

Approved 1/16/2018

THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

The purpose of this Constitution and By-laws is not to restrict the rights of anyone, but to define and to protect the body and to insure cooperation and unity.

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, it is the express purpose of God, our Heavenly Father, to call out of the world a saved people who shall constitute the body or church of our Lord Jesus Christ, built and established upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ, Himself, being the chief cornerstone; and

WHEREAS, the members of the body, the church (ecclesia) of Jesus Christ., are enjoined to assemble themselves for worship, fellowship, counsel, and instruction in the Word of God and the work of the ministry, and for the exercise of those spiritual gifts and offices provided for in the New Testament, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we recognize ourselves a body of Christian believers according to the Scriptural plan for the local church and under the laws of the State of Ohio, that we may worship God as a united body, exercising all other rights and privileges granted to organized bodies of Christian believers.

THEREFORE, we the membership (covenant partners) do recognize ourselves as a local Christian assembly and adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to cooperate and to be governed by them.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Grace Community Church of Bryan, Inc.

ARTICLE II. PREROGATIVES

Section 1. - The purpose of this Church shall be to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ and all that this entails related to living the “new” life here on earth and in preparation for our eternal life. All teaching, preaching, ministries, and activities of the Church must be based on, and in accordance with God’s Word, the Holy Scriptures. (II Timothy 3:16) To promote and maintain the spiritual purpose the church shall:

- (a) Establish and maintain a place of worship of the Triune God, and to promote Christian fellowship, edification, and the teaching and preaching of God's Word for the saving of souls and the maturing and discipling of believers. (Genesis 1:26, Matthew 3:16-17, Matthew 24:14, Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:19, John 14:16-17, 23, Romans 1:16, Ephesians 4:11-16)
- (b) To conduct and assume our share of responsibility, and our privilege, under the guidance of the Holy Scriptures, the work of evangelizing both home and foreign fields in obedience to the command of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20); and in harmony with the teachings and practice of his servants, the Apostles (Acts 8:4, 5, 25, 35-40; Acts 13:1-4; Romans 15:18-21; II Corinthians 10:16; Romans 10:12-17).
- (a) To establish such departments and offices as may be necessary for the propagation of the Gospel locally and to support missionary activity.
- (d) To minister to specific individual and group needs; including counseling, financial assistance, home study groups, laity training, etc.
- (e) To set aside 10% of all general tithes for the express purpose of local benevolence.
- (f) To provide for licensing and/or ordaining of persons whose said ministry is recognized as being called of God.
- (g) To govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament scriptures, "Making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace...until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:3, 13).

Section 2 - Acquisition and Disposition of Property

- (a) In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest, or otherwise, (either directly or as trustee) and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purpose; all in accordance with its constitution and by-laws or as the same may be hereafter amended or modified. Transactions shall be in the name of the church.
- (b) Should this Church ever cease to function, any properties held by the local church shall be distributed to other Christian ministries by mutual agreement of the active members (majority) and the pastor. No one individual shall have the right to confiscate any existing Church properties.

ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION

This local Church shall maintain its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conduct of its own affairs. We hold as scriptural and fundamental that form of church government which is a voluntary cooperative fellowship.

Though, this Church is functioning as independent church, we want to clarify that we desire the success and fellowship of all the Body of Christ.

ARTICLE IV. STATEMENT OF FAITH

This Church accepts the Holy Scriptures rightly divided as the revealed will of God, and therefore is our all sufficient guide for Scriptural government, faith, practice, maintaining unity, and establishing fellowship among believers (I Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42).

The following Statement of Faith is set forth to establish a general consistency of Biblical truths and principles. No claim is made that this Statement of Faith contains all truth in the Bible; only that it covers the fundamental Biblical precepts necessary for Scriptural unity.

WE BELIEVE

1. That the Holy Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God and the authoritative source of Christian doctrine and precept (II Timothy 3:15-17; I Thessalonians 2:13; II Peter 2:21).
2. In one God eternally existing in three persons, namely: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit .

The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM"". The Creator of heaven and earth, and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10-11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

3. That Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the Father, conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. That Jesus was crucified, and raised from the dead. That He ascended to heaven and is today at the right hand of the Father as the intercessor and soon coming King.

The Scripture declares:

- (a) His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35)
- (b) His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; I Peter 2:22)
- (c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38)
- (d) His substitutionary work on the cross (I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21)
- (e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; I Corinthians 15:4).
- (f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:19, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 11:3)
- (g) His second coming (I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 4:15, 17; II Thessalonians 1:7-10, 2:1; Revelation 5:10).

4. In the Salvation of man

That man was created in the image of God, but as a result of sin is lost and powerless to save himself.

That the only hope for man is to believe on Jesus Christ, the virgin-born Son of God, who died to take upon Himself the punishment for the sin of mankind and who rose from the dead so that by receiving Him as Lord, man is redeemed by His blood.

(a) Conditions of Salvation

The grace of God, which brings salvation, has appeared to all men through the preaching of repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ; man is saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit; and being justified by grace through faith, he becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 2:11, 3:5-7; Romans 10:13-15; Luke 24:47).

(b) Evidence of Salvation

By having faith in God's Word, the inward evidence to the believer of his salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness lived with increasing spiritual maturity (Fruit of the Spirit) and producing Kingdom fruit. (Galatians 5:22-23, John 15).

5. In Sanctification

- (a) By personal commitment to God's plan for Christian living which produces the Fruit of the Spirit in all goodness and righteousness and truth (Ephesians 5:9; Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 8:1-2; 12:1-2) .

- (b) Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication to God (Hebrews 12:14; Romans 12:1-2; I Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12).
- (c) Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection; and by faith, reckoning daily upon the fact of that union; and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11, 13; 8:1-2, 13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:13, I Peter 1:5).

6. In Water Baptism (Immersion)

- (a) All who repent should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit according to the command of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19).
- (b) We practice baptism by immersion unless the individual requests otherwise. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus, they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47-48; Romans 6:4).
- (c) Baptism by water is a commemorative act of obedience and neither a sacrament nor a guarantee of membership in the greater body of Christ or this local fellowship.

7. In the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

- (a) The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is subsequent to (after) the New Birth, and is witnessed by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit which are available to believers today and are to function in harmony with the New Testament guidelines (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8; Acts 2:4; I Corinthians 12; I Corinthians 13; I Corinthians 14, Romans 12).
- (b) We do not believe that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit must be manifested by speaking in tongues but rather by a powerfully transformed life of complete commitment to God.

8. In Divine Healing

Divine Healing is provided for all in the Atonement. Divine healing is an integral part of the Gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for all in the Atonement and is the privilege of all believers subject to the solemn will of God. (Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; James 5:14-16, Ephesians 1:11, James 4:15, Isaiah 46:10, I Chronicles 29:11).

9. In the Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper (Holy Communion) consisting of the elements—bread and the fruit of the vine—is the symbol expressing our sharing in the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (I Corinthians 2:26); and is enjoined on all believers “till He comes” (I Corinthians 11:26)

10. In the Second Coming of Christ

- (a) In order to resurrect the righteous dead and to catch away the living saints to Him in the air (I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Romans 3:23; Titus 2:13; I Corinthians 15:51)
- (b) In the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27, 30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21-22; Zephaniah 3:19-20; Romans 11:26-27), and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalms 72:3-8; Micah 4:3-4).

11. In the Bodily Resurrection

- (a) Eternal life for the righteous (Matthew 25:46; Luke 18:30; John 10:28; Romans 6:22; I John 5:11-13).
- (b) Eternal punishment for the wicked, no liberation nor annihilation (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 3:29; II Thessalonians 1:8-9; Revelation 20:10-15, 21:8).
- (c) The New heavens and the New Earth (II Peter 3:13; Revelation 21 and 22).

