the latest.
  - III. Oversee check disbursements of funds when authorized.
  - IV. Establishing and maintaining a rotation schedule for recording weekly giving activities.
  - V. Prepare monthly budget to actual reports for the Elders, Deacons and Councils.
  - VI. Prepare an annual report to assist the Budget Committee for review by the Church at the Annual Business Meeting.
  - VII. Responsible to keep the Elder Board updated on the Church's financial status.
  - VIII. Be a co-signer for bank account(s)

## 3. Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Elder Board. The Elders shall notify the Congregation each September that the volunteer applications are being accepted for the next calendar year. The individual shall begin a term of one (1) year effective January 1<sup>st</sup> which includes the preparation of any year end reporting.
- b. The Treasurer and/or Assistant Treasurer shall:
  - I. Provide a strong understanding of the Church financial recording process.
  - II. Review and validate the financial records on a monthly basis, including bank account reconciliations.
  - III. Maintain the integrity of the General Ledger and the Chart of Accounts.
  - IV. Validate the accuracy of any financial policies and recommend enhancements when needed.
  - V. Prepare any necessary tax returns and handle all IRS communications.
  - VI. Oversee the training for new Financial Committee members.
  - VII. Responsible for maintaining the bank account(s) co-signer lists.

## 4. Church Secretary

- a. The Church Secretary shall be hired by the Elder Board subject to an annual review.
- b. Duties include:
  - I. Answering the phone and directing calls as appropriate.

- II. Clerical duties including bulletin preparation, handling mail, maintaining office supplies.
- III. Financial duties as assigned by the Financial Committee.
- IV. Be a co-signer on the bank accounts.

#### 5. Financial Assistant(s)

- a. The Financial Committee, with approval from the Elder Board, will select from the list of active members of Grace Chapel, Financial Assistant(s) to a one-year term beginning on January
- b. The number of Financial Assistants will be determined by the Elder Board.
- c. Duties of the Financial Assistant(s):
  - I. Will assist in the collection, recording, and counting of weekly-donated funds with the oversight of the Treasurer, Secretary, or Deacon committee members;
  - II. Assistants will be rotated on a regular schedule determined by the financial committee.

#### 6. Ministerial and Professional Staff

- a. Definition:

The term “ministerial and professional staff” shall mean those full/part-time staff members of this Church whose duties are largely involved with the spiritual/administrative ministries of the Church. The ministerial staff shall include a Senior Pastor and such other pastors as the Church determines are necessary to maintain the proper conduct of the ministry. The term “professional staff” shall refer to non-pastoral staff positions.
- b. Qualifications:

All members of the Ministerial Staff shall give evidence of the call of God to the ministry of the Gospel and both Ministerial/Professional staff shall give unreserved agreement with the Doctrinal Statement and Leadership Standard.
- c. Call:

Each member of the Ministerial Staff shall be called for an indeterminate period by at least three-fourths (3/4) majority of the votes cast by the voting members present at a meeting held especially for this purpose. Notification of such meeting shall be provided by either written notice or announcement at the morning service(s) of two immediately preceding Sundays.
- d. Termination of Relationship:
  - i. Any member of the Ministerial Staff may terminate his relationship with the Church by not less than thirty (30) and not more than (90) days’ written notice.
  - ii. If, at any time, **the Elder Board shall deem the relationship of a member of the Ministerial Staff to the Church unsatisfactory, the Elder Board, or representatives thereof, shall meet with him/her in order to resolve the matter.**
  - iii. If, however, the relationship between the Ministerial Staff member and the Church continues to be unsatisfactory, the Elder Board may do the following:

- iv. In the case of staff members other than the Senior Pastor, the Elder Board shall have the authority to terminate the relationship with severance pay to be determined.
- v. In the case of the Senior Pastor, the Elder Board shall bring the matter before the Church. A meeting for such purpose shall be held, and the membership shall be notified by mail of such meeting at least one week prior thereto. The Senior Pastor shall have the right to attend such meeting and to present his side of the matter. Any charges or concerns must be submitted in writing to the Senior Pastor at least one week prior to the meeting to allow for adequate preparation. The Church, by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present may declare the Senior Pastor's position vacant upon not less than thirty (30) days and not more than ninety (90) days notice with severance pay to be determined.

