

GRACE BAPTIST TABERNACLE

ARTICLE 1

1.01—GRACE BAPTIST TABERNACLE

This congregation of believers shall be known as **GRACE BAPTIST TABERNACLE** “The church is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the state of “**TENNESSEE**”

1.02—PURPOSE

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) of 1986, for such purposes including, but not limited to, proclaiming the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; establishing and maintaining religious worship; educating believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, and maintaining missionary activities in the United States and around the world.

ARTICLE 2 STATEMENT OF FAITH

2.01—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the statement of faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members, staff and volunteers. All literature, whether print or electronic, used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the statement of faith. All activities permitted or performed in any facilities owned, rented or leased by this church, or engaged in by any member of the church staff (volunteer or paid), and all decisions of the administration of this church shall not conflict with the statement of faith. In all conflicts regarding interpretation of the statement of faith, the pastor and board, on behalf of the church, have the final authority.

2.02—STATEMENT OF FAITH

- A. **Beliefs on Doctrine:** The holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis for our Statement of Faith. The ordinances of the church are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. We believe scriptural baptism is by immersion in water or a believer in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This act symbolizes the believer’s faith and obedience, as well as his/her identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Lord. The Lord’s Supper is the partaking of the bread and of the cup in symbolic remembrance of the Lord, whose body was given and whose blood was shed for the remission of sins.

1. **The Scriptures:** We believe that the Bible was written by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21) and inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16). This inspiration was verbal (1 Corinthians 2:9-13) and plenary (complete) (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and without error and extends to the original writings. It is the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.
2. **The Trinity:** We believe there is one, and only one, true and living God; while there is indivisible unity in the Godhead, He exists in three separate persons – God, the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit – equal in every divine attribute and executing distinct. But harmonious offices in the work of creation and redemption, (Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; John 6:27; Acts 5:3-4; 2, 2 Corinthians 13:14 and Hebrews 1:8).
3. **God the Father:** We believe that God the Father is the first person of the Trinity and is the eternal, unchanging, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-wise, all-loving, completely just and perfectly holy, sovereign Ruler and Sustainer of the universe (Genesis 1:1; Ephesians 4:6; Isaiah 6:1-3, 40:21-28 and 43:10-13). He is the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the Father of all true believers, (John 17:1-51).
4. **God the Son:** We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God. He asserts oneness with the Father, (John 10:10) and is called God, (Hebrews 1:8). We believe He has the characteristics of God, (John 8:58; Matthew 28:18) and is of the same substance as the Father, (Colossians 2:9), therefore, He is God.
5. **God the Holy Spirit:** We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person who is equal with God the Father and God the Son (Matthew 28:19; Romans 8:8-16; John 15:26). He was active in the creation (Genesis 1:1-2 and 1:26). He convicts, seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer (John 16:7-15; Ephesians 4:30). We receive the Holy Spirit instantaneously at salvation and He begins these ministries in us (Ephesians 1:12-14; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22).
6. **Salvation:** We believe the Scriptures teach that Christ died for the whole world and that salvation of sinners is divinely initiated, wholly of grace, and accomplished only through the mediatorial work of the Son of God. It is wholly apart from works and is upon the sole condition of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and never without genuine repentance. In order to be saved the sinner must be born again, personally receiving Christ as Savior, being regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit through faith in God' Word and becoming the recipient of a new nature. The great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification, that judicial act of God accompanied by the pardon of sin and the imputation of divine righteousness, not because of any work of righteousness on our part, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, The believer who has exercised personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is completely justified and in possession of eternal life which is eternally secure. Habakkuk 2:4; John 1:11-12; 3:3-17; 10:28-29; Acts 13:39; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 4:2; 1 Peter 1:18-23; 2 Peter 1:4; 2:1; 1 John 5:11-13.
7. **Substitutionary Atonement:** We believe Christ died in the place of sinners (1 Peter 3:18) in order to pay the debt owed by sinful man to a righteous God (1 John 2:2).
8. **Bodily Resurrection of Christ:** We believe Christ arose physically from the grave after three days (Luke 24:36-46; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).
9. **Virgin Birth:** We believe the coming of Christ "in the flesh" was predicted by Isaiah and processed by the Virgin Birth (Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6). He was born of Mary alone (Matthew 1:16) and conceived of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).