In the Ordained Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the church in:

- (a) Evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20).
- (b) Worship of God (John 4:23-24).
- (c) Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16).

13. In the Church

The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22-23; Hebrews 12:23).

The priority reasons for the existence of the church are:

- (a) To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (I Corinthians 12:13).
- (b) To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being conformed to the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; I Corinthians 12:23; 14:12).
- (c) To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:10, 20; Mark 16:15-16).
- (d) To be the hands of God in nurturing the saints in their time of need (Galatians 6:10).

14. In the whole Bible rightly divided

We believe in the harmony of Scripture—the whole Bible rightly divided. We do not believe in emphasizing one portion of Biblical truth above another or one less than the other, but believe each one to harmonize with the other which presents a harmonious whole.

15. In Peaceful Co-existence

While it is the responsibility of the Church to seek and save the lost, love and respect for others should dominate all relationships so that we live in peace with everyone so far as we are able. (Romans 12:18-19)

16. In establishing justice for the disenfranchised

We believe we are responsible for those who cannot fend for or defend themselves. It is our duty as Believers to feed the hungry, care for the sick, visit those in prison, house the homeless. (Luke 4:18-19, John 14:12-14, Matt.25:31-45)

17. We believe that marriage was ordained by God at creation as the lifelong and exclusive sacred union of one man and one woman (Genesis 1:26-28, 2:24). All intimate sexual activity must therefore be reserved for the union of marriage between a man and a woman. (Exodus 20:14, Romans 13:9, I Corinthians 6:15-18, I Corinthians 5:1-2) Christian marriage is a representation of Christ's relationship to His church and thus we hold this union in honor. (Matthew 19:1-10, I Corinthians 6:9-11, Ephesians 5:22-23, Hebrews 13:4, I Corinthians 6:15-20) We believe that any form of intimate sexual activity such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex is sinful and offensive to God. (Leviticus 18:23, Romans 1:18-31, I Corinthians 6:9, I Timothy 1:8, Jude 7)

We also believe that children are a blessing from the Lord. Thus all human life is sacred and worthy of protection from the moment of conception. Psalm 127 & 128; 139:13-16:

****We encourage every covenant partner to be familiar with this Statement of Faith and to strive to Biblically understand the same and to actively demonstrate these truths in their daily lives.****

ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES AND PRIVILEGES

ORDINANCES:

Section 1. - Baptism by Immersion

The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) shall be administered to all who are old enough and have repented of their sins and who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12).

Baptismal Formula will be in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Section 2. - The Lord's Supper

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion) shall be observed regularly as a part of public worship, as the Scripture so directs (Luke 22:19-20; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

PRIVILEGES:

Section 3. - Child Dedication

Infants and small children may be dedicated to the Lord in the Church upon request and when the parents have received instructions as to the significance and responsibility of the parents in dedicating their children to the Lord (Mark 10:13-16 Luke 18:15-16).

Section 4. - Ministering to the Sick

The sick shall be ministered to and prayed for with the anointing of oil and laying on of hands upon their request (Mark 16:18; James 5:14).

ARTICLE VI. COVENANT PARTNERS (MEMBERSHIP)

II Corinthians 15:12 “They entered into a covenant (agreement) to seek the Lord, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and soul.”

I Corinthians 3:9 “For we are God’s fellow workers...”

Section 1. - Purpose and Goal

The purpose and desired goal of Covenant Partners (membership) is to create unity, strength, and singleness of purpose for which the Lord calls believers together. To become a Covenant Partner means that we are agreeing to voluntarily cooperate and work together for the glory and honor of the Lord Jesus.

The membership principles are set forth for the prayerful consideration of those who desire to become Covenant Partners (members) of this local body of believers.