e. Duties:

I. The Senior Pastor:

- (a) Shall be responsible for preaching and teaching the Word of God and administering the ordinances of the Church;
- (b) Shall exercise general administrative and pastoral oversight in all interests of the church; and
- (c) Shall be accountable to the Elder Board and, unless otherwise designated by the Constitution, shall be an ex-officio member of all Councils and Committees of the Church.

II. Other Ministerial/Professional Staff:

The Church may choose to retain one or more persons on its Ministerial/Professional Staff with responsibilities in other areas of ministry. All such staff is directly accountable to the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor and the Elder Board shall determine responsibilities.

### **Section D--Election Regulations**

1. Only individuals who are at least 21 years of age and have been a member of Grace Chapel for at least one (1) year shall be eligible for any elective office. OR
2. Shall have been an active member of Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Inc., Waterford, Michigan, USA for a minimum of six (6) months immediately prior to... beginning of service as..., have been a member in good standing in his/her prior church and have a letter of recommendation from that church's Senior Pastor.
3. Unless otherwise stated herein, election to any elective office requires affirmation by majority vote of those voting members present at a properly constituted meeting called for that purpose.
4. No person shall simultaneously hold more than one elective office.
5. Voting membership initiates at 18 years of age.
6. No person shall serve for more than two consecutive terms without taking a one-year absence before resuming service in an elected office.

**Article V**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

*Section A—Requirements*

The membership of **Grace Chapel of Oakland County, Inc., Waterford, MI, USA**, shall be composed only of those who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, who demonstrate evidence of this relationship in their lives, and who express agreement with the Doctrinal Statement.

*Section B—Sequence*

**The Elder Board shall administer the membership procedure described herein.** The Elder Board shall also have the authority to make binding decisions on any membership related issues not covered below.

1. Candidate for Membership:
  - a. A candidate is a person who has indicated his/her desire to become a member of this church by completion of a membership class held for that purpose.
2. Membership Procedure:

A candidate becomes a member by the following procedure:

  - a. Upon request by the candidate, the Elder Board (or at least two designated **by the Elder Board**) shall examine the individual concerning his/her faith in Jesus Christ **and his/her views** regarding the principles, practices, and doctrine of the Church.
  - b. Those conducting the examination shall report the results to the Elder Board.
  - c. The Elder Board shall approve any candidate who:
    - (1) Has trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior
    - (2) Is not in substantive disagreement with any part of the Doctrinal Statement
    - (3) Will abide by the Church Constitution and Covenant; and
    - (4) **Is not currently under church censure or discipline from a sister congregation.**
  - d. Upon approval by the Board of Elders, the candidate shall be a member of the Church and shall be publicly introduced to the congregation for the right hand of fellowship at a Sunday morning service.

*Section C—Duties and Privileges*

1. Routine Faithfulness:

It is expected that every member will faithfully perform **his/her** Christian duty, including the exercising of his/her spiritual gifts in ministry, and as far as possible to attend the meetings and services of the church; to pray for and Biblically support the leadership of the church; and according to God's blessing and personal ability, give financial support to the church.
2. Baptism:

While baptism is not a requirement for church membership, it is the mark of an obedient follower (disciple) of Jesus Christ. All believers, therefore, are firmly encouraged to respond in obedience to the Lord's command for believer's baptism.
3. Lord's Supper:

Any who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ may partake of the Lord's Supper (communion) with this congregation whether or not they are members. The following, however, should be considered:

- a. before partaking all should examine themselves to be sure they are in the faith and are living accordingly; and
  - b. no one under church discipline should participate, short of genuine repentance and reconciliation.
4. **Personal Bible Study:**  
All believers should study to show themselves “approved unto God.” Each Christian must take responsibility for **his/her** own spiritual nourishment. Therefore, the members of Grace Chapel are strongly encouraged to read, study, and apply the scriptures on a regular basis.
  5. **Evangelism:**  
Possessing the “good news” (gospel) unconditionally includes the obligation to share it. It is the glad duty of professing Christians to witness to Christ and give open testimony of His saving grace and power. Since Jesus has universal dominion, His gospel must go to the ends of the world. That is the prime directive given to each and every believer.
  6. **Inactive Status:**  
If a member does not perform his/her duties as described in this constitution for six months or more, the Elder Board shall assign that member to "inactive" status. In such a case, the Elder Board shall contact the person, if possible either personally or by letter to inform him/her of its action and the reasons for it. The Elder Board shall return an inactive member to active status when he/she resumes active support of this church. Those on inactive status may not vote, hold office, or teach. Unless corrected, inactive status is a precursor to loss of membership.

#### *Section D—Termination*

Members may be removed from the membership of the church by any of the following:

1. Death
2. If a member moves permanently out of the area and cannot attend or support the church by reason of distance (missionaries excluded).
3. If a member joins another church.
4. If a member remains inactive for longer than one year.
5. If required by church discipline.
6. Upon written request from the member. If it appears to the Board of Elders that a member has requested removal in an attempt to avoid church discipline that request shall not be given effect until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded.

Termination of membership is at the discretion of the Elder Board and must be preceded by an attempt to inform the persons of the actions and the reasons for it.

#### *Section E—Discipline and Expulsion*

Members must be willing to submit to Scriptural discipline according to the pattern of Matthew 18:15-17, I Corinthians 5:11-13, II Corinthians 2:6-8, II Thessalonians 3:6-15, and other New Testament teachings on the subject. Such procedure is set forth in Appendix C.

The Elder Board shall be responsible for the discipline of any member whose doctrinal position or life conduct is not consistent with the teaching and behavioral standards set forth in the Scripture. The Elder Board shall proceed with due consideration for the spiritual welfare of both the member and the church. The purpose of discipline shall be the spiritual restoration of the erring member and the purity of the Church.

A member under church discipline who persists in **his/her** error and sin and remains unrepentant shall be expelled from the fellowship of Grace Chapel, deprived of all rights of membership, including any ministry responsibility and shall be instructed not to partake of the Lord's Supper and not to attend social functions of the Church. The Elder Board shall report such actions to the Church.

When, after discipline, an individual gives evidence of godly repentance and a desire to obey the teachings of scripture, he/she shall be restored to fellowship by action of the Board of Elders. A report of the restoration shall be made to the membership.

By joining this church, all members agree that these methods shall provide the sole remedy for any dispute arising against the church and its agents, and they waive their right to file any legal action against the church in a civil court or agency  
I Corinthians 6:1-11.

## **Article VI** MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

1. Worship Service(s) and Sunday School:  
Worship Services and Sunday School, as reasonably as possible, shall be held every Lord's Day.
2. Midweek Service(s):  
A midweek service/prayer meeting/Bible Study/children's ministry/etc. may be held on a regularly designated weekday evening.
3. Ordinances:  
The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least monthly.  
Baptism shall be administered, as needed.
4. Annual Business Meeting:  
The Annual Business Meeting shall be held on the third Wednesday of **February**. The fiscal year of Grace Chapel shall run from March 1 through February 28 of the following calendar year.
5. Special Congregational Meetings:  
Special Congregational Meetings may be called by the Elder Board or by written request of **at least one tenth (1/10) of the voting membership of the Church**. The meeting shall be announced at least in the worship service(s) on the Sunday immediately preceding the meeting and notice of the meeting shall be posted on the bulletin board of the Church. A description of the business matters to be considered at any such meeting must be included in the announcement of the meeting.
6. Moderator—Congregation Meetings:  
The chairman of the Elder Board, or his designee, shall serve as moderator of all congregational meetings.
7. Quorum:  
**A majority (50% plus one) of the voting membership shall be required to be present for the transaction of business at the Annual or Congregational Meeting of the Church. Absentee ballots shall be made available upon request and will be counted only on the first vote.**
8. Procedure:  
Robert's Rules of Order, except where superceded by the provisions of this Constitution, shall govern all business meetings of the Church.