10. **The Ordinances:** We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer done in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Baptism is performed under the authority of the local church to show forth our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior. Baptism pictures our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. It is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership. The Lord's Supper, or communion, commemorates the death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the bread representing His body that was broken for us and the fruit of the vine representing His blood that was shed for us. Before partaking of these elements each person should examine himself, "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body".
11. **The Church:** We believe the Scriptures teach that the local church is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word. Its Scriptural officers are pastors, sometimes called bishops or elders, and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

B. Additional Religious Beliefs

1. Marriage and Sexuality

- a. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one, legitimate meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, covenantal union, as delineated by Scripture. Marriage ceremonies performed in any facility owned, leased or rented by this church will be only those ceremonies sanctioned by God, joining one man with one woman as their genders were determined at birth (on their birth Certificate). Whenever there is a conflict between the church's position and any new legal standard for marriage, the church's statement of faith, doctrines and biblical positions will govern. (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:22-23; Mark 10:6-9; I Cor. 7:1-9)
- b. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage as defined in (a) above. We believe that any other type of sexual activity, identity or expression that lies outside of this definition of marriage, including those that are becoming more accepted in the culture and the courts, are contradictory to God's natural design and purpose for sexual activity. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9-10; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)
- c. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two-distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God and the rejection of one's biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person. (Genesis 1:26-27)
- d. The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis for our statement of faith. The ordinances of the church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe scriptural baptism is by immersion in water of a believer in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy

Spirit. This act symbolizes the believer's faith and obedience, as well as his/her Identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Lord. The Lord's Supper is the partaking of the bread and of the cup in symbolic remembrance of the Lord, whose body was given and whose blood was shed for the remission of sins.

2. Family Relationships

- a. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)
- b. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a wonderful gift and heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate training and discipline. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

3. Divorce and Remarriage. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce except in cases of adultery. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Mark 10:11-12; Rom. 7:1-3; I Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6; I Cor. 7:10-16)

4. Sanctity of Life

- a. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion is murder and constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:13-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:36, 44)
- b. We believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, facilitates premature death, is assuming a decision that is to be reserved for God. We do not believe that discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome is euthanasia. (Ex. 20:13; 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)

5. Love. We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal graciously, humbly, gently, and patiently with those who oppose us. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages

in such actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; I Peter 3:8-9; 1 John 3:17-18)

6. Lawsuits within the Church. We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits within the church. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)
7. Protection of Children. We believe that children are from the Lord and must be absolutely protected within the church from any form of abuse or molestation. The church has zero tolerance for any person, whether paid staff, volunteer, member, or visitor, who abuses or molests a child. (Ps. 127:3-5; Matt. 18:6; Matt. 19:14; Mark 10:14)

ARTICLE 3 MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 3.01—QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Those seeking membership must, through their actions, words, lifestyle and affiliations, evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Membership will be granted upon the recommendation of the pastor and a majority vote by the church congregation, and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- By baptism at this local church following a profession of faith as a believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;
- By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith; or
- By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion in another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice.

When a person joins the church, they will be required to attend a new membership class led by a member of the pastoral staff or appointee, in which they will review the statement of faith, the bylaws of this church, general church practices and policies, and expectations of members. At the conclusion of the class, the new member will be interviewed by the pastor or pastoral staff to ensure they fully subscribe to the statement of faith contained herein and agree to submit to the authority of the church and its leaders, Class after membership.

SECTION 3.02—PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. Only members of at least sixteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy voting. There will be no absentee voting unless approved by the pastor/board. The eligible membership of the church may only exercise voting privileges in those areas that are defined and limited by these bylaws. Members may not vote to initiate any church action; rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and the board.