Section 2. - Standard of Membership (Covenant Partners)

COVENANT MEMBERSHIP SHALL BE OPEN TO ALL WHO

- (a) Show evidence of a genuine experience in regeneration (The New Birth) (John 1:12-13; 3:3-8; I Peter 1:18-25; II Corinthians 5:17).
- (b) Show evidence of a consistent Christian life (Romans 6:4; 8:1-4, 13:13; Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:1-2, 15; I John 1:6-7).
 - 1. A desire to abstain from all sin such as those in Galatians 5:19-21 : “adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, spiritualism, hatred, jealousy, anger, constant effort to get the best for yourself, complaints, criticism, the feeling that everyone else is wrong except those in your own little group, wrong doctrine, envy, murder, drunkenness, wild parties, etc.”
 - 2. A desire to progress in the positive virtues of Christian living and maturity as given in the Scripture. (John 15:10, 12, 14; Galatians 5:22-23; III John 2).
- (c) Voluntarily subscribe to and abide by the tenants of faith and agree to subscribe to the Constitution and By-laws as herein set forth.
- (d) Indicate a willingness to cooperate in the labor (Promotion of the Gospel) of this local church by your faithful attendance, and to contribute to the financial support of this local church through tithing and love offerings as the Lord so prospers.

1. Faithful attendance at services (Sunday School, Sunday Morning and Evening, Mid-Week, etc.)

The services of Grace Community Church are Bible based and designed to be a blessing. All are encouraged to make a quality decision to be faithful. By so doing they will be testifying to their love for Jesus, His Word, and His Church. They will be blessed and their faithfulness will strengthen the unity among the believers and be an overall blessing to the church.

Tithing and Offerings

Grace Community Church is committed to God's financial plan for His church and people. Faithful participation in this beautiful plan is a privilege to every believer, and all are encouraged to be faithful in their personal ministry of tithing and offerings to the Lord through the local church.

The Biblical system of tithing and offerings is God's ordained plan to bless His people and to also provide for the needs of the church and ministry and to reach out to the lost with the Gospel. (Malachi 3:6-12, Matthew 23:23, Luke 6:38)

(e) Practical Admonitions (to caution, to reprove gently, to instruct)

The following admonitions are not in any way intended to be a set of rules and regulations in reference to the life and conduct of the Covenant Members of Grace Community Church. They are being shared to assist the believer to more fully represent Christ in their testimony before the world. The believer is encouraged to follow the Word of God and guidance of the Holy Spirit in all areas of Christian living.

In view of the alarming erosion of national and international moral standards, we reaffirm our intention of holding up biblical standards against all forms of worldliness. We urge all believers to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world," (I John 2:15-16)

In its teaching regarding worldliness, the Scripture warns against: participation in activity which defiles the body, or corrupts the mind and spirit; the inordinate love of, or preoccupation with pleasures, position, or possessions, which lead to their misuse; manifestation of extreme behavior, unbecoming speech, or inappropriate and immodest appearance; any fascination or association which lessens one's affection for spiritual things. Anything or place that would be detrimental to a Christian's testimony and harmful to them spiritually would be considered out of bounds for the Christian. (Luke 21:34-35; Romans 8:5-8, 12:1-2; II Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11; I Timothy 2:8-10; 4:12; James 4:4; I John 2:15-17; Titus 2:12)

Matthew 5:16, “Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (read also Romans 14:1 and Romans 15:3)

Section 3. - Active Members/ Covenant Partners

Those who have become members of this local church and are living consistent Christian lives, and are faithful to the Standard of Membership and have passed their sixteenth birthday shall constitute the active membership of this local church.

Section 4. - Inactive Covenant Partners

Enrolled members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the church for a period of three consecutive months or more, or who cease to contribute of their means to its support or who may be out of harmony with the Constitution and By-laws of this local church shall be considered as Inactive Covenant Partners.