**Article VII**  
**Finances**

*Section A—Source of Income*

The financial support of this Church shall be provided by free will gifts and offerings and by such other methods as the Board of Elders may specifically authorize. All funds received by the Church shall be used for the support of Church expenditures authorized by the membership. A Benevolence Fund shall be supplied by an offering announced during Communion Services.

*Section B—Expenditure of Funds*

1. Church:

The Board, Councils, and authorized Committees may incur budgeted expenses for goods and/or services in an amount not to exceed that established by the Church at the Annual Business Meeting. The incurring of single item expenses in excess of the established maximum shall require express authorization from the Elder Board.

No unauthorized person may incur expense on behalf of the Church. Notwithstanding, the Deacons shall have independent authority to expend funds for emergency purposes for the care of the church property.

The Elder Board shall administer the Benevolence Fund in confidence.

2. Church Organizations:

As used herein, the term “church organization” shall mean any entity functioning with the approval and under the auspices of the Church. Expenditures of monies by a church organization shall be in accordance with general Church policy, and all funds in excess of two hundred dollars (\$200) held by such church organization for a period in excess of thirty (30) days shall be transferred to and held in trust by the Treasurer. The Elder Board shall make a written financial report from any church organization available to the Church upon request.

3. Designated Gifts:

The Church and any Church organization shall receive only such designated monetary and/or other gifts as are consistent with the Church’s general principles and policies. Any questions regarding a designated gift shall be referred to the Elder Board for consideration. The determination of the Elder Board will be final.

**Article VIII**  
**DISSOLUTION**

The Elder Board may call a Special Business Meeting for the purpose of dissolving Grace Chapel of Oakland County. Notice of the meeting shall be given at the two (2) Worship Services immediately preceding the meeting and in writing mailed to the membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present at the meetings shall be required to dissolve the Church and distribute the Church assets. All assets remaining after payment of liabilities shall be distributed to one (1) or more Christian organizations of like faith.

**Article IX**  
**AMENDMENTS**

1. This Constitution may be amended at any Annual or Special Business Meeting of the Church **by a majority (50% plus one) of the voting membership**. Written notice of the proposed amendment shall be given or mailed to each voting member at least two weeks prior to the meeting, and such meetings shall be announced at the morning Worship Service(s) on the two Sundays immediately preceding the meeting.
2. Upon adoption of this Constitution, all prior rules become null and void.

**Article X**  
**Appendices & Policies**

1. Appendices
  - (a) Definition: Appendices are supplementary statements of clarification within the concepts of the Constitution.
  - (b) Changes: Appendices may be added and/or amended by the Elder Board.
2. Policies
  - (a) Definition: A policy is a documented course of action designed to define the guiding procedures and principles used to meet specific church needs.
  - (b) Generating a Policy: The Elder Board, Deacons, Councils, Committees or an Elder defined group, can generate a policy. Once the originating group completes the document, it must be submitted to the Elder Board for review. Each policy will include a signature page with a space for each of the Elders to sign.
  - (c) Approval of a Policy: The Elder Board has up to one (1) month to review and vote on the policy. A majority vote approves the policy and the Elder Board will then sign their names to the policy. Then they will make the policy available for all members of Grace Chapel.
  - (d) Availability of Policy: Once a policy is approved, a copy will be placed in the following areas:
    - An electronic copy will be stored in a file labeled "policies"
    - A written copy will be stored in a binder in the Church lobby for public access
    - A written copy will be stored in a binder in the office
  - (e) Reviewing a Policy: All policies will be reviewed on a yearly basis, for validity by the appropriate group. Any policy changes must be presented to the Elder Board for their approval and signatures.

## APPENDIX A GRACE CHAPEL LEADERSHIP STANDARD

Leadership is influence. All leadership has affect. The only question is what the *effect* will be. For this reason Grace Chapel is careful to insure the integrity of its leadership staff. "Like people like priest" (*Hosea 4:9*), is the biblical principle that reminds us that we can only make the difference when we are different. Leaders are held to a higher standard because what *should* be true of every Christian *must* be true of them.