- B. This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the board. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor and board shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The board shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him.
- C. Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor, (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board), be treated as a trespasser.
- D. A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church and committee meetings, provided he shall have made a verbal or written request upon the church and the church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date. Board meeting minutes and discipline committee meetings, as well as other information involving privacy interests such as, but not limited to, donor records, lists of names and addresses of church members, individual benevolence, individual salaries, health information, background checks, and social security numbers, are exempt from this provision and are not subject to inspection or copy without a court order. The church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and materials, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

SECTION 3.03—AUTOMATIC TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding three months. This provision may be waived at the discretion of the pastor and the board upon the showing of good cause.
- B. The membership of any individual shall automatically terminate without notice if the member adopts opinions—verbally, in print, or in any other manner or medium—that are in direct contravention to the church's statement of faith. Since agreement with the church's statement of faith is a requirement for membership in this church, the member's non-conforming statements will be treated as the member's resignation by the pastor and the board.
- C. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.
- D. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if a member files a lawsuit in violation of section 2.02(B) (6).

- E. The membership of an individual will automatically terminate upon his or her death.
- F. For any memberships terminated in accordance with the above provisions, with the exception of memberships terminated under (E) above, the church may send a letter informing the prior member of the termination, but this is not required.

SECTION 3.04—TRANSFER OR RESIGNATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Members not under the disciplinary process of section 3.05 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church. A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastor.

SECTION 3.05—DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER

- A. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders the spiritual growth and testimony of an individual in the local church or the body as a whole, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
- B. If reconciliation is not reached, a second member is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
- C. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (A) and (B) have been taken, the two members aware of the offense shall, in keeping with Matthew 18, bring the issue before the pastor and the board, who are representatives of the church body.
- D. The pastor and board shall attempt to meet with the offending brother. If reconciliation is not reached, the pastor and board, as representatives of the church body, shall, upon a majority vote of those present at a meeting of the board, terminate the individual's membership without further notice to the individual(s). Unless the matter involves an issue of safety or security to the members of the church at large, the specifics of the matter shall not be addressed in a public forum or with the general church membership.
- E. The pastor and board shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline. If the pastor or a board member is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not be permitted to vote on his own membership termination.
- F. For any memberships terminated in accordance with this provision, the pastor may cause a letter to be written informing the prior member of the termination, although he is not required to do so.
- G. The procedures provided in this section are based on Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:113; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

SECTION 3.06—AFFILIATED CO-Laborer or WATCH-CARE

Those desiring fellowship, accountability and opportunities for service with this assembly on a temporary basis but who maintain membership in a like body of believers outside this locality may be granted affiliated co-laborer status with this church. The affiliated co-laborer may be eligible to serve in certain capacities determined by the pastor and board and may attend member fellowship events. This affiliation does not, however, grant membership or the rights of membership to the individual(s) so granted. Affiliated co-laborers shall not be entitled to hold any office, vote in, or have any say in any church matter, and shall not be counted for quorum purposes. A person wishing to become an affiliated co-laborer with this assembly must make a request to the pastor or his designee who will determine if affiliated co-laborer status should be granted to the individual. If the pastor or his designee so determines, the person may be granted co-laborer status upon a majority vote of the board.

ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS

SECTION 4.01—DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the chairman of the deacon board shall serve as vice president of the corporation; the church secretary shall serve as secretary of the corporation; and the church treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the corporation.

SECTION 4.02—CHURCH OFFICERS

The church officers are pastor(s), board members (deacons and trustees), secretary, treasurer, and any other officers the church deems necessary.

SECTION 4.03—ELIGIBILITY FOR CHURCH OFFICERS

- A. The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the statement of faith set forth in Article 2. All church officers, upon request of the pastor, shall affirm verbally their agreement with the statement of faith.
- B. All church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their offices.
- C. Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office or position. Affiliated co-laborers with this ministry are not eligible for such election or appointment.