Section 5. - Discipline

For those who are under charge for misconduct, or who may have fallen into sinful or worldly practices discipline is to be prayerfully administered in accordance with the Scripture. This step is serious and shall be made by the Pastoral Team after deliberation and prayer. (Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 16:17-18; I Corinthians 5:1-5; II Thessalonians 3:6-15; II Timothy 3:16; Galatians 6:1)

Section 6. - Withdrawal or Transfer

Covenant Partners in good standing, who may wish to sever their relationship with this local church or may desire to be transferred to some other congregation, may apply for a letter, which shall be granted on the approval of the Pastor.

Section 8. - Revision of Covenant Partner Roll

The Pastor shall be authorized to revise the Covenant Partner roll of this local church as is necessary, or at least annually.

ARTICLE VII. RELATIONSHIP OF MEMBERS AND LEADERSHIP

Section 1. - Tender Loving Care

To assure the Covenant Members that they will receive “tender loving care” Grace Community Church is committed to the New Testament directives in reference to the proper Scriptural relationship between the Members and the leadership of the local church.

Section 2. - Purpose of Leadership

According to the New Testament (Ephesians 4:11-16; I Corinthians 12:27-28; Romans 12:3-8) the leadership offices of the local church (pastors, elders, deacons, etc.) are set in the church for the purpose of (1) leading the Member to become mature in the faith that they may be equipped to carry out their individual ministry and (2) assisting the Covenant Partner in their time of need.

Section 3. - Mutual Love and Respect

The New Testament admonishes the leaders of the local church to love and respect the Members and admonishes also the Members to love and respect the leadership of the church. Mutual love and respect are necessary that love, joy, peace, and Christ-like unity may prevail. (Psalms 133:1; I Corinthians 1:10; Hebrews 13:15-17; I Peter 5:1-5)

ARTICLE. VIII. LEAD PASTOR

The Lead Pastor shall be considered the spiritual overseer of the church and shall direct all of its activities. He/she shall act as Chairman of all business meetings of the church. He/she shall be an ex-officio member of all departments and committees. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the church without his/her approval. He/she, along with all staff and employees must conduct their lives in accordance with the Statement of Faith expressed in Article IV.

The Lead Pastor shall have the authority to hire any staff and to determine the end of a staff person's tenure at Grace in consultation with the Elder Team. He shall also make recommendations annually to the Finance Team for salary reviews of all staff. The Lead Pastor may be removed for cause by 80% agreement of the Elder Team.

In the event of a vacancy of the office of the Lead Pastor, the Combined Leadership Team shall act in the capacity of a search committee for the selection of a new Pastor and shall prayerfully and with full consideration to the Word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit set forth guidelines for the selection of a new Lead Pastor. The final selection of a new Lead Pastor is the responsibility of the Combined Leadership Team and requires a minimum of 80% consensus.

ARTICLE IX. THE ELDER TEAM

The Elder Team shall be the Trustees of the Corporation and constitute an official church board for any legal purposes. The Elder Team shall meet at least quarterly or as needed.

The Elder Team shall be led by the Lead Pastor as Head Elder, and consist of those individuals and couples who have been chosen as elders, and any active and/or retired Lead, Associate, or staff Pastors. Elders are chosen by the Lead Pastor in consultation with the current elders. The Ministry Administrator shall be a resource person to the Elder Team and be available to meet with them as needed.

The Elder Team will provide oversight, direction and leadership for Grace Community Church entrusting the implementation of that direction to ministry leaders and staff under the leadership of the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor is to be held accountable for fulfilling the Elder Team's direction. The Elder Team is, therefore, allowed to focus their gifts and time on the biblical mandate to shepherd the church while allowing ministry leaders and staff the opportunity to maximize their gifts and talents as they lead their ministries and make practical decisions on how to carry out the direction provided by the Elders.

These men and/or women shall be spiritually minded, mature and meet the biblical qualifications for leadership as found in I Timothy 3:8-13 and Titus 1. They shall be covenant partners of Grace Community Church who comply with and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Statement of Faith in Article IV. They must be wholly and unconditionally committed to this church and faithful tithers to this ministry.