The scripture speaks expressly to the Elders and Deacons of the church and therefore those holding the positions for those offices outlined in 1 Timothy 3, and Titus 1 must maintain the guidelines.

Since the councils of Missions and Christian Education (or any councils added as needed) are not Biblically mandated, it is our desire to show grace in extending opportunity to serve on these councils. Members of such councils shall adhere to the standard of Acts 6:2-4.

### Leadership Guidelines for Elders/Deacons (I Timothy 3:8-12)

#### "PERSON OF DIGNITY"

*Outwardly* this means that a person should be worthy of respect in both mannerism and conduct; in simple terms, he is a dignified person. *Inwardly* that dignity is rooted in the recognition of the importance and gravity of our calling as a Christian. Such individuals do not act inappropriately, because they are serious minded. Leaders are honorable, because they are able to weigh values and make biblically wise decisions.

#### "NOT DOUBLE-TONGUED"

He is not to be guilty of double talk but consistent in all his communication. He is not to talk out of both sides of his mouth, giving rise to misunderstanding and confusion because he says one thing to one person and something that contradicts it to another. Nor is he to say one thing and know another. Nor are we to speak one thing to people's faces and another behind their backs. A leader is to be a person of his word; thus a candidate must be sincere, honest and truthful.

#### "NOT ADDICTED TO MUCH WINE"

Literally this means that the leader is not to be one "who lingers beside his wine." In other words such persons were to be moderate if they used any. However, there is something to be remembered here. The wine in Paul's day was much lower in alcoholic content than our own today; (cf. "A Christian Perspective on Wine Drinking" by Norman L. Geisler in *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 139, No. 553). Our wine today would have been considered the strong drink of the Scripture. (*Proverbs 20:1; 23-35*) Therefore, this verse would strongly imply that the leader should be temperate to the highest degree. (*Romans 14:21*)

#### "NOT FOND OF SORDID GAIN"

In this statement, "fond" and "sordid" are the qualifying words. The man who functions in this capacity is not to have a mercenary spirit. He is not to be "greedy" of "sordid" (i.e. disgraceful – dishonest) gain, which might lead him to prostitute his ministry for the sake of "unrighteous mammon" (*Luke 16:11*). Legitimate gain is perfectly acceptable; but when an individual focuses his eyes on material wealth, and makes this the pursuit of his

life, the Bible counts him as covetous, even idolatrous (*Colossians 3:5*) and incapable of giving true spiritual service (*Matthew 6:24*).

#### “HOLDING TO THE MYSTERY OF THE FAITH WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE”

A qualified individual *possesses* and *clings* to the “mystery of the Faith” which is the truth as revealed in the gospel. Regarding scripture there must be a conscious certainty of conviction. A leader must be fully persuaded of biblical truth if he is to help others in spiritual need. The way of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone should mark his conduct and confession. Such a man must also be honest with his own conscience, doing all that is possible to remain close to Christ and obedient to His Word. (*Colossians 3:15*)

#### “TESTED-BEYOND REPROACH”

A man’s life must first sustain the test of careful observation. Spiritual stability must be proven; he is to be tested not with a written exam but as a living example. This takes time but when actions and attitudes are “beyond reproach” scripturally, such an individual will qualify as a valuable model both within the church and outside it.

#### “IN THE SAME WAY, HIS WIFE IS TO BE...”

“*Dignified*” – worthy of respect; “*not malicious gossips*” – that is, not murmuring busybodies, nor slanderers who circulate half truths, lies or innuendoes; but “*temperate*” – modest, and “*faithful*” – trustworthy in everything, following through on assigned duties.