SECTION 4.04—ELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS

The annual election of officers by the church membership shall occur during the month of December at the annual church business meeting. Officers of the church must be elected by a majority of the eligible

membership present at a regular or special church business meeting. The pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other church officers, subject to a confirmation vote by a majority of the eligible church membership, present and voting at any regular or special church business meeting. Members may submit nominations for corporation officers to the pastor and the board. The pastor and the board shall then serve as the nominating committee for all general elections of officers.

SECTION 4.05—TERMS OF SERVICE FOR OFFICERS

- A. The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular or special church business meeting by following the procedures outlined in Article 6, provided notice of the meeting shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to the meeting. A majority of the eligible members present and voting shall be required to remove the pastor from office. Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership.
- B. The term of service for all offices and positions in the church, except the pastor and other staff members, shall be one year, at the expiration of which the officers may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- C. A vacancy occurring in any office or on the board, except in the case of the pastor, may be filled at any regular church business meeting by a majority vote of eligible members present.
- D. All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed, unless removed for disciplinary reasons.
- E. Members of the board may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other board members, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the board.
- F. Deacons may also choose to move themselves to an inactive status at any time by providing a written notice to be reviewed by the Pastor and chairman of Deacons.

SECTION 4.06—CALLING A PASTOR

Upon the resignation, death or dismissal of the pastor, the church shall seek a candidate who subscribes to the statement of faith and bylaw provisions of the church and whose life aligns with the qualifications of a pastor as described in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The church shall abide by the following guidelines for calling a pastor:

- A. The board shall select a pulpit committee to consist of all board members and up to five other members elected by a majority vote of the board. The pulpit committee shall interview potential candidates and will only consider men who completely subscribe to the statement of faith and who have read these bylaws.

- B. The interview process for selecting a pastoral candidate shall include, at a minimum, the following: a background check, a credit check, a reference check, and the filling out of a detailed application that explains the potential candidate's philosophy of ministry as well as his positions on issues of doctrinal significance.
- C. Upon a majority vote of the pulpit committee, the pulpit committee will formally announce the candidate to the church, after which the candidate must preach at least one regularly scheduled church service and be available for a church-wide question/answer time prior to being voted upon by the church membership.
- D. Notice from the pulpit must be given 2 consecutive Sundays prior to a formal candidate's preaching service(s), and 2 consecutive Sundays prior to the church membership vote.
- E. The candidate must be elected as pastor by a majority vote of members present and qualified to vote. This vote shall be taken by written, secret ballot. The pulpit committee will only present for consideration to the membership one candidate at a time, and an up or down vote must be cast prior to consideration of other potential candidates.

ARTICLE 5 DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS

SECTION 5.01—THE PASTOR

- A. The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God. He shall administer the ordinances of the church, act as moderator, or shall appoint a moderator, at all church meetings for the transaction of church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and watch over the spiritual interests of the membership. In all conflicts regarding interpretation of Scripture, the pastor has the final authority.
- B. The pastor and board, on behalf of the church, shall institute committees and appoint the members of the various committees at the annual church business meeting or, in the case of a vacancy or newly created committee, at any duly called special meeting. He shall serve as the president of the corporation. He shall publicly inform all newly elected officers of the functions and responsibilities of their respective offices. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the church and shall perform such other duties as generally appertain to the position of pastor. The pastor shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry God has given him.
- C. All appointments for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof, including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the church for any other purposes shall be under the control of the pastor, who, with the advice and counsel of the board, shall be able to determine the appropriateness of all property use, as well as persons permitted to use the church property.
- D. The pastor shall be responsible to fill the pulpit for each regularly scheduled church service as well as any special services. In the event of his absence, he (or the chairman of the deacon board in the case of a vacancy in the office of pastor or where the pastor is temporarily unable to perform his duties) shall be responsible to invite speakers from within the membership or outside the church to preach in a manner consistent with the beliefs articulated in the statement of faith.