The elders shall also provide tender loving Christ-Centered care for the Lead Pastor and his/her family. The Lead Pastor with the help of the elders is to provide the love and care for the staff. In any conflicts between the Lead Pastor and staff, the elders are to act as counselors between the parties involved.

The Elder team along with the Ministry Administrator shall constitute the Financial Team. The Financial Team shall address the financial matters of the administration of the church and the salaries of the staff. Each January, 4 non-staff elders shall be appointed to assess the salary structure of the Lead Pastor and bring recommendations for change to the entire Elder team.

This Team will function as the Finance Committee in any banking or land acquisition matters.

An Elder may remain in their position as long as his/her colleagues continue to affirm his/her position or reaches the age of 78. Any two members of the Elder Team or 3 members of the Lay Leadership Team may question the ability of any Elder should they believe he/she is no longer capable of fulfilling the role of Elder. Consensus is to be sought by the Combined Leadership Team (elders and lay leaders) concerning the removal of an elder.

ARTICLE X THE LAY LEADERSHIP TEAM

The other part constituting the Combined Leadership Team of Grace Community Church is the Lay Leadership Team which will consist of 6 laymen or women from the congregation and 1 youth selected by the Youth Pastor with the consultation of the Lead Pastor.

The Lay Leadership Team shall act as an advisory counsel to the Elder Team. Their role is to help the Elder team better understand the issues in the congregation, to be a sounding board for major decisions as well as encouragers in the congregation concerning decisions made by the Elder Team. Their input is to be given serious attention by the Elder Team when making decisions. It is the desired goal of the leadership of Grace to be in consensus on all major decisions.

The Combined Leadership Team will select by lot one-third of the members of the (6) lay persons to drop off every year and they shall then discern the gift mix needed to adequately replace the two that are coming off the leadership team. The Lead Pastor will then extend invitations to the newly selected to become part of the team. (A married couple shall never serve on the voting portion of the leadership team at the same time.) The youth member will drop off at the end of a 1 year term and a replacement will be selected by the Youth Pastor and Lead Pastor.

Concerning the appointment of new lay leaders, we see no example of voting for leadership in either the Old Testament or the New Testament so we will not hold elections, but we will trust the men and women of God who serve us on the Combined Leadership Team to rightly discern the will of God. In the unlikely event that a consensus of the leadership team cannot be achieved, the Lead Pastor will select and appoint the new member(s) after a reasonable time.

A vacancy in the Lay Leadership Team can be declared for failure to comply with the constitution and by-laws or the Statement of Faith in Article IV or the scriptural standards for leaders. The Lead Pastor will be responsible to initiate such a procedure and The Elder Team will decide if the individual needs to be removed.

ARTICLE XI. VACANCIES

As the various leadership positions become necessary in this local church, the procedure for determining qualifications, appointing, nominating, and vacating of leadership positions shall be determined by the Combined Leadership Team.

Such procedures (proposals) may become a part of the By-Laws of this Constitution after being considered and approved by the Combined Leadership Team.

When necessity demands, the Elder Team with the advisement of the Lay Leadership Team, may declare any leadership position vacant.

ARTICLE XII. MEETINGS

There shall be an annual meeting of the church at which time various reports of the overall ministries of the church shall be made to the active membership. Time of said meeting to be the third week of October. Place of said meeting will be designated by the Lead Pastor.

The membership may also meet at special meetings which will be called by the Lead Pastor, who will designate the time and place of the meeting. Notice of the annual meeting or special called meetings shall be by pulpit announcement, letter, Facebook, text, email, website announcement or by any reasonably accessible electronic media.

A quorum shall consist of the covenant partners in attendance at such a meeting.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution or to the By-Laws of Grace Community Church may be made by consensus of the Combined Leadership Team.