#### “HUSBAND OF ONLY ONE WIFE”

This requirement is not that a teacher must be married, but that if he is, he is to (literally), be a “one-woman man”. In a society where polygamy and concubinage was rampant, the Apostle Paul makes it very clear that a teacher is to be loyal to one spouse and to one alone. He is to be devoted to his wife in fulfillment of the covenantal relationship which witnesses to Christ’s love of His Bride, the church. (*Ephesians 5:25-27; Proverbs 18:22; Luke 16:18*)

#### “GOOD MANAGER OF HIS HOUSEHOLD”

If a person cannot oversee a smaller responsibility, don’t enlarge it! Again this does not mean that an individual has to have a family – but if he does, it should have a well-ordered and scripturally trained household. A responsible leader should be exemplary in his home relationships. This does not imply domestic perfection. It does require that where a problem exists, it is promptly addressed and biblically remedied. The way he manages his home, and cares for his family, is a clear indication of how he will serve the church.

### Leadership Guidelines for Councils and Committees

To summarize from Acts 6:2-4, leaders should be:

1. Persons of good reputation (*Proverbs 22:1, Philipians 2:15*)
2. Persons full of the Holy Spirit (*Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 5:18*)
3. Persons full of wisdom (*James 1:5; 3:17*)
4. Persons willing to serve (*John 13: 1-17; Philipians 2:3-8*)

\*N.B. With regard to leaders, two further qualifications are to be applied:

1. They must be active members of Grace Chapel and in hearty agreement with our doctrinal statement.
2. They should be spiritually gifted as leaders.

## Appendix B

### The New Testament Role of Elder

With the close of the apostolic era, the office of elder became the highest level of congregational leadership. The elder is called by the Holy Spirit and charged (*Acts 20:28*) with the care, instruction and spiritual oversight of the local church. Thus biblical eldership entails immense responsibility. That responsibility puts elders at the heart of New Testament church ministry.

#### *Responsibilities of an Elder*

Elders are literally caretakers of the church. Their function is to provide general oversight of the affairs of the congregation. As those who “rule” (*I Timothy 5:17*) or who “have charge over”, (*I Thessalonians 5:12*), their leadership is by precept and example (*Hebrews 13:7*), not arrogated authority. As spiritual overseers of the flock elders determine church policy (*Acts 15:22*); guard against false doctrine (*Acts 20:28*); oversee (*Acts 20:28*); ordain men (*I Timothy 4:14*); rule, teach and preach (*I Timothy 5:17*); exhort and refute (*Titus 1:9*) and serve as shepherds by “proving to be examples to the flock” (*I Peter 5: 1-4*). In order to carry out these duties, the elder shall be responsible:

1. To lead the church in biblical direction under the Headship of Jesus Christ, our Chief Shepherd (*I Peter 5: 1-4*).
2. To guard the church, the flock of God, in all areas of biblical practice and doctrine (*Acts 20: 28; Titus 1: 9*).
3. To oversee the household of God, which is the church, including: a) establishing policies, reviewing precedents and determining practices for Grace Chapel, b) assessing the ministries of the church as to their direction and effectiveness, c) evaluating the pastoral staff with positive suggestions and personal support, d) assisting the other church councils in fulfilling their responsibilities, e) strategic planning, and f) pastoral care of the congregation.\*
4. To watch over the purity of the church, the Bride of Christ, by the exercise of church discipline.  
(*Matthew 18: 15-17; I Corinthians 5: 1-13; I Thessalonians 5:12-13*)
5. To influence others for Christ by life example and biblical teaching. (*I Peter 5:3; Hebrews 13:7 and I Timothy 4: 12*)
6. To pray for the church. (*Acts 6:4; James 5:14*)
7. To help resolve ministry issues both doctrinal and practical. (*Acts 6: 1-7; Philippians 4: 2,3*)
8. To support all board decisions in a spirit of unity while conducting disagreements in love, regardless of strong personal feelings. (*I Timothy 3: 3; II Timothy 2: 24,25*)

\* N.B. Pastoral care must be vigorously pursued and biblically informed. This requires: 1) regular contact/personal involvement with those individuals assigned to each elder, 2) home and hospital visitation as needs require, 3) scriptural counseling, 4) intercessory prayer and 5) consistent church attendance.