- E. The pastor and the board shall be responsible to establish mandatory safety and security procedures for all ministries and programs. There will be a zero-tolerance policy with regard to abuse of minors; and any reasonable suspicions of child abuse alleged to be perpetrated by staff, volunteers, members or non-members will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement or child abuse prevention authorities. The pastor or his designee will be responsible to provide yearly child abuse prevention training for all staff and volunteers.

SECTION 5.02—THE BOARD

A. The board shall assist the pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, in conducting the church services, and in performing all other work of the church. The board is responsible for making preparations to observe church ordinances and shall consider applications for church membership and affiliated co-laborers. The benevolence committee shall disburse the benevolence fund in cooperation with the pastor, and shall assist him in all other evangelistic efforts of the church. The board shall assist the pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries. They shall provide the pulpit supply and choose a moderator for church meetings if the pastor is unavailable or the office of pastor is vacant. Upon the death, resignation, or dismissal of the pastor, the board may appoint a pulpit committee. There shall be a minimum of 6 board members every year.

B. Deacons:

1. Responsibilities: Deacons are first and foremost servants. The word "Deacon" translated in the original language in the Bible means "servant" Deacons are to serve the body of Christ as needed in support of the ministry of the pastor and church in the following:
 - a. Lead the church in the achievement of its mission
 - b. Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers
 - c. Care for the church members and others in the community
2. Number of Deacons: the church shall elect as many qualified men to serve as deacons as deemed necessary by the Pastor and active Deacon board to fulfill the ministry of the church
3. Minimum Qualifications: A Deacon must:
 - a. Confess to be a born again Christian with a personal Knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and living a life controlled by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Read and accept the Scriptural basis for deacons as prescribed in Acts 6:3-8 and 1st Timothy 3:12, a deacon shall be the husband of but one wife, neither he/ his wife have been divorced.
 - c. Support by prayer and participation in the entire church ministry, particularly Sunday school, Sunday worship services, mid-week services, deacon family ministry plan and other services of God's work insofar as able in good faith and conscience.

- d. Deacons are servants who lead and leaders who serve. The deacons shall join the pastor in providing spiritual oversight of the church. Together with the pastor, the deacons shall meet to deal with matters pertaining to the responsibilities of the deacon board.
- e. They shall be a member of Grace Baptist Tabernacle for at least one year prior to the time of nomination for election as a deacon-in-service.
- f. Shall be a male of at least 25 years of age prior to the time of nomination for election as a deacon-in-service.
- g. Must be a baptized-believer for at least three years prior to the time of nomination for election as a deacon-in-service.

C. Trustees:

1. At least three trustees shall be elected by the church to serve as legal officers for the church.

2. Responsibilities

- a. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property of the church without specific vote authorizations of each action.
- b. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, lease or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church approved matters.
- c. If a vacancy occurs during the year, a vote will be conducted during a regular or called business meeting to fill the remaining term of the vacated position.

D. The pastor and the board shall constitute the board of directors of the corporation. In addition to the various powers specifically granted the board under these bylaws, the board has authority to exercise the following powers, upon authorization by a majority vote of the eligible members at a duly-called business meeting.

1. To purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church.
2. To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges.
3. To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation.

E. All powers of the board, (whether deacons or other appointed groups) shall be compatible with the laws of the state of Tennessee.

F. The board shall, in conjunction with the pastor, conduct an annual ministry liability and safety review of the following policies and/or topics: child protection, including but not limited to worker screening procedures, child abuse reporting procedures, and worker training on child abuse prevention; building safety; security measures; insurance; financial accountability ; transportation; sexual harassment; policies including a whistleblower policy, a document retention and destruction policy, and a church financial investment policy (if applicable).

G. Each board member shall review the bylaws annually and shall bring suggested changes to a meeting of the board that has been designated for the purpose of reviewing the bylaws.

SECTION 5.03—CHURCH SECRETARY

The church secretary, along with any assistant or co-officer or church clerk, shall:

- A. Certify and keep at the office of the church, the original bylaws or a copy, including all amendments or alterations to the bylaws, minutes of meetings, the membership roll, baptisms, and records of any special events which are of historical interest to the church; and shall deliver such documents to his or her successor upon leaving office.

