

Constitution of Grace Chapel

[September 2012]

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The Constitution of Grace Chapel

Preamble

We, the members of Grace Chapel, Havertown, Delaware County, Pennsylvania, consistent with the Charter granted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do ordain and establish the following Constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

1. Purpose of the Church

According to the Grace Chapel Charter, Recorded in the Office for the Recording of Deeds, Media, PA, on March 13, 1909, “the purposes for which the Corporation is formed are for the worship of Almighty God and the imparting of religious instruction as an undenominational organization in accordance with the accepted teachings of an Orthodox Evangelical Christianity and for the furtherance of other religious and benevolent purposes in connection therewith.”

2. Statement of Faith

- 2.1 We believe there is only one Living and True God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.
- 2.2 We believe the Bible is the Word of God consisting of the sixty-six Books of the Old and New Testaments, is verbally inspired of God and without error in the original writings, and as such is the supreme and final authority in faith and life.
- 2.3 We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned and brought upon himself and all humanity physical death and spiritual death which is separation from God. As a consequence, all human beings transgress God’s Law of love and are in need of His salvation.

- 2.4 We believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, is fully God and fully man, and as such He lived a perfect sinless life.
- 2.5 We believe the Lord Jesus Christ died as a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins and that He was raised from the dead, according to the Scriptures. All who believe in Him are justified by God's grace apart from human effort on the basis of His shed blood and righteousness.
- 2.6 We believe in the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to judge the world with justice. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the eternal happiness of the saved, and the eternal conscious punishment of the lost.
- 2.7 We believe in one Church of Jesus Christ embracing all who are united to Him by grace through faith and manifested in local churches faithful to His Word.
- 2.8 We believe there are two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper which are commanded by our Lord as expressions of faith regarding the believer's identification and fellowship with Christ and His Church.

3. Membership

The membership shall consist of those persons over 18 years old who have been approved by the Elder Board based on the following:

- 3.1 A profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation.
- 3.2 Baptism in obedience to Christ's command.
- 3.3 Agreement with the Grace Chapel Statement of Faith.
- 3.4 Agreement to be spiritually accountable to church leadership.

Members shall have the privilege and responsibility to vote on matters presented to the membership for approval.

4. Finances

- 4.1 The Elder Board shall determine the fiscal year of the organization.
- 4.2 A Treasurer shall be appointed annually by the Elder Board. The Treasurer shall oversee the receipt, custody and disbursement of all monies contributed for the work of the church.
- 4.3 The Treasurer shall oversee a complete and accurate accounting of all receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer shall report to the Elder Board and at congregational meetings, as requested by the Elder Board.

5. Leadership Structure

- 5.1 The Directors or Trustees of the Corporation are the Elder Board which includes: the Senior Pastor and no fewer than five men recommended by the Elder Board and affirmed by the congregation. Those who comprise the Elder Board shall have full voting rights in all Elder Board activities.
- 5.2 The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Elder Board shall be elected from among its lay members to serve a term of one year. A Chairman and Vice Chairman may be re-elected for successive terms. The Chairman is an ex officio member of all Committees.
- 5.3 Two-thirds of the Elder Board shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business. All decisions must be approved by a majority of its members.
- 5.4 The Senior Pastor together with the rest of the Elder Board shall have general oversight of the spiritual life of the congregation. The focus of his ministry is to pray for,

represent, spiritually feed, lead, administrate, encourage, exhort and discipline, as needed, the congregation. He shall be an ex officio member of all Committees of the church.