Maintain and file minutes of all church business and board meetings, including the time and place of holding, the notice given, the names of those present unless a church-wide meeting, and an accurate record of all church business approved at each meeting. A copy of these minutes shall be kept as a permanent record of the church and shall be made available at all reasonable times to:

- B. Proper person on terms provided by law and pursuant to these bylaws.
- C. Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law; see that reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed.
- D. See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. In case of the absence or disability of the secretary, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the pastor or by the chairman of the deacon board.
- E. Serve as the secretary of the corporation and be a member in good standing.

SECTION 5.04—TREASURER

The church treasurer, along with any assistant or co-officer, shall:

- A. Count, or cause to be counted, along with two other persons so appointed, and record in a permanent record all the monies received in offerings for the church. This shall be done following each service or day of services of the church.
- B. Convey in a timely manner all funds received to the person designated by the board for verification and deposit in the bank, including moneys received from outside sources.
- C. Maintain a permanent weekly record of individual giving for all donations, offerings, contributions and gifts, and guard the confidentiality of these records. Issue an official receipt to each contributor at the end of the fiscal year.
- D. Keep in the church office an accurate and permanent record of all financial transactions of church funds. Make reports of itemized disbursements and the financial condition of the church as requested by pastor and the board, and for annual, quarterly or otherwise special or regular business meetings; and deliver such records to his or her successor upon leaving office.
- E. Serve as treasurer of the corporation and be a member in good standing.

SECTION 5.05—DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS

- A. All records are the property of the church and must be kept in the church office.
- B. Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the bylaws for a period of three months may be removed from his office, at the discretion of the pastor, and another may be appointed by the pastor to serve the un-expired term.

ARTICLE 6 CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS AND MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

SECTION 6.01—ANNUAL CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING

- A. The annual church business meeting, for the election of officers and the transaction of other business, shall be held on 2nd Friday of December. A quorum shall consist of the eligible members present. Public notice of the meeting shall be given from the pulpit for two successive Sundays immediately preceding the meeting.
- B. The pastor or his designee shall serve as moderator of church business meetings. In the temporary absence of the pastor, or if the office of pastor is vacant, the board chairman or his designee shall serve as moderator. In the event of a conflict of interest, the deacon board may substitute a moderator.

- C. The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling.
- D. For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers (or children, if circumstances so warrant) to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, he may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises and treat the person as a trespasser.
- E. The fiscal year of the church shall begin **January 1st and end December 31st**.

SECTION 6.02—CHURCH SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

The pastor (or the board if the office of pastor is vacant or if the pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special church business meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the church from the pulpit at least two Sunday and not less than two weeks prior to said meeting. A meeting for the calling of a pastor or for the discipline or removal of the pastor shall be called in accordance with the provision of sections 4.05 and 4.06.

SECTION 6.03—VOTING AT CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS

Voting at any church business meeting is limited to eligible members in good standing with the church who are physically present at the meeting. Absentee voting (unless approved by the pastor/board) is not permitted, and any member who is undergoing church discipline at the time of a vote is not permitted to vote. A majority vote (60%) will constitute the requisite number of votes for passage of amendments and motions, whether by the board voting at a board meeting or by the members voting in a church business meeting.

SECTION 6.04—MOTIONS AT CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS

Any member in good standing will be allowed to make a motion. The church can vote to approve or disapprove of said motion.

SECTION 6.05—MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

- A. Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the board shall be held at such time and place as the board shall determine.

- B. Special Meetings. The pastor or any two (2) board members may call a special meeting of the board at any time, and nothing contained in this article shall be construed as limiting, fixing, or affecting the time or date when a meeting called by action of the board may be held.
- C. Notice of Meetings
1. Requirement of Notice: Notice shall not be required for regularly scheduled meetings of the board unless there has been a change to the time, date, or location of such regularly scheduled meetings, in which case notice shall be given in accordance with this section of the bylaws. Notice shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of this section for all special meetings of the board.
 2. Method of Notice: Notice shall be sent to each board member for special meetings by means of the secretary's chosen method of communication, whether by postal mail, phone, or email at each board member's address or phone number as it appears in the records of the church or as supplied by the board member to the secretary for the purpose of notice. Notice shall be given by or at the direction of the chairman of the deacon board or the pastor. In the event the pastor or chairman resident refuses to give notice, any board member may give notice of any meeting. The secretary is responsible to verify that notice is duly provided.
 3. Content of Notice: Notice of any special meeting shall state the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.
 4. Time of Notice: Notice of any special meeting shall be delivered by the person charged with giving notice, not less than two (2) days before the date of the meeting.
 5. Waiver of Notice: A board member may waive notice of a meeting of the board by written statement, and attendance by the board member at the meeting without protest shall be deemed waiver of notice.
- D. Quorum. A quorum for meetings shall consist of a majority of the board. If a quorum is not attained, then those present shall adjourn the meeting to a new date certain duly noticed to all board members for not more than ten (10) days thereafter, and at that later-noticed meeting a quorum shall consist of those board members then present.
- E. Roles. At every meeting of the board, the chairman, or in his absence, the officer designated by the chairman or in the absence of a designation, the person (who shall be one of the officers, if any is present) chosen by a majority of the board members present shall act as chairman and/or moderator, and shall conduct the meeting in an orderly manner, as determined by the chairman. The secretary of the board shall act as secretary of all meetings and shall take accurate minutes of board meetings and promptly deliver such minutes to the church secretary. In the absence of the secretary, the chairman may appoint another person to act as secretary of the meetings.

- F. Participation in Meetings. Any one or more board member may participate in a meeting of the board by means of a conference telephone, web-based conference, or similar communications equipment or device, by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time. Participating by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting for purposes of determining if a quorum is present.

ARTICLE 7 EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

SECTION 7.01—PURPOSE

The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To help fulfill this responsibility of imparting biblical truth and furthering the Great Commission, this church shall establish and maintain an educational program (either a Sunday school and/or a weekday educational program) for the purposes of winning souls to Christ and teaching Bible doctrine, godly worship, and biblical Christian living. To this end, the church shall engage in educational ministries.

SECTION 7.02—CHURCH PARTICIPATION

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor and board, on behalf of the church, may permit non-church members to participate in church educational programs or courses of instruction if they deem it in the best interest of the church.

SECTION 7.03—AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT OF FAITH

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church and shall be taught and presented in full agreement with the statement of faith of the church and the inerrant Word of God. The church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or who expresses disagreement with the statement of faith or who adopts or lives a lifestyle inconsistent with the beliefs and practices of the statement of the faith or this church, whether in or out of the classroom.

ARTICLE 8 COMMITTEES

SECTION 8.01—COMMITTEES

The pastor and board, on behalf of the church, may designate or form any committees and may appoint members and/or chairpersons of said committees as considered by the pastor and board to be in the best

interests of the church. These committees may be standing or temporary (special) committees. The Pastor is a de facto member of all committees.

SECTION 8.02—ACTIONS OF COMMITTEES

Committees, whether standing or special, have no authority to act on behalf of the corporation. Their primary function is to research and recommend. Committees shall make available upon request all records and materials to the pastor and board, who shall have the right to overrule any plans or decisions made by the committee. Each committee shall have a secretary that keeps minutes of each meeting and shall timely submit the minutes to the pastor and church secretary to be filed with church records. If deemed appropriate by the pastor and board, the committee secretary, in conjunction with the chairman, shall submit an annual report to the church of the decisions and plans of the committee. Each committee will be accountable to the pastor.

ARTICLE 9 DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. If the church receives a designated contribution for these funds or for any other designated purpose, the church will attempt to honor the designation; however, all designated contributions shall be deemed advisory rather than legally mandatory in nature and shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the pastor and the board. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in section 1.02.