- 5.5 The services of the Senior Pastor may be terminated at any time by a two-thirds vote of the votes cast at a members meeting called for that purpose.
- 5.6 The services of an Assistant or Associate Pastor may be terminated at any time by the Elder Board.
- 5.7 When it is the desire of the members to call a Senior Pastor, the Elder Board shall oversee the interim situation and appoint a Committee of Recommendation to search out the Lord's will in this matter. After the Committee of Recommendation has approved a candidate by a two-thirds vote of its members, the Committee shall present that candidate to the Elder Board. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time, and in no case shall the name of more than one candidate be voted upon at a members meeting called for the purpose of electing a Senior Pastor. If the Elder Board approves the candidate by a two-thirds vote of its members, they shall call a members meeting for the purpose of voting on the call of that candidate as Senior Pastor. If the candidate receives a two-thirds vote of the votes cast at that members meeting, a written call to the candidate shall be prepared and extended to him.
- 5.8 Once formed, a Committee of Recommendation shall continue until the Committee is disbanded by the Elder Board or until a new Senior Pastor is installed. The Elder Board shall fill any vacancies on the Committee by appointment. The Committee shall report monthly to the Elder Board.

6. Elder Board

The Elder Board shall consist of spiritually mature men, according to the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, who are responsible for the oversight of the congregation. The focus of their ministry is to work alongside and support the Senior Pastor as they work together to pray for, represent, spiritually feed, lead, administrate, encourage, exhort and discipline, as needed, the congregation.

The function of the office is primarily pastoral. Within this biblical mandate, the Elder Board is responsible for the initiation and administration of policy pertaining to the philosophy of ministry, focus and objectives of the church.

7. Deacon Committee

The Deacon Committee shall consist of spiritually mature men and women, according to the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-12, whose primary ministry is to lead and administrate the service arm of the church. The Deacon Committee shall carry out their ministry under the direction of the Senior Pastor and Elder Board and assist the Elder Board in formulating and administering the policies of the church.

8. Elections

Members of the Elder Board and Deacon Committee shall be elected for up to two consecutive terms of four years, followed by at least one year off the standing Board of Elders and Deacon Committee. Terms of fewer than four years may be assigned so that a majority of either body shall not end their terms at the same time.

The Elder Board and Deacon Committee shall consist of members who are recommended by the congregation, nominated by the Elder Board, and voted for by the members. The Elder Board may appoint members of the congregation to fill vacancies in either body to serve until the next Annual Members Meeting when the members shall elect a person to fill the existing vacancy. An Elder or a Deacon serving

less than one year of a vacancy shall be eligible for immediate nomination to a full term of service.

9. Member Meetings

The annual meeting of the members shall be held no more than six weeks after the end of each fiscal year. The business of the meeting shall include approval of the annual budget and election of the Elder Board and Deacon Committee.

Only members of the church shall be eligible to vote. A majority vote is necessary to approve the annual budget and the selection of the members of the Elder Board and Deacon Committee. In order for the vote to be binding, there must be a minimum of 50 votes cast.

Special meetings may be called at any time by the Elder Board and shall always be called by the Elder Board when requested in writing by fifty members of the church who are eligible to vote.

10. Limitation of Liability of Directors

An Elder, Deacon, Officer or member of any Auxiliary Board of the Church (all of which Board members are hereinafter called Directors for the purpose of this article) shall not be personally liable for monetary damages as such for any action taken, or any failure to take any action unless the director has breached or failed to perform the duties of his or her office under the Pennsylvania Directors' Liability Act (Act 1986-145) (relating to standard of care and justifiable reliance) and the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct or recklessness.

To the extent permitted by statute, the members, at a meeting called for that purpose, may direct, by a two-thirds vote of those in attendance, that a current or former Director be indemnified by the church for any expenses relating to legal actions which are threatened, pending or completed and which are based on any action taken or any failure to take any action by a current or former Director.

11. Amendments

The Constitution may be amended at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose. Two weeks written notice of the proposed amendment must be given to the members of the church. If the members of the church approve the proposed amendment at said meeting by a two-thirds vote of those present, the Constitution shall be so amended. The precise wording of any amendment shall be proposed by the Elder Board or by the petition of not fewer than fifty members eligible to vote. The amendment shall then be submitted to the members of the church as herein provided.

12. Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of this Corporation all of its debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members, but shall be irrevocably dedicated by the Trustees to such other non-profit religious corporations as are in agreement with the letter and spirit of the doctrinal position of this organization; and in addition must be in conformity with the requirements of the United States Internal Revenue Service code of 1986, Section 501(c)(3) or any subsequent amendments thereto.”