ARTICLE 10 CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

SECTION 10.01—PURPOSE

The purpose of this conflict of interest policy is to protect the church's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the church or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state or federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

SECTION 10.02—DEFINITIONS

- A. Interested Person: Any director, officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers who has a direct or indirect financial interest.
- B. Financial interest: A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:
 - 1. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the church has a transaction or arrangement,

2. A compensation arrangement with the church or with any individual or entity with which the church has a transaction or arrangement, or
 3. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the church is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.
 4. A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the board of directors decides that a conflict of interest exists.
- C. Compensation: Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.
- D. Board: The term “Board” refers to the board of directors of the church. The pastor and Board will determine procedures for determining a possible conflict of interest.

SECTION 10.03—PROCEDURES

- A. Duty to Disclose. In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and, if applicable, members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- B. Determining whether a Conflict of Interest Exists. After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, including any presentations by and discussion with the interested person, he shall leave the board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest involving the transaction or arrangement is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members (as applicable) shall decide, by a majority vote, if a conflict of interest exists.
- C. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest
1. The chairman of the board shall, if appropriate, appoint a neutral person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
 2. After exercising due diligence, the board or committee shall determine whether the church can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
 3. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the board shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the best interests of the church, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.
- D. Violations of the Conflict of Interest Policy.

1. If the board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
2. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the board determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

SECTION 10.04—RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS

The minutes of the board shall contain the names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the board or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

The minutes of the board also shall contain the names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

SECTION 10.05. —COMPENSATION

- A. A voting member of the board or any committee who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the church for services rendered may not vote on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- B. Voting members of the board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the church, either individually or collectively, are not prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

SECTION 10.06—ANNUAL STATEMENTS

Each director, principal officer, and member of a committee with governing board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

- A. Has received a copy of the conflict of interest policy;
- B. Has read and understands the policy;
- C. Has agreed to comply with the policy; and

- D. Understands the organization is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

SECTION 10.07—PERIODIC REVIEWS

To ensure the organization operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and doesn't engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- A. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining.
- B. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the church's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and don't result in inurement, impermissible private benefit, or in an excess benefit transaction.

SECTION 10.08—USE OF OUTSIDE EXPERTS

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in 10.07, the organization may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

ARTICLE 11 BINDING ARBITRATION

SECTION 11.01—SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION

Members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration any legal matters within the church, which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bring any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

SECTION 11.02—ARBITRATION PROCEDURES

The procedures for arbitration shall be as adopted by the board. If the board has not adopted procedures, the church will use arbitration procedures provided by the National Center for Life and Liberty. This arbitration provision is ecclesiastical and faith-based in nature and is intended to operate under the rules and guidelines of this local church. It is not intended to operate under any state or federal guidelines for arbitration.

ARTICLE 12 TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS

SECTION 12.01—PRIVATE INUREMENT

No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in section 1.02 hereof.

SECTION 12.02—POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. To the extent prohibited by law, the church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

SECTION 12.03—DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the church, the board shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all assets of the church to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as the board shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to tax-exempt organizations that agree with the church's statement of faith.

SECTION 12.04—NONDISCRIMINATION The church shall not discriminate against members, applicants for membership, or students on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin. Furthermore, while Grace Baptist Tabernacle does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national and ethnic origin in its employment policies, as a religious institution it reserves the right to deny employment in accordance with its religious beliefs or to deny or terminate the employment of persons whose lifestyle, words, actions or otherwise do not align with the church's statement of faith, standard of conduct or other policies of this organization.

SECTION 12.05—LIMITATION OF ACTIVITIES

Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the church shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes stated in section 1.02.

ARTICLE 13 AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the eligible members present and voting at any regular church business meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been announced from the pulpit for at least two consecutive Sundays, and at least fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken. Proposed amendments or changes must be made available to voting members for review at least one week prior to the meeting at which the vote to amend the bylaws will be taken. Amendments become effective immediately upon adoption.

These bylaws were adopted by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present.

These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of **Grace Baptist Tabernacle Church.**

Date

Church Secretary